

When you rob God you cheat yourself.

MISSIONARY

PREMILLENNIAL

BIBLICAL

BAPTISTIC

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"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.

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## The Absolute Sovereignty Of God

By T. P. SIMMONS

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defeated Him partially, he can defeated Him wholly. The God of the Bible is not a defeated God.

Finally note the rank absurdity of saying that God willed to prevent the fall, but could not. Could not God have annihilated Satan before he entered the garden to tempt our first parents? Or could not God have shut the Devil out of Eden, since some day, according to the twentieth chapter of Revelation, He is going to shut him up in the bottomless pit and finally cast him into the lake of fire? Since God set a limit on the work of the Devil in the case of Job, could He not have limited him in Eden to such temptation as our forefathers were able to stand? Since God withheld Abimelech from sinning (Gen. 20:6), and restrained Balaam from cursing the children of Israel; and since we read in Prov. 21:1, "The king's heart is in the hand of the Lord, as the rivers of water; he turneth it whithersoever he will," and since we read in Phil. 2:13, "It is God which worketh in you both to will and to do of his good pleasure," could not God have wrought in the minds and hearts of Adam and Eve as to keep them from eating the forbidden fruit? To say that God could not have done this without destroying the free agency of Adam and Eve is to deny that there is such a thing as human free agency. Are we to suppose that God destroyed the free agency of Abimelech or that of Balaam or that of the king or that He destroys the free agency of the saved? Most certainly we are not to say this, for these are only typical examples of what God is doing constantly among men. If we wish to stand with the Bible we must affirm both the sovereignty of God and the free agency of man.

### The Fall Of Man

Let us take first, THE CASE OF SIN'S ENTRANCE INTO THE HUMAN FAMILY. This is in the fall of Adam, as recorded in the third chapter of Genesis. What was God's relation to the fall of Adam? God either willed or decreed to prevent the fall, but could not; or He willed or decreed not to prevent and therefore freely allowed it to take place. If we say that God willed to prevent the fall, but could not, we deny the sovereignty of God and we rob ourselves of all basis of faith in God's power.

In the former article we noted the declaration that God "doeth according to his will in the army of heaven and among the inhabitants of the earth; and none can stay his hand, or say unto him, What doest thou?" (Dan. 35). We read again that He worketh all things after the counsel of his own will" (Eph. 11). Moreover we found that God says: "My counsel shall stand, and I will do all my pleasure" (Isa. 46:10). Add to these passages the words of Jeremiah: "Ah Lord God! be- hold thou hast made the heaven and the earth by thy great power and stretched out arm, and there is nothing too hard for thee" (Jer. 32:17). We cannot affirm that God desired to prevent the fall, but could not without denying these state- ments from the Word of God. Moreover if such were true, when we could have no possible way of knowing that sin and the Devil will not yet overcome God He is to prove all His promises false. God willed to prevent the fall and could not do it, then our hope is vain. If the Devil defeated God once, then he can do it as often as he likes. If he

Both are represented in the Bible as standing unimpaired.

There is but one sound and logical answer concerning God's relationship to the fall, and that is that God had the power to prevent it, but did not choose to use that power. In other words, God allowed or permitted the fall. He did it because he had righteous purposes to be worked out through the fall. The fall of man was included in the eternal decrees of God.

But mark my words carefully. God permitted the fall; He did not cause it. If I release an object and let it fall to the floor, it is gravity and not I that causes it to fall. It was the finite and mutable quality of human nature that caused the fall of the race. All mutable things change unless sustained by God's power. God did not take from Adam any grace or strength that He had formerly given him. He simply did not give him the added grace and strength necessary to sustain him under the insidious attack of Satan. But Adam and Eve were not compelled to listen to the lies of Satan or look upon the forbidden fruit. They could have resisted Satan if they had willed to do it. But they did not will to resist him. They both acted from choice based on motives, which is the way every man acts. Adam and Eve were just as free in sinning as they

### OUR WEEKLY RADIO PROGRAMS

WIRO — 1230 On The Dial  
Ironton, Ohio  
Sunday, 9:00 p. m.

WHJC — 1360 On The Dial  
Matewan, W. Va.  
Saturday, 1:15 p. m.

WHTN — 800 On The Dial  
Huntington, W. Va.  
Sunday, 7:45 a. m.

WSNJ — 1240 On The Dial  
Bridgeton, N. J.  
Sunday, 2:45 p. m.

## The First Baptist Pulpit

### "A Great House For A Great God"

"And the house which I build is great: for great is our God above all gods."—II Chron. 2:5.

If I have just one desire for my message today, it is that in this message I might magnify my God. Too many people, beloved, stand before a congregation on the Lord's Day to preach a God of mighty little power, and to talk about a God who is so limited in power that He is practically powerless. Let me repeat, beloved, if I have one

desire today, it is that I might magnify my God. I want you to see God as a God of greatness and a God of power.

Just to show you how so many preachers fail to recognize the power of God, let me remind you of that poor fellow that I heard preach sometime ago, who lamented the apostasy of the day, and who talked about how people are going contrary to the things of the Lord. After lamenting over all the spiritual declension in the world, he con-

tinually used this expression "Poor God; poor God," and he made it appear that God had been taken unawares, and that God hadn't planned any of this, and that God didn't know what was coming to pass, and that the conditions of today were very much of a surprise to the Lord. I don't know how many times in his sermon that he made mention of God with the adjective "poor" before Him. I tell you, beloved, as I listened

(Continued on page two)

### EDITOR URGES HIS READERS TO ORDER A COPY OF THIS MOST SPLENDID BOOK

**THE BATTLE OF ARMAGEDDON**, by Prescova Hogg, 303 Murray Street, South East, Grand Rapids, Michigan, who was for seventeen years a missionary in the Kentucky mountains. Paper. Thirty-one pages.

This booklet begins with a correct discussion of the meaning of Armageddon and the time and site of the battle. It tells who will engage in the battle and how it will end, which will be with Christ's second coming. It discusses "Signs in the Religious World." It deals also with "National Signs," among which is "The Gathering of the Jews to Palestine." Along with the majority of premillennialists, the author believes that there will be a period of seven years between "the Rapture of the saved and the coming of Christ to judge the nations." The

reign of the "Beast" of Revelation is touched upon. The author believes that the 38th and 39th chapters of Ezekiel refer to Russia, and discusses them in that light. When Christ comes He and the glorified saints will reign at Jerusalem over the whole earth for a thousand years. Then (at the end of the "little season" following the millennium) will come "The Great White Throne Judgment." The book closes with an appeal to the lost and a poem entitled "A Vision of the Future." The many friends of the author will desire, no doubt, to have this book as a memorial of her. The book is dedicated to Mrs. Carl E. Sadler, the author's daughter and the wife of Elder Carl E. Sadler, pastor of Dripping Springs Church, near Olmstead, Ky. Order from author.

could have been if God had not existed.

### The Hardening Of The Heart Of Pharaoh

In the second place, let us take THE CASE OF THE HARDENING OF PHARAOH'S HEART. Here again we come face to face with the sovereignty of God in its relation to human freedom and responsibility. In the book of Exodus it is indicated no less than five times that the hardening of Pharaoh's heart is to be attributed to God. The hardening of Pharaoh's heart was a part of God's eternal decrees. But it is also said several times that Pharaoh hardened his own heart. Is this a contradiction? Nay, verily not. God hardened Pharaoh's heart in that He decreed all the circumstances that led to that hardening and in that He did not bestow upon Pharaoh the grace that would have softened his heart. But God did not cause Pharaoh to harden his heart; God merely permitted Pharaoh to follow his own pride, stubbornness, and the deception of unbelief in hardening his own heart. No man ever acted more freely than did Pharaoh in refusing to let the children of Israel leave Egypt, and yet he was acting in full harmony with God's eternal purpose. God commanded Moses to say to Pharaoh: "And in very deed for this cause have I raised thee up, for to show in thee my power; and that my name may be declared throughout all the earth" (Ex. 9:16). This was to be accomplished by the sending of the ten plagues, and the sending of the hardened heart of Pharaoh.

### The Blinding Of Sinners

In the third place, let us note THE CASE OF THE BLINDING OF SINNERS. In John 12:40 the blinding of sinners is attributed to God in these words: "He hath blinded their eyes, and hardened their heart; that they should not see with their eyes, nor understand with their heart, and be converted and I should heal them." Here is God's sovereignty. But note that John 12:40 is a quotation from Isa. 6:10 where the prophet is commanded to shut the eyes of the people. Then in Matt. 13:14, 15 we have a free quotation of this same passage and there it is said that the people closed their own eyes: "their eyes have they closed," says Matthew. Then, in 2 Cor. 4:3, 4, the blinding of sinners is attributed to the Devil: "the god of this world hath blinded the minds of them which believe not." All of these passages refer to the same thing, and all of them are true because they are in the Word of God. We have the blinding of sinners attributed to God, to the sinners themselves, to the prophet, and to the Devil. The blinding is attributed to God because He decreed, either efficiently or permissively all the circumstances that render the sinner blind and leave him thus. The same blinding is attributed to sinners themselves because, as Jesus tells us in John 3:18, they love darkness rather than light and necessarily manifest that love in the rejection of Jesus Christ. This blinding is attributed to the prophet because his preaching of the Word brought out the blindness of sinners and made it active in the rejection of the Word. Finally the blinding of sinners is attributed to the Devil because he is the author of sin by which the sinner is blinded. But neither God, nor the prophet, nor the Devil ever compel the sinner against his

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### MONEY IN HAND FOR SIMMONS' BOOK

We are publishing below the receipt for the money contributed for the printing of "A Systematic Study of Bible Doctrine," by T. P. Simmons in Brazil. The printer has promised to have the book complete about Jan. 1, 1954.

"Date, Sept. 16, 1953

This is to certify that I have received from T. P. Simmons (Continued on page four)

### A CORRECTION AND CHANGE OF DATE

Recently it was announced that T. P. Simmons would assist Pastor Earl Frazier and the First Baptist Church of New Harmony, Indiana, in an evangelistic meeting beginning on Nov. 1. The date for the beginning of this meeting has been changed to Monday, Oct. 19. A cordial invitation is extended to all in the vicinity of this church to attend this meeting.



# THE BAPTIST EXAMINER

JOHN R. GILPIN — EDITOR

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## "A Great House For A Great God"

(Continued from page one)

to him, under my breath I kept saying something similar to it, for I said, "Poor preacher; poor preacher."

Let me remind you this morning that God is a sovereign God. He planned this world before this world began. He swung it out into space, knowing what every creature on it was going to do. He knew about the apostasy. He knew about the moral declension. He knew about the religious apostasy that would be in the world. He knew that there were going to be modernists, infidels, and near-infidels to deny His Word. He knew all that, and knowing it all, He planned it, and it has come to pass just exactly as God has planned. We are not to sympathize with God and say "Poor God; poor God." Everything that is taking place is just according to the plan of the eternal God who purposed all things in Christ Jesus before the world began.

Or I might make mention of another individual of whom I have spoken numerous times. Some years ago I heard him preach a sermon on the subject, "God's Duty To Man," and in his message he certainly made it appear that God was under eternal obligation to man. When I heard the announcement as to the subject of his sermon I was shocked, but when I heard the sermon I was even more shocked. That preacher, beloved, emphasized the fact of the greatness of man, and in view of the fact that man is a sovereign being, then God was under obligation to him, so this preacher said.

What is man anyway? Who are you and who am I? Just one of one billion, five hundred million beings who inhabit this globe. And what is this globe, or this earth on which we live? It is just a part of the solar system, and a very, very small part at that—so small that if you were to hollow out the sun, you could pour one million two hundred thousand earths like ours in it and they would still have room to rattle around. And what is the sun? Just one of three hundred sixty million suns and moons and stars that are out yonder in space, and beloved, God made them all.

Now, do you want to know what you yourself are, stated mathematically? Well, if you will divide one by one billion five hundred million, and that by one million two hundred thousand, and that by three hundred sixty million, and that by infinity, the answer is you.

Would you like to know how big God is, stated mathematically? Then multiply one by one billion five hundred million, for He made us all, and then multiply that by one million two

hundred thousand, and that by three hundred sixty million, and that by infinity, and that is God. God, my brother, created this world and all things therein. Any man who talks about God's duty to man is not talking the language of the Bible. He is not talking the language that thrills my soul. I want to talk about a God of magnitude, a God of sovereignty, a God of power, and as Solomon says in the text which I have read, "Great is our God above all gods."

I

### GOD IS GREAT.

God is great in His PRE-DETERMINING PURPOSES. I do not believe that there has ever been one thing taken place that took God unawares. Instead, I am satisfied that every event in your life and in mine, and every event that has ever come to pass in this world is a part of God Almighty's pre-determined plan.

We talk about accidents and we say that things took place by chance. I don't believe that there is such a thing as an accident. I don't believe that anything takes place by chance. How could there be an accident in a world that is made and governed by God? How could anything take place by chance in a world that has God at the controls? I am saying this morning, God is great in His pre-determining purposes.

God's Word shows us that this is true.

"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.

Here is a text which tells us that God has determined the times, and not only that—He has determined the bounds of our habitation. Your habitation was known of God before the foundation of the world, and the bounds of it, that is, the boundary round about it.

The Word of God also tells us that the very time of your birth and the time of your death was all foreknown of God. Listen:

"A time to be born and a time to die..."—Eccl. 3:2.

Beloved, in order that you might see that God does know, and God does pre-determine our lives, I would like you to notice the experience of the Apostle Paul.

"Verily, verily, I say unto thee, When thou wast young, thou girdest thyself, and walkedst whither thou wouldst: but when thou shalt be old, thou shalt stretch forth thy hands, and another shall gird thee, and carry thee whither thou wouldst not. This spake he, signifying by what death he should glorify God. And when he had spoken this, he said unto him, Follow me."—John 21:18, 19.

Notice, beloved, that Jesus was speaking to Simon Peter, and He foretold the manner of Simon Peter's death. He said, "Thy shalt stretch forth thy hands." In other words, He foretold the manner of Simon Peter's death as being that of crucifixion, and He foretold the time of his death, for He said, "When thy shalt be old." Here was one man who knew that he wasn't going to die young. Here was one man who knew that he wasn't going to die, as we say, prematurely. Here was one man who knew that he wasn't going to die until he got old, and he knew the manner and the time of his death because it was revealed to him by the Lord Jesus Christ.

Now, beloved friends, if Jesus

Christ knew the time and the manner of the death of Simon Peter, then surely the Lord Jesus Christ knows the time and the manner of the death of you and me and all the people of this world.

At the same time, beloved, everything that comes to pass was foreknown of God from the beginning of the world, for we read:

"Known unto God are all his works from the beginning of the world."—Acts 15:18.

Beloved, in the light of these verses, you couldn't help from seeing that God is great in His pre-determining purposes. I am satisfied that God pre-determined your presence here within this house of God this morning. I am sure that God pre-determined that you would be here, before you were ever born and before this world ever came into existence. Oh, my brother, my sister, what a thought! What a blessed thought just to know that God is great in His pre-determining purposes. Why should a child of God ever worry? Why should a child of God ever fret? Why should a child of God ever be over-anxious about the problems that confront him in this world? When there come troubles, when there come difficulties, when there come heartaches, and when finances are low and when everything looks like it is against you, why should you worry? Why should a child of God ever grieve when he is living in a world that is running according to the pre-determined purposes of Almighty God? "Great is our God," so says our text.

Beloved, God is not only great in His pre-determining purposes, but He is great in His CHOOSING. I have a definite conviction that is based on this Bible and which has been born out of a deep study of the Word of God that God chose certain individuals unto salvation before the foundation of the world. Listen to God's Word in this respect:

"According as he hath chosen us in him before the foundation of the world, that we should be holy and without blame before him in love."—Eph. 1:4.

As I have often said, I am older than creation in the mind of God. In fact, beloved, you can look at the hills and the mountains and the rivers and all the phenomena of nature; you can look up into the sky at the moon and the stars by night and the sun by day; you can see the clouds that float yonder in the sky—when you see all this various and varied phenomena of nature, you can say, "Before God ever made a one of these, He chose me in Christ Jesus. I am older than creation."

If you are a child of God, that knowledge of your salvation came to you the day that you received the Son of God as your Saviour, but 1900 years before you received Him, Jesus Christ had already died for your sins, and in the aeons of eternity gone by, before the world began, God Himself had already chosen you in Christ Jesus unto salvation.

Listen again:

"But we are bound to give thanks always to God for you, brethren beloved of the Lord, because God hath from the beginning CHOSEN YOU TO SALVATION through sanctification of the Spirit and belief of the truth."—II Thess. 2:13.

If you are saved, you were chosen of God before anything ever began—before this world began, before a human being ever lived here, before Adam and Eve ever walked in the Garden of Eden, before there was ever one flower within that

garden, or one blade of grass to grace the earth—before this world was, God had chosen us from the beginning unto salvation.

Whenever I say this, I am always reminded that somebody will say, "But, Brother Gilpin, I made a choice. I remember how I chose the Lord." Beloved, so do I. I can remember very definitely and very distinctly that little choice that I made, but what was my choice in comparison to God Almighty's choice? My choice of Him was nothing more than the ratification of God Almighty's eternal choice that was made before the foundation of the world. Our Lord said:

"Ye have not chosen me, but I have chosen you."—John 15:16.

The only choice that we ever made was merely the acceptance of the choice of the Lord Jesus Christ Himself. Think of it this morning, that the great God of the universe who made this world and who flung it out into space, and who spoke the sun and the stars and the moon into existence—think of it that that God, before any of this ever began, had already made a choice of you, and you, and you, unto salvation—that He chose, purposed and planned our salvation before the foundation of the world. No wonder Solomon said, "Great is our God." He is great.

Not only is God great in His pre-determining purposes and in His choosing of the recipients of salvation, but I would remind you that He is great in His SAVING ABILITY. That God who chose you also had to save you, and the way that He had of saving you was not by election, but by redemption in Jesus Christ. The election or the choice merely marked out the fact that salvation was to come to us, and merely pre-determined that we would be saved and guaranteed our salvation. The way whereby we are saved is not by election or by His choosing, but we are saved by His redemption which was wrought out by Jesus Christ at Calvary. Beloved, great is our God in His saving ability.

"For the Son of man is come to seek and to save that which was lost."—Lu. 19:10.

"Wherefore he is able also to save them to the uttermost that come unto God by him, seeing he ever liveth to make intercession for them."—Heb. 7:25.

"This is a faithful saying, and worthy of all acceptance, that Christ Jesus came into the world to save sinners; of whom I am chief."—I Tim. 1:15.

Turn to the Word of God and read about a man named Jacob. If ever there were an individual in all this world who was low in principle, it was Jacob; but, beloved, God saved him.

Turn to the New Testament and read the story of how God saved Zaccheus. I can see him as the Lord Jesus paused beneath that tree, with little Zaccheus up in the tree. As He paused there, Jesus gave a command. I can see little Zaccheus as he fell out of that tree at the feet of Jesus, and I can hear him as he said, "Lord, if I have taken anything from any man by false accusation, I restore him fourfold." The law just demanded that he restore twofold, but Zaccheus went twice as far. Beloved, I know that salvation came to that man that day, for Jesus said so.

Beloved, if God can save a man like Jacob, if God can save a man like Zaccheus, if God can save a woman like Mary Magdalene, and if God can save the worst, the vilest, the lowest, and the meanest, surely we can stand in His presence and say, "Great is our God in His ability

to save." After all, beloved, doesn't take any more of God's grace to save the worst than it does to save the best. We talk about the fellow who is down on the moral scale. We talk about that individual's salvation as though it were a great miracle of grace. Beloved, it is a miracle anytime God saves any of us. It is a supernatural operation of God Almighty's marvellous grace whereby any of us are ever saved, and it takes no more grace to save one than it does another. Great is our God in His ability to save.

I would remind you also that our God is not only great in His ability to save, but that He is great in HIS ABILITY TO KEEP US SAVED. Wouldn't it be a pathetic thing if God were to save you and then turn you loose and let you die and go to Hell? I can't think of anything that could be much more pathetic than for me as a preacher, to stand here and say, "Now, brother, the Lord can save you, but you have to watch out, or you might lose your salvation." Wouldn't that be a horrible message to preach? I can't think of anything more terrible than to tell a man that there is a possibility that he might lose his salvation.

My brother, who was it who pre-determined my salvation? It was God. Who was it that chose me unto salvation? It was God. Who was it that redeemed me whereby that I am saved? It was God. Beloved, my salvation isn't mine to start with; it is all of God in every particular. How then could there be a possibility of me ever losing that which was never mine except as a gift, and which became mine because of God's greatness in pre-determining, in choosing, and in saving me? Beloved, I am glad for the fact that God is great in His ability to keep me saved.

"Who shall also CONFIRM YOU UNTO THE END, that ye may be blameless in the day of our Lord Jesus Christ."—I Cor. 1:8.

He is not going to confirm you just as long as you hold out. He is not going to confirm you just as long as you are a good boy or a good girl. He is not going to confirm you just as long as you are happy. He is not going to confirm you just as long as everything moves smoothly. Beloved, He is going to confirm you unto the end. That means the days when you are disobedient as well as when you are obedient. That means the times when you have burdens and difficulties that take your mind off the Lord and cause you to worry. He is going to confirm you unto the end. Great is our God in His ability to keep you saved.

One day Jesus said:

"My sheep hear my voice, and I know them, and they follow me: And I give unto them eternal life; and they shall NEVER PERISH, neither shall any pluck them out of my hand. My Father, which gave them me, is greater than all; and no one is able to pluck them out of my Father's hand."—John 10:27-29.

It is no wonder that Paul said:

"Nay, in all these things we are more than conquerors through him that loved us."—Rom. 8:37.

Some people say, "If I can barely get into Heaven I will be satisfied." Listen, beloved, I won't. I tell you this morning, I don't want the back seat of a Baptist church, and I don't want the back seat of Heaven. As far as I am concerned, I know that I am going there. I know it now, and I am not worried about it, and I am not concerned lest I

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You may give without loving, but you cannot love without giving.

## "A Great House For A Great God"

(Continued from page two)

beloved, of God, the worst that we talk about is the scale. We talk about the dual's scale. We are a great turn to God's Word and loved, it said, "We are more than conquerors." Remember when He pernaturned the five thousand men, not mighty's mounting women and children, by any that they picked up twelve based it takes of fragments. He not only had one hand enough to feed them, but at is one had some left over. Remember when He fed the four thousand men, not counting the women and children. They picked up seven baskets of fragments. He not only had enough to feed them but He had some left over. That is the way with God's grace. We are more than conquerors through Him that led us. He not only is going to save us, but He is going to keep us, "Now when we get to Heaven we have used up in the progress of our journey here on earth."

I like to hear Paul as he says: "For I am persuaded, that neither death, nor life, nor angels, nor principalities, nor powers, nor things present, nor things to come, Nor height, nor depth, nor any other creature, shall be able to separate us from the love of God, which is in Christ Jesus our Lord." — Rom. 8:38, 39.

Beloved, thank God, there is power that can take you out of the hands of God when once you have been saved — not because of your strength, and not because of your greatness, but because great is our God. Yes, beloved, our God is a great God. He is great in His pre-determining purposes; He is great in His choosing; He is great in His saving ability; and He is great in His ability to keep those whom He has saved.

Were you ever in Washington, D.C.? If you were, then you know that the highest peak in Washington is the Washington Monument. I'll never forget the time that I first saw it, and the impression that it made upon me. You remember, those of you who have seen it, how it stands 555 feet above the earth. It is very unusual in its make-up. There is no office of any important official located within it. There is no archive within it, nor does it house any precious document. There is no vault in it for the housing of precious gold or silver. There is no auditorium within where men might meet, or even for to worship God. There is no name carved upon it. I talked about it and marvelled at the fact that there was no name of any individual carved upon it. Then I thought—this monument, marvelous as it is, built in memory of him who was first in war, and first in peace, first in the hearts of his countrymen — marvelous is it, that all people of the United States look upon it as a symbol of the first individual who was president of our country. I walked away from it, the man who was with me said, "Brother Gilpin, do you know why it is that they have no skyscrapers in Washington?" Then I looked around and it dawned on me that there were none. He said, "The reason that they have no skyscrapers here is because nothing can be erected here that is above the Washington Monument." I walked away from that place and the thought came to my mind — great is my God in His pre-determining purposes; great is my God in His choosing; great is my God in His salvation; great is my God in His saving ability and His keeping ability. There can be nothing greater than my God. Washington

won't allow any skyscrapers to be built for fear that it might mar the beauty and the sublimity of the Washington Monument. How much more should it humble us when we think that there can be nothing above the greatness of our God.

## II

### A GREAT GOD DESERVES A GREAT HOUSE.

If you will read in the New Testament, you will find that the early Christians didn't have church buildings. There wasn't a single church in the New Testament, so far as we know, that owned their own building. They were too poor. But, beloved, a great God deserves a great house.

This text which I have read to you from II Chronicles is taken from the story of the building of Solomon's temple. Now, beloved, in Solomon's day, by taxation that temple was built. They didn't spare any cost. It was built of the best of hewn stone so that when the stones were fitted together, so perfect was the fit that it appeared to be one solid stone. It was built of choice cedar — not second growth, and not culls, but choice cedar. It was plastered not with ordinary plaster that we use in our homes and buildings today, but it was plastered with silver and gold. It had a built-up roof, which was built out of pure gold. Listen, beloved, that building for God back there was the greatest house that could be built in all Israel, and the reason was, that God was not to be represented by anything except the greatest — a great house for a great God.

Every once in a while I will visit some community to preach where they will be worshipping in a little shack, and where the building that they have for worship purposes isn't really fit for a barn. I have preached in buildings, beloved, that actually were not good enough to be a decent barn. I tell you, it is a disgrace for any man or woman to live in a finer house than the church of which he is a member. A great God deserves a great house.

This house, beloved, was built for one purpose—that we might worship God. One day one of our brethren, Brother Jack Rock, and I were here inside the building when we were building this structure, walking about. We hadn't had a service in this auditorium yet, but we were walking about, planning and talking and looking forward to the future. We heard voices and we looked up in the balcony and two women were standing there. One of them said to the other, "Now that we are getting our building so pretty, we will have to dress up better." Brother Rock said, "Brother Gilpin, we are not building this building to cause people to dress up better." I immediately went to my God in prayer and said, "Oh God, either save that woman or take her out of the church." Beloved, you can't tell me that a woman is right with the Lord who is thinking about a building as a means of reflection of the styles of this life. We have a great God, beloved, and a great God deserves a great house—a house wherein we can worship Him.

This building is that we might worship God. These seats on which you sit are for the purpose that we might worship God. If we put carpet on this floor, it is for the purpose that we might better worship God. When I stand here beside this sacred desk, the corners worn by twenty-four years and better of my hand-prints — when I stand beside this sacred desk

## LIGHT TO LIVE BY



Reprinted at the request of many of our readers.

that is hallowed to me through the years, it is for one purpose, that you and I might worship God. Beloved, we are not here for trifling. We are not here to trifle with the souls of men. We are here to worship God. The church building doesn't need a gymnasium. It doesn't need a restaurant. It doesn't need a theater. It doesn't need a hospital. A church building, beloved, is to worship God.

I know some churches that are more like community club centers than they are places of worship. I have been in some churches that if they would quit having fish fries and chicken dinners, it would take six months to get the smell of fish and chicken out of it, after they have quit doing so. God's house is not that we might serve our bellies nor our flesh in any way, but God's house is a place that we are to worship God.

**PRAYER**, beloved, is an element of worship. It is, to my mind, one outstanding element, and yet how little the house of God is used for prayer.

"My house is the house of prayer; but ye have made it a den of thieves." — Lu. 19:46.

What Jesus said in the days of His flesh can be said of many, many church buildings today. His house is to be a house of prayer. It should be such, but most often it is merely a den of thieves.

Then, beloved, His house ought to be a house for **PRaise**. If we are going to worship God, we can't worship Him if we don't praise Him. I like to read that text which says:

"Speaking to yourselves in psalms and hymns and spiritual songs, singing and making mel-

ody in your heart to the Lord." — Eph. 5:19.

Beloved, I have a different conception of this great house that we have for a great God to what lots of people have. My conception is that it is for worshipping purposes. It is not for the purpose that we should come here and praise one another, but we are to come here to praise our God. If there is any individual in all this world who decries and despises religious jazz, it is this preacher who is speaking to you. When I speak of religious jazz, I mean the songs that ordinarily are sung by the Holy Rollers on the radio and the songs that are ordinarily sung at these singing conventions. If there are any songs that I despise, they are these. I call them religious jazz. They are so jazzy that there is no worship about them at all. God's people need to praise the Lord. That is why I like to sing:

"Amazing grace! how sweet the sound,  
That saved a wretch like me!  
I once was lost, but now am found,  
Was blind, but now I see."

I like to sing those great old songs — "How Firm A Foundation," "Amazing Grace," and "Holy, Holy, Holy." I like to sing about Him who is to be the King of kings and the Lord of lords. I like to sing "All Hail The Power of Jesus' Name." Beloved, there is worship there. God's house was built for worship. If you are going to worship Him, you have to worship Him in prayer and in praise.

Then, beloved, we worship Him in **PREACHING**. Did you ever stop to think that when

Jesus Christ began His ministry, that He began to preach? He went into the temple and read from the book of Isaiah. After He had read from the book of Isaiah, He said:

"This day is this Scripture fulfilled in your ears." — Luke 4:21.

Jesus began His ministry preaching. Then when He sent out His disciples, He didn't tell them to tell sob stories and funny stories, that they might cause the people to cry one minute and laugh the next. Instead, He said:

"And as ye go, preach, saying, The kingdom of heaven is at hand." — Mt. 10:7.

Beloved, when He sent out the seventy, He gave them the same commission, for He said:

"All power is given unto me in heaven and in earth. Go ye therefore, and teach all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit: Teaching them to observe all things whatsoever I have commanded you: and, lo, I am with you always, even unto the end of the world." — Mt. 28:18-20.

Beloved, God's house is a house that is built for a great God, and it is built for the purpose of worshipping that God; and the only way that we can worship Him is by prayer and praise and by the preaching of His Word.

I like to think that this church is for this purpose. I am not a priest, but I am a preacher, and (Continued on page four)

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OCTOBER 10, 1953



None live so pleasantly as those who live by faith.

## "A Great House For A Great God"

(Continued from page three)  
I am to represent God to you through His Word. Beloved, I don't believe in doing it in a half way manner. Lots of churches have gotten to the place where they have a program to go by on Sunday, and the preacher is about the fifteenth on the list. He usually gets ready to preach about a quarter to twelve, and woe be to him if he dares to go over twelve o'clock with his sermon. Most churches today want a sermonette, and I never try to preach one. I conclude that if a man preaches a sermonette he has to be a preacherette, and I don't want anybody to call me

a preacherette. Beloved, if a preacherette preaches a sermonette, do you know what it is going to produce? It is going to produce some Christianettes, and I certainly, if I were you, would not want to sit out here and think of myself as a Christianette. You know, beloved, if a preacherette preaches a sermonette, and that develops Christianettes, do you know what you are going to have after a while? You are going to have a churchette instead of a church.

Beloved, we have a great God, and that great God deserves a great house — the best house you can give Him. He deserves that we worship Him in this house, and if we are going to worship Him we must worship Him in praise, in prayer, and in the preaching of His Word. May

God help us to be true to the task of worshipping our great God in this house that we have built for His glory!

I have come to this conclusion, beloved, that so far as God's house is concerned, when the Word of God is fearlessly preached, if you are one of God's people you will come back for more just like the children of Israel every morning for forty years came back for more manna. So many preachers have come to the place where they will turn their church building over to any kind of an appeal that comes along. I conclude that when Sunday comes it is my business to be here in this place to preach God's Word and it is your business to be here to worship with me as I preach about a great God.

May we ever remember that our God is great, and that He deserves a great house, and may we thus worship Him in prayer, and praise, and preaching through all days until Jesus comes! May God bless you.

## Sovereignty

(Continued from page one)  
will to remain in sin. No outside force is ever brought to bear upon the will of the sinner to prevent his turning to God. He is held in the grip of his own evil nature. He follows his own wicked affections. He chooses from inward motives, and thus remains as free in his choices as any being, whether human or divine, good or evil, could possibly be.

## God's Use Of The Assyrians

In the fourth place, let us give our attention to THE CASE OF GOD'S USE OF THE ASSYRIANS TO INFLICT HIS ANGER UPON ISRAEL. The whole story of God's sovereignty and human freedom and responsibility in this striking case is told in a few verses from the tenth chapter of Isaiah thus: "O Assyrian, the rod of mine anger, and the staff in their hand is mine indignation. I will send him against an hypocritical nation, and against the people of my wrath will I give him a charge, to take the spoil, and to take the prey, and to tread them down like the mire of the streets. Howbeit he meaneth not so, neither doth his heart think so; but it is in his heart to destroy and cut off nations not a few." (Isa. 10:5-7). Now skipping down to the twelfth verse let us read the rest of the story: "Wherefore it shall come to pass that when the Lord hath perfected his whole work upon Mount Zion and on Jerusalem I will punish the stout heart of the king of Assyria, and the glory of his high looks." God sent the Assyrians down on Israel and gave them a charge, and then dealt with them for what they did. This proves that God's sovereignty and human freedom and responsibility stand together in the fullest harmony.

## The Crucifiers Of Jesus

The same thing is seen in the fifth place in THE CASE OF THE MEN WHO CRUCIFIED JESUS. Peter says in Acts 2:23 and Acts 4:27 that they did only what God decreed for them to do, but they did it with wicked hands and from wicked motives. They did because they hated Him and wanted Him out of the way. Therefore they did it freely and were responsible. GOD IS SOVEREIGN AND MAN IS FREE.

## Money For Simmons' Book

(Continued from page one)  
the total amount of \$662.00 for the printing of his book, 'A Systematic Study of Bible Doctrine,' in the Portuguese language in Brazil.

Signed, Harold Morris.

## CHRIST'S COMPANIONSHIP

No distant Lord have I,  
Loving afar to be;  
Made flesh for me, He cannot rest

Until He rests in me.  
Brother in joy and pain,  
Bone of my bone was He.  
Now—intimacy closer still  
He dwells Himself in me.

I need not journey far  
This dearest friend to see,  
Companionship is always mine,  
He makes His home in me.

I envy not the Twelve;  
Nearer to me is He;  
The life He once lived here on earth  
He lives again in me.

Ascended now to God,  
My witness there to be,  
His witness here am I, because  
His Spirit dwells in me.

Oh, glorious Son of God,  
Incarnate Deity,  
I shall forever be with Thee  
Because Thou art with me!

—Maltbie D. Babcock

## THE BAPTIST EXAMINER

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