

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

Weak Points of Arminian Theology

By Jonathan Bailess
of Edmond, West Virginia

I Peter 1:18-20

In our text, Peter, through the inspiration of the Holy Spirit, states that the blood of Christ is precious in the eyes of God. Any doctrine or basis of theology that cheapens or detracts from the preciousness of Christ's blood is in direct opposition to God. In addition, the Bible states in Philippians 2:9-11: "Wherefore God also hath highly exalted



him, and given him a name which is above every name: That at the name of Jesus every knee should bow, of things in heaven, and things in earth, and things under the earth; And that every tongue confess that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of God

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God's Ten Plagues Upon Egypt

By Matthew Stepp
of Wayne, West Virginia

"And thus shall ye eat it; with your loins girded, your shoes on your feet, and your staff in your hand; and ye shall eat it in haste: it is the LORD'S passover. For I will pass through the land of Egypt this night, and will smite all the firstborn in the land of Egypt, both man and beast; and against all the gods of Egypt I will execute judgment: I am the LORD" (Ex. 12:11-12).



God rarely has but one purpose in mind as He "... d o e t h a c c o r d i n g to his will in the army of heaven, and among the inhabitants of the earth: and none can stay his hand, or say unto him, What doest thou?" (Dan. 4:35). The Egyptian plagues were not only

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Well of Living Water

By Glenn Gilbreath
of Decatur, Alabama

John 4:1-30

In this chapter we have the account of Jesus at Jacob's well, and He is met there by a woman of Samaria. We must first point out that this encounter was not by accident. Notice verse 4, "And he must needs go through Samaria." There was a purpose for Him in Samaria. Before time was, God ordained that Jesus would go to Samaria at this time because some of God's elect were there.

Next, we see that they met at



Jacob's well. Jesus being the God-man was wearied in His journey and became thirsty. Jesus

Christ is perfect, but yet He still ate, drank, labored, and slept.

The true importance of this Scripture is that Jesus Christ is the "living water" that mankind must have in order to have everlasting life. The significance of the place frequently supplies the key to the meaning of what is recorded as occurring there. Examples: 1) The

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Christ the Propitiation

By Joseph M. Sidders
of Guntown, Mississippi

"This then is the message which we have heard of him, and declare unto you, that God is light, and in him is no darkness at all. If we say that we have fellowship with him, and walk in darkness, we lie, and do not the truth: But if we walk in the light, as he is in the light, we have fellowship one with another, and the blood of Jesus Christ his Son cleanseth us from all sin. If we say that we have no sin, we deceive ourselves, and the truth is not in us. If we confess our sins, he is faithful and just to forgive us our sins,



and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness. If we say that we have not sinned, we make him a liar, and his word is not in us.

My little children, these things write I unto you, that ye sin not. And if any man sin, we have an advocate with the Father, Jesus Christ the righteous: And he is the propitiation for our sins: and not for ours only, but also for the sins of the whole world" (I John 1:5-2:2).

There is a word today that has

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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.
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Weak Points

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the Father." Considering this passage, we can draw the fact that salvation brings glory to God, so to take salvation out of His hands and place it in the hands of man robs God of His glory.

1. Human free will—This stance states that though man is fallen, he is not incapacitated by the sinful nature and can, therefore, freely choose God. Man's will is not restricted and enslaved by his sinful nature.

A. Biblical stance is that Man is totally depraved and bound by his nature. (Gen 6:5, 11, Job 15:16, Psalm 14:3, Rom. 1:24).

B. Man will not decide to turn to Christ. (John 6:65, John 14:6).

C. To the argument of Romans 10:13 **"For whosoever shall call upon the name of the Lord shall be saved."** I would ask that the hearer or reader continue to read what was written from Romans 10:10-17. This passage reveals that there is more required than simply an empty calling upon God. In addition, Ephesians 2:1 declares, **"And you hath he quickened, who were dead in trespasses and sins."** A sinner is born dead spiritually there is no ability or desire within the body of that death to come to Christ.

D. Other points to further disprove this point:

a. Upon salvation man is a new creature old things are passed away. (Gal 6:15 2 Corinthians 5:17) Therefore it can be determined that fallen man simply does not possess a free-will to good.

b. The fall of man implies that every aspect of man fell as a result of sin. This would naturally include man's will. Therefore we conclude once again man can not by nature possess a free-will

to good. In his book *An Antidote Against Arminianism*, Chris Hess brings out the fact that sin has brought about a threefold rebellion in man's nature:

Against the counsel of the mind

Against the controls of conscience

Against the commands of God

Once again we must conclude by stating that man had no free-will to good in his nature which brings us to our next point.

2. Conditional Election—God chose people for salvation based on His foreknowledge where God looks into the future to see who would respond to the gospel message.

God's Word declares we were chosen before the foundation of the world (Eph. 1:4) God is an eternal, immutable, sovereign being meaning that all things He has determined, declared, or decreed possess the same attributes. In addition, the point we just went through brought out extremely clearly that there is no good or ability towards good in us.

If this point of Arminianism is true, meaning if God elected us unto salvation by looking through time and seeing who would respond to the gospel message, we are a people without hope and without God in the world. (Ephesians 2; John 6:65; Isa. 64:6; John 15:16).

3. Universal Atonement—The position that Jesus bore the sin of everyone who ever lived.

The next three points are among some of the most God-weakening points of doctrine that I have encountered. To say that Jesus bore the sins of every person who ever lived but was then was unable to save and preserve them means that the death of Christ was 100%

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Brief Truths

By Randy Johnson of
Texarkana, Texas

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



REDEEMING THE TIME

"See then that ye walk circumspectly, not as fools, but as wise, Redeeming the time, because the days are evil. Wherefore be ye not unwise, but understanding what the will of the Lord is" (Eph. 5:15-17).

The words "redeeming the time" means buying up the opportunity, or to taking advantage of the time. It means to make the best use of the opportunities God gives us. Time has three elements, past, present, and future. We always live in the present, never tomorrow or the past. Once today becomes yesterday we cannot change it, but today is our present, our space of working, tomorrow may never get here.

As Christians and churches, we always need to be aware of our time and use it for the Lord, with the salvation of the lost as our main goal. God said, **"because the days are evil."** Today we know this, we live in an advanced evil time, people are very evil in their hearts. We always believe more evil than before, but evil has been on the earth since Adam and Eve. Remember Cain very horribly killed his bother Abel and was very presumptuous when God questioned him about it. **"And the LORD said unto Cain, Where is Abel thy brother? And he said, I know not: Am I my brother's keeper"** (Gen. 4:9)? We sometimes believe that evil is getting worse today than anytime in history, but the truth is while it may be more open, it is not worse.

Evil in the world has always been very bad, and anti-God, and anti-Christian. There was a time in our history when tens of millions of Christians were absolutely slaughtered at the hands of people calling themselves "Christians" with the help of the governments. While we may not be able to declare today more evil than ever before, times are very evil, and more open than ever before. People today do not care about God, Jesus, the Bible, or church; they are haters of God maybe more so than anytime before.

Churches in America are shrinking to such low numbers that they are in jeopardy of closure. However, our focus needs to be steadfast on God, Jesus, the Bible, church, and the salvation of the lost. The commission to the churches is to preach the gospel to the lost, and without concern to our times. **"And he said unto them, Go ye into all the world, and preach the gospel to every creature"** (Mark 16:15). Until this has been accomplished (and it never will be) our mission that God has appointed to us is not complete. We are in this battle together, while every church has their commission, they are all the same. The gospel message is the greatest message to the world today and tomorrow, but today is more relevant because for some tomorrow will not get here. God said, **"We then, as workers together with him, beseech you also that ye receive not the grace of God in vain. (For he**

saith, I have heard thee in a time accepted, and in the day of salvation have I succoured thee: behold, now is the accepted time; behold, now is the day of salvation.) Giving no offence in any thing, that the ministry be not blamed" (II Cor. 6:1-3). Our redeeming the time is now, today, never tomorrow, because Jesus could come before tomorrow, they could expire before tomorrow, and we failed to redeem our time.

A saved person is not permitted to sin because their sins are covered by the blood, and we are not to use God's sovereignty of saving sinners as an excuse to not redeem our time to the lost. God told us in verse 15, **"See then that ye walk circumspectly."** Circumspectly means perfect or complete. The Lord has ordered us to walk according to the Scriptures because in failing to do so makes us walk as fools. We cannot be good redeemers of time if we are walking as the lost. Why would lost people want salvation if there is no change in us? God said in verse 17, **"Wherefore be ye not unwise,"** that is mindless or stupid but walking in the purpose that God has for you. Remember, if God saved you, He has a purpose for your life, and you should discover that purpose, and then guide your purpose in life accordingly. If we fail, then we are not redeeming our time but walking unwise and as fools. Verse 17 concludes **"but understanding what the will of the Lord is."** We are all to search for God's will for us, if we seek, we will find, and when we find we should do. Let us not walk as fools wasting valuable time, let us all redeem our time as God has elected for us.

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



Weak Points

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in vain. This stance take salvation from the hands of the sovereign, almighty, Creator of all things and places it dependent upon the will of the sinful, wretched, evil creature. It robs God of all glory, robs God of power, and cheapens the death of Christ. In addition, this stance makes God a failure. In short this stance makes man god of his own salvation.

If Christ died for all, then all would be reconciled to God. We find in Romans 3:5 that Christ is the propitiation (or payment) for our sin. Therefore, if Christ paid the sin debt for all, then once again we must declare one of God's attributes to be false. If Christ died for all, and thereby paid the sin debt for all, then some must pay their own sin debt in Hell, then God is unjust since those sins were paid for by the death of Christ. I do not serve an unjust god! My God sent His only begotten son into the world to die only for the sins of His people no one else. I am sure that the Arminian who may still be reading at this point is telling me to visit John 3:16 and II Peter 3:9. I am very much aware of what each of these verses say and will submit to the listener that they must read these verses in context and truly see what they say. In John 3:16 Jesus uses the word world to describe each nation, kindred, tribe, and people not each individual (Romans 9:11.) In II Peter 3:9 the entire verse is addressed to the beloved or those who are in Christ.)

4. Resistible Grace—The teaching that the grace of God can be resisted and finally beaten as to reject salvation in Christ.

Once again we arrive at a God-
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Weak Points

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weakening heresy. To state, as we mentioned above, that God sent Christ to be the atonement for all mankind but then is unable to save them because they refuse to be saved makes man the god of salvation. Something I should have mentioned earlier is that if man is the god of anything, God then ceases to be the solely sovereign almighty One; God will not give up His glory that man may have somewhat to glory in. The Bible states in Psalm 110:3 that God's people will be willing in the day of his power.

When we stop to consider what we have already looked at, I would like to present to you the reader the following question:

Since we have been proven by the Scripture to be helplessly dead in our sin; knowing the penalty for that sin is death and eternity in Hell; realizing we are incapable of saving ourselves from this penalty; and whereas only God is capable of saving us; Why would we think for one moment that when the Holy Spirit convicts us and reveals these things to us that we would in turn refuse salvation?

Ephesians 2:1 again states: **"And you hath he quickened, (made alive) who were dead in trespasses and sins."** Verse 10 states that **"we are His (God's) workmanship, created in Christ Jesus unto (not by) good works, which God hath before ordained that we should walk in them."** Saul's conversion reveals God stating that it is hard for you (man) to kick against the pricks. John 6:37 unequivocally declares the following: **"All that the Father giveth me shall come to me; and him that cometh to me I will in no wise cast out."**

From these scriptures and facts we should realize that man has no

hope of resisting the call of God.

5. Fall from Grace—The teaching that a person can fall from grace and lose his salvation.

A. Romans 8:28-39. Nothing can separate between us and God. God controls the work of salvation from beginning to end. God saves us to the uttermost (Heb. 7:25).

B. We that are saved are the children of God. (I John 3:1; John 1:13; Heb. 12:5-11). In light of these two facts we can determine that mankind can not separate God and His children. There is absolutely no scriptural basis for this stance.

C. As I have brought out several times from the previous few points, the points of Arminianism weaken God and cheapen the sacrifice of Christ. Any system of theology that does this can not be of God. For us to say that God is unable to preserve those He has saved is again to separate God from His Sovereignty. (John 3:14-16, Heb. 9:1-28).

The words everlasting and eternal mean without end, therefore since God has promised us everlasting life we must conclude that that means life without end. Romans 5:18-6:2 bring out the fact that there is grace for our forgiveness just as I John 1:9 states.

Conclusion: As we have gone through this study, I pray that the Lord has revealed unto you the fact that the Arminian theological system has a very weak God as its head. In addition, it has made man the god of their own salvation. According to this system man may decide to follow Christ then through his or her own action renounce Christ only to return to the bondage of sin. This stance is purely against the Bible, heretical in its nature, and, quite frankly, is an abomination

before God as is any view we may encounter that weakens God or detracts from the preciousness of Christ's blood. May the Lord bless you all, and may we pray for God's churches as they gather.

(Jonathan Baileis is pastor of the Beauty Mountain Baptist Church of Edmond, West Virginia).



God's Ten Plagues

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meant to **"Let my people go,"** but were meant also to tingle the ears of the Canaanites (Ex. 15:15, Josh. 2:10, 9:9); would fulfill His purposes upon reprobate Pharaoh (Ex. 9:16); and as our text states, will single out at least ten of the so-called divinities worshiped by Egypt for impugn judgment, out of the midst of their over 1500 named gods and goddesses. Selah! Think about it!

Ex. 7:3-5- **"And I will harden Pharaoh's heart, and multiply my signs and my wonders in the land of Egypt. But Pharaoh shall not hearken unto you, that I may lay my hand upon Egypt, and bring forth mine armies, and my people the children of Israel, out of the land of Egypt by great judgments. And the Egyptians shall know that I am the LORD, when I stretch forth mine hand upon Egypt, and bring out the children of Israel from among them"** (Ex. 7:3-5). That there is but one true Deity is going to be the echoing declaration from the banks of the Nile all the way to Mount Carmel and Elijah's declaration of: **"Hear me, O LORD, hear me, that this people may know that thou art the LORD God, and that thou hast turned their heart back again. Then the fire of the LORD fell, and consumed the burnt sacrifice, and the wood, and the stones, and the dust,**

and licked up the water that was in the trench. And when all the people saw it, they fell on their faces: and they said, The LORD, he is the God; the LORD, he is the God. And Elijah said unto them, Take the prophets of Baal; let not one of them escape. And they took them: and Elijah brought them down to the brook Kishon, and slew them there" (I Kings 18:37-40). Not only are these judgments meant to exalt God, but also to destroy any validity of rival gods.

1. THE FIRST PLAGUE

"Get thee unto Pharaoh...And thou shalt say unto him...Thus saith the LORD, In this thou shalt know that I am the LORD: behold, I will smite with the rod that is in mine hand upon the waters which are in the river, and they shall be turned to blood. And the fish that is in the river shall die, and the river shall stink; and the Egyptians shall lothe to drink of the water of the river...upon the waters of Egypt, upon their streams, upon their rivers, and upon their ponds, and upon all their pools of water, that they may become blood; and that there may be blood throughout all the land of Egypt, both in vessels of wood, and in vessels of stone" (Ex. 7:15-19).

Turning the River Nile into blood was a direct attack on many deities, as the importance of this river of life in the desert cannot be underestimated and was worshiped in many different ways, times, and temples. The primary god of the Nile River was Hapi (Apis), also portrayed as Sobek, the god with a crocodile head. As I researched which deity was affected by each of the ten plagues, it was difficult to pin down a particular name, as

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Narrow Paths

By Doug Newell IV of
Clendenin, West Virginia

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

A DIFFERENT KIND OF VICTORY

If I scored zero in a round of golf, I would be thrilled. If my final score was zero in a game of basketball, I will be embarrassed. The victor's score looks different, depending on the rules of the contest. Most would agree in a fight to the death, the person left standing is the winner, but here too, it depends on the judge. In Revelation 15:2, there are saints of God in Heaven, who have **"gotten victory over the beast."** They were in heaven, instead of the earth, because they stood against the beast and were put to death. They refused to worship the false god, take the mark of the antichrist and for their stand, they were executed. And God called them victorious.

Revelation 13:11-18 tells us more about the power the beast has over the world. Anyone who does not take the mark is restricted from participating in society, they can not buy nor sell. Rich or poor, powerful or weak, free or in bondage, it does not matter, you take the mark and worship the beast. If not, you die. These faithful few stand refusing to worship the beast. Having their eyes opened by the Spirit of God, turning from their sin to trust only in Christ Jesus, they refused to bow to worship an idol god, even if it cost their life.

From earth, people will see what happened and will be afraid of following suite. They will participate because they do not want to die. All they have to do is take the mark. All they have

to do is bow down and worship the image and they live to fight another day. A win, right? How foolish for these people to stand for Christ and get put to death, for what? What did they gain? Think of all the good they could have done. That is the perspective from the Earth. It looks a little different in Heaven. The martyrs lost their lives and immediately were in the presence of the Lord. They did not lose their battle with the antichrist, they won. All the enemy could do in his persecution is chase them up to Heaven. If we are worldly minded then we can only think of worldly victories. But the heavenly minded person sees the real battle and by faith knows what victory looks like. As the persecutor put their mortal bodies in the ground, he believed he was ridding himself of his opposition, so naturally, he was winning. But in reality, it was the martyrs who won. God has a different type of scorecard.

They are the victors. Not in a metaphorical way. Not just some sentimental words to comfort those who remain. They overcame the wicked one by the blood of the Lamb, declaring the gospel of Christ, that salvation is by grace alone, through faith alone, in Christ's work alone. They did not gain victory through their own death, but **"they loved not their lives unto the death"** (Rev. 12:11). Faith was the victory that overcame.

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



God's Ten Plagues

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the Egyptian gods change almost from dynasty to dynasty. There is a mutability to their natures and their legends, because there is no truth in them. Our God is the only immutable and sovereign God that has remained sanctified throughout history. **"Lord, thou hast been our dwelling place in all generations. Before the mountains were brought forth, or ever thou hadst formed the earth and the world, even from everlasting to everlasting, thou art God. Thou turnest man to destruction...For a thousand years in thy sight are but as yesterday when it is past, and as a watch in the night"** (Ps. 90:1-4). It is amazing whenever manuscripts are found or archaeology artifacts are found, they always validate the one story of history, that the Hebrew God is still God and His Word is found infallible. Hallelujah! Selah! Think about it!

God, in this first plague, starts off with a big bang. Turning the Egyptian water of life into a river of death. Fish and river life die in this elementally-altered river environment. The Egyptian god of the river would surely defend his domain. But Hapi and Sobek are no more real than Baal was for those Phoenicians deceiving the children of Israel in Jezebel's day. Nothing checks the power of Jehovah, the only self-existent One.

It is significant that the ten plagues begin with a bloody river and end with bloody door posts and lintels in the land of Goshen. Blood equals death, and as the seven days of thirst prevailed upon the land of Egypt, I am sure more folk died as desperate, thirsty folk tried to drink the

river liquid, or died in the deprivation of living water. Death is inevitable, and the only reason the children of Israel would be spared is that there was blood shed on their behalf (pictured by the passover Lamb that deadly night of the death angel) by the Lord Jesus Christ. Beloved reader, do not leave this bloody Nile river without considering the consequences of ignoring the One with the power to take away the physically life-sustaining river of life for these Egyptians. God is able to take life at will, and this first judgment of the god Hapi will also be the judgment of every soul that cleaves to the doomed Nile River and rejects the blood of Jesus Christ as the fountain of Life.

2. THE SECOND PLAGUE

"And the LORD spake unto Moses, Go unto Pharaoh, and say unto him, Thus saith the LORD, Let my people go, that they may serve me. And if thou refuse to let them go, behold, I will smite all thy borders with frogs: And the river shall bring forth frogs abundantly, which shall go up and come into thine house, and into thy bedchamber, and upon thy bed, and into the house of thy servants, and upon thy people, and into thine ovens, and into thy kneadingtroughs" (Ex. 8:1-3).

Frogs, harmless little fellers, are they not? As the next three plagues illustrate, too much of a good thing is not good. But a fair question might be, why would the Egyptians worship a frog? The underlying answer is that man is both capable and desiring to worship anything. As they see these little amphibians come out of the Nile River, so too, they imagined that the gifts of the river came to them. Heqet became

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God's Ten Plagues

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a goddess symbolized with the head of a frog, as “she” would bring fertility to the land of Egypt. Each year the flooded river would deposit fresh new layers of fertile soil upon the valley fields waiting to be planted as the waters receded. Heqet became the goddess of fertility and renewal and was worshiped, lest she not bring that needed bounty each year.

The frogs sent from God came into the people's houses, bedchambers, beds, ovens, kneadingtroughs, and basically there was no escaping their ubiquitous presence. No longer sacred, these slimy, leaping nuisances became cursed in the eyes of the former worshipers of the goddess Heqet. “Enough! Go away!” came the cry even of the unexempted Pharaoh. Begone Heqet? Yes, that is what the Lord was waiting to hear. But even in the restoration of normalcy, the Egyptians were plagued, because **“...the LORD did according to the word of Moses; and the frogs died out of the houses, out of the villages, and out of the fields. And they gathered them together upon heaps: and the land stank”** (Ex. 8:13-14). Does anyone still want to worship Heqet the stinker? God could not have turned the tables on Heqet and the Egyptians any sweeter. Perfect judgment. Selah! Think about it!

3. THE THIRD PLAGUE

“And the LORD said unto Moses, Say unto Aaron, Stretch out thy rod, and smite the dust of the land, that it may become lice throughout all the land of Egypt. And they did so; for Aaron stretched out his hand with his rod, and smote the dust

of the earth, and it became lice in man, and in beast; all the dust of the land became lice throughout all the land of Egypt. And the magicians did so with their enchantments to bring forth lice, but they could not: so there were lice upon man, and upon beast. Then the magicians said unto Pharaoh, This is the finger of God...” (Ex. 8:16-19).

I did not find a lice-headed god for the Egyptians, although I would not be surprised if further research found one. The god targeted here could be Geb, the goose-headed god of the Earth and dust. Geb was a rather important god that gave stability to the Egyptians that worshiped him. That Jehovah God could take “his dust” and turn it into a plague of lice would have frustrated those worshipers (since there is no real god to offend). As in the frogs, the primary plague here is still just one of discomfort for the Egyptians to take notice of Geb's impotence and repent and turn in faith to the real God of omnipotent power. The later plagues will become more deadly.

A couple things to note. This is the last plague initiated by Aaron's rod. Hereafter, the plagues are commenced by the mouth of Moses, speaking only the words of God. The rod of Aaron was not the source of power in these first three plagues either, but symbolically, the Lord wanted the picture of the rod of correction and discipline being laid upon the nation of Egypt. The second note is that the magicians of Egypt had manipulated their trickery (perhaps via demonic powers) in the first two plagues, but that was only allowed by God thus far. No more could they pretend to have any real powers to match this Hebrew God of gods. “The finger of God!” was their cry as

they retreated from this invasive plague of lice from dust. Why then did the Lord allow them to compete in the first two plagues? I think we can see that many times men (Pharaoh) will harden their hearts by trusting in works. Works will only get one so far. Never will they be sufficient in this matter of Spiritual worship. Geb was insufficient to the task. He could not make one single lousy louse. Truly the Egyptians saw their god Geb as a “lousy” substitute for the real God of Moses and Aaron.

4. THE FOURTH PLAGUE

“And the LORD said unto Moses, Rise up early in the morning, and stand before Pharaoh...and say unto him, Thus saith the LORD, Let my people go, that they may serve me. Else, if thou wilt not let my people go, behold, I will send swarms of flies upon thee, and upon thy servants, and upon thy people, and into thy houses: and the houses of the Egyptians shall be full of swarms of flies, and also the ground whereon they are. And I will sever in that day the land of Goshen, in which my people dwell, that no swarms of flies shall be there; to the end thou mayest know that I am the LORD in the midst of the earth. And I will put a division between my people and thy people: to morrow shall this sign be” (Ex. 8:20-23).

Yep! There was a fly-headed god that had a following in Egypt. Uatchit was his name, also known in various forms as Kepri. He was the god of creation and maybe had his source in science, as ancient Egyptians studied the intricate marvel of this creature that actually our God created. Truly I cannot think of anything good about a fly (or a fly god), but maybe its multifaceted eyes

fascinated some man wise in the foolishness of mankind? The only other advantage I have ever heard given flies, is when someone wants to know the secrets of the locked room, they desire to be a fly on the wall. Truly this omniscient power belongs to no Uatchit, but the Egyptians were going to experience a fly on every wall in their homes and their nostrils and mouths. Spittings of Ptttphhh! would be heard all over this cursed land. “Curse you, Uatchit!” shouts would last as long as the Lord God almighty decreed. Uatchit's puny will and decrees notwithstanding.

This fourth plague is the first plague where the Word of God specifically states that there was a distinction made between the plight of Egyptians and the sanctuary of Israelites in Goshen. God says that the dwelling places of His people in the land of Goshen would not experience swarms of flies, but the plague was meant only for the Egyptian populace. Does this mean that the frogs, lice and bloody water did plague the children of Israel in the previous plagues? I think not. God has promised protection for His people and especially has decreed often that the wrath of God (which these plagues clearly are) would not touch His children. **“...The hand of our God is upon all them for good that seek him; but his power and his wrath is against all them that forsake him”** (Ezra 8:22). **“Consume them in wrath, consume them, that they may not be: and let them know that God ruleth in Jacob unto the ends of the earth. Selah”** (Ps. 59:13). **“God is jealous, and the LORD revengeth; the LORD revengeth, and is furious; the LORD will take vengeance on his adversaries, and he reserveth**

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Light Contemplations

By Luke Austin
of Cadillac, Michigan

"Whoso is wise, and will observe these things, even they shall understand the lovingkindness of the LORD" (Psalm 107:43).

A DYING MAN PLEADING WITH DYING MEN AND WOMEN

I am dying. No, I do not have cancer. I have not received some grim diagnosis. But nonetheless, I am dying. I have the disease that is common to all mankind (Rom. 5:12). Sin courses through this body and from the moment my first cries of life were uttered, my clock began to countdown.

There is one event that happens to all mankind. Whether he be wise or a fool all come to that same end (Eccl. 2:16). Death is ruler of this mortal frame and no man gets out alive. No one outsmarts or outruns death (Rom. 5:14).

What vanity mankind is subjected to. Whether he be wise or a fool, rich or poor, kind or cruel, he cannot escape the penalty of sin which is death. Death reigns supreme.

So I have a death sentence (Gen. 2:17). The guillotine's blade inches ever closer to my neck. My appointed time is creeping closer day by day. I am not alone. All mankind awaits their day of departure (Heb. 9:27). Where can we go? How can we escape this death sentence?

I met Someone years ago. He came to me when I realized this death sentence was inescapable. That not only was it inescapable but also deserved. Death is the just payment of sin (Rom. 6:23). I was not an exception to this rule. I am going to die and I am going to reap my due. The wrath of God would be poured out on

me for all eternity because I am a sinner (Psalm 9:17). But He forgave my sins and promised me an inheritance with Him (I Peter 1:4). He gave me eternal life in the midst of a land of constant death (John 10:28). What once was a fearful thing, death, is now the day I am free from the body of this death (Rom. 7:24). I am free from the fear of death (Heb. 2:15)!

I have found the way out. I have found the One way to escape death. Jesus Christ has defeated death (Heb. 2:9, I Cor. 15:55, Rev. 1:18). He says to you repent of your sins and believe the Gospel (Mark 1:15).

Oh, sinner put yourself in my shoes for just a moment. You may be sick and tired of the constant "religious talk." You may be tired of hearing about sin. But ask yourself this, what would you do? Entertain the idea just for a moment that what I am telling you is all true. If our positions were reversed and you constantly beheld this land of sorrow and death, yet you knew the way out, would you not incessantly, constantly, even irritatingly tell people about Jesus? I am pleading for your soul. I am pleading with dying men and women. It is not an "if" for me. I know by experience that Jesus saves. But do you understand what this implies? That all of it is true. Sin, hell, judgment, wrath, it is all true. I am not here to please your ears or motivate you to be a better person. I do not care about the

1's and 0's in your bank account. There is one thing, before you depart this life that matters and only one. Do you know Him as Savior?

(Luke Austin is a member of the Cadillac Baptist Church of Cadillac, Michigan.)



God's Ten Plagues

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wrath for his enemies" (Nah. 1:2). **"He that believeth on the Son hath everlasting life: and he that believeth not the Son shall not see life; but the wrath of God abideth on him"** (John 3:36). **"For God hath not appointed us to wrath, but to obtain salvation by our Lord Jesus Christ"** (I Thess. 5:9). **"A thousand shall fall at thy side, and ten thousand at thy right hand; but it shall not come nigh thee. Only with thine eyes shalt thou behold and see the reward of the wicked"** (Ps. 91:7-8). I would not be dogmatic, because the children of Israel had certainly merited some measure of chastisement, but God's glory is untarnished during this crisis of faith and there is really no scriptural reason given to suspect that the frogs and lice might have afflicted the Hebrews, except for the placement of this verse. The information given might be merely God saying, "Check out My people and note My care for them supercedes any judgment y'all have merited." The Lord provided food and water for Elijah while He plagued the land of Israel centuries later with drought and famine, did He not? I do not imagine that Moses and Aaron lacked for water those seven bloody days, nor did the frogs and lice infiltrate their nostrils and ears. The Bible does not portray an inconsistent God and we cannot use negative exposition to

overrule what is clearly taught in Scripture. Positive exposition says that He does not have to state at every plague that He has made that unconditional election.

5. THE FIFTH PLAGUE

"...Thus saith the LORD God of the Hebrews, Let my people go, that they may serve me. For if thou refuse to let them go, and wilt hold them still, Behold, the hand of the LORD is upon thy cattle which is in the field, upon the horses, upon the asses, upon the camels, upon the oxen, and upon the sheep: there shall be a very grievous murrain. And the LORD shall sever between the cattle of Israel and the cattle of Egypt: and there shall nothing die of all that is the children's of Israel. And the LORD appointed a set time, saying, To morrow the LORD shall do this thing in the land" (Ex. 9:1-5).

The Egyptian goddess Hathor is one of several cow-headed deities. She is purportedly the goddess of protection that her faction trusted to keep them safe. Some artworks of her have a cow-headed goddess encircling the Earth picturing an omnipotent protection that obviously fell far short of protecting the Egyptians. Remember the old philosophical adage about what happens when an irresistible force hits an immovable object? What happens is that some wordage is gonna change. There was not anything sovereign or immutable about Hathor. The irresistible power of Elohim is crushing god after Egyptian goddess. Irresistibly. Selah! Think about it!

This fifth plague was not just a "nuisance" as the previous four might be considered. The ante is being upped by this Hebrew God and the death of the Egyptian

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God's Ten Plagues

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horses, camels, sheep, etc are going to destroy Egyptian commerce, agriculture, transportation, livelihoods and retirement accounts. The more the Egyptians need their gods and goddesses, the more they are abandoned to their own helpless plight. Attention is starting to be paid to the demands of these Israelites to go abroad and worship their Worthy Deity. God, as He did with the flies plague, sends Moses from the presence of Pharaoh telling them that when they wake up on the morrow, the plagues will come. I imagine that made for a sleepless night for this tormented people. As with the earlier plagues, Pharaoh ends up stubbornly unmoved. **"And Pharaoh sent, and, behold, there was not one of the cattle of the Israelites dead. And the heart of Pharaoh was hardened, and he did not let the people go"** (Ex. 9:7).

Some folks have a problem with the scriptures that say that God hardened Pharaoh's heart, as if God were somehow forcing Pharaoh to sin. Obviously, God never has sinned by forcing anyone else to sin. Bible fact. The hardening of Pharaoh's heart is entirely the fault of Pharaoh himself. But it is true that God hardened Pharaoh's heart also! How? The same way any father can harden the heart of their four-year-old child by telling them not to get into the cookie jar. Just watch that heart harden and that face turn into a scowl and you will be looking at Pharaoh's face when God denies him any deity. Even faster will a teenager's face and heart harden, at the simple telling of the truth: "You can not do that!" Every time! I know, because I was there each

time my parents' truth hardened my rebellious heart. The rebellion of Pharaoh was already there (1500 anti-gods, remember?), but God's unstoppable winning streak caused Pharaoh's heart to resolutely harden again and again. He hated and denied this new truth and a hardened heart (of unbelief) was the result. Selah! Think about it!

6. THE SIXTH PLAGUE

"And the LORD said unto Moses and unto Aaron, Take to you handfuls of ashes of the furnace, and let Moses sprinkle it toward the heaven in the sight of Pharaoh. And it shall become small dust in all the land of Egypt, and shall be a boil breaking forth with blains upon man, and upon beast, throughout all the land of Egypt. ...And the magicians could not stand before Moses because of the boils; for the boil was upon the magicians, and upon all the Egyptians" (Ex. 9:8-11).

Several gods and goddesses have represented health and medicine in Egyptian history. The oldest was probably Sekhmet, who was typified with a lioness-head. Isis also was able to heal, and in legend was able to restore to life. But against this test of boils upon the Egyptian populace and their remaining beasts, neither Sekhmet nor Isis had any power at all. The Bible does not give any time frame on how long the boils produced blains upon Egypt, but Sekhmet could neither heal nor alleviate the symptoms until God, Himself, was finished working out His sovereign will over even the (perceived) sovereign of Egypt. Imagine running to the local physician and buying a salve for the boil. Would it work? I doubt it, but if it did, I imagine another boil would immediately appear. What about running

to the temple of Sekmet to give an offering and request healing prayer from one of her acolytes? Think that could overrule the boils of God almighty? Eh, no.

Eventually all the prayers of the fervent Egyptians terminated with: "Sekhmet has abandoned us!" Perhaps the truth is starting to sink in by this sixth plague. "Maybe there are no gods, except for this unknown God of the Hebrews." That is what the Athenians had to learn in Acts 17:22-24, **"Then Paul stood in the midst of Mars' hill, and said, Ye men of Athens, I perceive that in all things ye are too superstitious. For as I passed by, and beheld your devotions, I found an altar with this inscription, TO THE UNKNOWN GOD. Whom therefore ye ignorantly worship, him declare I unto you. God that made the world and all things therein, seeing that he is Lord of heaven and earth, dwelleth not in temples made with hands."**

7. THE SEVENTH PLAGUE

"And the LORD said unto Moses, Rise up early in the morning, and stand before Pharaoh, and say unto him, Thus saith the LORD God of the Hebrews, Let my people go, that they may serve me. ...As yet exaltest thou thyself against my people, that thou wilt not let them go? Behold, to morrow about this time I will cause it to rain a very grievous hail, such as hath not been in Egypt since the foundation thereof even until now. Send therefore now, and gather thy cattle, and all that thou hast in the field; for upon every man and beast which shall be found in the field, and shall not be brought home, the hail shall come down upon them, and they shall die. ...And Moses stretched forth his rod toward heaven: and the LORD sent

thunder and hail, and the fire ran along upon the ground... And the hail smote throughout all the land of Egypt all that was in the field, both man and beast; and the hail smote every herb of the field, and brake every tree of the field" (Ex. 9:13, 17-19, 23, 25).

A thunderstorm of lightning and hail plagued this pagan people next. The original sky goddess Nut and the more prominent later god Horus, the falcon-headed were supposed to rule the skies. But our God pays no attention to the vain imaginations of men's hearts. Horus, who? A god of Egypt? I think not. Imagine the brutal scene of darkening clouds and "grievous" hailstones large enough to kill both man and cattle falling from the skies with punishing power. Add in the lightning bolts striking among the hailstones that would light up the skies momentarily, then the crazy shadows and flickering lights as the "fire ran along upon the ground" burning the cash crops of Egypt. With the hailstones large enough to "brake every tree of the field" it is not a place I would want to be without a powerful God. Horus failed his worshippers on this day, being unable to stop the storm or protect those that called upon him for protection.

This seventh plague of hail is one of the most interesting to me. Moses gave the Egyptians a 24-hour warning (of mercy) to **"Send therefore now, and gather thy cattle, and all that thou hast in the field; for upon every man and beast which shall be found in the field, and shall not be brought home, the hail shall come down upon them, and they shall die"** (Ex. 9:19). The protection of the buildings could have been sought by the ranchers if they respected

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Small Drops

By Joseph M. Sidders of
Guntown, Mississippi

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



ROLLING STONE, KEEP ON ROLLING

When I was just out of college, my job led me to Rock Hill, South Carolina. I had been visiting a church there on the weekends, and one Sunday, a particular sermon really struck a chord with me. I headed to the front after services and told the pastor that I felt compelled to join the church. I just knew there was service I needed to do for the Lord.

The excitement from that sermon carried over a few days into the week. I was going to join a church, be baptized, and could imagine the great things I would do in the name of Jesus. That Wednesday I had to work late to manage some projects. Even before my shift ended, I had already told myself that I was too tired to make services. Surely God would understand if I missed the midweek service after making such a promise the Sunday before, right? By Saturday I was full of justifications. I had convinced myself that because I would be relocating soon with my job, it just was not time for me to "settle-down" with a church and commit to such a serious relationship.

"And it came to pass, that, as they went in the way, a certain man said unto him, Lord, I will follow thee whithersoever thou goest" (Luke 9:57). In this verse, I often see myself. I strive to follow the righteous path and pursue the Lord. Sadly, many times I have also found my own resolve not strong enough to keep me moving. As the story continues in Luke Chapter 9, we find the Lord's directions:

"Follow me." Jesus' followers respond with, **"Lord, suffer me first to go and bury my father. Jesus said unto him, Let the dead bury their dead: but go thou and preach the kingdom of God. And another also said, Lord, I will follow thee; but let me first go bid them farewell, which are at home at my house."** Upon reading this, I sorrowfully find myself in good company.

Jesus explains throughout this passage of Scripture that the life of a follower, a disciple, would be that of constant motion. Think of a stone that has been lifted to the top of a great mountain. The born-again believer is that stone, and Jesus came and commissioned the stone to be in motion, sending it to all nations (Matthew 28:18-20) by simply giving it a nudge. This stone, as long as it is continually moving, will gather no moss; it shall not be weighed down by dirt or clumps of earth. This stone will not be slowed or distracted, and as a result, it will not desire to stop.

The closing verse to this chapter is Luke 9:62, **"And Jesus said unto him, No man, having put his hand to the plough, and looking back, is fit for the kingdom of God."** If we have been set in motion by God Himself, there is no excuse powerful enough to stop us. Self-justification seeks to cause us to turn from what God has for us. Distractions and reasoning, not fit for the Kingdom, pull us from our commission to follow Jesus without ceasing.



God's Ten Plagues

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the God of Moses (by now?). Awesomely some did seek that refuge because **"He that feared the word of the LORD among the servants of Pharaoh made his servants and his cattle flee into the houses"** (Ex. 9:20). But just as jaw-dropping is the next verse, that even after all of the physical evidence of the power of the Hebrew God, **"...he that regarded not the word of the LORD left his servants and his cattle in the field."** Why would they do that? Why would they imagine that Horus or Nut would fare any better than the other impotent Egyptian gods, if that is what they were trusting in? Some people never give up.

The length of the storm, too, was of particular note. It showed no sign of diminishing quickly, so Pharaoh sent for Moses and Aaron to please put a stop to the **"mighty thunderings and hail."** But the storm would continue unabated until Moses arrived and then after his departure from the capital city, he would spread abroad his hands, for an immediate calm—guaranteed.

The flax and barley were important crops for clothing and beverages, so the financial losses for Egypt were mounting with every hardening of Pharaoh's heart. It spared the wheat and rye still in the ground or the food crops would have been lost, too, leading to starvation and famine. It makes one wonder how much longer the ruler of Egypt will be able to hold out. But that, too, was foretold to Moses. **"And the LORD said unto Moses, Go in unto Pharaoh: for I have hardened his heart, and the heart of his servants, that I might shew these my signs**

before him: And that thou mayest tell in the ears of thy son, and of thy son's son, what things I have wrought in Egypt, and my signs which I have done among them; that ye may know how that I am the LORD" (Ex. 10:1-2). And sure enough, as soon as the storm ended, **"he sinned yet more, and hardened his heart."**

8. THE EIGHTH PLAGUE

"And Moses and Aaron came in unto Pharaoh, and said unto him, Thus saith the LORD God of the Hebrews ...if thou refuse to let my people go, behold, to morrow will I bring the locusts into thy coast: And they shall cover the face of the earth, that one cannot be able to see the earth: and they shall eat the residue of that which is escaped, which remaineth unto you from the hail, and shall eat every tree which groweth for you out of the field: And they shall fill thy houses, and the houses of all thy servants, and the houses of all the Egyptians" (Ex. 10:3-6).

I did not find a locust-headed god or goddess in the lists, but as these latter plagues were designed for destruction as much or more than sacrilege, it is more the realm of Set, the god of chaos that is being erased, as far as prestige and power. Set had a reputation for bringing famine, war, and chaos among the people and other gods, but Set had no ability to bring the chaos that Yahweh was going to bring upon the coasts. Evidently a few weeks have passed for the wheat and rye to be sprung up, but not enough time that some of the more prudent Egyptians were all too ready to give up. Upon Moses' latest request to leave and the subsequent threat of releasing a plague of locusts upon the weary land, some were ready to parley, **"And Pharaoh's servants said**

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unto him, How long shall this man be a snare unto us? let the men go, that they may serve the LORD their God: knowest thou not yet that Egypt is destroyed” (Ex. 10:7)?

As Pharaoh again predictably stiffens his neck at the prospect of losing his slaves, he drives them angrily from his court. Perhaps he places confidence in Set and makes a sacrifice before the incoming calamity? Would Set hear? After all the other gods have failed, would this one succeed? Hmm, no. The donkey/dog-headed god is destined to fail. As the locusts sweep in destroying the new crops, it is not just a nuisance plague any more. Devastation and destruction of country and city alike causes the population to wail and weep. I just hope they are not praying to Set and expecting an answer by having him attack the land of Goshen. Set, even if Satan himself were to take that doggish donkey head as his latest deception, has no power over the people of God. **“Then Satan answered the LORD, and said, Doth Job (Israel) fear God for nought? Hast not thou made an hedge about him (and each and every Hebrew, small or great), and about his house, and about all that he hath on every side? thou hast blessed the work of his hands, and his substance is increased in the land”** (Job 1:9-10). Satan could not touch Job and Set cannot perturb the people of Moses. That hedge-line in Egypt stretched all of the way around the land of Goshen. I do not imagine any Israeli was tempted to cross over into Egypt proper, because if he did, he would be choking on locusts and flies or gagging on blood and lice. As in

the final plague, where the bloody doorposts limited the protection of God to the interior of that particular house, so no child of Israel would be safe outside of the will of God living amongst the worldly Egyptians.

An interesting tidbit I did find during my research of Egyptian gods. Serapis was invented in the years after the ten plagues, and his deified job was to protect Egypt from locusts. Wow! Just a few years too late, and a few infinite kilowatts too dim to challenge the God of the universe.

9. THE NINTH PLAGUE

“And the LORD said unto Moses, Stretch out thine hand toward heaven, that there may be darkness over the land of Egypt, even darkness which may be felt. And Moses stretched forth his hand toward heaven; and there was a thick darkness in all the land of Egypt three days: They saw not one another, neither rose any from his place for three days: but all the children of Israel had light in their dwellings” (Ex. 10:21-23).

Another multi-day plague is in the homestretch for the exodus of Israel. God blots out the most powerful and ancient of Egypt's gods, Amon-Ra. This ram-headed god, with a sun disc typically portrayed on his head cannot produce a candle's worth of light for his supplicants. Aligned with Khnum as the creator god, he definitely is not creating anything except doubt in the minds of his imaginers. A darkness **“which may be felt”** would be defining an oppressive darkness without hope. No lamp could be lit in this supernatural absence of light of any sort. The Egyptians just hunkered down to wait it out, not knowing when (if ever) this terrible darkness would depart. Unimaginable to me. I have been

stuck in a cave before with very little light, and sometimes we would put out all of our lights to “see” how dark it was. It usually did not take long before we all turned our lights back on. But what if we could not? What if we were as helpless and hopeless as these Egyptians muttering prayers and incantations to an invisible Amon-Ra? Much like the denizens of Hell, they will have to tolerate the conditions of torment and despair.

The Bible does not say any committed suicide in the darkness of despondency, but one can only imagine the frail psyche of this shocked-and-awed humanity that has suffered through eight terrifying plagues, already. But as day after day passes, wondering if it will ever end, where will any find hope? I can only imagine the wailing, sorrow, fear and deep anguish caused by the absence of Amon-Ra, or any other gods the Egyptians may have called upon.

One wonders if any of the light within Goshen might have lit the families closest to that blessed region of light, but no, the light shone not for Egypt. Presaging the Shekinah pillar of fire that would lead Israel to the promised Land, perhaps. **“And the angel of God, which went before the camp of Israel, removed and went behind them; and the pillar of the cloud went from before their face, and stood behind them: And it came between the camp of the Egyptians and the camp of Israel; and it was a cloud and darkness to them (Pharaoh and Egypt), but it gave light by night to these (Moses and Israel): so that the one came not near the other all the night”** (Ex. 14:19-20).

As I considered this darkness, and the Hell of it all, it brought to mind those terrible three hours

of forsaken darkness upon the cross of Golgotha. There was no earthly land left lit during Christ's terrible descent into the horrors of a burning darkness filled with torments and unspeakable infinity. That there was a limit of three hours is the same reason the Lord limited the darkness of Egypt to three days. Grace. The Lord will work out His will to accomplish the salvation of His elect. As Israel leaves Egypt in a few pages of Holy Script, it has always struck me that the Bible states that they were not alone. **“...And they spoiled the Egyptians. And the children of Israel journeyed from Rameses to Succoth, about six hundred thousand on foot that were men, beside children. And a mixed multitude went up also with them...”** (Ex. 12:36-38). Is this not grace at work in this cursed land of Egypt, also? During those hours of darkness did the Holy Spirit convict some of those pagan Amon-Ra followers of their sin and lead them to the light of Jesus Christ? A mixed multitude of Gentiles. Praise the Lord for His infinite mercy and grace. Selah! Think about it! He is still saving a mixed multitude yet today.

10. THE TENTH PLAGUE

“And the LORD said unto Moses, Yet will I bring one plague more upon Pharaoh, and upon Egypt; afterwards he will let you go hence: when he shall let you go, he shall surely thrust you out hence altogether. ... And Moses said, Thus saith the LORD, About midnight will I go out into the midst of Egypt: And all the firstborn in the land of Egypt shall die, from the firstborn of Pharaoh that sitteth upon his throne, even unto the firstborn of the maidservant that is behind the mill; and all

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Little Hills

By Nathaniel Hille of
Plant City, Florida



SUNDAY SCHOOL LESSON - BIBLE SURVEY #26

The Book of II Chronicles

TEXT: II Chronicles 36:15-21

DEVOTIONAL READING: Phil. 3:1

AIM: Over-View of the Book of II Chronicles

INTRODUCTION: We now look at the 14th book of the Bible; the 9th in the Historical Section: II Chronicles. Originally, I and II Chronicles (Chron.) were one book. They were also once called "diaries" or "journals." II Chron. continues the history first begun in I Chron.

I. AUTHOR: Unknown, Jewish tradition holds that Ezra is the author. As opposed to I & II Kings which were written from a prophetic perspective; I & II Chron. is written from a post-exiled perspective. These two books are recorded looking back.

II. THEME: In I & II Chron. the faithfulness of God to His covenant is in the forefront. The Holy Spirit focuses entirely on the southern kingdom of Judah. It would do well to take note of the covenant that God made with Israel prior to them coming into the land (See Deut. 28 & 29; Deut. 28:15, 36-37, 47-52, 63-68). And the covenant made with David and his household (II Chron. 21:5-7).

It is worth noting the beginning verse of II Chron. 1:1, and compare it with the departure of the nation from the land in II Chron. 36:15-21. What a contrast! It would do well for the child of God, churches of the Lord and families to look at what took place in the nation that we do not repeat these same mistakes. We must recall those words of I Samuel 8:5, "...now make us a king to judge us like all the nations." It all began with this ungodly desire.

III. OUTLINE: A basic outline of 2 Chron. There are 19 natural divisions in the book of II Chron. They are divided by the reigns of the kings of Judah.

1. King Solomon's Reign (II Chron. 1:1-9:31)
2. King Rehoboam (II Chron. 10:1-12:16)
3. King Abijah (II Chron. 13:1-14:1)
4. King Asa (II Chron. 14:1-16:14)
5. King Jehoshaphat (II Chron. 17:1-21:1)
6. King Jehoram (II Chron. 21:1-21:20)
7. King Ahaziah (II Chron. 22:1-12)
8. King Joash (II Chron. 23:1-24:27)
9. King Amaziah (II Chron. 25:1-28)
10. King Uzziah (II Chron. 26:1-23)
11. King Jotham (II Chron. 27:1-9)
12. King Ahaz (II Chron. 28:1-27)
13. King Hezekiah (II Chron. 29:1-32:33)
14. King Manasseh (II Chron. 33:1-20)
15. King Amon (II Chron. 33:21-25)
16. King Josiah (II Chron. 34:1-35:27)
17. King Jehoahaz (II Chron. 26:1-7)

18. King Jehoiachin/Jehoiakim (II Chron. 36:8-10)

19. King Zedekiah (II Chron. 26:11-21).

IV. KEY PERSON(S):

1. God: He is the focal point. The book focuses on the temple of God, the worship of God, the faithfulness of God, the covenant promise of God in maintaining the Davidic line through the centuries (II Chron. 21:5-7), to bring about the Lord Jesus Christ, King of kings and the King of the Jews. It is the Lord who brings about the revivals (or commonly mis-called reformations) in the kingdom through various kings and prophets.

2. Christ Jesus: He is portrayed in every king, but particularly in those kings who **"did that which was right in the eyes of the Lord."**

3. Prophets: The Lord raised up many prophets during this time (See II Chron. 36:15-16); Azariah (II Chron. 15:1-7) w/ King Asa. Obadiah, Ben-hail, Zechariah, and to Nethaneel, and to Michaiah (II Chron. 17:7) w/ king Jehoshaphat. Micaiah (II Chron. 18:12-27). Jahaziel (II Chron. 20:14-19). Zechariah (II Chron. 24:20-22). Jeremiah (Jer. & II Chron. 36:21); Isaiah (Isa.) w/ King Hezekiah and many others.

V. REVIVALS: Under various kings, Judah experienced revival. The teacher and student should take note at those elements which were common in each of the revivals. Idol worship removed, the word of the Lord, the Spirit of the Lord, returning the prescribed worship and ways of the Lord are found in each case of revival. Revivals were experienced under the following kings: Asa, Jehoshaphat, Joash, Amaziah, Uzziah, Jotham, Hezekiah, Josiah.

VI. "GOLDEN NUGGETS" OF SCRIPTURE: While many refer to the books of I & II Chron. as redundant, they are anything but. Remember what Paul wrote to the church at Philippi (Phil. 3:1) **"Finally, my brethren, rejoice in the Lord. To write the same things to you, to me indeed is not grievous, but for you it is safe."** This is not mere "boring" or repetitive material. Far from it. These books contain more spiritual nourishment for the downcast and the fearful than perhaps any other of the historical books of the Old Testament.¹

Observe these verses alone: II Chron. 7:14; 14:11; 15:1-15; 25:9; 21:10; 32:8, 31. In the final verses, we see God's faithfulness to His people and word as Judah is charged to return (36:22-23).

NOTES

1. Gray, James M., *Synthetic Bible Studies*, Pg.95, Copyright: 1906

(Nathaniel Hille is pastor of the Bible Baptist Church of Plant City, Florida.)

God's Ten Plagues

(Continued from page 10) ♦

the firstborn of beasts" (Ex. 11:1, 4-5).

The death of the firstborn is a multitude of sermons of its own, but for our task of judging the gods of Egypt, this last god is Pharaoh, himself. It could be also targeted at Tawaret, the hippo-headed goddess of children, but the primary focus is on the

current human/god wannabe. For humanity to dabble in divinity is dangerous stuff and God will put up with no pretenders or imitators of His only begotten Son of God and man. The ten plagues are a direct result of a denial of the God of creation and all of humanity. **"And Pharaoh said, Who is the LORD, that I should obey his voice to let Israel go? I know not the LORD, neither**

♦ (Continued on page 16)

The Berea Baptist Banner Forum

Submit your questions on any Bible topic.

1. What did Queen Jezebel mean when she said, "**Had Zimri peace, who slew his master?**", in II Kings 9:31?

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Oh Jezebel, Jezebel, is not there anything that you would not say or do to get your own way and to obtain power? I used to believe that Hilary Clinton was a modern-day reflection of Jezebel, but I have soon learned that the want-a-be vice president is 100 times more dangerous and evil.

In order to understand what Jezebel is meaning we need to look at (I Kings 16:9-15). And it is a little more difficult than just an easy answer, as far as I am concerned. But, basically in II Kings 9:31 Zimri, in referring to Jehu by that name, Jezebel is being sarcastic and is referring to the previous purge of Zimri in (I Kings 16:9-15). Since Zimri died seven days after beginning his reign, Jezebel was implying that the same fate awaited Jehu.

If you were not on Jezebel's side, she wanted you dead. Sounds like the want-a-be vice president, does it not?

I would like to quote John Gill here: "And as Jehu entered in at the gate, either of the city of Jezreel, or of the king's palace: she said, had Zimri peace, who slew his master? Elah the son of Baasha king of Israel; no, he had not; he reigned but seven days, and, being besieged, burnt the king's house over him, and died, I Kings 16:10,

suggesting that the like would be his fate, who had slain his master Joram; or the words may be rendered, "O Zimri, the slayer of his master"; calling Jehu so, because of his likeness to Zimri."

So, if my understanding is correct, Jezebel wanted Jehu to suffer the same fate, or death as did Zimri in (I Kings 16:9-15). I am sure that with the other three preachers, the questioner will be able to have this question answered to their satisfaction. God Bless!

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II Kings chapter nine records God's command for Jehu to smite the house of Ahab as a judgment for his wickedness. The chapter records the anointing of Jehu and his mission to kill Joram the king of Israel, the son of Ahab and Jezebel. Jehu also killed Ahaziah the king of Judah. He then proceeded to Jezreel where one of the most wicked women of the Bible, Jezebel was dwelling. When Jezebel heard what Jehu had done to Joram and Azariah, and found out he was coming to Jezreel she painted her eyes and tired her head. At the time, this was done to make the eyes and the hair look more majestic and royal. Jezebel was hoping to intimidate Jehu and prevent him

from carrying out his mission.

Her question to Jehu regarding Zimri was referring back to the time in I Kings 16:8-20 when Zimri, the servant of Elah, king of Israel conspired to kill the king. Zimri killed Elah and killed all the remaining house of Baasha. Zimri's reign was short lived however, lasting only seven days (I Kings 16:15). When Zimri saw that the people had turned against him and had declared Omri as king, he went into the king's house and burnt it down in an act of suicide. Zimri was judged for his act of treason (I Kings 16:19-20). Basically, Jezebel thought she could intimidate Jehu and prevent him from killing her by hoping to scare him with the example of Zimri. However, she was thrown over the wall by her own attendants who were eunuchs and plunged headlong to a most violent death. When Jehu ordered her remains to be buried, they found that the dogs had eaten her carcass leaving only her skull, hands, and feet. This was all prophesied to come to pass by the prophet Elijah in I Kings 21:21-24 as a judgment against the house of Ahab for stealing the vineyard of Naboth and then having him killed.

Try as she may, Jezebel the idolatrous queen could not prevent the prophecy and purpose of God from coming to pass. God's Word never returns unto Him void. Man cannot and will not thwart any of God's decrees, prophecies, or purposes. Jezebel was proud and haughty but she was judged just as it had been prophesied by the prophet Elijah. I can think of some modern day Jezebel's who think they are exalted and untouchable who will one day face the fury of God's wrath for their wicked sins.

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The scene: Jehu was anointed king of Israel, the northern kingdom, in II Kings 9:1-13 by Elisha. With Ahab being dead, Jehu rides to Jezreel to kill queen Jezebel as prophesied by Elijah the prophet in I Kings 21:23 (II Kings 9:36). Upon entry unto Jezreel, Jehu was asked of Jezebel, "**Had Zimri peace, who slew his master?**" The question at hand is, "why would she ask this?"

To better understand, we must investigate who Zimri was. According to I Kings 16:8-20, Zimri was the captain of the host under Elah, the son of Baasha, king of Israel. Zimri, taking advantage of the drunken state of Elah, struck him dead, along with all the males of his family and even his friends. This was all done, as stated in verses 12-13, as fulfillment of prophecy in provoking the Lord with sinfulness and idolatry of Elah and his father Baasha against the Lord.

Jezebel's reference has to do with Zimri's outcome. I Kings 15:15-20 states that Zimri's reign only lasted seven days, and that Omri, the new captain of the host/army conspired against him, chased him into the king's palace, and burned him alive. Thus, the treasonous act of Zimri, murdering the king, was met in kind with assassination, trouble, and anything but peace. Jezebel, then, is saying that Jehu would take part in the same, and that he would suffer the death of a traitor in similar fashion as Zimri.

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The Berea Baptist Banner Forum

Submit your questions on any Bible topic.

2. Does your church use the internet (web page, Sermonaudio, social media, etc.) as part of your community outreach, and has it been effective?

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Yes, our church does use the internet to some degree. We have a simple web site www.mpbcohoio.com where we post audio sermons and other information about our church. We also have all the issues of The Baptist Examiner dating all the way back to 1931 and going to 1998, digitally preserved on our site.

We have had a Sermon Audio account since 2016 and it can be accessed at www.sermonaudio.com/mtpleasant. When we go visiting and door knocking in our community we hand out a track that has all this information on it so that people can access it.

We also broadcast our Sunday school, Sunday morning and evening, and Wednesday night services on Facebook Live under my account, Tom Ross.

I think its difficult to measure how effective any of these forms of outreach really are. I know that we have had visitors from time to time as a result of our online outreach. I have written editorials for our local paper which prompted an old brother, Clyde Maynard to visit and attend our church. He has since gone to glory, but he brought his brother Glen and his wife Mimi who still attend our services.

Another family started coming after Brother Doug Bills shared our sermon audio account with them. They attended for nearly a year and their 15 year old son Devan was saved a few months back. I baptized Darrell, Hannah, and Devan Hall on May 30th, 2021.

Recently I made a Facebook post concerning Afghanistan and the religious tyranny of Islam wherever it holds sway and made some comments about the political and religious tyranny and oppression in America with an exhortation to preach the Gospel. A local talk radio host, Tom Roten (800 AM) read it and informed me that he shared it on his morning show. This is another way that the truth gets out and has a ripple effect. The point is that we should be using all lawful means to cast the Gospel seed everywhere.

With that said, I still believe that the most effective outreach is person to person starting in the home and spreading out to the community. Every day we should seize upon opportunities to witness and share the Gospel of Christ. Every day we should live for the Lord in such a way that others see and hear our testimony of grace and godliness. Matthew 5:16 states: **"Let your light so shine before men, that they may see your good works, and glorify your Father which is in heaven."** Mark 16:15 commands: **"..Go ye into all the world, and preach the gospel to every creature."** Acts 1:8 declares: **"But ye shall**

receive power, after that the Holy Ghost is come upon you: and ye shall be witnesses unto me both in Jerusalem, and in all Judaea, and in Samaria, and unto the uttermost part of the earth." Acts 8:4 states: **"Therefore they that were scattered abroad went every where preaching the word."** Colossians 4:5-6 exhorts: **"Walk in wisdom toward them that are without, redeeming the time. Let your speech be always with grace, seasoned with salt, that ye may know how ye ought to answer every man."**

It is true that the internet can go where we can not oftentimes. Let us learn to use every lawful means to broadcast the truth as it is in Jesus to a world lying in darkness and wickedness.

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As a supplementation for public and personal witness, we at the Sovereign Grace Baptist Church do utilize different forms of internet media in attempt to broadcast the gospel of Jesus Christ. Several of the members use Facebook, we do have a web page, and we do have a ministry through Sermonaudio. The effectiveness of these tools, as far as we can tell, is well worth the time and effort that we put in, but we may never know the full extent thereof.

As far as Facebook goes, we have had a few messages broadcasted live, and particularly during the initial covid 19 outbreak and on the 11th hour feed. There seems to have been a positive response

during that time, with most of the comments coming from current church members of other local churches expressing their encouragements. As individual members, many of the membership post near daily scriptures and encouragements in the Lord, with many of these posts being read, responded to, and even shared by those who are outside of the Sovereign Grace Landmark Missionary community. We have also experienced free course with Facebook, with little or no banishments, censorship, or withdrawal of privileges.

We do have a website, <http://gracebiblebaptistsds.org/SilsbeeChurch/index.html>, and have recently had visitors come in "off the street" having visited this site. They have been back for several services, and we trust our Lord will lead as He sees fit. This site was put together for us by the Grace Bible Baptist Church of Denham Springs, LA, if anyone was wondering about the address.

We have been on Sermonaudio.com for a few years. Our monthly amount for this service is \$49.95, which certainly does sound like a lot of money. We continue this service with joy, however, because in just a few years we have downloaded to date 513 sermons and have had over 38,000 sermon plays. Thus far in August, about halfway through the month, we have had a total of 385 listens, with 75 of those being international. It would be difficult for me to accomplish this as a preacher without this resource, but quite simple to take the messages preached from weekly meetings and upload them to this service.

In addition, there are other forms of media that perhaps other churches have not considered or

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Forum Question #1

(Continued from page 12) ♦

Well, Jehu commanded that Jezebel be thrown out of her window unto her death, at which time the dogs ate her. II Kings 10 tells that Jehu slew all the house of King Ahab (Jezebel's husband), his warriors and great men, his relatives and his priests, sparing none. He also slew all the Baal worshippers, making a league with Jehonadab, the Rachabite in these matters. All being told, Jehu was not at all perfect, but the LORD did give him commendation in II Kings 10:30, though verse 31 clearly states that Jehu was also an idolater. II Kings 10:36 tells us that Jehu reigned for 28 years, which is significantly longer than the seven days of Zimri.

Why did Jezebel, then, ask this question? She was attempting to spare her own life. That is evident in II Kings 9:30, as it says she painted her face. She was willing to say and do anything to preserve her own life. In the providence of God, however, what men say and do will not add one moment to their days. As the Lord hath sworn and decreed, so shall it be. May the Lord, at the presentation of this account, cause the children of God to know with certainty that the providence of God shall be carried out, and that the end of the wicked is determined. May also any sinner, that one in unbelief know that in the day of judgment, there is no plea bargaining nor painting oneself up against the justice of God. You are encouraged at this time to repent of your sins, cry out to the Lord, and beg Him for mercy in the blood of Jesus Christ.

May the Lord bless.

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"If you live by the sword, you will die by the sword" is a familiar proverb to us, and Jezebel was making reference to such proverbs, when she tried to fend off her assassination at the hands of Jehu in II Kings 9:31-33: **"And as Jehu entered in at the gate, she (Jezebel) said, Had Zimri peace, who slew his master? And he lifted up his face to the window, and said, Who is on my side? who? And there looked out to him two or three eunuchs. And he said, Throw her down. So they threw her down: and some of her blood was sprinkled on the wall, and on the horses: and he trode her under foot."** Truly, we need to understand that even the Lord does not look upon the bloodshedding of mankind without disgust and judgment and even the "necessary" blood shed by King David would ultimately disqualify him from building the Temple of God in Jerusalem. **"But the word of the LORD came to me (David), saying, Thou hast shed blood abundantly, and hast made great wars: thou shalt not build an house unto my name, because thou hast shed much blood upon the earth in my sight"** (I Chron. 22:8). Selah! Think about it!

Earlier in the history of Israel, Zimri had fulfilled a prophetic judgment against the house of Jeroboam, by using his position as general of half the armies of Baasha's son Elah, to wipe out the king's house. However, his military coup failed to survive

and his reign was a mere seven days, before Omri, the father-in-law of Jezebel, slew him.

But, if we are to learn from history, Jezebel's question is very significant. Will military coups or revolutions always bring about more warring and bloodshed? Is it possible for "Zimri to have Peace?" Is it ever appropriate for a citizenry to rebel against existing authority, especially when we consider Romans 13:1-2, **"Let every soul be subject unto the higher powers. For there is no power but of God: the powers that be are ordained of God. Whosoever therefore resisteth the power, resisteth the ordinance of God: and they that resist shall receive to themselves damnation."**

Well, what does the Bible say? Even in the context of Romans 13, we can see that this commandment is in a framework of "good" government. **"For rulers are not a terror to good works, but to the evil..."** (Rom. 13:3). What if it is a "bad" government that commands the worship of Baal, the persecution of Elijah, and the godly children of Israel? What if the "rulers" are a "terror to good works" and not "to the evil?" Well, our text is just such a case, eh? God actually instructs his prophet Elisha to anoint Jehu to revolt against Ahab and Jezebel and to establish a more godly government. **"And Elisha the prophet called one of the children of the prophets, and said unto him...look out there Jehu the son of Jehoshaphat the son of Nimshi, and...say...Thus saith the LORD God of Israel, I have anointed thee king over the people of the LORD, even over Israel. And thou shalt smite the house of Ahab thy master, that I may avenge the blood of my servants the prophets, and the**

blood of all the servants of the LORD, at the hand of Jezebel. For the whole house of Ahab shall perish: ...And I will make the house of Ahab like the house of Jeroboam the son of Nebat, and like the house of Baasha the son of Ahijah: And the dogs shall eat Jezebel in the portion of Jezreel, and there shall be none to bury her. And he (the godly prophet) opened the door, and fled" (II Kings 9:1-10).

The real-life secrecy and conspiracy of these godly men as the Lord leads them down the path of governmental overthrow, with the purpose of building one nation under God is very reminiscent of the American revolutions, also. I have had various folk tell me that the American Revolutionary War and the American Civil War were both abuses of God's order and commandments, but godly men have a physical and spiritual responsibility to the three institutions of God: 1) family, 2) church and 3) government. If they are broken then fix them. Selah! Think about it! We would not think twice about voting out (or throwing out) a recalcitrant pastor, or influential church member, right? An unfaithful spouse or child, would be required to respond to God's commandments and order. So, too, is a government accountable to her godly citizens to uphold moral righteousness, "establish justice, insure domestic tranquility, provide for the common defense, promote the general welfare, and secure the blessings of liberty to ourselves and our posterity..." As God dealt with the prayerful George Washington and James Madison, as well as Robert E. Lee and Stonewall Jackson, God's people are also to prayerfully and boldly move mountains by faith,

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Forum Question #1

(Continued from page 14) ♦

responsibility, honour, duty and the grace of God.

To use the feeble excuse of exempting the nation of Israel, because God was still writing the Holy Bible and audibly spoke to Elisha, is to deny the supremacy of God to speak to His people in any generation. That is just dumb. To portray a frustrated God that would say, "Oh boy! I wish I had not already finished the Bible, so I could tell Sam Adams and Nathaniel Greene that they need to throw off the oppressive rule of King George." Beloved reader, God still speaks. I know, because He told me to go pastor the Big Creek Baptist Church fifteen years ago. And I obeyed Him. If God wants His people to throw off an oppressive presidency of Joe Biden, et al, then He is certainly very capable of revealing His will, yet today and once again. Selah! Think about it!

Thomas Jefferson was very correct when he wrote: "We hold these truths to be self-evident, that all men are created equal, that they are endowed by their Creator with certain unalienable Rights, that among these are Life, Liberty and the pursuit of Happiness.--That to secure these rights, Governments are instituted among Men, deriving their just powers from the consent of the governed, --That whenever any Form of Government becomes destructive of these ends, it is the Right of the People to alter or to abolish it, and to institute new Government, laying its foundation on such principles and organizing its powers in such form, as to them shall seem most likely to effect their Safety and Happiness. Prudence, indeed, will dictate that Governments long

established should not be changed for light and transient causes; and accordingly all experience hath shewn, that mankind are more disposed to suffer, while evils are sufferable, than to right themselves by abolishing the forms to which they are accustomed. But when a long train of abuses and usurpations, pursuing invariably the same Object evinces a design to reduce them under absolute Despotism, it is their right, it is their duty, to throw off such Government, and to provide new Guards for their future security." It might take awhile, but godly men will eventually do what they know to do, and God will provide them the wisdom, prudence and grace to accomplish the tasks that He has foreordained for them.

Some of those revolutions might fail and be quashed. Such occurred during the "War of Northern Aggression" as the American Civil War is known south of the Mason-Dixon Line. But even in that case, it cannot be proved that the brave and Godly southerners did not do what was right in the sight of God in rejecting the over-bloated power of the federal government of Washington, DC. But God had (and has) continuing purposes that we can see playing out today, because of the heroics of faithful men and women in the generations gone by. **"...but the people that do know their God shall be strong, and do exploits. And they that understand among the people shall instruct many: yet they shall fall by the sword, and by flame, by captivity, and by spoil, many days"** (Dan. 11:32-33). As Judah and Israel warred back and forth in the times of the Kings, it mattered not so much as to which color of uniform they were wearing, but more so, which was more godly,

repentant and faithful.

Zimri would not have peace. But Jehu would, by God's grace. The United States of America has had peace, praise God. If the times require a revolt and a revolution, will the men and women of God have the spiritual awareness and fortitude to follow His will and again put their lives, fortunes and honour on the line? I pray God will bless us therewith. **"And the angel of the LORD appeared unto him, and said unto him, The LORD is with thee (Gideon), thou mighty man of valour. ...Go in this thy might, and thou shalt save Israel from the hand of the Midianites: have not I sent thee"** (Judges 6:12, 14)? Selah! Think about it!

MATTHEW STEPP



Forum Question #2

(Continued from page 13) ♦

are unaware of their availability. The church puts in an add in our local paper, about 40 words or less, with a scripture and a brief comment. This is less than \$30/entry, and well worth the effort. The submission is from a rotation of the local church members. We also keep a billboard in the middle of town for \$400/month that reads, **"Salvation is of the LORD"** (Jonah 2:9), along with our address and meeting times. We have had this sign for almost 2 years, and not one person has come in from it, but talking around town, the people know that it is there and where we are.

Lastly, as a body we agreed several months ago to witness to the community as a body together. We stand at our local intersections and have made signs that read, **"SINNERS REPENT," "JESUS SAVES," "I KNOW THAT MY REDEEMER LIVETH,"** and

"FREE BIBLES;" we have been giving out free bibles to any and all who will take one, along with personally sharing the gospel with everyone that pulls over to talk.

Are the things that we are doing a success? May the Lord be pleased to say so. If success is measured by our ability, desire, and devotion to testify of the Lord and His work on our behalf, I pray the Lord would give us success and add unto our desire to broadcast the fame of His glory.

May the Lord bless.

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Well, the mission has a webpage, and we have our Sunday morning sermons recorded and then I put them on YouTube, and we have audio sermons as an outreach in our community, so that answers the first part of the question.

Now, has it been effective? I guess it depends on how you look at it. We have never had anyone come to the services that has either seen our webpage, or watched one of the sermons that is on YouTube or listened to an audio sermon.

But, for me that is not the only reason we have those things out there. Our members do use them for a witnessing tool when talking to others about the Mission, but the main important part of all of it is for the truth's sake. I believe it is a very good way to get the truth out there, whether there is a response or not.

There is so much garbage out there on social media, why should

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Forum Question #2

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not the truth be out there as well? But that is my opinion. God Bless!

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I have never seen or heard of any internet ministry being an effective local outreach. The Big Creek Baptist Church has used Facebook to broadcast our worship services, both song and sermon, to the missing portion of our membership since the advent of the Chinavirus and the subsequent lockdowns by our national and local governmental institutions. As the members have returned, we have voted to continue posting all of our services thus far, because we still have not returned to normal, yet.

But, we have not really considered our FaceBook broadcast (which is our only internet ministry) at most, as any more than a supplement of our physical community outreach, via the persons of our church members. Because, really, the only ones listening (as family, friends and neighbors) have likely been invited to do so, personally, physically and as "friend shares" (which is disappointingly rare, by the way!). Our usage of Facebook was never meant or intended as a replacement of the church function of worship as an assembled body of Jesus Christ. It was meant rather, as more of a function of ministering to our "shut-in" or providentially-hindered members, who might be

able to watch online and attend virtually during their crisis or trial of Satan. Also, that those that missed, might be able to "catch-up" by watching the services later, as the Lord's grace frees them up to do so. Selah! Think about it!

With the advent of the Wuhan virus has come persecution to God's faithful churches, as well. "Now they which were scattered abroad upon the persecution that arose about Stephen travelled as far as Phenice, and Cyprus, and Antioch, preaching the word to none but unto the Jews only. And some of them were men of Cyprus and Cyrene, which, when they were come to Antioch, spake unto the Grecians, preaching the Lord Jesus. And the hand of the Lord was with them: and a great number believed, and turned unto the Lord" (Acts 11:19-21). I am sure that God has had His purposes in "kick-starting" Big Creek Baptist Church into our Facebook broadcasts. Certainly we cannot deny that the power of the gospel and the amazing grace of God might not be communicated to our community and beyond, even to the uttermost parts of the Earth, because this vile media-driven frenzy has so many others "locked down." But the Baptist churches of God have no excuse not to go out physically to propagate the gospel of Jesus Christ. We may not sit back in our "ceiled houses" and neglect the work of God's house. God forbid. "Is it time for you, O ye, to dwell in your cieled houses, and this house lie waste? Now therefore thus saith the LORD of hosts; Consider your ways" (Hag. 1:4-5).

"For the word of God is quick, and powerful, and sharper than any twoedged sword, piercing even to the dividing asunder of soul and spirit, and of the joints

and marrow, and is a discernor of the thoughts and intents of the heart. Neither is there any creature that is not manifest in his sight: but all things are naked and opened unto the eyes of him with whom we have to do" (Heb. 4:12-13). The Word of God is certainly powerful enough to save a "listening ear" to our Facebook broadcast, but God requires that our "beautiful feet" go over the mountains to preach the gospel of peace. It is naivety itself to suggest that God will cause lost people to tune in to our broadcasts. Certainly He can, but it is also certainly unlikely that God will use a single Facebook broadcast to save even a single soul. As far as I have seen, it is usually saved people that tune in because they desire to hear God's truth preached. The path God has always used is the personal witness and evangelism of God's preachers and His church and family members, as they personally tell their own gospel conviction accounts to others. "So shall my word be that goeth forth out of my mouth: it shall not return unto me void, but it shall accomplish that which I please, and it shall prosper in the thing whereto I sent it" (Isa. 55:11).

The effective ministry of the Gospel is invariably one-on-one witnessing. "How beautiful upon the mountains are the feet of him that bringeth (Gospel!) good tidings, that publisheth peace; that bringeth good tidings of good, that publisheth salvation; that saith unto Zion, Thy God reigneth" (Isa. 52:7)? Tell them about sin and Jesus and invite them to church, so that they might be physical witnesses of the miracle of I Corinthians 14:23-25, "If therefore the whole church be come together into one place, and...all prophesy, and there come in one that believeth not, or one

unlearned, he is convinced of all, he is judged of all (Conviction): And thus are the secrets of his heart made manifest (Holy Spirit Regeneration); and so falling down on his face (Repentance) he will worship God (Faith), and report that God is in you of a truth." Selah! Think about it!

MATTHEW STEPP



God's Ten Plagues

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will I let Israel go" (Ex. 5:2).

God claims the prerogative of life (both entry and exit), and at the stroke of midnight, He instantaneously extinguishes the life of every firstborn in Egypt. The lives of the firstborn of Israel come at a price also, but as we said, that is another message. God claims life and Pharaoh, Tawaret, nor any other false deity can question His sovereign right to give or take that precious commodity. To quote Job again in his first chapter, **"...Naked came I out of my mother's womb, and naked shall I return thither: the LORD gave, and the LORD hath taken away; blessed be the name of the LORD."**

When God sent the death angel to "Passover" the faithful children of Israel and slaughter the non-elect, He was as well within His purview to kill the Egyptians in judgment for their filthy sins, as He was when He sent brimstone and fire down upon Sodom and Gomorrah. He killed the future Pharaoh, as well as the milkmaid's firstborn for the same reason, rejection of the one true God. After the thoroughness of the ten plagues, in distributing to the ends of the nation the bad news/good news of an omnipotent One that is no

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God's Ten Plagues

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figment of man's imagination, even the captive in the dungeon had seen the frogs, lice, and locusts and feared the mighty thundering and darkness. None could say as they entered Hell's gates that, "I did not know!"

I have often remarked concerning this matter, that the ten plagues were the greatest gift of grace that Egypt had ever received. **"If I had not come and spoken unto them, they had not had sin: but now they have no cloke for their sin"** (John 15:22). No cloak of academia or religion for the impotence of their host of gods. How mighty the speech (not of Moses, although he was a mouthpiece) of God almighty to these beleaguered Egyptians. **"Look unto me, and be ye saved, all the ends of the earth: for I am God, and there is none else"** (Isa. 45:22). Get rid of Apis, Heqet, Geb, Uatchit, Hathor, Sekhmet, Horus, Set, Amon-Ra, Tawaret, and even Pharaoh himself and bow down to the one real God of the universe.

Before we shake ourselves loose from this riveting account of so many years ago, what about us, here in America? We may not serve Amon-Ra or Sekhmet, but who are we serving? Are we serving the one true God in sincerity? How many plagues of Corona viruses will it take to cause us to remember the vital necessity of our service to Him who holds life in His great hands? Are you lost? I pray God, that you have just been found (out). May God gift you with the faith to repent of your rebellion and trust Jesus Christ. Selah! Think about it!

Plague # 1- River Nile to Blood

Plague # 2- Frogs Overrun

Plague # 3- Dust to Lice

Plague # 4- Swarms of Flies

Plague # 5- Murrain on Beasts

Plague # 6- Boils on Man/Beast

Plague # 7- Hail and Lightning Fire

Plague # 8- Locusts Horde

Plague # 9- Oppressive Darkness

Plague # 10- Death of Firstborn

Well of Living Water

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children of Israel were in Egypt when the Lord delivered them. Egypt symbolizes the place where God apprehended us (meaning the world). 2) John the Baptist preached in the wilderness, symbolizing the spiritual emptiness of Israel at that time. 3) Jesus went up into a mountain, a place of elevation, symbolic of His throne of authority where He delivered His declaration.

The first time the "well" is mentioned in Scripture is in Genesis 16:6-7, 13-14, **"But Abram said unto Sarai, Behold, thy maid is in thy hand; do to her as it pleaseth thee. And when Sarai dealt hardly with her, she fled from her face. And the angel of the LORD found her by a fountain of water in the wilderness, by the fountain in the way to Shur. And she called the name of the LORD that spake unto her, Thou God seest me: for she said, Have I also here looked after him that seeth me? Wherefore the well was called Beerlahairoi; behold, it is between Kadesh and Bered."** It is called the "fountain of water" in verse 7 and then the "well" in verse 14. Sarai had become jealous

Egyptian Deity judged:

Hapi or Sobek, the Crocodile god of the Nile

Heqet, the Frog-headed goddess of the Nile's Renewal

Geb, the Goose-headed god of the Earth/Dust

Uatchit, the Fly-headed god of Creation

Hathor, the Cow-headed goddess of Protection

Sekhmet, the Lionness-headed goddess of Healing

Horus, the Falcon-headed god of the Sky

Set, the Donkey-Dog-headed god of Chaos

Amon-Ra, the Ram-headed god of the Sun

Tawaret, the Hippo-headed god of Children

Pharaoh, himself, unable to save even his own son

of Hagar after she had born a son for Abram, even though Sarai had given Hagar to Abram. Hagar fled to the well. This well is where the **"angel of the LORD"** (a theophany, or pre-incarnate appearance of Christ) found Hagar. The well was located in the wilderness—a symbol of the world. The wilderness represents the condition of our heart when we first met Christ. The "well" was the place where God was revealed. Hagar called the name of the Lord **"Thou God seest me."** Christ is the revealer of God. **"... He that hath seen me, hath seen the Father"** (John 14:9).

Another time the "well" is spoken of is in Genesis 21:14-19, **"And Abraham rose up early in the morning, and took bread, and a bottle of water, and gave it unto Hagar, putting it on her shoulder, and the child, and sent her away: and she departed, and wandered in the wilderness of Beersheba. And the water was spent in the bottle, and she cast the child under one of the shrubs. And she went, and sat her down over against him a good way off, as it were a bowshot: for she said, Let me not see the death of the child. And she sat over against him, and lift up her voice, and wept. And God heard the voice**

of the lad; and the angel of God called to Hagar out of heaven, and said unto her, What aileth thee, Hagar? fear not; for God hath heard the voice of the lad where he is. Arise, lift up the lad, and hold him in thine hand; for I will make him a great nation. And God opened her eyes, and she saw a well of water; and she went, and filled the bottle with water, and gave the lad drink." Here again we see Hagar cast out into the wilderness because of the jealousy of Sarah. Sarah did not want Hagar's son to be an heir with her son. Hagar wandered in the wilderness until she used up all of her water. We see she had cast away her child to die, and she sat weeping— this being a picture of the poor, lost sinner in need of salvation. God heard the voice of the child and the **"angel of God"** called unto Hagar and **"opened her eyes"** so that she might see the "well" that had been there all the time. Just as it was with each one of God's chosen people, it was not our own mental capacity that revealed the "well." But God opened our eyes to see Him as the only One who could meet our need.

Let us also look at Exodus 2:15-17, **"Now when Pharaoh heard**

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Well of Living Water

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this thing, he sought to slay Moses. But Moses fled from the face of Pharaoh, and dwelt in the land of Midian: and he sat down by a well. Now the priest of Midian had seven daughters: and they came and drew water, and filled the troughs to water their father's flock. And the shepherds came and drove them away: but Moses stood up and helped them, and watered their flock." Pharaoh represents Satan as the god of this world, seeking to destroy the believer. As Moses is fleeing from Pharaoh, he came to the land of Midian and "sat down by a well." The well here represents Christ Who is our refuge. This well is also where the daughters of Jethro came for water. But we see the shepherds came and "drove them away." Do we not see this being an example of so-called men of God and their man-made teachings driving many away from Christ? God still has those who will "stand up and help;" those who truly desire the "well of living water." We must also remember that before we can help others, we must first rest on the "well" ourselves.

Now let us focus on the well presented in our text: Jacob's well. Firstly, this well was purchased by Jacob, or more correctly, the land in which the well was located was purchased by him. "And Jacob came to Shalem, a city of Shechem, which is in the land of Canaan, when he came from Padanaram; and pitched his tent before the city. And he bought a parcel of a field, where he had spread his tent, at the hand of the children of Hamor, Shechem's father, for an hundred pieces of money" (Gen. 33:18-19). The word "Sychar" in John 4:6 means

"purchased." "And Israel said unto Joseph, Behold, I die: but God shall be with you, and bring you again unto the land of your fathers. Moreover I have given to thee one portion above thy brethren, which I took out of the hand of the Amorite with my sword and with my bow" (Gen. 48:21-22). This is the same land that is referred to in Genesis 33 and John 4:5. The Amorites were seeking to rob Jacob of this well and as a result had to protect this land with the resources necessary. What a picture of the Holy Spirit (while Satan seeks to oppose and keep God's people away from the "well") bringing salvation to lost souls by means of the sword (Hebrews 4:12)!

Secondly, the land secured by "sword and bow" was given to Joseph. This became part of Joseph's birthright. Notice Genesis 48:22, "...one portion above thy brethren." This should have gone to Reuben, Jacob's firstborn; but through his sin, the birthright was transferred to Joseph. "Now the sons of Reuben the firstborn of Israel, (for he was the firstborn; but, forasmuch as he defiled his father's bed, his birthright was given unto the sons of Joseph the son of Israel: and the genealogy is not to be reckoned after the birthright" (I Chron. 5:1). Look at the type represented the second Man (Christ) takes the inheritance that the first man (Adam) lost due to sin. Through the sin of Adam, all of mankind is dead spiritually. Only through the quickening of the Holy Spirit can man be made spiritually alive. "And you hath he quickened, (made alive) who were dead in trespasses and sin" (Eph. 2:1). The human body is made up of approximately 50% water. When the body dies, it goes back to the dust from which it came.

Physically a person must have water to live. A person who dies and does not know Jesus Christ as Lord and Saviour, the water that was in them is gone – never to be seen again. But the Word of God tells us that those who do know Christ as Saviour have a "...well of water springing up into everlasting life" (John 4:14). Simply put, a person must have that "living water" in order to live spiritually, and that person will never thirst again.

We must also consider the longevity of this well. Jacob's well is still there today. It is much shallower today (65 feet due to debris falling in that was recorded in the 21st century, as opposed to 131 feet in 1935. In ancient times, it was twice as deep.) Jesus Christ is always there for us. He will never leave us.

May we always remember the significance of the "well of living water." "But whosoever drinketh of the water that I shall give him shall never thirst; but the water that I shall give him shall be in him a well of water springing up into everlasting life" (John 4:14).



The Propitiation

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become a bit of a buzz-word and that is the word reparation. I do not have to tell you the ways in which it has been used to create such chaos in the world, but I would like to properly define it. That word is reparation and it means "something done or given to make amends." This is a most precious word to the elect of God, for when we call the Lord Jesus our Propitiation we are saying that He gave Himself over freely to make amends for our sins. Reparation (singular) was made on the cross (only once) by the

Reparator or the Expiator or our Beloved Atonement.

In looking at this aspect of Christ's divinity let us first define its meaning to us as given in Scripture. The word "atonement" is only used once in the King James and that takes place in Romans 5:6-11, "For when we were yet without strength, in due time Christ died for the ungodly. For scarcely for a righteous man will one die: yet peradventure for a good man some would even dare to die. But God commendeth his love toward us, in that, while we were yet sinners, Christ died for us. Much more then, being now justified by his blood, we shall be saved from wrath through him. For if, when we were enemies, we were reconciled to God by the death of his Son, much more, being reconciled, we shall be saved by his life. And not only so, but we also joy in God through our Lord Jesus Christ, by whom we have now received the atonement."

The original Greek noun is used three times: Romans 11:13-15, "For I speak to you Gentiles, inasmuch as I am the apostle of the Gentiles, I magnify mine office: If by any means I may provoke to emulation them which are my flesh, and might save some of them. For if the casting away of them be the reconciling of the world, what shall the receiving of them be, but life from the dead?" As well as in II Corinthians 5:17-19, "Therefore if any man be in Christ, he is a new creature: old things are passed away; behold, all things are become new. And all things are of God, who hath reconciled us to himself by Jesus Christ, and hath given to us the ministry of reconciliation; To wit, that God was in Christ,

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Moderate Steps

By Paul Stepp of
Indore, West Virginia

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

WOE TO THE WORKERS OF EVIL

"Woe to them that devise iniquity, and work evil upon their beds! when the morning is light, they practice it, because it is in the power of their hand. And they covet fields, and take them by violence; and houses, and take them away: so they oppress a man and his house, even a man and his heritage. Therefore thus saith the LORD; Behold, against this family do I devise an evil, from which ye shall not remove your necks; neither shall ye go haughtily: for this time is evil. In that day shall one take up a parable against you, and lament with a doleful lamentation, and say, We be utterly spoiled: he hath changed the portion of my people: how hath he removed it from me! turning away he hath divided our fields" (Micah 2:1-4). This is a prophecy that could be applied to our place and time. It seems that the ones who "devise iniquity, and work evil" have the upper hand in our society. It seems that the evil persons can do as they wish "because it is in the power of their hand." These men and women "work evil upon their beds." This could be, in part, a reference to the adulteries and the wicked sins that men and women commit with one another. But, I believe in this case it is primarily a reference to the manner in which evil men and women of these days spend their time, even their nights devising their wicked plans, and then they implement them when

the day comes. They seem to be having great success in our nation today. Working out their evil plans at night, and then revealing them to the world during the day.

However, I want you to know that God is still the Judge of all men. I know there are other judges in our societies; but God is the Judge who matters. He is the final Say and the One who will pronounce final judgment. Our God is still in control, though it may seem to our finite and unknowing minds that men of evil are on track to destroy us all. Think about it this way: is it going to be a good and peaceful life for these wicked persons, who have gained much prestige and power, but who have also had "woe from God" pronounced upon them? Would you be willing to gain the world and the pleasures and powers of it, only to find out that God has brought a terrible and eternal woe upon you? These evil persons who afflict our nation now, may seem to be prospering. They may even be rejoicing in their momentary victories, but they will have to one day submit to the justice and judgment of God.

I think that Christians will agree with me, when I say that it is better to suffer a bit for the present as a Christian, as a follower of Good, or as an upright and honest person, and to presently receive favor and recognition from God, than it is to receive accolades, power, prestige, and the pleasures of this life only to be judged by God, and condemned unto everlasting



punishment. The victories of man and his evil desires are only for a little while, and have no enduring success. The victories of God and good, the virtues supplied by the grace of God and salvation in Jesus Christ, these are effective unto happiness and contentment in this life, and eternal joy and peace in the life to come.

I would hate to be this one (or these ones) who is described in our text, as God has him in consideration: **"...against this family do I devise an evil, from which ye shall not remove your necks."** It is a terrible thing, no matter what successes these evil men and women may have in this life, to have God "devise an evil" or a judgment and destruction upon wicked men!

I hope that God will give us grace in these last evil days, to resist and lay aside the evil and the sin which does so easily beset us; and that we would have strength to serve Him and to stand up for goodness and righteousness in these last evil days. **"Blessed is the man that endureth temptation: for when he is tried, he shall receive the crown of life, which the Lord hath promised to them that love him"** (James 1:12).



The Propitiation

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reconciling the world unto himself, not imputing their trespasses unto them; and hath committed unto us the word of reconciliation." From its use we can see that it was through His actions on the cross that Jesus made amends or atoned for us.

Secondly, let us describe its needfulness (borrowing points from Brother T.P. Simmons now in glory). It vindicates the holiness of God: II

Corinthians 6:14-7:1, **"Be ye not unequally yoked together with unbelievers: for what fellowship hath righteousness with unrighteousness? and what communion hath light with darkness? And what concord hath Christ with Belial? or what part hath he that believeth with an infidel? And what agreement hath the temple of God with idols? for ye are the temple of the living God; as God hath said, I will dwell in them, and walk in them; and I will be their God, and they shall be my people. Wherefore come out from among them, and be ye separate, saith the Lord, and touch not the unclean thing; and I will receive you, And will be a Father unto you, and ye shall be my sons and daughters, saith the Lord Almighty. Having therefore these promises, dearly beloved, let us cleanse ourselves from all filthiness of the flesh and spirit, perfecting holiness in the fear of God."** Being absolutely Holy, God will not and CANNOT tolerate sin. It is the cause of His wrath and His wrath must be spent.

It establishes God's law: Romans 3:31, **"Do we then make void the law through faith? God forbid: yea, we establish the law."** Without atonement the law would be our certain death sentence; our "recompence of reward" (Heb. 2:2).

It manifests the greatness of God's love: Romans 5:8, **"But God commendeth his love toward us, in that, while we were yet sinners, Christ died for us."** Oh those precious "but God" verses. Our sins have earned us the wrath of God and an eternal dying "but God." This is the text we read above and it plainly says we shall be saved from [God's]

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The Propitiation

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wrath through Him [Christ Jesus] in vs. 9. We could not and would not do that for ourselves, or for anyone else beloved, apart from God we can do nothing!

I John 4:7-11, **"Beloved, let us love one another: for love is of God; and every one that loveth is born of God, and knoweth God. He that loveth not knoweth not God; for God is love. In this was manifested the love of God toward us, because that God sent his only begotten Son into the world, that we might live through him. Herein is love, not that we loved God, but that he loved us, and sent his Son to be the propitiation for our sins. Beloved, if God so loved us, we ought also to love one another."** Calvary was literally our lesson from God on His passion and love for us!

It proves the divine authority of Old Testament sacrifices: When God gave instruction in the wilderness to Aaron and the priests on the need for sacrificial offerings He began teaching them to look for this great future atonement. A day when the sins would no longer be rolled forward time after time but they would be atoned for once and for all. The atonement is the central theme of Christianity. All that preceded it looked forward to its fulfillment (sacrificial offerings), and everything that has followed has looked back to its completion (the ordinance of the Lord's Supper).

It is the acid test of other "denominational institutions." Brother Simmons gave this illustration: "Christianity is the only religion with an atonement. It is related that some years ago, when there was held a Parliament

of Religion at the World's Fair in Chicago, Joseph Cook, of Boston, the chosen spokesman for Christianity, arose, after other religions had been presented and said: 'Here is Lady Macbeth's hands, stained with the foul murder of King Duncan. See her as she perambulates through the halls and corridors of her palatial home, stopping to cry, "Out damned spot! Out I say! Will these hands ne'er be clean?"' The representative of Christianity turned to the advocates of other religions and triumphantly challenged: 'Can any of you who are so anxious to propagate your religious systems offer any cleansing efficacy for the sin and guild of Lady Macbeth's crime?' They were speechless; for none of them had an atonement to offer."

The majority, if not all, of the world's systems of religions require the sacramental offerings of the believer but:

Who can wash away my sins?

Nothing but the blood of Jesus!

What can make me whole again?

Nothing but the blood of Jesus!

Oh precious is the flow,

that makes me white as snow;
no other fount I know,

Nothing but the blood of Jesus!

Finally, let us demonstrate its application. To do this let me ask the following question, How big do your sins need to be to require atonement?

Let me answer with another illustration: How much debt is too much? Perhaps you have heard the lie of "well, you need debt to earn credit and you will need credit to buy a car or a house one day." With this logic, do we NEED to sin to earn grace? We are born utterly and totally depraved and without hope of deserving the grace of God. Shall we then continue in that state in order that we might deserve grace

more? God forbid, and hopefully you find this to be a preposterous notion! We would deserve grace even less for sinning more (much like how we truly should not earn credit based on our ability to go into debt).

To answer our original question then, you must only be born to have a most desperate need for atonement! **"For all have sinned and come short of the glory of God"** and you can **"be sure your**

sin will find you out" (Rom. 3:23; Num. 32:23).

ALL sin is a foul stench before the nostrils of the thrice holy God and all sin must be punished. Will you yet pay for your sins, by dying for all eternity? I pray this is the hour by which the Mighty Expiator calls you by name and says "you are mine and you have been made whole!"



From the Pen of a Country Preacher

Milburn R. Cockrell
(1941 - 2002)



The Slain Lamb

"And I beheld, and, lo, in the midst of the throne and of the four beasts, and in the midst of the elders, stood a Lamb as it had been slain, having seven horns and seven eyes, which are the seven Spirits of God sent forth into all the earth" (Rev. 5:6).

John wept because no man in Heaven could open the book of redemption and loose its seals (Rev. 5:1-4). Then one of the twenty-four elders said to him: **"Weep not; behold, the Lion of the tribe of Juda, the Root of David, hath prevailed to open the book, and to loose the seven seals thereof"** (Rev. 5:4-5).

John looked for a lion and saw a lamb. These are symbols of the same person---Jesus Christ. He is the lion in His mighty power; the Lamb in His gentleness of atoning sacrifice. By His sacrifice as a Lamb He became a Lion. He is One mighty to save and to claim the inheritance of the saints.

HIS FORM---"A LAMB"

There are symbols in the Book

of Revelation. Chapter 1, verse 1, says:

"The Revelation of Jesus Christ, which God gave unto him, to shew unto his servants things which must shortly come to pass; and he sent and signified it by his angel unto his servant John." Note the words **"signified it."** Two errors are made in studying the book. The first is to deny that it contains some symbols, for it surely does as Revelation 1:1 declares. The second is to make it so symbolic that the book is robbed of all truth.

"Lamb" is a symbol of Christ in the Book of Revelation. The word for "Lamb" in Revelation (*arnion*---little or young lamb) differs from the word "Lamb" (*amnos*---sacrificial lamb) in the Gospel of John (John 1:29, 36) and in Peter's epistle (I Pet. 1:19). Christ is called "Lamb" 28 times in the Book of Revelation.

In the eternal purpose of God Christ was **"the lamb slain from**

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The Slain Lamb

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the foundation of the world" (Rev. 13:8). In the decree of God Christ was appointed to redeem the elect by His blood. The Bible teaches blood redemption by Jesus Christ, God's Lamb.

A lamb was used in the legal sacrifices of the Old Testament. The first sacrifice ever offered by a man was a lamb: **"And Abel, he also brought of the firstlings of his flock and of the fat thereof. And the LORD had respect unto Abel and to his offering"** (Gen. 4:4). God accepted the sacrifice of Abel because it was typical of the future sacrifice of Christ. A lamb was used in the Passover: **"Speak ye unto all the congregation of Israel, saying, In the tenth day of this month they shall take to them every man a lamb, according to the house of their fathers, a lamb for an house"** (Ex. 12:3). The pascal lamb was typical of the death of Christ as the Lamb of God. **"For even Christ our passover is sacrificed for us"** (I Cor. 5:7; cf. I Pet. 1:19). A lamb was used in the daily sacrifice of the tabernacle (Ex. 29:38-39) and other sacrifices (Num. 28:3, 9, 13).

Christ was called a Lamb in Old Testament prophecy. Speaking some 700 years before the birth of the Savior, the Prophet Isaiah said: **"He is brought as a lamb to the slaughter"** (Isa. 53:7; cf. Jer. 11:19). The New Testament commentary on this verse is found in Acts 8. **"The place of the scripture which he read was this, He was led as a sheep to the slaughter; and like a lamb dumb before his shearer, so opened he not his mouth"** (Acts 8:32). When the eunuch asked Philip of whom the prophet spoke Acts 8:35 reads: **"Then Philip opened**

his mouth, and began at the same scripture, and preached unto him Jesus."

John the Baptist, the son of a priest, called our Lord a sacrificial Lamb: **"The next day John seeth Jesus coming unto him, and saith, Behold the Lamb of God, which taketh away the sin of the world"** (John 1:29). **"And looking upon Jesus as he walked, he saith, Behold the Lamb of God!"** (John 1:36). John had seen other lambs furnished by men, but this One was provided by God. The words of Abraham were true when he said to Isaac: **"My son, God will provide himself a lamb for a burnt offering"** (Gen. 22:8). Jesus Christ told the Jews of His day: **"Your father Abraham rejoiced to see my day: and he saw it, and was glad"** (John 8:56).

Hence we must not marvel that when John had a vision of Christ he saw **"a lamb."** This lamb is in contrast to all the wild beasts elsewhere mentioned in the Book of Revelation. When on earth Christ was as innocent and pure as a lamb; He was as inoffensive and harmless as a lamb. The Greek word of "lamb" in Revelation (*arnion*) means "a young lamb" or "little lamb" (Lev. 9:3). Such creatures were cherished by the Israelites and kept in the house as much loved pets (II Sam. 12:3-4). In a manner of speaking, men murdered the young pet Lamb of the family of God at Golgotha.

HIS MARKS---"AS IT HAD BEEN SLAIN"

Who were the murderers of this Lamb of God? A first degree murder charge was laid at the feet of the Jewish leaders in the first century. On the day of Pentecost Peter said: **"Ye men of Israel, hear these words; Jesus of Nazareth, a man approved of God among you by miracles and wonders and signs, which**

God did by him in the midst of you, as ye yourselves also know: Him, being delivered by the determinate counsel and foreknowledge of God, ye have taken, and by wicked hands have crucified and slain" (Acts 2:22-23). Peter renewed this charge later: **"But ye denied the Holy One and the Just, and desired a murderer to be granted unto you; And killed the Prince of life, whom God hath raised from the dead; wherof we are witnesses"** (Acts 3:14-15). It is little wonder that the high priest said, **"Did we not straitly command you that ye should not teach in this name? and, behold, ye have filled Jerusalem with your doctrine, and intend to bring this man's blood upon us"** (Acts 5:28). Hear Peter still once more in Acts 10:39: **"And we are witnesses of all things which he did both in the land of the Jews, and in Jerusalem; whom they slew and hanged on a tree."** The death of Christ was by wicked hands, but it was the fulfillment of what God's **"hand and thy counsel determined before to be done"** (Acts 2:23; 4:28), and what the prophets had foretold (Acts 3:18).

According to Old Testament law, the sacrificial lamb had to be slain. This is why Jesus Christ as the Lamb of God **"became obedient unto death, even the death of the cross"** (Phil. 2:8). This is why our Savior **"endured the cross, despising the shame"** (Heb. 12:2). There is no remission of sins without the shedding of blood (Heb. 9:22). Our Lord **"put away sin by the sacrifice of himself"** (Heb. 9:26).

Greek scholars tell me in Revelation 5:6 it literally reads **"as having been slain."** It might possibly be translated "with its throat cut." The knife-wound

was familiar to all who stood at an Israelitish altar and had seen a lamb die. In the vision John sees Christ in Heaven with the evidences that He had come by the way of the altar of sacrifice, had been dead and become alive by resurrection. This once slain Lamb, by whose blood the elect's inheritance had been purchased, is seen with power to take and open the seven-sealed book.

This Lamb John saw in Heaven was covered with blood and had wounds upon it. Here we see Christ in Heaven with His atoning blood. He stands in the presence of His Father with His blood: **"Neither by the blood of goats and calves, but by his own blood he entered in once into the holy place, having obtained eternal redemption for us"** (Heb. 9:12). This event was typified by the living bird who flew away to Heaven with the blood of the slain bird upon its wings (Lev. 14:51-53).

In the post-resurrection appearances Christ bore the marks of His death: **"And when he had thus spoken, he showed them his hands and his feet"** (Luke 24:40). **"And when he had so said, he showed unto them his hands and his side. Then were the disciples glad, when they saw the Lord"** (John 20:20). Our Lord told Thomas: **"Reach hither thy finger, and behold my hands; and reach hither thy hand, and thrust it into my side: and be not faithless, but believing"** (John 20:27). Today Christ, as He sits at the right hand of His Father in Heaven, still bears the marks of His death. When He returns to the Mount of Olives the remnant of Israel shall look on Him as the slain Lamb. **"They shall look upon me whom they have pierced, and they shall**

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mourn for him" (Zech. 12:10; cf. 1:7).

Many preachers of this generation ridicule and make fun of the idea that Christ took His blood to Heaven---that He bears in His body for eternity His wounds---that He is the slain Lamb up in Heaven. According to them, John merely thought he saw a Lamb as it had been slain in Heaven. These people throw the typology of the Old Testament to the wind. They seem to have a problem with a memorial of the cross abiding in Heaven, and of it being owned and felt throughout eternity. I have no such problem.

Unlike them, I believe Christ is in Heaven bearing the marks and scars of His slaughter. I believe we need a constant sight of the slain Lamb. Christ in His sacrificial character is the most prominent object in the heavenly world. This should be the most prominent thing in our preaching on earth: **"For I determined not to know any thing among you, save Jesus Christ, and him crucified"** (I Cor. 2:2). God's people in Heaven sing of the slain Lamb: **"And they sung a new song, saying, Thou art worthy to take the book, and to open the seals thereof: for thou wast slain, and hast redeemed us to God by thy blood out of every kindred, and tongue, and people, and nation"** (Rev. 5:9). The elect on earth should sing of the slain Lamb. Revelation 5 concludes with all Heaven worshipping Christ because of redemption: **"Saying with a loud voice, Worthy is the Lamb that was slain to receive power, and riches, and wisdom, and strength, and honour, and glory, and blessing"** (Rev. 5:12).

Some Greek scholars point

out that in Revelation 5:6 the slain Lamb means "newly" or "lately slain" (See Chadwick and Gill). This declares the perpetual freshness of the offering of Jesus Christ before the throne of God. Here is the continual efficacy of the blood of Jesus to cleanse from all sin. I John 1:7 says: **"And the blood of Jesus Christ his son cleanseth us from all sin."** **"Cleanseth"** is in a continuous tense. The efficacy of His precious blood is perpetually available to cleanse from every sin past, present and future. William Cowper saw this truth and crystallized it in that line of his hymn---

Dear dying Lamb

Thy precious blood

Shall never lose its power,

*Till all the ransomed Church
of God*

Be saved to sin no more.

HIS ATTITUDE---"STOOD"

After the ascension of Christ our Lord is often said to be sitting down. **"So then after the Lord had spoken unto them, he was received up into heaven, and sat on the right hand of God"** (Mark 16:19). **"...when he had by himself purged our sins, sat down on the right hand of the Majesty on high"** (Heb. 1:3). But in Revelation 5:6 Christ is not seen sitting down. He is not merely seen slaughtered and dead, but raised again with sacrificial marks upon Him. He stands before the throne of the Father in all the vigor of His eternal life. The resurrection of Christ is not a fiction, but a fact. At present He sits with the Father upon the Father's throne (Rev. 3:21) and at His Father's right hand (Ps. 110:1; Heb. 8:1). In the vision John sees that Christ has vacated the throne and the right hand, and He stands ready to take His great power and act. Standing indicates a readiness

for action.

We believe not in a dead Christ only. Our faith does not terminate at the garden tomb. We believe in a resurrected Redeemer, standing in Heaven full of energy. John sees Christ as He stands to take to Himself His rights, purchased by His death on the cross, about to usher in His reign. Christ is about to rid the world of its usurpers and to put down all false authority. **"And he came and took the book out of the right hand of him that sat upon the throne"** (Rev. 5:7). His purpose in taking the seven-sealed book is to open it and to reveal its contents. The book contains the foreordained process by which our Lord will claim our inheritance for us. This is the revelation proper and covers the things from here to the end of the Book of Revelation.

HIS PLACE--- "IN THE MIDST"

Christ stands in the midst of the company around the throne. This means in the middle or center. The center of attraction in Heaven is Jesus bleeding and dying in our room and stead. Christ is the center of heavenly worship. He is worshipped by men and angels as the slain Lamb. The memories of Calvary are treasured in Heaven.

The Holy Spirit seems to always put Jesus in the center place. In the before-time covenant He is in the bosom of the Father as the center of Divine affection (Prov. 8:30). At the age of 12 we find Him **"in the temple, sitting in the midst of the doctors, both hearing them, and asking them questions"** (Luke 2:46). Speaking to His church Christ said: **"For where two or three are gathered together in my name, there am I in the midst of them"** (Matt. 18:20). After the institution of the memorial supper we see Christ **"in the midst of the church"** (Heb.

2:12) singing a hymn. On the cross, a malefactor on each side, we see **"Jesus in the midst"** (John 19:18). Prior to His ascension into Heaven, **"Jesus himself stood in the midst of them, and saith unto them, Peace be unto you"** (Luke 24:36; cf. John 20:19, 26).

Some believe that Christ stood between the elders and the Father who sat on the throne. Here is the mediatorial work of our Lord. As the God man, He mediates between God and redeemed men. He is our go-between. **"For there is one God, and one mediator between God and men, the man Christ Jesus"** (I Tim. 2:5; cf. Heb. 9:24; I John 2:1). The slain Lamb is a **"daysman betwixt us"** and God (Job 9:33).

HIS DIVINITY

The text concludes with the words: **"...having seven horns and seven eyes, which are the seven Spirits of God sent forth into all the earth."** In the Bible horns are a symbol of power. Daniel 7:24 declares: **"And the ten horns out of this kingdom are ten kings that shall arise. . ."** Kings are people with power. The little horn (Antichrist) in Daniel is seen to have great power (Dan. 7:24-25). In Daniel 8:20-21 Alexander the Great is symbolized by **"the great horn."** The beast out of the sea (the Antichrist) has ten horns, and he has power over the nations on earth (Rev. 13:7). The power of Christ to save us in Luke 1:69 is called **"an horn of salvation for us."** The seven horns on the Lamb are symbolic of power, and joined with the number seven it means complete and perfect power.

This can only be said of God, and Jesus Christ is God. Psalm 62:11 says: **"God hath spoken once; twice have I heard this; that power belongeth unto God."** There is no power in the entire

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universe save what God delegates. The slain Lamb did not acquire this power. Rather it belongs to Him inherently. His complete and perfect power is self-existent and self-sustained. No man nor angel can add to as much as a shadow of increase to the power of Jesus Christ.

The “seven eyes” are symbolic of omniscience. The language of Revelation 5:6 is reminiscent of Zechariah 4:10 which speaks of **“the eyes of the LORD (Jehovah) which run to and fro throughout the whole earth.”** In II Chronicles 16:9 it is written: **“For the eyes of the LORD run to and fro throughout the whole earth, to shew himself strong in behalf of them whose heart is perfect toward him.”** Proverbs 15:3 says: **“The eyes of the LORD are in every place, beholding the evil and the good.”** In Revelation 5:6 omniscience is ascribed to Christ, showing Jesus is Jehovah and qualified to take the book of future events and explain it.

Liberals and cultists deny the divinity of Jesus Christ. They make the slain Lamb a mere man for the homage of the redeemed and the adoration of the angels. In contradiction of the prophets and apostles and Jesus Himself, they deny the Lamb was God in the flesh. But in Revelation 5:6 the slain Lamb is seen as Jehovah God.

CONCLUSION

1. The center of heavenly worship is the slain Lamb who is Jehovah-Jesus. Men and women on earth may doubt the divinity of Jesus Christ. They may preach against it and write books against it. But Heaven is not such a place of doubtful questions. The angels in Heaven and redeemed saints

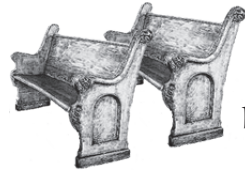
are certain the slain Lamb is Omnipotent and omniscient. The departed who are of the contrary mind are not seen in Heaven; they are in Hell!

2. A lamb is an approachable being. No one should fear to come to the Lamb of God who died for sinners. Have you come to Christ, weak and heavy laden with sin, for spiritual rest and refreshment? Have you received Him as your Savior?

3. One has so well written:
*If you from sin are longing to be free,
Look to the Lamb of God;
He, to redeem you, died on Calvary,
Look to the Lamb of God.*



The Short Pews



Brief Articles
by Curtis Pugh
(1944 - 2018)

CHRISTIANS, GROW UP!

Imagine the concern of parents for a child of theirs that never got beyond nursing: that never progressed to eating solid food. Something is wrong with such a child! No doubt they would take the child to doctors and to specialists to try to remedy its serious problem. How can a child properly develop if he or she never learns to eat nutritious food? It cannot and eventually will wither away with ruined health.

The Holy Ghost through the writer to the Hebrews says “Grow up!”: not in those words but in these: **“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” (Heb. 5:12-14).

Baby Christians! Undeveloped believers! Milk-sucking saints! Children of God lacking the ability to accept strong doctrinal teaching! Immature church members! Followers of the Lamb who are unable to discern good from evil! Is it any wonder that today's saints are not saintly? Is it any wonder that they are given over to the observance of every idolatrous pagan practice and holiday that is celebrated most anywhere in the world? Most professing Christians cannot discern good from evil and so compromise with everything pleasant that comes down the pike! Not knowing the truth they cannot stand for it and so fall for most everything! And sadly, the case is often “like pastor, like people!”

Those addressed in this passage ought to be grown up: mature in the faith. They ought to be able to teach others as the text clearly says, but they are useless. Instead of being a help to their fellows they are spiritual babies and require constant care by others. These folk do not even know the **“first principles of the oracles of God.”** They do not know how God saves sinners! They think the new birth is a result of their actions! They regurgitate (vomit) whenever anyone tries to get them to eat a little solid food. You doubt that? Send them a preacher who mentions such things as election, reprobation, predestination, particular redemption, total depravity and

total inability of sinners to please God. Read to them these words: **“Therefore hath he mercy on whom he will have mercy, and whom he will he hardeneth”** (Rom. 9:18) and see if the average professing Christian does not vomit all over you: i.e. spiritually speaking. Shame! Shame! Shame! Baby Christians indeed! Grow up! Get on a spiritually healthful diet of solid Bible teaching! Forget the baby stuff and find out what the Bible really says! Read Romans chapter nine for instance and believe what it says! Grow up and become useful!

GENUINE BLESSEDNESS

We often refer to natural things which we enjoy or appreciate as being blessings. We say that we are blessed to live in a free country, to have good health, to have plenty to eat, etc. Perhaps we do well to think of these things in that way if we recognize that whatever our lot in life, it comes from the hand of Almighty God. We must admit that there are people just as worthwhile as we, just as intelligent, etc., who live in poverty, suffer terrible illnesses and many who are oppressed by cruel governments or fanatical religions.

But there is a blessedness spoken of in the Bible – in both the Old and New Testaments, that goes beyond natural things. These things that we call natural blessings come to God's children and to lost sinners alike. The Lord Jesus said about His Father, **“..he maketh his sun to rise on the evil and on the good, and sendeth rain on the just and on the unjust”** (Matt. 5:45). God is good both to His friends and His enemies!

Paul in proving that salvation is not by works, but is solely in the hands of God, wrote these words:

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“Now to him that worketh is the reward [i.e. salvation] not reckoned of grace, but of debt. But to him that worketh not, but believeth on him that justifieth the ungodly, his faith is counted for righteousness. Even as David also describeth the blessedness of the man, unto whom God imputeth righteousness without works, Saying, Blessed are they whose iniquities are forgiven, and whose sins are covered. Blessed is the man to whom the Lord will not impute sin” (Rom. 4:4-8).

This genuine blessedness does not come to men and women who try to earn it by good works of any kind. God “justifieth,” or declares, individuals to be righteous in His sight at the moment faith is worked in them by the Spirit. Paul continues by quoting David in one of the Psalms to prove the blessedness of those whom God views as righteous apart from works. He points out that David wrote three things about those people.

The three things that are true of some people are these: (1) their sins are forgiven, (2) their sins are covered, and (3) God does not charge them with sin. The meaning of the word “impute” is “to credit” or as some say, “to keep account of.”

Above all things, this is true blessedness: to have committed sins and to have those sins forgiven, covered and to be in such a position that God does not see any sins on your account sheet, as it were. “Blessed is the man to whom the Lord will not impute sin.” It is not that God could not charge these people with sins, but that He “will not impute sin” to them!



No sins to answer for because they were really paid for by the Lamb of God! Whether a person is rich or poor, healthy or afflicted, this is the genuine blessedness!



ANNOUNCEMENTS

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

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

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

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

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

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

The Stephens Branch Baptist Church of Martin, Kentucky is in need of a pastor. They are an Independent, Sovereign Grace, Landmark, Missionary Baptist church holding to the doctrines of grace and the King James Bible. If you are interested in being considered or would like more information on the church you can call Brother Lonnie Edwards at (859) 629-1413 or write the church at: Stephens Branch Baptist Church, 1025 Stephens Branch Road, Martin, Kentucky 41649.

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

The Sovereign Grace Baptist Church of Caldwell, KS is in need of a pastor. For more information please contact the church in writing at SGBC, 400 N. Main St., Caldwell, KS 67022, or by phone Brother Darin Wiley 620-863-2431.

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