

# A Baptist Church The Climax Of God's Wisdom

H. Boyce Taylor  
(Now In Mansions Above)

Unto me, who am less than the least of all saints, is this grace given, that I should preach among the Gentiles the unsearchable riches of Christ; to reveal what is the stewardship of the mystery, which from the beginning of the world hath been hid in God, who created all things by Jesus Christ; to the intent that now unto the principalities and powers in the heavenlies might be known by the church the manifold wisdom of God, according to the eternal purpose which He purposed in Christ Jesus our Lord: in whom we have boldness and access in confidence by the faith of Him (Eph. 3:8-12).

This is a big text; but it discusses a big subject. It takes a big text to tell all Paul here tells about the subject the Holy Spirit revealed through him.

The subject matter was of God's choosing, not Paul's; it was given to Paul by revelation, not something he evolved from his own reason. The messenger through whom God revealed His long-hidden wisdom on this subject was also of God's choice. Paul was both an object and a subject of God's grace. Objectively he had been in God's purposes of grace for a long time. From the ages he had been God's chosen instrumentality for the revelation of this long hidden mystery. Subjectively he had been apprehended by God's sovereign grace on the road to Damascus and God's purposes of grace for him unto all nations and all times, revealed in part both to him and in him, before he arose from the earth (A. 26: 16-18). God's purpose of grace included revealing Christ in him as well as to him. No man ever knows Christ simply by what he hears. Christ is revealed to him

by the gospel of grace; but Christ is revealed in him by the illumination of the Holy Spirit (Ezek. 37:1-14). Sinners are born from above by the word and the Holy Spirit (Jno. 3:5). The new birth is miraculous and supernatural (Gal. 4:28, Eph. 1:19-21). Paul is a pattern believer in the supernaturalness of the way his faith was wrought in him (1 Tim. 1:16).

God's purposeful grace was revealed unto Paul in his salvation, in his call into the ministry, in his call to the mission field and in his call as God's chosen steward through whom His mysteries of grace and glory were to be revealed. God sought Paul: he was not seeking God. God called him into the ministry: no man called him out. God's calls are effectual through the effectual working of His power. God's calls are all effectual, both unto salvation and the ministry. God-called men are

thrust into the ministry: they do not go into it themselves, neither are they called out by others. Paul was a minister by grace and a foreign missionary by grace: both of which mean, that men had nothing to do with making him either a minister or a missionary. God's sovereign grace and power were not bestowed upon him in vain. This grace was bestowed upon him unto all nations and that grace did not fail to accomplish God's eternal purposes in him. God's grace always works sovereignly and powerfully. No man can stay His hand or say unto Him, What doest Thou? Paul's call was very definite. It would not have been of grace if it had not been. Grace leaves nothing to man's planning or choosing. There is no mixing of grace with any thing of man. Grace and works do not mix: neither do reason and revelation: neither do God's unchangeable plans and men's

changeable ones. Grace bestows all her gifts through faith: and faith excludes all works or efforts of wisdom of men. Grace called Paul to a very definite work—preaching the gospel and revealing Christ. It was to a very definite people—the Gentiles—the heathen. Grace was effectual in working out every detail of God's purpose for him, both in him and through him. He finished God's predestined course for him before the lion killed him (2 Tim. 4:17, 7). The theme of this whole chapter is God's sovereign and effectual grace. God's purposes never fail.

Having first of all seen something of God's purposes of grace in His chosen instrumentality for revealing His long-hidden mysteries, let us now turn to the text and find out, if we can, what this mystery, hidden from creation, but revealed through Paul, includes.

(Continued on page three)

## God's Grace Can Never Be Exhausted Due To Its Fullness

Have you never read the incident of the good ship that had been a long time at sea, and the captain had lost his reckoning; he drifted up the mouth of the great river Amazon, and after he had been sailing for a long time up the river without knowing he was in a river? When another vessel was seen, they signaled her, and when they got near enough for speaking they cried, "Water! We are dying for water!" They were greatly surprised when the answer came back, "Dip it up! Dip it up! You are in a river. It is all around you." They had nothing to do but fling the bucket overboard, and have as much water as ever they liked. Here are poor souls crying out, "Lord, what must I do to be saved?" when the great work is done, and all that remains to them is to receive the free gift of eternal life. What must you do? You have done enough for one lifetime, for you have undone yourself with doing. That is not the question. It is, "Lord, what hast Thou done?" And the answer is, "It is finished. I have done it all. Sinner, you are in a river of grace and mercy. Over with the bucket, man, and drink to full; (Continued on page three)

BIBLICAL

PREMILLENNIAL

CALVINISTIC

BAPTISTIC

## The Baptist Examiner

"To the law and to the testimony; if they speak not according to this word it is because there is no light in them."—Isaiah 8:20

Volume 17, No. 25

Russell, Kentucky, July 31, 1948

Whole Number 531

### How A Man Was Saved From Suicide

A young Christian went around to a few houses with tracts — a capital work for young believers. At one door he knocked and received no answer; so he knocked again, and yet again, for he believed in the perseverance of the saints.

Presently he heard someone coming, and the door was opened; but only a very little way. He at once presented his tract, and it was at once grabbed, drawn in and the door closed. He just saw the opener was a man, and that was all.

Not a very encouraging opening; but the distributor believed (did I not say he was a young believer?) and believing, he called again the following Sunday. He did not have to knock twice, for the door flew open as by magic.

"Come in," said the man, the same, yet not the same; and shutting the door behind his guest, he led the way upstairs. There appeared to be no third

party in the house.

"Are you afraid?" said the mysterious man.

"No," replied the young believer, and he needed to be a pretty firm believer just then, for his guide was evidently bent on getting as far from the ground as possible, up, up, up, to a sky-garret.

Opening a door, he led his visitor into a scene that might have made the stoutest quail. From a beam hung a rope, in the rope was a noose, and beneath the noose stood a box.

"Are you afraid?"

"No," said the child of God, feeling that he was in the pres-

ence of his Father even then.

"Then let me tell you that, when you knocked last Sunday night, my feet were upon that box, and my head in that noose. I made up my mind not to answer you; but when you kept on knocking, I thought I would see who it was before I hung myself. I came down, took your tract, returned here, and read it. It was so blessed to me, that I am here alive."

The receiver of that tract did not put his head again into the rope. He was saved. Saved upon the verge of death, upon the brink of hell.

I was told this incident not very far from where it happened, by one who, I believe, had it from the young believer himself. Go on, tract distributors, scatter these crumbs of the Bread of Life, for even under the table, out of sight, are some who may call themselves dogs, to whom the words will be (Continued on page three)

### Mused Uncle Mose

I gits pow'ful worried 'bout er lot o' things I see goin' on, tel dat ol' blin' feller come a tappin' down de sidewalk; den I gits to worryin' 'bout whut ef I couldn't see 'em?

## The First Baptist Pulpit

### "THE PILLAR OF CLOUD AND FIRE"

(Read Ex. 13:20-22; Num. 9: 15-23).

Let me remind you that as sinners all need a Saviour, and as saved pilgrims all need a guide. I cannot emphasize this statement too much. That was true of Israel just as it is true of us. On the night of that memorable Passover, Israel was redeemed in the land of Egypt. On that same night they left Egypt and started through the wilderness and for forty years they wandered until they came to the land of Canaan. They were saved in the land of Egypt on

the night of the Passover. They needed a guide through all of their wilderness journeys until they came to the land of Canaan. From the very hour they were saved, they became pilgrims, and through all their wilderness journeys they needed a guide to lead them into Canaan.

The Scriptures which I have read tells us that as they encamped at Etham on the edge of the wilderness, and knowing not one step of the way which lay before them, and not understanding one thing about the wilderness with all of its perils

and trials, and not knowing one thing that existed between them and their home in Canaan, — as they were thus encamped, a cloud suddenly came down out of the skies to rest upon the camp of Israel. For forty years from the time that that cloud descended from the skies as they were encamped at Etham on the edge of the wilderness, — for forty years that cloud never left them. By day it had the appearance of a cloud and by night it had the appearance of fire, and for forty years it (Continued on page two)

## Some Questions To Help You Analyze Your Religion

A well-balanced Christian life is a wonderful thing, blessedly useful but all too rare. Some do not bother about negatives. They are religious, but do and live as they please without regard to God's Word. Others are strong on negatives — they do not swear, they do not lie, they do not play cards, they do not belong to secret societies, they do not drink liquor, they do not go fishing on the Lord's Day, they do not dress as is unbecoming a saint, they do not support the movies. Good!

Just remember that these things are largely a matter of reform. We are hardly at the place of religion yet. The reform is surface matter, usually bringing about a condition where one can have good religion.

A few questions to one whose religion is only negative:

Are you faithful in your private devotions, prayer, and the reading of the Word?

Do you have the Christian attitude and spirit in your home?

Is your religion attractive or repulsive?

Are you having family prayers?

If so, are these a mere formality?

Are you constructive and helpful in your attitude toward young people, or only critical of (Continued on page three)

### GLORYING IN GOD

I could write many pages about my machinery because I am proud of it, but I'd rather write about my Lord because I glory in Him. The machinery is my own creation, but I am His creation. God created man a mighty high order of being and it is much easier for me to believe the Genesis story of creation than to believe man evolved from a protoplasm, a tadpole, etc. I can make a machine that can cast a complete house without human hands ever touching the mold or the material out of which the house is built, but can't build a tractor that will evolve itself into an airplane. I'll take for mine the simple story that God created man in His own image. He created all (Continued on page three)

### MISSING CHRIST

When I arrived home one evening, there was a pile of mail on my desk. I went into the kitchen and kissed my sweetheart, put down the satchel, and started opening the letters. Soon I heard a step, and the wife came into the office. Putting her face next to mine, she said, "Lover, when are you going to think more of me than you do of the mail?"

I looked up into her face, and said, "Right now."

I helped her put the food on the table, and after the meal was over, I said to the children, "You children can clean up the table; your mother and I are going to have a good visit." We went into the front room, sat down on the davenport, and had (Continued on page two)



# THE BAPTIST EXAMINER

JOHN R. GILPIN—EDITOR

PUBLISHED WEEKLY

Editorial Department, RUSSELL, KENTUCKY, where communications should be sent for publication.

SUBSCRIPTION PRICE  
Per Year in Advance 50c  
(Domestic and Foreign)

Send Remittances to Russell, Ky.  
Entered as second-class matter May 31, 1941, in the post office at Russell, Ky., under the act of March 3, 1879.

Paid circulation in every state and many foreign countries.

Subscriptions are stopped at expiration unless renewed or special arrangements are made for their continuation.

## MISSING CHRIST

(Continued from page one)  
a grand time of fellowship together.

I had been paying the bills, buying her clothes, giving her money, and had been a real husband to her, I thought; but that wasn't what she wanted. It wasn't my money, but myself that she was interested in.

There is such a thing as being satisfied with the affairs of God, and missing His lovely Person. We are so busy doing church work that we are missing Him. This service is very lovely—I wish we had much more—but that isn't what He is talking about. "If any man thirst . . ." "If you want Me, come and drink." Just drink in the Spirit of God. Drink in the Lord Jesus. Go and take all you can get of Him. He wants us to be good customers of His. Get everything He has for you. We want You, Lord Jesus, and we want all we can get of You.

—Walter L. Wilson.

## THE PILLAR OF CLOUD AND FIRE

(Continued from Page One)  
hovered directly above them.

### I

THE CLOUD WAS A PROTECTION FROM THE HEAT. Listen:

"He spread a cloud for a COVERING; and fire to give light in the night." — Psalms 105:39.

The Psalmist David was recounting the blessings of God upon Israel and he tells how God has blessed them through their wilderness journeys, and one of those blessings that is enumerated is, that God has spread a cloud over top of them out in the wilderness.

Beloved, those Jews never saw the sun for forty years. The sun never shone upon them one time during the entire forty years of their wilderness wanderings.

We think how hot it has been for the last few days and of the summer temperatures through which we have been passing. We all rejoice, beloved, in the fact that we can find a shade tree and rest from the sun. Brethren, for forty years those Jews in the wilderness never had to look for a shade tree. For forty years, beloved, they never had to worry about the vernal rays of the sun. For forty years the sun never shone upon them one single time. That cloud that covered them, that stood between them and the sky, was a protection to them from the heat.

### II

THE CLOUD WAS A LIGHT AT NIGHT. Listen:

"He spread a cloud for a covering; and fire to GIVE LIGHT in the night." — Psalms 105:39.

If you will read that verse in connection with these Scriptures which I have read to you in the beginning of my message, you will find that the cloud by day and fire by night served the purpose of giving light to all the camp of Israel for forty years. They didn't know what it was to ever be in darkness for forty years. In fact, beloved, it was just as bright at night in Israel as it was by day. There wasn't one bit of difference. The cloud shielded them by day; the cloud was there by night in the appearance of fire. So these Jews for forty years never had one moment's darkness. They never took a step in the darkness for forty years' time. They never had to worry about a light or a lamp. They never had to worry about anything to light

their pathway, for about them all the time was a cloud of fire by night which gave light unto all the camp to the extent that the camp was lighted far better than any modern city that you or I could ever conceive of or imagine. As these Jews had this pillar of fire to light their camp by night so that there was no darkness for them for forty years, so, beloved, there is not one bit of need in any child of God ever walking in darkness within this world. Listen to the words of our Lord, when He said:

"I am the light of the world: he that followeth me shall not walk in darkness, but shall have the light of life." — John 8:12.

As surely as those Jews had light to guide them by night, that there was never darkness resting upon them, just so God's people today have, the "Light of Lights," the Lord Jesus Christ, to guide us so there need never be any darkness shrouding our lives.

### III

THE CLOUD PROVIDED A DEFENSE FROM THEIR ENEMIES. Listen:

"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." — Exodus 14:19.

That was when Pharaoh and his chariots came out in pursuit of Israel. When it looked like those Jews were going to be wiped out of existence, the cloud just reversed its position as Pharaoh and his army came in pursuit of Israel. Then the cloud stood between the Israelites on the one hand and the Egyptian army on the other. In other words, beloved, the cloud not only provided a protection from the heat of the day and was a light to them at night, but the cloud provided for them a defense from their enemies.

Certainly, beloved, as God provided a defense for them and cared for them concerning their enemies, our God, beloved, still provides for us as He leads us through our wilderness journeys today. There isn't a child of God in this assembly today but what realizes that God is providing a defense for all and everyone of our enemies. Listen:

"The Lord is my light and my salvation; whom shall I fear? the Lord is the strength of my life; of whom shall I be afraid?" — Psalms 27:1.

I know, beloved, that many times God's people become fearful of the consequences of our own experiences and many times God's people wonder what they ought to do by way of protection. I was holding a revival meeting in a southern state some years ago and I found that the pastor was in apprehension and fear of his life, and carried a gun in his car at all times to protect himself. One day he asked me what I thought about a preacher carrying a gun for his own protection. I said, "My brother, a child of God has a greater protection than he can give to himself by way of any gun, for a child of God has the Lord as his defense from all his enemies." Beloved, when I look back over my years of experience in the ministry and think carefully of some of the experiences through which I have passed, I say this morning that I would rather depend upon my God to give to me the protection that I need and defend me from my enemies than to depend upon any earthly subterfuge or to depend upon anything for my defense other than my Lord Jesus Christ.

When those children of Israel came to the Red Sea it looked

like an impossible barrier that was extending out before them. They looked behind them and saw those four hundred chariots of Pharaoh's and all the armed host of that heathen king of Egypt. It looked like that it was "curtains" for everyone of them. It looked like that there was no way of escape. As you recall, God came to the defense of those Jews and He said, "Moses, say unto the children of Israel that they go forward." When they went forward, beloved, God opened a pathway in the Red Sea to provide for them. At the same time God said, "The Egyptians whom you see today, you will see them no more forever." In other words, He said, "Just go on and follow Me, and I will take care of the Egyptians."

I come back many times to the Red Sea experience in my life when I haven't known what to do, and when I couldn't see any way out and it looked like an impossible barrier before me—I always come back to this experience as God said to Moses, "You go on and serve me and I'll take care of the Egyptians." Beloved, God has done that very thing for me time and time again through the days gone by. Our God knows how to take care of the Egyptians; our God knows how to take care of our enemies; our God knows how to defend and protect His own. As this cloud became a defense through all their wilderness journeys, so, beloved, our God today is a defense for us from all of our enemies.

### IV

THE CLOUD SERVED AS A GUIDE. It is wonderful to have it as a protection from the sun by day and to have it as a light for their camp at night. It is wonderful to have that cloud to defend them from their enemies. Beloved, more than that, that cloud above them served as a guide for the children of Israel for forty years. There wasn't a signboard nor a signpost there in the wilderness. There wasn't an automobile station anywhere where they might stop and get information. There wasn't a filling station on every corner where they might ask as to the proper road and the right turns in the road. Though there was nothing whatsoever whereby they might be guided humanly, Israel never had to ask the way that they were going. They never had to ask as to the condition of the road. They never had to inquire as to the highway for forty years' time, for, beloved, that cloud led them and all they had to do was to just keep their eyes upon the cloud in the sky. Listen:

"And when the cloud was taken up from the tabernacle, then after that the children of Israel journeyed: and in the place where the cloud abode, there the children of Israel pitched their tents." — Numbers 9:17.

As the cloud moved, they moved; as the cloud stopped, they stopped. If it turned to the right or if it turned to the left, they followed the cloud, and for forty years that cloud guided them through the wilderness. Moses tells us of it a little later. Listen:

"He found him in a desert land, and in the waste howling wilderness; he led him about, he instructed him, he kept him as the apple of his eye. As an eagle stirreth up her nest, fluttereth over her young, spreadeth abroad her wings, taketh them, beareth them on her wings: So the Lord alone did lead him, and there was no strange god with him." — Deuteronomy 32:10-12.

If you will look at the context and study carefully those verses, you will see that it is a reference

to the time when Israel was of God through the wilderness. It says that just like an eagle tears up her nest and lets little ones fall until it looks as if they will be destroyed, and gracefully spreads her wings and flies beneath them and bears them up, then lets them fall again and spreads her wings to fly beneath them, then teaching them how to fly. God led Israel by the cloud forty years through the wilderness.

Beloved, I thank Him and praise Him today that no one had more to thank God for than any Gentile does in this twentieth century. As you guided them by the cloud, so God our Guide today. Listen: "For this God is our God ever and ever: he will be our GUIDE EVEN UNTO DEATH." — Psalms 48:14.

God will be our Guide even unto death. You don't have to worry about a guide; you don't have to worry about what the future holds in store for you. Beloved, there is a promise which tells us that God will be our guide even unto death.

"To give light to them that in darkness and in the shadow of death, to GUIDE OUR FEET into the way of peace." — Psalms 137:9.

Beloved, I am glad that those Jews had that cloud. I am glad that it served as a guide for forty years and that all they had to do was just to look to it and follow as that cloud led. When it stopped, they stopped; when it moved, they moved. Beloved, I am glad they had the cloud to guide them. I thank and praise my God today that in this life I have the Lord Jesus Christ to guide me. I am glad that I can look up in the sky. Though I don't see any visible cloud to guide me and go before me, the Lord Jesus Christ is there as a guide. As I read His Word I look to Him in prayer, He leads and He guides just as the cloud which led Israel in the long

### V

ISRAEL COULD MAKE PLANS FOR TOMORROW. They couldn't say, "We are going to encamp on yonder shore tomorrow night." They didn't know where they were going to encamp. They couldn't say, "We are going to stay here by this brook for the next morning." They didn't know how long they were to stay there. They couldn't make a single plan for tomorrow. All they could do was live for the day. Beloved, thank Him today that so far as you and I are concerned, there is not one plan that we can make for tomorrow. Our business is to live for today. Every once in a while I see some Christian brother who is worried about tomorrow. He never promised to give us a plan for tomorrow. He never promised to take care of our business ten years from now. He never promised to look out for us there in the future. He said, "thy days, so shalt thou live." As those Jews could not make a plan beyond a day, it is with each of us. We cannot make no plans for tomorrow. Listen:

"Go to now, ye that say, Tomorrow we will build such a city, and continue therein year, and buy and sell, and gain: Whereas ye know what shall be on the morrow. For what is your life? It is as a vapor, that appeareth for a little time, and then vanishes." — James 4:13-17.

(Continued on page three)

## THE PASTOR AND THE DOCTOR

Distributed by Eli Williams  
Ashland, Kentucky

Mrs. Huff is up the miff-tree  
On a seat fixed good and firm;  
And she'd like to tell the pastor  
A few things and make him squirm.

Mrs. Huff was sick abed, sir,  
Yes, sir, sick abed a week!  
And the pastor didn't call, sir,  
Never even took a peek.

When I asked her if the doctor  
Called to see her she said, "Sure,"  
And she looked as if she thought I  
Needed some good strong mind-cure.

Then I asked her how the doctor  
Knew the sickness laid her low,  
And she said that she had called him  
On the 'phone and told him so.

Now the doctor gets his bill paid  
With a nicely written check,  
But the pastor for not knowing,  
Simply, "gets it in the neck."



To look around is to be distressed. To look within is to be depressed. To look to Christ is to be blessed.

## THE PILLAR OF CLOUD AND FIRE

(Continued from Page Two)  
way. For that ye ought to say, *For the Lord will, we shall live, and do this, or that.*—James 4: 13-15.

### VI

THIS CLOUD DETERMINED THE ROUTE THAT ISRAEL WAS TO TAKE. The route that Israel was to take was chosen for them by the Lord.

Will you follow me in what I consider the deepest doctrine of predestination when I say to those of you who are here within this house this morning, "you are not here because you are not to be here; you are here because God guided you here. I believe from this Word of God that even the place where we live is determined of the Lord."

"And hath made of one blood all nations of men for to dwell on all the face of the earth, and hath determined the times before appointed, and the bounds of their habitation."—Acts 17: 26.

God determines the times and the bounds of our habitation. "The bounds of their habitation" means the place where we live. Beloved, God determines the times of our lives; He determines our habitation; He determines what we are to do. Israel was directed on all its route by that cloud, and God directs us in every place.

Here is a dear man worshiping with us this morning from Helena, Montana. (This was Mr. and Mrs. Crawford, readers of *The Baptist Examiner*, who were at our visit with us. In the same service was Elder Chester Tulga of Chicago. Many of our readers are with us from time to time and we are always happy to have them. He thinks he planned to come here this morning and humanly speaking he did. But back of that human plan was a Divine predestination that he would be here in the building of the First Baptist Church of Russell, Ky., on this morning of July to worship, as I shall preach from this text of scripture.

Beloved, I thank and praise Him that our lives are directed by Him, and that our lives have been patterned by Him. What are we and what we do merely the outgrowth of the Divine predestination of our God.

### VII

THE BEHAVIOR OF THE CLOUD WAS APPARENTLY ARBITRARY. Sometimes that cloud lingered as though it had forgotten to move. It would just stand still in the sky and it would look like God had forgotten about it. It looked like God had completely forgotten about His people. Sometimes the cloud would stand still so long they would remain camped in one place for a year. Then sometimes, beloved, that cloud would move so fast, that it would hardly halt for them to even catch up. That cloud certainly moved in an arbitrary manner. So it is with God's providences for us. Sometimes God leads and we cannot understand everything that He does, and at other times, beloved, God leads so that we can see how God is governing. Sometimes it appears that His plan is open unto us so that we can see exactly how He directs, and at other times we just hope, not knowing fully how

God is leading. That cloud acted arbitrarily. They couldn't understand; it was beyond their comprehension. The way which God leads us is surely in an arbitrary manner. His providences for us are arbitrary.

As the poem has said:

### "HE LEADETH ME

In pastures green? not always; sometimes He Who knoweth best, in kindness leadeth me In weary ways where heavy shadows be:

Out of the sunshine, warm and soft and bright; Out of the sunshine into darkest night I oft would faint with sorrow and afright,

Only for this—I know He holds my hand So whether in the green or desert land, I trust, although I may not understand.

So whether on the hill-tops high and fair I dwell, or in the sunless valleys where The shadows lie—what matter? He is there.

Where'er He leads me I can safely go; And in the blest hereafter I shall know Why in His wisdom He hath led me so."

Yes, beloved, this cloud that led Israel through the wilderness, led them in an arbitrary way. They couldn't understand it, but God was back of it all.

### VIII

ISRAEL HAD TO LOOK UP FOR GUIDANCE. Most of us for guidance look down—probably at a road map, or possibly at a bulletin which has been issued by an automobile club. Israel looked up for guidance. Would to God that you and I might learn the lesson of looking up for guidance! There isn't any guidance to be had from the world for the child of God. A child of God needs to look up for proper guidance. Note:

"The meek will he guide in judgment: and the meek will he teach his way."—Psa. 25:9.

Do you want guidance? Look up.

Do you remember when Jonah had been swallowed by the whale? The Word tells us how that Jonah in the belly of the fish, looked up and God heard him. Israel had to look up at the cloud for guidance and for forty years God guided them through the wilderness. As God's people look up at Him toady, God will guide us in our wilderness journey.

### IX

EVERY STEP AND EVERY DANGER ON THAT JOURNEY FROM EGYPT TO CANAAN WAS WELL KNOWN TO GOD. Israel never took a step that God didn't know about before hand. There wasn't a danger, including the Amorites and the Amalekites, that God didn't know about. There wasn't a danger from the Moabites or any of the balance of those heathen people that God didn't know about. I rejoice today, beloved, to know that that is true of you and me—that on our journey from earth to heaven, that there isn't a danger that confronts us but what God knows about it before it comes to pass. How could it be otherwise, when we read:

"KNOWN UNTO GOD are all his works from the beginning of the world."—Acts 15:19.

He knows about them even

from the foundation of the world. He knew that you would be here in this house of God this morning, before the foundation of the world. He knew that I would preach this sermon this morning, before the foundation of the world. He knew every event of your life and mine before we were ever born—before the world was. *Known unto God are His works, before the foundation of the world.* In view of this, beloved, I like the words of that song, which says:

"God moves in a mysterious way

His wonders to perform; He plants His footsteps in the sea, And rides upon the storm.

Deep in unfathomable mines Of never failing skill, He treasures up His bright designs, And works His sov'reign will.

Ye fearful saints, fresh courage take; The clouds ye so much dread Are big with mercy, and shall break In blessings on your head.

Judge not the Lord by feeble sense, But trust Him for His grace; Behind a frowning providence He hides a smiling face.

His purpose will ripen fast, Unfolding ev'ry hour; The bud may have a bitter taste, But sweet will be the flow'r."

Yes, beloved, I am glad that as I read to you from this Book the story of the cloud and its arbitrary leading of the children of Israel—I am glad to know that there isn't a step, there isn't a danger, there isn't a pitfall, there isn't anything out before us but what has been known to God before the foundation of the world.

### X

WHEN ISRAEL PRESUMED TO GO ON WITHOUT THE CLOUD, THEY MET WITH DESTRUCTION. I read this Bible, beloved, for a long, long time before I ever saw that once Israel presumed against the cloud. Listen:

"But they presumed to go up unto the hilltop: nevertheless the ark of the covenant of the Lord, and Moses, departed not out of the camp. Then the Amalekites came down, and the Canaanites which dwelt in that hill, and smote them, and discomfited them, even unto Hormah."—Num. 14:44, 45.

This was at the time, beloved, when the children of Israel came to Kadesh-Barnea. They sent spies over into the land of Canaan. Two of these spies, like stalwart men of God, came back and said, "It is a great country; let's go up and possess it." The other ten came back with yellow stripes running down their backs, and saying, "It is a great land, but we can't take it." They shook and quaked in the presence of the enemies that they had seen beyond Canaan. When God pronounced a curse upon them for their unbelief, they said, "We will go. In order to escape the curse we will go on anyway." They did, but Moses didn't go and the ark of the tabernacle didn't go and the cloud didn't go. The cloud remained stationary. When they got beyond the cloud, beyond the realm of the guidance of God, the Canaanites and the Amalekites came out against them and smote them and discomfited them and killed them.

Beloved, we can't presume against God, for God is a sovereign God. He guides us with an unerring hand and we can-

not presume beyond His guidance. Many times God's people will pray, "Lord, if I am not right, stop me in what I'm trying to do." It is wrong to pray thus. The child of God ought to find God's will and then proceed in the light of God's will instead of saying, "Stop me if I am not in your will," for, beloved, those stopping processes are mighty uncomfortable processes sometimes.

You drive down the street and there is a green light facing you. You move on and at the next intersection there is a yellow light, or perhaps a red one, and you will say, "If it isn't right for me to go, maybe something will stop me." My brother, it may, and you may be in the hospital for several days because you didn't get the green light signal before crossing the street.

God's people need to get the green light from God and move on with God as God directs. As God leads us, we don't have to presume to go forward without His guidance.

Let me say this in closing: These people did not in any wise at all attempt to follow the cloud until they first experienced redemption. The guidance of the cloud came after redemption. A sinner can't follow the Lord until he has first seen Jesus Christ at Calvary. My message this morning is absolutely nonsense to the man who is out in the world and who knows not the Son of God as a Saviour. You can't follow God until you first see Jesus at Calvary. May God help you to come to Calvary and trust Jesus and be saved today. And then, as the cloud led Israel through the wilderness, may the Lord lead you as a saved pilgrim through your wilderness experience with Him. May God bless you!

## Saved From Suicide

(Continued from page one)

blessed.

"Fear not, neither be discouraged." He never gives us a precept without good reason for practice. W. L., in *Gospel Chimes*

## Your Religion

(Continued from page one)

It is assumed that you are faithful in attendance at the house of God, but do you bring any needy soul with you?

Are you definitely working on someone for his salvation?

Today are you clearly justified?

Today does the blood of Jesus Christ, God's Son, cleanse you from all sin? — *The Free Methodist*

## I SHOULD LIKE TO KNOW

Where can I find in the Scripture that God's Son was a missionary?

A missionary is one sent on a mission, sent to propagate religion, and certainly our Lord was sent on a mission to this earth, as He Himself says in John 17:18; this should suffice. See also John 20:21; John 3:17. God sent His Son into the world. Was that Son not sent on a mission? Was He not a missionary?

## FELLOWSHIP MEETING

The Tri-State Baptist Bible Fellowship will meet on Friday, August sixth, at 7:30 p. m. with the First Baptist Church of Russell.

All readers of *THE BAPTIST EXAMINER* in the tri-state area are urged to attend.

This organization has been holding regular monthly meetings throughout the past year and exists for the purpose of fellowship through the Word of God.

We urge you to worship with us on the first Friday evening of each month.

## FULLNESS

(Continued from page one)  
for you will never exhaust the stream of grace. — *Conwell in The United Evangelical.*

## GLORYING IN GOD

(Continued from page one)  
sorts of beautiful flowers too, but they are a lower order of creation than I am. Man can take the seeds of the flower and analyze them to the nth degree and give their exact chemical analysis, but he can't put the chemicals back together and make them grow into a flower. Only God can put the chemicals together to make a plant that has life and will grow.

He made the animals too, but He did not give them a living soul that will live forever; only man has that. Man also has the power of choice. We may choose to serve Him, or we may choose not to serve Him. It is a God-given prerogative and God Himself will not take it away. To me this explains many things that are hard to understand. — R. G. LeTourneau

## A BAPTIST CHURCH

(Continued from page one)

### 1. What Is a Mystery?

A mystery isn't something we can not understand; but something that no man can reason out. As used by the Gnostics and other secret cults in Bible days it referred to the secrets of their orders, which only the initiated knew. As used in the Scriptures it refers to previously hidden truths, which the prophets and other wise men, desired to look into and probably tried to fathom; but which no man knew then or knows now except by divine revelation. In all of them there still remains the supernatural element, notwithstanding what the Scriptures reveal about them. The mysteries of the kingdom, of godliness, of the translation of the living saints, of Israel's blindness, of the incarnate Christ as the embodied fullness of the Godhead, of the seven stars and seven candlesticks and other Bible mysteries are still pried into by curious minds: but no man knows anything about any of them, except what is written. "Nothing beyond what is written" is true of all Bible mysteries. We know only what is revealed and there is still much about each of these mysteries that God has not seen fit to reveal. Many questions arise about them in inquiring minds but there is only the blackness (Continued on page four)



## A BAPTIST CHURCH

(Continued from page one)  
of darkness and no light at all, when we try to go beyond what God has revealed. He has revealed all we need to know.

### 2. The Mystery of the Church.

The mystery revealed in the text was one that had been hidden since the creation. God had hid it in Himself throughout all past ages. Paul was His chosen steward through whom He would turn the light upon this mystery. This mystery is as to His purpose and mission for a New Testament church. The greatness of this mystery is seen in that, even after God has revealed it, men refuse to believe and try to make it mean something different from what God revealed. So contrary is what God herein reveals to all human reason and human wisdom and human plans, that men will not receive the truth, even after God has revealed it to them. Many try to make the church, through which God's wisdom is revealed to three worlds, a great compact visible hierarchy, like the Roman Catholic or Greek Catholic or Lutheran or Episcopal or Presbyterian or Methodist churches, with their compact organizations and overlords and ecclesiastic courts and well greased machinery. That kind of a church would reveal human wisdom, but not the wisdom of Him, who said: "My thoughts are not your thoughts, neither are your ways My ways." And other great and wise men say: "No, the church is not a great, compact organization like that, with its intricate machinery." But they in their wisdom imagine that it is an invisible, universal institution, composed of all the saved of all ages and climes. That would be Satanic wisdom, but not divine wisdom. Satan has just such a compact organization of spirit beings and forces. It may be referred to in the text by "principalities and powers." One thing is sure. Just three chapters further over (6:12) "principalities and powers" do refer to the forces of evil under Satanic control, with whom the Christian has to wrestle and war. If we interpret (Eph. 3:10) by (Eph. 6:12), the "principalities and powers" referred to not only may mean, but must mean the invisible spirit forces of the god of this age, with the most compact organization of super-lords, called "the rulers of the darkness of this world," at work in the air all about us, trying to defeat God's purposes and plans. Wherein would God's wisdom be revealed to men and demons and angels, if the church here referred to was an invisible, universal organization of spiritual forces? Satan has an exact counterpart of that and better organized. If there is such a thing as an invisible, universal church, it is badly divided in every way. It has no unity as to plans, as to headship, as to its mission, as to methods, as to ends to be accomplished or as to program. Wherein would the manifold wisdom of God be shown by such confusion worse confounded in His ranks? Satan has an invisible, universal, compact organization of spirit forces to fight the gospel and the saints. The idea of an invisible, universal church being the church here spoken of would not be a mystery: for Satan had just such an organization at work before God revealed His mystery to Paul. A big, invisible, universal organization of any kind does not fit the text. It was not hidden from creation: Satan had one of his own. It was not a mystery, that men

could know only by revelation. And as B. H. Carroll well says, such an institution would lack the two essential features of being an ekklesia, or church. In his discussion with W. J. McGlothlin as to the meaning of the word ekklesia some years ago, B. H. Carroll said: "The proposed new sense (that is, making ekklesia refer to an invisible, universal body) destroys the essential ideas of the old word, namely, organization and assembly, and would leave Christ without an institution, an official business body on earth. How can there be a body of disciples apart from organization and assembly? Miscellaneous, scattered, unattached units do not constitute a body."

The church referred to in the text was neither a universal visible nor a universal invisible institution. It was the local Baptist church at Ephesus, to which Paul was writing.

### 3. A Baptist Church Reveals God's Manifold Wisdom.

Men can take great, compact organizations with their super-lords and intricate details and do things. Satan organizes his limitless forces of evil spirits, with their rulers of darkness and accomplishes wonders. God's "exceedingly various, multiform, multifarious, manifold, immense and infinite" wisdom is seen in that He has no great compact organization of any kind to accomplish and carry on His purposes and will. His only organizations are little, independent, local democracies, with no super-lords and no centralized power or government. Through them He will carry out His commission and make His gospel known to the ends of the earth.

First, it should be borne in mind, that this was hidden in God from creation until New Testament days. Nothing like a Baptist church was ever heard of until Christ came and organized out of the material prepared by the first Baptist preacher, John the Baptist, the first Baptist church. To this church He gave His world-wide commission: but unto Paul was reserved the privilege, as a steward of this long-hidden mystery, of revealing that the only organization God would have for carrying His gospel to the ends of the earth, would be these independent local assemblies. In Old Testament days He had centralized governments, patriarchal, then tribal, then a theocracy, then judges and then kings. Nothing like these little, independent democracies was ever heard of until the Lord Jesus established the first one. God's mystery, hidden in Himself, was now revealed by His chosen steward, the first great foreign missionary, who put into practice what is herein revealed.

Paul went out without any centralized power or organization behind him, depending upon God and these little, independent democracies to support him in his world-wide missionary activities. All this is said in the text and fits only in and with God's missionary activities through Baptist churches in New Testament days, with no centralized head, government or power.

But in the second place do these little independent democracies reveal the "multiform and exceedingly varied" wisdom of God? If they do, we ought to be able to see that wisdom; for Paul said that God's purpose was through him to throw light upon how thy mystery makes known God's many-coloured wisdom. Has God's wisdom been revealed through these little, in-

dependent churches through the centuries, and if so, how?

First, God's infinite wisdom has been revealed through the centuries in that He has perpetuated them from Christ's day until the present. Alex. Campbell said that "public monuments of their existence in every century can be produced." Ypeij and Dermoutt, Dutch Reformed historians, said: "On this account the Baptists may be considered as the only Christian community which has stood since the apostles, and as a Christian society, has preserved pure the doctrine of the gospel through all ages." Sir Isaac Newton said: "The Baptists are the only body of Christians that has not symbolized the Church of Rome."

Prof. William Cecil Duncan, University of Louisiana, said: "Baptists do not, as do most Protestant denominations, date their origin from the Reformation of 1520. By means of that great religious movement, indeed, they were brought forth from comparative obscurity into prominent notice. \* \* \* They did not, however, originate with the Reformation, for long before Luther lived, nay long before the Roman Catholic Church herself was known, Baptists and Baptist churches existed and flourished in Europe, in Asia and in Africa."

Both God's wisdom and God's power have been seen in the perpetuity of Baptist churches: for Satan's compact organization of spirit forces, all the powers of Rome, the last mistress of the world, and the compact ecclesiastical organization of both the Roman and Greek Catholic churches have all spent their utmost strength and combined powers to stamp out and destroy these little, independent democracies. Only the infinite wisdom and omnipotent power of our sovereign God could have prevented three such mighty and universal forces as these from accomplishing their aim. But Satan and his rulers of darkness; temporal Rome and her armies and fagots and stakes; and ecclesiastical Rome, with her intrigue, her bans, her councils and her conspiracies, have all failed to stamp out the Baptists. Thus have three worlds been forced to know and confess the manifold wisdom of God.

But again, not only have the preservation and perpetuity of Baptist churches, with their simple faith and lack of central control, against the three most compactly organized powers in the universe, namely, satanic spirits, ecclesiastical Rome and Rome, the mistress of the world, demonstrated God's manifold wisdom and mighty power; but His method of doing it has also revealed His matchless wisdom. He has never fought the devil with fire. He hasn't matched force against force. He has never raised any armies. Though always persecuted and hunted into the dens and caves and mountain fastnesses of the earth; yet Baptists have never been persecutors. His method of their preservation has always been by a Book, the Baptist Book, the Bible, the infallible and inerrant Word of God. God's Book and God's Spirit have preserved the Baptists and Baptist churches. Presbyterians and Episcopalians thrive and grow on education. Methodists and the so-called Holiness cults live on emotionalism. Catholics blossom and reach their glory and power where ignorance abounds and force has sway. Baptists, even under bitterest persecution, multiply and fill the earth, wherever the Bible is read and obeyed. Again, God's multifari-

ous wisdom is seen, in the remarkable unity of these little independent democracies. Bound neither by creeds nor tradition nor oaths nor ritual nor centralized ecclesiastical authority, yet the rank and file of our Baptist churches are more nearly one in faith and practice than any other people on earth. Others with their ecclesiastical courts and centralized government marvel at the unity of our Baptist hosts and can neither understand nor explain it. A few educated leaders, obsessed with their own importance and infected with germs of unionism or modernism, imbibed in the vitiated atmosphere of rationalized "kultur," may give us a good deal of notoriety at times; but the great body of common people, that compose the overwhelming majority of Baptist churches, are sound at heart and one in faith on the great historic truths of God's Word. The secret of their unity is found in their reading the same book the world over and obeying it.

And then the marvelous wisdom of God is manifested through Baptist churches to the world and to Satan's organized forces of evil in the forces He uses. It is still true as it was in New Testament days that He uses unlearned and ignorant men." He not only uses that kind, but He actually chooses that kind. "For ye see your calling, brethren, how that not many wise men after the flesh, not many mighty, not many noble: but God hath chosen the foolish things of the world to confound the wise; and God hath chosen the weak things of the world to confound the things which are mighty; and base things of the world and things which are despised, hath God chosen, and things which are not, to bring to nought things that are: that no flesh should glory in His presence" (I Cor. 1:26-29). And therein is the Scripture fulfilled, which says: "The foolishness of God is wiser than men, and the weakness of God is stronger than men." A Sunday School Board expert at the recent Southern Baptist Convention sensed God's methods and God's plans rightly when he said: "Thirty years from now 80 per cent of the First Churches in all our cities will have back-woods, country boys for their pastors, just as now." Rural and back-woods churches furnish nearly all of the worth-while laymen and preachers for all positions of responsibility and trust, either in church or denominational life. Satan doesn't do it that way. He goes to the colleges and universities and selects the mighty and noble and wise. God's much-varied wisdom is seen in that He chooses the weak and the foolish and the base and the despised and the noughts and with them confounds the wise and mighty and noble.

Lastly, God has given a demonstration of His immense and muchly varied wisdom to kings and councils and hierarchies and ecclesiastical courts and satanic cabals, through little, independent, Baptist democracies in His choice of preaching for the spread of His truth. The wisdom of this world magnifies schools or social service or organization or money or publicity. The Bible doesn't. "It pleased God by the foolishness of preaching to save them that believe." Baptists thrive in the country because it is there they depend upon preaching. Preaching and teaching the Bible are God's two chosen agencies for the salvation of the lost and the edification and confirmation of the saved. Up in the Blue Grass last summer we heard pastors

talking about live societies their churches and dead churches. They are organized to death. Some churches are lodged death and some are clubbed death and some are societized to death and some are organized to death and some are starved death and some are entertained to death and some are sung death (but not with spiritual songs) and some are hugged death by the world and some are unionized to death and some are lectured to death and some are ritualized to death: but I never heard of a Baptist church being preached to death. Baptist churches thrive and prosper and grow and multiply the preaching of the Word of God. Satanic wisdom puts emphasis on education and social service. God's marvelous and manifold wisdom puts the whole and sole emphasis upon preaching of the Word of God. Satanic wisdom puts the emphasis on organization and social service. God's marvelous and manifold wisdom puts the whole and sole emphasis upon preaching the Word. Information, inspiration, evangelization and doctrination are the four corner stones on which Baptist growth and enlargement and spirituality and consecration and liberty rest. Preaching is God's one ordained method of evangelization and indoctrination: and preaching and Bible study are God's only prescribed agencies for information and inspiration. God's favorite preacher told his favorite son of his was the pastor of the church of which this favored son of his was the pastor. He told them that God gave to churches pastors and teachers for "the perfecting of the saints unto the work of ministering for the edifying of the body of Christ: till we all come in the unity of the faith and of the knowledge of the Son of God, unto a full-grown man, unto the measure of the stature of the fulness of Christ." The pastor by preaching and teaching the Bible can bring every member of his church, who will hear and obey the Word, to perfection in character and service, like his Lord's.

Baptist churches from the foundation of the world in their hidden purpose are His chosen agencies through which to demonstrate to earth, heaven and hell His infinite and manifold wisdom. This demonstration is two-fold. He will demonstrate through them His dominion and power in choosing them as His agencies for carrying out His mission to the ends of the earth and carrying out His purpose to the end of the age. Then He will demonstrate through them His manifold wisdom in perfecting the individual members in life and character and service like unto the image of their Lord. And as the climax of this demonstration will show the depths of God's measureless wisdom by perfecting redeemed men and women in the likeness of their glorified Lord (the most beautiful likeness in all the universe of God) by the foolishness of preaching and teaching just one Book, the Bible. Therefore, Brethren, as most highly honored of all God's workmen, in heaven or earth, preach and teach the Bible.