

The Baptist Examiner

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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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HOW A LOST SHEEP GOT HOME

JOSEPH M. WILSON
Winston-Salem, N. C.

"And He spake this parable unto them, saying, what man of you, having an hundred sheep, if he lose one of them, doth not leave the ninety and nine in the wilderness, and go after that which is lost, until he find it? And when he hath found it, he layeth it on his shoulders, rejoicing. And when he cometh home, he calleth together his friends and neighbors, saying unto them, Rejoice with me; for I have found my sheep that was lost."—Luke 15:3-6.

I am aware that this portion of Scripture is somewhat difficult of interpretation, and there are varied and conflicting views on its proper meaning. You may differ with me on my exegesis

of this Scripture, but I insist that the truths which I shall base upon that exegesis are truths that are taught prominently in the Word of God. If you differ with me on the meaning of this passage, you cannot differ with me on the truths that I base on this passage. If you do, you will just be differing with truths clearly and abundantly taught in Scripture.

Salvation as pictured in this Scripture is in direct contrast to the usual idea about salvation. How often unsaved folk are asked: "Have you found the Lord?" The unsaved are taught again and again that salvation is something they are to seek for, and that it is found by them at the end of a long and painstaking search. A little boy was asked:

"Have you found the Lord?" He replied, "I did not know He was lost, but I was, and He found me." Salvation is not the result of our searching and finding—not the result of our efforts; but salvation is that sovereign and effectual work of God, whereby He finds us, saves us, keeps us saved through time and carries us over into eternity as the trophies of His saving grace. Let us look closely at this parable, examine it carefully, compare it with other Scriptures, and learn many precious truths therefrom.

THE SHEPHERD

The first question that comes to mind as we look at this parable is, "who is the Shepherd?" Well, we will not have much controversy here. I think we will (Continued on page 5, column 3)

From December 19 to December 22, it was your editor's pleasure to be with the Missionary Baptist Church of Hayward, California, for their Annual Bible Conference, and to say the least, it was an enjoyable season for which we thank God and take courage as we face the future.

A GREAT PASTOR AND CHURCH

Brother R. Lawrence Crawford is pastor of the church and it was truly a blessing to be with him and his family and his church. I have said repeatedly through the years, since I have known him, that I considered Brother Crawford the greatest living preacher of today. When I made a statement similar to this sometime ago, Mrs. Gilpin asked if I perhaps hadn't been a little too extravagant in the use of the superlative degree. I told her then that after living with me for nearly 50 years she ought to know that I "always call them as I see them." I truly heard some great sermons at this conference, but I am satisfied the message that Brother Crawford preached on Monday afternoon was the highlight of the entire conference. Truly, it was a joy to be with him, to fellowship

with him, and to hear him preach.

Brother Crawford is blessed with not only a good church, but a remarkable family by way of a wife and four boys—one of whom is in Vietnam.

In this church, of which Brother Crawford is pastor, he has two brothers, Claude and Tom. They and their wives truly impressed me as unusual folk of the first magnitude, and I thank God for them.

Everything that could be done to make me happy was done both in the Crawford home and in the church. Mrs. ... who generally looked after the serving of the food, was unusually kind. Mrs. ... took time to prepare some artichokes for me for lunch on Monday. The fellowship with Brother Lee Ennis (Sunday School Superintendent) and his wife was wonderful. I had met these folk when I visited California some four years ago and I truly looked forward as to this trip, to fellowshiping with them again.

Claude Crawford, brother of Lawrence, and his wife took me to dinner Monday evening at the Fisherman's Wharf in San Francisco. What a blessing it (Continued on page 4, column 4)

PREDESTINATION

PREACHED AT CALVARY'S 1968 BIBLE CONFERENCE

ELD. AUSTIN FIELD
Coal Grove, Ohio

My subject is the great doctrine of predestination. In assigning this subject to me, Brother Gilpin said jokingly, "I might as well give you predestination for you will preach it anyway." I suppose that is true for it is a doctrine I believe in most firmly, and love very dearly, for it is one of the most comforting doctrines in God's Word. It gives us hope when, humanly speaking, there is no hope; it makes a way out of every difficulty; it makes mole hills out of mountains, for predestination declares that all things come to pass as God has decreed. His decree was not made on the spur of the moment, rather He predetermined that it should come to pass from before the foundation of the world.

"O Lord thou art my God; I will exalt thee, I will praise thy name; for thou hast done wonderful things; thy counsels of old are faithfulness and truth." — Isa. 25:1.

From this verse, it becomes clear that God's counsels or His predestinating work was from old times, or we might put it from before the foundation of the world. Therefore, things come to pass because God has counseled, purposed, decreed, or predestinated that they should, and may I add that things do not come to pass because the same God has predestinated that they should not come to pass. All things that take place in this world, or do not come to pass, do so, or do not, because our Heavenly Father has predetermined the course of this world, and all things therein.

Now, I am sure you can begin to understand that I believe in absolute predestination. Believing that God is an absolute sovereign, and in order to be consistent, I must also believe that predestination is absolute, and that predestination includes positive action and also negative action. I have talked with some who declare with a great deal of pride, "Preacher, I believe in predestination to a certain extent," meaning that some things are predestinated while others are not. Such a theory is not taught in the Bible. In fact, if you do not believe in predestination to the fullest extent, negatively and positively, you do not believe in predestination at all

Because of my firm conviction that God is an absolute sovereign, predestination must also be absolute. I am a predestinarian from the top of my head to the tips of my toes. Yet, in spite of the clear teaching of the Bible on God being an absolute sovereign, we hear some teaching positive predestination, meaning that God predestinated things that come to pass, but the things that do not come to pass, God has no part of them—thus denying the negative side.

I.

Now, with that in mind, let us open our Bibles to Eph. 1:11:

"In whom also we have obtained an inheritance, being predestinated according to the purpose of him who worketh all things after the counsel of his own will."

From this verse, we learn that God works all things after the counsel of His own will, and brethren, I believe God meant exactly what He said. All things including positive action and negative action are working according to the will of God.

I do not anticipate any disagreement on my text statement which is that God is eternal. If He is eternal, then we must argue that His will is also eternal. Because it is eternal, it cannot in



AUSTIN FIELD

anyway be turned, thwarted or set aside by the free will of a sinner or saint, or as some call it, the free moral agency of the sinner. I realize that in Ohio and Kentucky and perhaps in the other states represented here, there is a teaching among so-



called Missionary Baptists as to the doctrine of freedom of the will. It is their belief that God's will is secondary to the will of the sinner and that God has the will to save and to do, but His

will is of no value unless the sinner will permit God to do the things He has counseled to do. Such a theory places the sinner on the throne rather than God; and therefore, I do not believe in free will of the sinner, nor his free moral agency. No, people, I do not believe in free will, but I do believe in the absolute predestinating work and will of a Sovereign God. I have yet to read or to find one single verse to support the doctrine of free moral agency. I have found, read, and studied of the eternal counsel and will of God.

Let us turn to the Bible to show to you the contrast between God's predestinating will, and the will or free moral agency of the sinner:

"According to the eternal purpose which he purposed in Christ Jesus our Lord."—Eph. 3:11.

The Spirit calls God's purpose eternal. If God's purpose (predestination) is eternal, then the will of the sinner is not a determining factor in God's will. Thus, free moral agency could not be true and also God's will be eternal and unchangeable. Perhaps there are some who would refer to Rev. 22:17 thinking that this verse denies all that I have said regarding freedom of the will and absolute predestination. Let us turn to this, and read it, to

see for ourselves if it denies the doctrine of predestination, or teaches freedom of the will on the part of the sinner.

"And the Spirit and the bride say, Come. And let him that is athirst come. And whosoever will, let him take the water of life freely."—Rev. 22:17.

Many boast loud and long when using this verse to teach a general invitation to the sinner and freedom of the will. They hope, by using it, to destroy absolute predestination. Let us look at this verse squarely and honestly without any preconceived ideas that we may have formulated in our minds. May I ask you, what, or who, is the Spirit mentioned in this verse? This Spirit can only be the Com-

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forter who resides in a true Missionary Baptist Church, and may I add that this is the only church in which He resides, and no others can lay claim to Him. I am not having reference to the Spirit's work in salvation, but to Him as the one who leads and guides into all truth. Read John 14 and 16.

The bride in this verse, which is the church of Jesus Christ, is the body in which the Spirit dwells. The Spirit (comforter) and the bride (church) both say come. May I ask you to whom they are speaking? Are they pleading with the sinner? No, beloved, they are speaking to the bridegroom, or Him, to whom the bride is to be wedded. The Spirit explains by saying "even so, come Lord Jesus." Rev. 22. They are pleading for the second coming of Jesus, not the coming of Christ to a sinner.

The verse goes further by declaring, "let him that heareth say come?" How many of you believe in total depravity? Many will quickly answer, "I believe in total depravity." Now, let me follow that question with another. (Continued on page 3, column 2)

The Baptist Examiner Pulpit

A Sermon by Pastor John R. Gilpin

"EXCEPT"

"Except the Lord build the house, they labor in vain that build it."—Psa. 127:1.

I need not remind you that this is one of my favorite texts of the Bible. Through the years gone by, I have read it often, and when preaching, I have used it as a proof text many times in my messages. As I say, it is one of my favorite texts.

I wish, beloved, that you and I might realize the truth of it—that is, if the Lord isn't in everything that we do, it is in vain.

Take, for example, a church. A church may put on a program—a big, extensive, expansive program—and they may be able to get many members, add lots of

folk to the church roll, have big offerings, and much to report to the association, but "except the Lord build the house, they labor in vain that build it."

A man was talking to me a few days ago concerning a certain preacher whom I know to be a heretic, who is a Universal Church man, an Arminian, a feminist and a unionist, and I don't know anything that could be said about him that could be much worse than this combination. About the only thing that I don't find wrong with him is that he isn't a modernist. He boasts of the fact that he believes in the authority of the Bible, the deity, the virgin birth, the blood

atonement, and the resurrection of Christ. Those are his five cardinal truths, but he ignores all the truths in the Bible relative to the church that Jesus built. He will unionize with anybody that comes along. He lets women speak from his pulpit. Certainly, beloved, he is an Arminian through and through.

Well, this man was telling me how this preacher, four or five years ago, went to a certain town and started a church (?) and that now he has a tremendous membership and church property that is worth two and one-half million dollars. He told me how they had their own radio station and their (Continued on page 2, column 1)

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"Except"

(Continued from page one)
TV station. He talked to me concerning this preacher who is seemingly spreading himself, as David said, "like a green bay tree."

Beloved, it looks big to the world that a man, in about five years' time, could build a congregation and a building such as this, yet I know it isn't of the Lord. I know that Arminian work is not of the Lord. I know that any work that relegates the sovereignty of God to the background is not of the Lord. I know that the man is not a sound preacher. I have had correspondence with him and I know that he does not believe in the sovereignty of God. Beloved, I don't consider any preacher a sound preacher, I don't care what his denomination may be, who does not believe in the sovereignty of God, and who does not preach the doctrine of election. Furthermore, any preacher who does not believe the truth relative to the church is not a sound preacher. I don't care how much a man may believe in the virgin birth, the deity, the blood atonement, the resurrection, and the inspiration of the Scriptures. If he does not go further than that, his fundamentalism doesn't mean much to me.

That is why I often say that I do not claim to be a modernist nor a Fundamentalist. The modernists are entirely too modern and the Fundamentalists are not nearly fundamental enough. Now if a man says, "I am a Baptist Fundamentalist," I will shake hands with him. I will go along with him.

Beloved, I say it looks big in the eyes of the world that in less than six years a man builds a congregation and builds a church edifice that is worth two and one-half million dollars and is practically debt-free. But I read my text: "Except the Lord build the house, they labor in vain that build it."

I grant you, beloved, that our church will be 18 years old before long and we certainly have not been able to build a two-and-one-half million dollar edifice. We certainly haven't been able to build a congregation that could support that kind of ministry. I come back to this text, and if the work of this church or any church is not according to the will of the Lord and is not in the light of God's Word, it is in vain and amounts to nothing, and I don't want it.

However, I have used this text as a starting point, or, as I often say, a point of departure. A text for most preachers is merely a point of departure. Most of them get so far from it that they never get back to it. I want to use this

text as a point of departure. I want us to study the word "except" as it is used in some half-dozen places in the Bible.

I

THE "EXCEPT" OF RIGHTEOUSNESS.

"Except your righteousness shall exceed the righteousness of the scribes and Pharisees, ye shall in no case enter into the kingdom of heaven."—Mt. 5:20.

Jesus said that unless your righteousness is greater than that of the scribes and Pharisees, there is no hope for you to go to Heaven.

Now how righteous were the scribes and the Pharisees? You know as well as I that the Pharisees were a righteous group. Our Lord never accused the Pharisees of immorality. Our Lord never accused them in any wise at all of living lives that would bring shame to His cause. They were righteous. They had what we might call a superiority of righteousness. They had a superior righteousness. They counted 612 precepts that were binding upon them. About half of them were negations, which said, "Thou shalt not;" the other half of them were positive declarations, which said, "Thou shalt." They were strong on the basis of human righteousness. But the Lord said to his congregation, "Except your righteousness shall exceed the righteousness of the scribes and Pharisees, ye shall in no case enter into the kingdom of Heaven."

Let me remind you of this fact, a good man, in order to go to Heaven, has to be better than the scribes and Pharisees. Are you as good as the scribes and Pharisees? Are you as good as these individuals that Jesus spoke of? They had 612 precepts that they counted, but Jesus said that they have to be better. You can have all the righteousness that they had and still go to Hell.

That leads me to say that nobody can be saved on the basis of his goodness or his righteousness. These people counted 612 precepts relative to righteousness, but Jesus said that they couldn't go to Heaven even if they lived up to these 612 precepts — that one's righteousness has to be greater than the righteousness of the scribes and the Pharisees. I tell you beloved, you read this verse and you come back to this fact, there is no hope for a man in his own righteousness, and there is no hope for a man in his own morality. No wonder that Isaiah said:

"And all our righteousnesses are as filthy rags."—Isa. 64:6.

Isaiah declared that the very best that there is about us is just like an old dirty, filthy rag. It is no wonder that we read in the New Testament many, many times that our works will not suffice. Paul said:

"For by grace are ye saved through faith; and that not of yourselves; it is the gift of God: Not of works, lest any man should boast."—Eph. 2:8,9.

I tell you, beloved, I don't care how good an individual may be, nor how much righteousness he may have, this text declares that except your righteousness is greater than the righteousness of the scribes and the Pharisees, there is no hope for you.

II

THE "EXCEPT" OF CONVERSION.

"Except ye be converted, and become as little children, ye shall not enter into the kingdom of heaven."—Mt. 18:3.

A man has to be converted to go to Heaven. The word "convert" means "to change." Jesus said that except you be converted, you can't enter into the kingdom of Heaven. Notice that Jesus said there must be a conversion on your part.

I am persuaded that our churches are filled with a lot of ecclesiastical corpses because they have never yet been converted. The very fact that individuals never read their Bible and never pray; the very fact that individuals never seem to seek the will of the Lord for their lives leads me to believe that they have never yet been converted. Jesus said that unless you are convert-

ed, you will never enter into the kingdom of Heaven.

I remember a girl down in Oak Ridge, Tennessee, who wrote me a number of years ago. She wrote and swore me to secrecy in her first letter, and in the second letter wrote me the problem of her heart. She was a preacher's daughter. She had been brought up in a Baptist preacher's home. All her life she said she had been a good, moral girl. She said that she had joined the church during a revival meeting, but that after reading THE BAPTIST EXAMINER she knew she had never yet been saved.

Now, beloved, I insist that that girl is not an isolated case, but that there are multiplied thousands of individuals in this world who are good and moral. They are righteous, but they have never yet been converted. They have joined the church but that is as far as they have gone.

I remember a Baptist deacon who told me some few years ago that he regretted the fact that there were so many good people outside the church. He said, "Of course they have never been saved, but they are good people, and they ought to be inside the church." Beloved, there are thousands of these "good people" who are inside the church, who have never yet been saved. They have never yet been converted. Somebody has urged them to join the church. Somebody has persuaded them to unite with the church. The result is that they have never been converted. The Lord said, "Except ye be converted, and become as little children, ye shall not enter into the kingdom of heaven."

I think about the brother who visited with us in our services this morning. He said he wondered about preachers, as well as about the church members. He said that he thought a lot of them were sincere, but like he himself was for years, they were sincere in their ignorance. I believe, beloved, that his statement is definitely true. There are many people who are sincere all right, but they are sincere in their ignorance. They are ignorant of the Word of God. They are ignorant of the plan of salvation. They are ignorant of the grace of God. They are ignorant about Jesus Christ. They may be sincere, but they are sincerely ignorant. Would to God we could shout from the housetops — that we could shout it around the world, "Except ye be converted, and become as little children, ye shall not enter into the kingdom of heaven."

III

THE "EXCEPT" OF THE NEW BIRTH.

"Except a man be born of water and of the Spirit, he cannot enter into the kingdom of God."—John 3:5.

Beloved, you have to have the new birth to enter into the kingdom of God. It is either the new birth or else a Devil's Hell.

A man may sit down under beautiful trees and rest beneath the shade of the most magnificent trees that are possible to imagine, but except he experiences the new birth he will never sit down under the tree of life and enjoy the fruit thereof.

A man may travel and may see many beautiful and marvelous cities in this world that man has constructed, but except he be born again he will never see that city which has foundations, "whose builder and maker is God."

A man may be able to see the waters of the Niagara. He may be able to drink of the waters that flow from the various springs of the country that are known for their medicinal qualities. Beloved, unless that individual is born again, he will never enter into the kingdom of Heaven and will never drink of the river of life.

You may sit down at the most sumptuous banquet. You may eat in the most gorgeous home. You may enjoy the most outstanding meal that is possible to be cooked, but you will never eat of the tree of life unless you yourself are born again.

IV

THE "EXCEPT" OF REPENTANCE.

"Except ye repent, ye shall all likewise perish."—Luke 13:3.

Let's get the story back of this. One day Jesus and His disciples were gathered together and someone began to tell Him of a recent current event — just like you and I are interested in the things that happen, the current events, the news items that we read in the paper everyday. They said, "Master, wasn't it awful the way Pilate treated those Galileans? He mingled their blood with their sacrifices."

Here were these Galileans going to worship and they are offering their sacrifices upon the altar. They are in the act of religious devotion. As they stand there and observe their sacrifice being offered up to God, Pilate's soldiers swooped down upon them and killed them and mingled their blood with the blood of their sacrifices. As Jesus listened to His disciples telling Him about the Galileans, I think He must have

closed his eyes so far as this world is concerned and looked beyond the altar on which the sacrifice was being offered. He looked beyond the sacrifices and He looked beyond the dead bodies of these Galileans. He looked beyond their blood and the blood of the sacrifices being mingled together. He closed His eyes on this and looked out yonder to eternity, and instead of seeing the bodies of these Galileans, He saw their souls. Instead of seeing them in this life, He saw them in the life to come. And how did He see them? He saw them coming up to the judgment bar of God unsaved, and He said, "Except ye repent, ye shall all likewise perish."

Oh, is it possible for a man to be killed in the act of a religious devotion — is it possible for a man to come to the end of his way in the act of serving God and yet come up to the judgment bar of God unsaved? Jesus said that it was. I tell you, beloved, just because a man is a religious man is no sign that he is going to Heaven. Just because his name is on a church record book is no sign he is a child of God. Just because a man has joined the church is no sign that he is going to be in Heaven after a while. Jesus said that this crowd of religious people who died in the act of offering their religious sacrifices, were lost, and He said to His disciples, "Except ye repent, ye shall all likewise perish."

I tell you, beloved, we need to realize the importance of this word "repentance." When the Lord Jesus Christ came in the beginning of His ministry, we read in the Gospel of Matthew how He came preaching. And what was He preaching? The Word of God tells us that He preached repentance. When John the Baptist, the predecessor of Jesus, came, what did he preach? Listen:

"In those days came John the Baptist, preaching in the wilderness of Judea, And saying, REPENT YE: for the kingdom of heaven is at hand."—Mt. 3:1, 2.

The keynote of John the Baptist's message was repentance, and the keynote of the message of Jesus Christ was repentance, for we read:

"And saying, The time is fulfilled, and the kingdom of God is at hand; repent ye, and believe the gospel."—Mark 1:15.

V

THE "EXCEPT" OF JESUS' DEATH.

"Except a corn of wheat fall (Continued on page 3, column 1)

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"Except"

(Continued from page two)
into the ground and die, it abideth alone; but if it die, it bringeth forth much fruit."—John 12:24.

Who is the corn of wheat that Jesus is talking about? None other than Himself.

Wheat is a self-fertilizing plant. Wheat is sown, it rots, and when that grain of wheat rots, it forms a fertilizer and causes life to grow. The potato is also a self-fertilizing plant. There could never be any wheat grown nor could there ever be a potato grown unless that wheat or that potato rotted. It has to rot in order to produce.

Jesus Christ said, "A grain of wheat has to die or else remain alone. It has to die or it will be just one grain of wheat. It has to perish or there will never be but one grain of wheat. Likewise, the same is true concerning me. I have to die or else there will never be anybody that will be saved." Here is the "except" relative to Jesus' death.

Beloved, if Jesus Christ had come to this world and had lived the perfect life that He did live, and had gone back to Heaven without dying, you and I would be in our sins today.

A few days ago I was called out in the country for a funeral for a little boy. As I stood there beside that little casket and saw it put down into the ground and heard the clods fall on the lid of it, I thought to myself, if it weren't for the death of Jesus Christ, those clods would ring the death knell to the souls of everyone of us. I tell you, beloved friends, there would be absolutely no hope for us if Jesus Christ hadn't died. If He had lived the perfect life, which He did live, and had not died, the Son of God would have saved Himself only and nobody else would have been saved. But the grain of wheat died. The Son of God came to this world and died on the Cross and redeemed the elect of God back to the Father.

I tell you, beloved, I rejoice for this fact, that the grain of wheat that came to Calvary did not die in vain. He died for the elect of God.

CONCLUSION

Let me ask you a simple question in closing. Do you have more righteousness than the scribes? Do you count 612 precepts and do you keep them all and one more? Do you keep 613? Jesus said that you have to have more righteousness than they had to be saved. Do you have more righteousness than they had? If not, then you are lost.

Have you ever been converted? Jesus said, "Except ye be converted, and become as little children, ye shall not enter into the kingdom of heaven." Have you ever been converted? If not, there is no hope for you to go to Heaven.

Jesus said that except you be born again, you can't enter the kingdom of Heaven. Have you ever been born again? Has the Lord worked a miracle in your heart and have you experienced the new birth?

Jesus said, "Except ye repent, ye shall all likewise perish." Have you ever repented? The definition of repentance is this: it is a turning from your dead works. Every individual in this world, naturally speaking, is an Arminian at heart, and he tries to save himself by his own works. Repentance is simply turning from your dead works — away from

what you are trying to do yourself.

You say, "I think I am going to make it. I think I am going to be saved. I have quit a lot of my meanness. I think I will be able to make it after a while." Listen, beloved, you are still depending upon your works. You need to repent and turn away from those dead works.

Listen, beloved, Jesus died on the Cross. He died that you might go to Heaven. If He hadn't died, you wouldn't go to Heaven.

How I thank God that the grain of wheat came and lived and died, and as a result thereof, all of God's elect through all ages are going to be ultimately brought to the Lord Jesus Christ. He may have to move you around. He may have to shift the population in order that you might hear the Word of God. But there is one thing certain, all of God's elect are going to be saved. How precious it is to know that the grain of wheat died, but did not die in vain.

Did He die for you? If He died for you, then you ought to take your stand for Him. You have no right to decide whether you are going to be baptized or what church you will join. Jesus instituted baptism and He instituted His church. If you are saved, you ought to follow Him in baptism immediately, and if you are saved, you ought to unite with His church.

May God bless you!

Predestination

(Continued from page one)

Can those who are dead in sin, and who are the decadent descendants of Adam hear? Hearing is a characteristic of a live man, and those who are dead (spiritually) cannot hear. Then, the verse speaks of those in Christ who are athirst. Again, thirst is not a characteristic of the dead, but of the living. The latter part of the verse says, "whosoever will, let him come and take of the water of life freely." Here again to will is evidence of life—not of death. This verse is not only speaking of the second coming of Jesus and the desire of the Spirit and bride that He hasten the day of His coming but also of those who have been quickened and made alive (spiritually) that they join in the prayer for the coming of the bridegroom. The will mentioned in this verse is not the will of the old nature (Adamic) but the will of a new heart and new spirit placed within us at regeneration. There is not a conflict of absolute predestination and Rev. 22:17.

Perhaps by now you can begin to understand why I despise the doctrine of the freedom of the will of the sinner. It is not Biblical, and therefore is not true. Furthermore, the doctrine of free will and absolute predestination cannot dwell together. They have two different fathers. The father of free moral agency, or free will, is Satan; whereas, the father of predestination is God.

"For the Lord of hosts hath purposed, and who shall disannul it? and his hand is stretched out, and who shall turn it back?" — Isa. 14:27.

The Spirit asks the question, who can turn back the purpose (predestinating work) of God?

Leaving us to answer, we know all too well the answer for there is none who can turn Him back. Yet Satan invents the doctrine of freedom of the will which is nothing more or less than his attempt to defeat the purpose of God, which neither he, nor any of his followers, can do. If God predestinates, no one can change it. If God does not predestinate, pray tell me, people, who can bring it to pass? My Father is a sovereign, He is God, and beside Him there is none other like Him.

"Remember the former things of old; for I am God, and there is none else; I am God, and there is none like me. Declaring the end from the beginning, and from ancient times the things that are not yet done, saying My counsel shall stand, and I will do all my pleasure."—Isa. 46:9-10.

How can God declare the end from the beginning, or from before the foundation of the world? He can because He has predestinated what the end should be.

The God of the average Bible Conference is nothing like the God of the Bible. In fact, He is no better than the little gods of the natives of New Guinea or Africa. They hew out little gods of mud, stone and wood; and here in America, they have hewed them out of their own imagination a god who is subject to the will of the sinner. Such

a god is no better than the gods of wood and stone.

II.

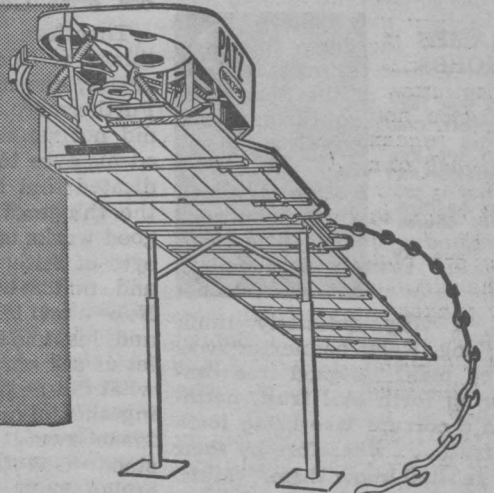
The God of the Bible is an absolute sovereign. Because He is a sovereign, He is doing exactly what He has predestinated from before the foundation of the world. To prove my point on God's sovereignty, or predestinating work, let us look at His work in creating this world. It was He who decreed how large this earth was to be. There was no one else there to give Him counsel. He did not have to be told—neither was there any reason for Him to ask how big to make this earth or the sun and the planets. He predestinated their size and location, and then spoke them into existence. Not only did He predestinate the size of the earth, but all things within it as well. Let us look at the Garden of Eden. He was free to make it as He pleased. So, He predestinated its size and its contents, the number of rivers to be in it and all manner of vegetation, as well as all trees. Perhaps all of you will agree up to this point. Some may part company on my next point, but let us take up the other side of the predestinating work of our sovereign God.

When God decreed to put within the Garden the tree of knowledge of good and evil, was He forced to put it there? The answer is "No." Did He know before He planted it what was

to transpire around it? I think He did. It is my firm belief that God knew exactly what was going to take place around this tree. May I follow this with another question? Did God put it there on purpose? Brother, Sister, answer me, did He put it there on purpose? Your answer must be in the affirmative, Yes, He put it there on purpose. Thus, the tree of knowledge of good and evil was as much a part of God's predestinating work, as was the creation of the Earth. If the tree of knowledge of good and evil was placed in the Garden, and He knew before it was planted the events that were to take place around it, then the events which transpired around the tree were as much the predestinating work of God as was the tree. It is my belief that the entrance of sin in the Garden was no surprise to God. It was a part of His program—His predestinating program. Without sin, we would have never known the love of God, never known His great mercy and kindness, and I would have never known salvation in its fullest. But, because of God's predestinating work in the Garden of Eden, I now enjoy the knowledge of God's love, mercy, and salvation. It was God's decree to save me through the suffering of His Lamb before He made the tree, or before man sinned around that tree.

"Forasmuch as ye know that ye were not redeemed with cor- (Continued on page 7, column 2)

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THE BAPTIST EXAMINER

JANUARY 3, 1970

PAGE THREE

The Baptist Examiner FORUM

"In the light of King Nebuchadnezzar's prayer of Daniel 4:34-37, could we say he was a saved man?"

E. G. COOK

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BIBLE TEACHER

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"There is none that understandeth, there is none that seeketh after God." Again verse 18 says, "There is no fear of God before their eyes."

Only a saved man recognizes the works of God as truth. The Psalmist says, "For the word of the Lord is right; and all his works are done in truth." (Psalms 33:4) Moses sang a song of rejoicing and it is recorded in Deuteronomy 32. Verse 4 says, "He is the Rock, his work is perfect; for all his ways are judgment: a God of truth and without iniquity, just and right is he." Revelation 15:3 repeats these words of Moses as being sung in heaven.

He learned his lesson. He found that "those that walk in pride" are abused by God.

AUSTIN FIELDS

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PASTOR,

Arabia Baptist Church

Arabia, Ohio



Yes, we can say he was a saved man, and these verses under consideration show forth the faith of this man of God. In verse 34, we hear him (Nebuchadnezzar) testify that his understanding returned unto him. Understanding is one of the characteristics of a child of God. The Holy Spirit reveals that an unregenerated man does not understand.

Therefore to understand the standeth, there is none that seeketh after God." Rom. 3:11.

Therefore to understand the things of God as did Nebuchadnezzar, one must be regenerated. Furthermore, his understanding did not return until he had lifted his eyes to Heaven, which indicated that his faith was not in the things of the earth, such as good works of his own, rather his eyes of faith were fixed on God, and that which God had done. Now that his eyes were lifted and his understanding returned, let us ask ourselves this question, what did he understand? In reading the following verses, we are made aware of what he understood: God is an absolute sovereign, he is in the hands of God, and he has no power at all against God. This is a confession that he understood his own depravity before God. The only people on earth who come to the position that Nebuchadnezzar takes in verse 34 are the children of God. Since he had true knowledge of God and of himself, he had the Spirit of God who revealed these things to him.

"For what man knoweth the things of a man, save the spirit of man which is in him? even so the things of God knoweth no man but the Spirit of God." I Cor. 2:11.

Verse 35 gives me conclusive proof that Nebuchadnezzar was saved for no child of Satan would ever write such a verse. I cannot conceive of such words coming from a heart that had not been quickened by the Spirit. Had he been speaking in the energy of the flesh, I am sure He would have extolled and praised the flesh. I realize some argue that an unregenerated sinner can understand the sovereignty of God and the doctrines of grace. I disagree with their theory. The Word of God teaches me that the natural man (un-

regenerated) cannot receive the things of God.

"But the natural man receiveth not the things of the Spirit of God: for they are foolishness unto him: neither can he know them, because they are spiritually discerned." I Cor. 2:14.

"John answered and said, a man can receive nothing, except it be given him from heaven." John 3:27.

There is no doubt in my mind, but that Nebuchadnezzar had received some things of God. John tells us that no man can receive the things of God except it be given him from Heaven. Verse 35 reveals that he had received knowledge from Heaven of the greatness of God. Nebuchadnezzar learned that only God has free will. Some who profess to be saved today need to come to that place, for they boast loud and long of the free will of the sinner, whereas this child of God boasted loud and long of the free will of God. Nebuchadnezzar could teach you "free willers" that it is God's will which is paramount, and that God does what He wills in Heaven, not only in Heaven, but also on earth. To prove that God's will is always accomplished, he adds, "and none can stay His hand." His words in verse 35 give me concrete proof that he was a child of God and that he was saved by grace divine.

Verse 37 gives further evidence that this man was saved. He declares that he will praise and extol and honor the king of heaven. The only ones who can praise God are those who are acquainted with Him. All others praise the works of men, whose works are lies, but Nebuchadnezzar assures us that God's works are true.

The words of Dan. 4:34-37 are not the words of an unbeliever, rather they are the words of a child of God whose faith is grounded in the greatness of God.

ROY MASON

Radio Minister

Baptist Preacher

Aripeka, Florida



While I do not believe that one can answer this question with absolute certainty, I do not believe that he was a saved man. He had had some striking things to happen in his life such that he was convinced that Daniel's God was real, but that does not mean that he discarded the belief in other deities. Often the heathen believed in a whole string of gods, and they were not averse to adding other gods to their list. For instance, the people of Athens had "gods many and Lords many" but they were afraid that they might neglect some god with whom they were not acquainted, and that he might retaliate by sending trouble on them, so they erected an altar to "THE UNKNOWN GOD." That would cover any that they might have ignorantly left out of consideration.

At ancient Baalbeck I once visited the ruins of a great temple—the largest temple ever erected. This temple was not for one god but for several. There was a temple for Baal, and one for Bacchus, the god of booze, and a temple of Venus. All these were built together, and in reality constituted one temple.

I believe that if Nebuchadnezzar had really turned to the one true and living God with his whole heart, he would have thrown away all false deities, and he would have turned Babylon to the true God.

In this day there are happenings in people's lives that induce them to believe that there is really a God, and they may say some complimentary things about him, but there is a vast difference be-

tween this and an actual turning to God with mind and heart and soul.

Bible Conference

(Continued from page one)

was to fellowship with them. The only trouble was that the time of my departure came too soon. Frankly, I was never so "wined and dined" in all my life, nor was I entertained so regally, as I was on this trip.

I think the Missionary Baptist Church of Hayward has one of the greatest opportunities of any church that I have ever visited. There are four million people all about them and so far as I could learn, there is virtually no other church to scripturally minister to this group. What an opportunity and what a challenge!

MADE A MOVIE

California is, as you know, noted for movies. While in Hayward, I made one movie. Brother Charles Burns (a good layman whom I have admired for a long time) and wife of Roy, Utah, were present and he had a movie camera. It was thus that I made the movie.

Seriously, this was about 20 feet in length — 18 feet of film and my two feet.

GREAT CONFERENCE

God truly blessed in the conference. I judge that there were perhaps 25 sermons preached and the entire conference got better and better as time went on, and for the fellowship with the brethren, and also around the Word of God, I truly give God the thanks today.

West Coast brethren: Glen Tweet (Seattle, Washington), Richard Cavaretto (Fremont, California), Noel Brown (Carmichael, California), O. C. Harris (Citrus Heights, California), Ralph Doty (Fossil, Oregon), Obie Tilley, Robert Burke, and Claude Crawford (all of Hayward, California) were a blessing and inspiration. Then, too, Charles Souder (Elizabethton, Tennessee), Wayne Cox (Selmer, Tennessee), and E. G. Cook (Birmingham, Alabama) were truly refreshing with their messages.

Two missionaries, Brother Steve Montgomery (Brazil) and Brother Bill Mayes (Mexico), were in attendance to present their work.

It was indeed a blessing to hear all these brethren and I am more than happy for the fellowship that God gave us. I expect to share a few of the messages with our readers as soon as they can be prepared for publication.

OUTSTANDING STATEMENTS

There were three outstanding statements made during the conference. Brother Noel Brown said, "The Bible is not just a book of texts, but a book to present the Lord Jesus."

Brother Richard Cavaretto said, "I started to preach on the theory of the universal church, but I couldn't find any text that taught it so I had to abandon that subject."

Brother Steve Montgomery said, "When men fail—When the church fails—Get back to instructions — Get back to the Book."

There were many fine messages and statements made, but I considered these three as outstanding.

MEET OLD FRIENDS

It was good to meet my longtime friend, Clarence Savage, from Alabama. He was visiting his daughter in California, and on learning of the services, made it a point to attend all the conference. Brother Clarence Savage is a friend of long standing, and a member of a remarkable family. His father was a horse and buggy doctor in Alabama, who was one of the greatest Baptists I ever knew. I have

been entertained in his home when all of his family (thirteen children), who along with Dr. Savage's grandchildren, made quite a family. It being summer time, we ate outside and it took a table 45-feet long to allow this crowd to sit down at one time. As I say, Clarence comes from a great family. He himself is a great Baptist, and I thank God for the fellowship that we had together.

Brother Gerald Kirkendall of Los Angeles, whom I have known since he was a little boy, drove in for the services on Saturday evening. It was truly a joy to see him and his wife. I thank God over and over for this unexpected pleasure. He grew up near Portsmouth, Ohio, and I have known him since he was a little boy—he being the brother-in-law of Brother Willard Pyle and is a cousin to Mrs. James Hobbs.

ENJOYABLE TRIP

I had a most enjoyable trip from the standpoint of the ease and speed with which it was made. I left home at 9:14 a. m. on the 19th and arrived in California at 2:59 p. m. I left California at 12:05 a. m. Monday night, and arrived in Huntington at 10:45 a. m. Tuesday, flying most of the way at better than 600 miles per hour.

In this respect, when you fly, fly Delta. Their service in my opinion is in a class to itself and I would recommend them over any other line on which I have ever flown.

This trip chalks up considerably over a million miles that I have traveled in the service of the Lord and I thank God for His goodness and blessings to me through the years.

Some people are afraid of planes, but personally, I'm not. I don't particularly care for flying, but it is a quick way to make a trip, and I thank God for it.

Eight preachers had been to a convention on the West Coast and were flying home. On noticing a troubled look on the face of the stewardess; they inquired, to learn that one of the engines had just "conked out." One of the preachers told her to go tell the captain that he had nothing to worry about since he had eight preachers on the plane and surely God would take care of the plane. When she returned, she still had the troubled look on her face, and reported that the captain said he would rather have four engines than eight preachers.

I think I would agree with the captain, but at any rate, I never feel safer than when I am in the sky, and I never feel closer to the Lord for I realize His sovereignty and my dependence.

It is good to be home though with my wife, my friends, my shop, and my church. John, Jr., who looks after the shop, did an excellent job while I was gone, and he, along with another man worked until 10:30 on Monday night in order to get a job ready for me by the time that I returned. It cost a great deal to make this trip — \$289.80 — for plane fare alone. It is hard to take this much money from our printing shop, and yet, I am glad that I went as I feel much good was accomplished thereby.

LARGE OFFERING

I might say that I was greeted on my return immediately with the news that TBE had received one offering of a thousand dollars, while I had been gone. Some friends in Arkansas had sent this as a year-end offering. All offerings are a blessing, but naturally, this one gladdened my soul immensely.

There were three time changes between Ashland and San Francisco. Yet, I am impressed that the old Book remains the same. It is needed one place just the same as another. I am truly glad that whether in Kentucky or on (Continued on page 5, column 1)

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Baptist Church

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Yes, I very definitely think that King Nebuchadnezzar was a saved man. "A good tree cannot bring forth evil fruit, neither can a corrupt tree bring forth good fruit . . . wherefore by their fruits ye shall know them." (Matt. 7:18, 20) He was a saved man because of the fruits of his lips.

You will notice in the text that his "understanding returned" unto him. This was more than just an ordinary understanding but one that comes from God because he blessed, praised, and honored the most High. He tells us that He is a sovereign God, one who is in complete control of the heaven and earth. He also speaks of the truth of God as well as the judgment. All of this is enough to show the fruits of a saved man.

The Bible teaches us that our understanding must be opened by God before we can have true understanding. "Then opened he their understanding, that they might understand the scriptures." (Luke 24:45) Romans 1:31 points out that part of the attributes of sinful man is that he is "without understanding."

Verse 35 of our text could not come from the lips of an unsaved man. Romans 3:9-26 describes a lost man. Note verse 11,

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Bible Conference

(Continued from page 4)
the West Coast, the old Book meets the needs of everyone.

THINGS I DIDN'T LIKE

There were some things about the trip that I didn't like:

Particularly the hippies—dirty, filthy, bearded weirdo hippies.

A Negro man and a young white girl walking with their arms entwined about each other at the airport.

Hippies every where — barefooted, long-haired, smelly hippies.

A white man, a Negro woman, and two little Mulatto children boarding a plane in San Francisco.

Homosexual men wearing skirts to advertise their profession.

On one street in San Francisco, are located many burlesque shows featuring many completely nude actors.

Advertising in other windows offered bottomless and topless entertainment.

Restaurants featuring topless waitresses.

Drinking on planes. Every stewardess is a bartender and nearly everybody drinks. One Negro woman seated across the aisle from me had scarcely settled into her seat on the plane when she asked the stewardess to bring her "a double shot of Bourbon."

"Woe unto him that giveth his neighbor drink, that putteth thy bottle to him, and maketh him drunken also, and thou mayest look on their nakedness." Habakkuk 2:15.

Christmas — there were lights and trees everywhere. On the plane from Chicago to San Francisco, a well-dressed, cultured lady, who sat with me, expressed her sympathy with me that I was having to make this trip at the Yuletide season, but she seemed relieved that I would get home in time for Christmas.

Short miniskirts, especially at

airports. The majority of the stewardesses didn't wear enough clothes below the hips to flag a handcar. It is said that skirt used to be a proper noun. I would say in the light of this trip that it is now an abbreviation. Many of the skirts are just overly wide belts.

On six planes and in three airports, I never saw anyone reading God's Word, although I saw them reading everything else.

On the streets of San Francisco, I saw one weirdo selling the filthiest magazine ever published, called "Hard Core." The colored picture on the front page was revolting and disgusting in its obscenity.

People have no thought of God. The majority of folk that I saw on this trip with the exception of those at the conference did not have God in their thoughts. I am of the opinion that I have just returned from a trip to modern Sodom and Gomorrah.

CHINATOWN AND FREEWAYS

I have often heard of Chinatown with its thousands of "Chinks." Brother Crawford says there are more Chinese living in San Francisco than in Hong Kong. On Monday evening, after the conference ended, Lawrence and Claude, along with their wives, took me to Chinatown. This was an experience in itself for which I'll never cease to thank God. Yet, in it all, I am amazed when I realize that of these many, many thousands of Chinamen, all of them are in need of the gospel and, yet, the majority of them know nothing at all about it.

I surely don't like the freeways—some of them four deep—but I enjoyed this trip to Chinatown over these freeways, particularly since Brother Lawrence Crawford was doing the driving. He knows the area and what roads to take, and I just settled back and enjoyed the trip, and the fellowship which ended with a dinner at world-famous Fisherman's Wharf, courtesy of Brother Claude. Very shortly afterwards, I left these brethren, bidding them goodbye at the airport to come back home and take up my work here.

Having seen the value of **The Baptist Examiner** and its influence and having heard the testimony of various brethren, whom I met on the West Coast, I am

convinced that God has given us a great work in the publishing of the paper and I am thanking God today for the privilege that is ours as we begin the New Year in His service.

Sheep . . . Home

(Continued from page one)

all agree that the true and proper shepherd of the Lord's sheep is none other than the Lord Jesus Christ. It was prophesied of Him that He would be the shepherd.

"He shall feed his flock like a shepherd; he shall gather the lambs with his arm, and carry them in his bosom, and shall gently lead those that are with young."—Isa. 40:10.

This is a prophecy of the coming of our Lord and of His shepherding of His people. Who can forget the beautiful twenty-third Psalm in which David sees and describes the Lord Jesus as the shepherd of His people.

"I am the good shepherd; the good shepherd giveth his life for the sheep."—John 10:11.

Here, our Lord definitely identifies himself as the Shepherd. Surely, we need not argue this point. Surely, all the children of God gladly own the Lord Jesus as their great, good, and chief Shepherd. I would, in passing, point out that this is evidence of the Deity of Jesus Christ. A mere man could never be the shepherd of even one of the Lord's sheep. The work is too important and difficult—the needs of the sheep are too varied and manifold—the number of the sheep is too large—for a man to be entrusted with or enabled to do the work of the shepherd. It is necessary that Jesus Christ be God Almighty, and that He possess all the attributes, power, and abilities of Deity in order for Him to be the Shepherd of the Lord's sheep. So beloved, I gladly own Jesus Christ as my God and my Shepherd, and right thankful. I am that He is such to me.

THE SHEEP

The next question that comes to the front as we look at this parable is: "Who are the sheep?" Now, our peaceful harmony is at an end, and much controversy ensues over the proper answer to this question. Let me point out that the sheep are not just the nation of Israel.

"And other sheep I have, which are not of this fold; them also I must bring."—John 10:16.

Here we see that there are those who go to make up the complete number of the sheep of the Lord that are not of the nation Israel. Further, not all people are the sheep of the Lord.

"Ye believe not, because ye are not of my sheep." — John 10:26.

Here it is clearly pointed out that some of mankind are, and some are not, the sheep of the Lord Jesus Christ. And it is clearly set forth in this verse that faith is the evidence that one is already a sheep, and not the means by which one becomes a sheep. This verse stands forever engraved on the page of God's Word as one among a multitude that teach the sovereign grace of God in salvation. Oh, how the free-will heretics wiggle and squirm over this verse, and how they strain human ingenuity in vain efforts to get around the clear teaching of this verse.

Furthermore, we learn that the sheep are not just those already saved. The usual idea of man is that all are goats by nature, but that some become sheep by being saved. This is absolutely contrary to God's Word. The Bible teaches that goats are goats—always have been and always will be goats. They are those whom the Lord passed over when He made up His elect family, left them in their sins, and ordained them to hell for their sins. The Bible teaches that sheep are sheep. They always have been,

and they always will be, sheep. The sheep in this parable was just as much a sheep while lost and away from the shepherd as it was after being found. The Bible pictures mankind as divided between goats and sheep, and none ever passing from one class to the other. Then it pictures the sheep as lost sheep and found sheep. But I would anticipate a later point in the message by saying that all the sheep will eventually be found. I insist, beloved, that the Lord Jesus is not a goat-herder, but a Shepherd. He did not come seeking goats, but searching for His lost sheep. Amen! Praise God!

Now I want to make it crystal clear that the Bible speaks of the elect of God, who are not yet saved, as the sheep, people, and children of God.

"And other sheep I have, which are not of this fold; them also I must bring, and they shall hear my voice; and there shall be one fold, and one shepherd."—John 10:16.

This verse is most clear that there are those who are referred to as the Lord's sheep who have not yet heard His voice and not yet been brought into the fold of salvation. They will hear His voice—He must bring them—but prior to this they are referred to as His sheep. The sheep in the parable was a sheep before being found, and it was exactly that, because it was a sheep that the shepherd went searching for.

"For I am with thee, and no man shall set on thee to hurt thee; for I have much people in this city."—Acts 18:10.

Here, God's elect who are not yet saved are clearly referred to as the people of the Lord before they are saved. Paul, evidently was considering leaving Corinth for some other field of labor. The Lord appeared to Paul and used the doctrine of election to encourage Paul to stay on and labor in Corinth. God told Paul that He had some elect in that city who were His people though not yet saved, and that God was going to use Paul and his preaching to bring those elect unto salvation. This glorious truth so encouraged and fired the apostle that he continued a year and six months in that city. But note again, that the elect were referred to as the people of God before they were saved.

"And not for that nation only, but that also he should gather together in one the children of God that were scattered abroad."—John 11:52.

Here we note that the elect are referred to as children of God even before they are gathered by the drawing work of the Holy Spirit. You see, God the Father elected a people that are scattered abroad through time, and through the earth. Christ died for the sins of those chosen ones. The Holy Spirit gathers them to the purpose and purchased salvation, but they are called the children of God prior to their gathering.

"And because you are sons, God hath sent forth the Spirit of his Son into your hearts, crying, Abba, Father."—Gal. 4:6.

We see here that God's elect are referred to as sons even before that work of the Holy Spirit by which they are brought to the experience of salvation.

So you see that it is quite clear that the elect of God are referred to in Scripture (and the Scripture is our final authority) as the sheep, people, and children of God even before they are saved. Oh, beloved, they are sheep, people, and children by election. They are such in the eternal purpose of God. And, because the eternal purpose of God cannot be frustrated, these people are referred to as such even before they experience that work of saving grace. Do you not see that, when God purposes a thing, it is as good as done, and that He can refer to it as done because it is as sure to be, as if it already were. So because we are the sheep, people, and children of God in His eter-

nal purpose, we can be referred to as such even before we experience saving grace. What God purposes to be, shall certainly be. Those who are God's by choice and purpose, shall certainly be His by experience at the appointed time. So, we are able to answer the question as to who are the sheep by saying that the sheep are the elect of God.

Now the one hundred sheep represent the total number of the elect of God. Before the world began, God sovereignly and unconditionally chose a great number that no man can number (but a definite number known to God) and predestinated them to be the objects of His saving grace. These chosen ones were given to Christ in the everlasting covenant of grace to be His sheep. In that everlasting covenant, Jesus Christ received these chosen ones as His sheep and undertook and agreed to do the part of the shepherd for them. To love them, to find them, to save them, and to keep them. The number of the elect is a definite number and cannot be added to by the free-will (so-called) of man, or by the high pressure tactics of Arminian evangelists. And praise God, this number cannot be diminished by the work of Satan, or the failures of man. It is a definite number and is represented by the one hundred sheep in this parable.

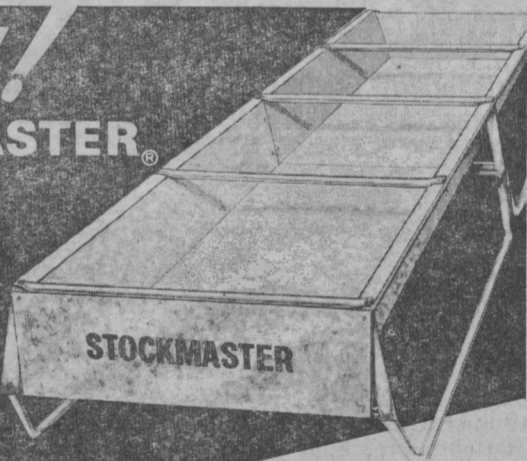
Now, beloved, this doctrine of election is a glorious doctrine. It is a Biblical doctrine, and a Baptist doctrine. The man who does not see this doctrine clearly and repeatedly taught in the Word of God, is simply blind as to the meaning of the Scripture. The doctrine of election is not hidden away in some obscure corner of the Bible—in a place that is of hard and difficult understanding. Election is revealed in the Bible as clear as the shining of the noonday sun on a cloudless day. The Bible not only teaches election, but it makes it so prominent that you could only get rid of election by getting rid of the Word of God. In fact, election is so prominent in the Bible, that those who hate election truth must labor assiduously to invent some way to get around the true doctrine of election while they hold the term.

This doctrine of sovereign and unconditional election is, beyond honest controversy, a Baptist doctrine. The man who calls himself a Baptist and does not believe this doctrine is either inexcusably ignorant or a deliberate liar and deceiver. No man has the honest right to call himself a Baptist preacher who does not believe strongly, and proclaim fearlessly, this glorious truth. Those who call themselves Baptists and do not believe, and even oppose this doctrine, are wearing the wrong uniform. They are flying the wrong flag. They are traitors to the glorious name they wear. That name has been worn proudly by the true churches of Christ since the days of our Lord. That name is covered with glory and stained with the blood of untold numbers of martyrs who gladly gave their lives for that for which Baptists stand. How sad it is to those who know the truth, and how wicked it is that men, who oppose nearly all that the name Baptist has stood for through nearly two thousand years of glorious history, will yet hypocritically hold on to a name which they have no right to wear. People, be honest. Believe and preach what Baptists have historically stood for or give up the name and be out-and-out what you are, and quit deceiving the people by wearing a name in which you do not believe. Again, I say, it is beyond honest controversy that election is a Baptist doctrine, and the man who (Continued on page 6, column 3)

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The Redeemer's Return

By ARTHUR W. PINK

(Continued from last week)

4. Our Hope is the personal Return of our Redeemer.

"Jesus Christ our hope" (I Tim. 1:1). Jesus Christ is the believer's "all in all" (Col. 3:11). He is "our peace" (Eph. 2:14). He is "our life" (Col. 3:14). He is "made unto us wisdom, and righteousness, and sanctification, and redemption" (I Cor. 1:30). And, we repeat, He is "our Hope." But hope always looks forward. Hope has to do with the future. "We are saved in hope: but hope that is seen is not hope: for what a man seeth why does he yet hope for? But if we hope for that we see not, then do we with patience wait for it" (Rom. 8:24, 25). This means that what we hope for is that which we do not yet possess. In Scripture, "hope" is something more than desire or longing: it is a joyous expectation, a definite assurance. Faith is that which lays holds of God's promises; hope is that spiritual grace which sustains the heart until the promise is "received." As another has said, "Man was not made for the present, and the present was not intended to satisfy man. It is for the future, not the present, that man exists" (W. Trotter).

The Hope of the believer is clearly set forth in Titus 2:13—"Looking for that blessed hope and appearing of the glory of the great God and our Saviour Jesus Christ" (R. V.). Our Hope is the personal Return of Christ when He shall come back again to receive us unto Himself. Our Hope is to be taken out of this scene of sin and suffering and sorrow to be *where Christ is* (John 14:1-3). Our Hope is to be caught up to meet the Lord in the air and be for ever "with the Lord" (I Thess. 4:16, 17). Our Hope is to be "made like" Him, and this hope will be realized when "we shall see Him as He is" (I John 3:2). This is the "one hope" of our calling" (Eph. 4:4). This is *the only Hope* for everything else has failed.

The hope of Philosophy has failed. Philosophy was the beautiful ideal of the ancient. When Greece and Rome were the leading nations of the earth, the goal of every ambitious young man's desire was to become a philosopher. Philosophers were respected and honored by all. Philosophy set out to solve the 'riddle of the universe' and to explain the *rationale* of all creation. It was expected that philosophy would find a solution to every problem and devise a remedy for every ill. But what were its fruits? "The world by wisdom knew not God" (I Cor. 1:21). When the apostle Paul came to Athens—one of the principal centers of philosophic culture—he found an altar erected to "The Unknown God" (Acts 17:23). The only place the word "philosophy" is found in the Scriptures is in Col. 2:8, where we read "*Beware lest any man spoil you through philosophy and vain deceit*, after the tradition of men, after the rudiments of the world, and not after Christ." Philosophy proved a will-o'-the-wisp. Never was philosophy so thoroughly systematized and so ably expounded as it was in the days of Socrates, and never was society more corrupt. The ruins of ancient Greece bear witness to the failure and inadequacy of philosophy.

The hope of Legislation has failed. It was the dream of the celebrated Plato that he could establish an ideal Republic by compiling and enforcing a perfect code of laws. But a perfect Code of Law *was* compiled a thousand years before Plato was born. God Himself gave to Israel a Code of Law on Mount Sinai—with what results? No sooner was that Law given than it was broken. The children of Israel declared, "All that the Lord hath said will we do, and be obedient" (Ex. 24:7), but their words were an empty boast. The truth is that imperfect creatures *cannot* keep a perfect law, nor can imperfect men be induced to *administer and enforce* it. There is not a land in all the world where all the statutes of the State, or nearly all, are rigidly enforced. What then is the use of electing worthy and able legislators and for them to enact righteous laws if their successors refuse to enforce them? The present universal failure to do this testifies to the impotency of Law while it is left in human hands.

The hope of human Government has failed. The Roman Empire experimented for many centuries and tried no less than seven different forms of government, but each in turn failed to accomplish the desired effects, and the last state of that Empire was worse than the first. Everything from absolute monarchy to absolute Socialism *has already been weighed in the balances and found wanting*. Revolting at the tyrannical yokes imposed upon their subjects by the European rulers, our forefathers in this country sought to establish a free Republic, a democratic form of government, a government managed by the people and for the people. What have been its fruits? Are economic conditions in the United States better than those in England or Italy? Are relations between Capital and Labour more amicable and satisfactory? Is there less political corruption in high places, and fairer representation of the oppressed? Are moral

conditions better here: have we, proportionately, fewer thieves, fewer drunkards, fewer murderers? Is there more contentment and satisfaction among the masses? We fear not. When we witness the methods employed in the average political campaign, when we read through the reports of the police courts, when we behold the strikes and lock-outs in every part of the country, when we peer beneath the surface and gaze upon the moral state of the masses, and when we hear the angry cries of the poor laborer and his half-starved family, we discover that the only hope for America as well as Europe is that our Lord shall come back again and take the government upon His shoulder.

The hope of Civilization has failed. How much all of us have heard of 'the march and progress of Civilization' during the past two generations! What an Utopia it was going to create! The masses were to be educated and reformed, injustices were to cease, war was to be abolished, and all mankind welded into one great Brotherhood living together in peace and good will. Civilization was to be the agency for ushering in the long-looked-for Millennium. Any one who dared to challenge the claims made on behalf of the enlightenment of our twentieth century, or called into question the transformation which the upward march of Civilization was supposed to be effecting, was regarded as an 'old fogey' who was not abreast of the times, or, as a 'pessimist' whose vision was blinded by prejudice. Was not "Evolution" an established fact of science and did not the fundamental principle of Evolution—progress and advancement from the lower to the higher—apply to nations and the human race as a whole; if so, we should soon discover that we had outgrown all the barbarities of the past. War was now no longer to be thought of, for those cultured nations within the magic pale of civilization would henceforth settle their differences amicably by means of arbitration. It was true that the great Powers continued building enormous armies and navies, but these, we were told, would merely be used to enforce Peace. But oh! what a madman's dream it has all proven. The Hope of Civilization, like every other hope which has not been founded upon the sure and certain Word of God, has also proved to be nothing more than an entrancing mirage, a tragic delusion. The great World War, with all its unmentionable horrors, its inhumanities, its barbaric ruthlessness, has rudely awakened a lethargic humanity to the utter insufficiency of all merely human expediences, and has demonstrated as clearly as anything has ever been demonstrated that "Civilization" is nothing more than a high-sounding but empty title.

We repeat again, the *ONLY hope* of the Church is the personal Return of the Redeemer to remove His people from these

(Continued on page 8, column 4 and 5)

Sheep . . . Home

(Continued from page 5)

calls himself a Baptist and does not believe in election is either inexcusably ignorant or a deliberate liar and deceiver.

Then, certainly, this doctrine of election is a glorious doctrine. When we are made to see our depravity, and made to see that we would never, of ourselves, have chosen the Lord, then to see that, in spite of our sin and rebellion, He chose us before the world began—He chose us apart from any condition on our part—to see this, is glorious beyond the power of words to describe. When our eyes are opened to see this truth, we immediately elevate it to the front rank of Biblical truth as one of the most precious truths of that precious Book. Surely, in that galaxy of stars of Biblical truths, this truth shines as bright as any. So, the one hundred sheep represent the total number of the elect of God given to Christ to be His sheep that He might save them.

The ninety-nine sheep represent those elect ones who have already been found and saved. The Lord did not start His shepherd work day before yesterday. He has been at it a long time, and many of His sheep have already been found. Adam was one of those sheep. When Adam sinned against God, he sought vainly, to cover his nakedness with the works of his own hands. When he heard the voice of the Lord, Adam fled from God and, if left to himself, would have been running yet. However, the Lord found Adam, and clothed him with that provided by God, on the basis of a substitutionary sacrifice. That day the shepherd found the first of His sheep. Abraham was one of those sheep. He was an idolator in Ur of the

(Continued on page 6, column 1)

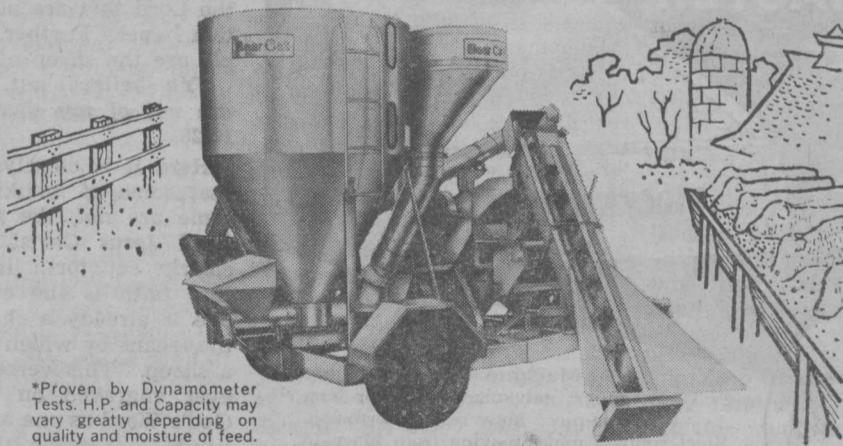
THE BAPTIST EXAMINER

JANUARY 3, 1970

PAGE SIX

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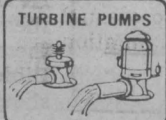


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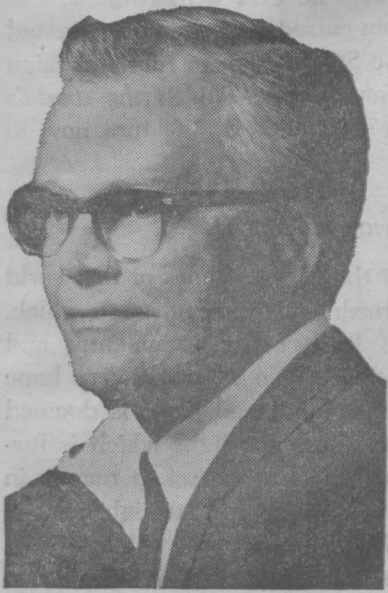
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Sheep ... Home

(Continued from page six)

Chaldees. He had no knowledge of, nor desire for the God of the Bible. Yet, at the appointed time, the Lord of glory appeared to Him and effectually called Abraham to Himself, and another sheep was found. Jacob was one of those sheep. Fleeing from his brother's anger, not looking for God, not knowing that God was anywhere around, Jacob lay down in a wilderness place with a stone for a pillow. That night God appeared to Jacob in power, and Jacob awoke and said: "The Lord was in this place and I knew it not." Another sheep had been found.

Matthew sat at the gate of custom, living the wealthy, sinful life of a tax collector, and hated by the Jews around him. Who would have thought Matthew was one of God's little sheep? But he was, and at the appointed time, the shepherd came by and said: "Follow me." and the little sheep heard the shepherd's voice and "arose and followed him." Another sheep had been found.

In Samaria there lived a very wicked woman. She had lived with five husbands and was now living with a man without the pretense of marriage. Who would have thought her to be among the elect of God? She started out one day, not looking for—not desiring salvation—but only to get some water. Earlier that day the Shepherd had started out from Judea, and instead of taking the usual route, it was said that at that time and on that journey: "He must needs go through Samaria." Beloved, it was not a geographical necessity, but it was the necessity of electing grace and predestinating purpose that charted the Shepherd's path that day. One of His sheep was over there, and the appointed time had almost come, and He must go and save his sheep. So on that day, two folk head for a meeting at Jacob's well. One, a lost

sheep, her steps directed by sovereign grace and according to eternal purpose, though she knew it not; the other, the Divine Shepherd searching for and finding another one of His sheep. Oh, I could go on and on, but time would fail me and space would not permit. How many of the Lord's sheep have already been found! And the finding of each one of them presents a wondrous story of sovereign and saving grace that would delight our souls if we had time to hear them. Will not a part of eternity be spent in telling and hearing these stories of the Shepherd's finding of His sheep? And, dear reader, if you are saved, you too, have a story to tell as wonderful as these—how the dear Shepherd came to you and how He found you and how He saved you. Oh, Glory, glory! How my soul delights and thrills in contemplating this—the greatest of all love stories—the love of the Shepherd for his sheep. I cannot finish my story in this article. I will continue it in a later article D.V. May God bless His little sheep as they meditate on the story of "How A Lost Sheep Got Home." God bless you all. (To be continued next week, D.V.)



Predestination

(Continued from page 3)

ruptible things, as silver and gold, from your vain conversation received by tradition from your fathers; But with the precious blood of Christ, as of a lamb without blemish and without spot; Who verily was foreordained before the foundation of the world but was manifest in these last times for you.—I Peter 1:18-20.

Perhaps by this time, some are saying, "Preacher, you are a Hardshell." If this is what you are thinking, I say "Amen." I want to shout it so the whole world can hear, I am a Hardshell. Now people, do not be hasty in your judgment of me. Give me a little time to explain. As to denomination, I am a Missionary Baptist, and by God's grace, I will be, till I die. I am acquainted with some "Hardshells" who boast long and loud about predestination, but while talking to one, I was suddenly made to realize, they do not believe in absolute predestination. The "Hardshell" member told me, Brother Fields, I feel so bad—I do not know whether I am saved or not." Brother, such a doctrine cannot be classified as "Hardshell"—rather he should go by the name of softshell. The doctrine of absolute predestination gives us assurance, but this man had no security for his hope was based on how he felt. The predestinating work of God undergirds our salvation, and without it you have no foundation to rest upon. I realize that the doctrine of absolute predestination is a hard doctrine, and because it is hard, I am a "Hardshell."

The greatest sermon that I believe ever fell from the lips of man was preached by my Lord at Capernaum. The theme of His message was absolute predestination. I am having reference to John six. While he was preaching, there went a murmuring through the congregation. The religious Jews did not like what they were hearing. Finally, there arose a division among them, and some stomped out stating "This is a hard saying; who can hear it?" John 6:60.

How many can hear it? If you will turn with me to Acts 13:48, we will get the answer as to how many will hear.

"And when the Gentiles heard this, they were glad, and glorified the word of the Lord; and as many as were ordained to eternal life believed."

That is exactly how many will hear: The number that God has ordained (predestinated) to eternal life. Those that will hear are the ones predestinated to eternal life from before the foundation of the world and whose names God recorded in His Book, which

he calls the Lamb's Book of Life.

"And all that dwell upon the earth shall worship him, whose names are not written in the book of life of the Lamb slain from the foundation of the world."—Rev. 13:8.

This book was completed before God ever made a man. Some have asked, don't you think there is room for any more names? There is no more room, beloved. The last place on the last page was filled before the foundation of the world, because God, from eternity, had predestinated who, and how many, He was going to save. Therefore, the Book of life was made just big enough to hold the names that God decreed He was going to save.

Preacher, do you mean there is no chance for any other to be saved? To answer that question, may I point out that salvation is not a matter of chance, but rather it is of grace. Those who are saved are saved because God has decreed that they should be saved. Those whom God has not predestinated to save, cannot be saved. I do not believe God's program can be changed, therefore the action of a saint or sinner cannot change what God has predestinated should come to pass before he made man.

"But he is in one mind, and who can turn him? and what his soul desireth, even that he doeth."—Job 23:13.

Do you believe that Heaven is a prepared place for a prepared people? Well, beloved, I firmly believe that Heaven was prepared only for those whom God predestinated to save, and I also believe that they did not prepare themselves, but were prepared by God. Let us turn this around by asking you another question. Do you believe Hell is a prepared place? If so, is it prepared for a prepared people? Now I realize that many will say, "No preacher, I do believe that Heaven is a prepared place for a prepared people, but I do not believe that Hell was prepared for a certain number, and I do not believe God knew exactly how many people were going to Hell."

Brother, Sister, I do not understand how you can believe that God predestinated Heaven and all the people that go there without believing that God also prepared Hell for those He did not prepare for Heaven. Yet, some may say, I believe it is up to the sinner; it is the sinner that will do the determining. If that is your belief, let me tell you what needs to be done to you. You need to be thrown into the pot of God's sovereignty and boiled, stewed, baked, and fried until all the free will is cooked out of you, and you are made to realize that it is God who is seated on His throne working all things after the counsel of His own will, and not after the will of the sinner. I can guarantee you that if you go into God's Word with an open mind, you will come out like I did—an absolute predestinarian.

Now, let us turn to Rom. 9:23: "And that he might make known the riches of his glory on the vessels of mercy, which he had afore prepared unto glory."—Rom. 9:23.

To many, this verse is indeed a wonderful passage, and they rejoice as I do over its contents. Surely, we can say that we (saved) are vessels of mercy, and we also declare that we all were afore prepared (predestinated) unto glory. I do not believe God could make it any clearer that those who are saved were prepared by God as vessels of His mercy for the prepared placed called glory. It is no accident that we are saved. Our salvation is according as God hath predestinated. Though this is a glorious verse of Scripture, yet there is another side which I wish to investigate at this time. It involves those whom God has not predestinated as vessels of mercy unto glory. If they are not predestinated to glory, are they predestinated to destruction? The answer is "Yes." They are as much prepared for destruction as those who were prepared for glory.

"What if God, willing to shew his wrath, and to make his power known, endured with much long suffering the vessels of wrath fitted to destruction."—Romans 9:22.

Verse 22 is as much the Word of God as verse 23. Notice that these are vessels of wrath fitted (predestinated) to destruction (hell). The same God that prepared the vessels unto glory, fitted the vessels of wrath for destruction. I realize to some it may sound harsh, but to me, it makes God sovereign not only in Heaven but also in Hell. It makes my God bigger than anything or anybody on earth, in Heaven, or in Hell. To me, it makes Him God, and beside Him there is no other.

Listen as Jesus speaks to those who were vessels of wrath fitted to destruction:

"Woe unto you, scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites! for ye compass sea and land to make one proselyte, and when he is made, ye make him twofold more the child of hell than yourselves."—Matt. 23:15.

May I ask you a question? Could Christ be wrong in this verse; can He change; can the Word of God be altered? We know God cannot be wrong, neither can He change or His Word be altered. He calls these religious Jews children of Hell. They were not going to become children of Hell but were already children of destruction. Were they predestinated as children or Hell? Surely beloved, they were, or else Jesus would not have addressed them as such.

"But these, as natural brute beasts, made to be taken and destroyed, speak evil of the things that they understand not; and shall utterly perish in their own corruption."—2 Pet. 2:12.

Now, brethren, I do not know how you feel about this verse, yet it is clear to me that those are natural brute beasts made to be taken and destroyed. Who made them? Was not it God? They were made by God to be destroyed.

"For there are certain men crept in unawares, who, were before of old ordained to this condemnation, ungodly men, turning the grace of our God into lasciviousness, and denying the only Lord God, and our Lord Jesus Christ."—Jude 4.

How great is our God? I have tried to make him great in predestination, yet I know I have come a long way short, but I believe that He is doing all His pleasure.

III.

Let us notice predestination in the crucifixion of Jesus. They arrested my Lord in the Garden of Gethsemane. They (Jews) had predetermined that He should be put to death. They brought Him before Pilate where they heard the sentence pronounced, which was death by crucifixion. They then saw Him crucified and buried. When all was said and done, they had fulfilled exactly what God had predestinated that they should have done.

"The kings of the earth stood up, and the rulers were gathered together against the Lord, and against his Christ. For of a truth against thy holy child Jesus, whom thou hast anointed, both Herod and Pontius Pilate, with the Gentiles, and the people of Israel, were gathered together for to do whatsoever thy hand and thy counsel determined before to be done."—Acts 4:26-28.

Others cry aloud saying, "Preacher, the doctrine of predestination is so very true, but it should not be preached in the open nor publicly." May I remind you that Jesus didn't preach it in a corner, rather out in the open where all could hear Him. If you will study the sixth chapter of John, you will readily see that He was not backward or timid in preaching predestination. Neither should we be backward about our declaration of this great doctrine. Others exclaim, people will not believe it. To answer this objection, may I

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point out our Lord and His attitude toward people not believing what He preached:

"But there are some of you that believe not. For Jesus knew from the beginning who they were that believed not, and who should betray him. And he said, Therefore said I unto you, that no man can come unto me, except it were given unto him of my Father."—John 6:64-65.

From this verse, it becomes apparent that He knew who would believe, and who would not believe, even before He started His message, yet He faithfully and very forcibly preached predestination. To you who say, "If I believed predestination I would never preach another sermon," you had better learn from our Lord that He even knew who they were who would not believe. Still He preached. Who they are, we do not know because that is God's business. Ours is to declare the truth.

For one to believe is the work of God, not the preacher.

"Then said they unto him, What shall we do, that we might work the works of God? Jesus answered and said unto them, This is the work of God, that ye believe on him whom he hath sent."—John 6:28-29.

I might say unto my Lord, "Lord, what do you mean when you say this is the work of God that I believe? Do you mean that to believe is not my work, but yours?" He might answer and say "Yes, that is true." Therefore, we believe because God has worked belief within us. Belief then is not the cause of life, but is the God-given evidence that God has worked life within us. Dead men cannot believe. It is only those who are already spiritually alive who can believe. If one believes and repents, these two gifts are God-given, and they come from the new heart and new spirit that God places within those whom He has predestinated to eternal life. Therefore, no man is saved because He believes. He believes because He is already quickened by the spirit, and it is only these quickened ones who can and will believe the doctrine of absolute predestination. Since (Continued on page 8, column 5)



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follows: "The Lord Is My Shepherd. That's Enough."

How wonderfully true that fact is, as hosts of God's people know! It is a glorious thing when He becomes so real to us that, like the little girl who innocently misquoted Psalm 23:1, we can exclaim with a full heart: "The Lord is my Shepherd. He's all I want."

The Pilgrim Messenger

"He Got It"

A. C. Dixon tells the story of a lady who was traveling with her maid and child. A wasp got into the carriage, and the child kept crying for it. At last the lady said to the servant, "What is the child crying for? Let him have it." A few minutes later the lady was startled by an awful scream from the child, and exclaimed in alarm, "What's the matter?" "He has got it!" was the servant's calm reply. So, sometimes, in His great wisdom, God allows us to have what we cry for, that we may feel the sting of it, and learn through pain and humiliation that God's will and way are best—Christian Herald.

What Christ Is To Us

The Shield from every dart;
The Balm for every smart;
The Sharer of each load;
Companion on the road.

The Door into the fold;
The Anchor that will hold;
The Shepherd of the sheep;
The Guardian of my sleep.

The Friend with whom I talk;
The Way by which I walk;
The Light to show the way;
The Strength for every day.

The Source of my delight;
The Song to cheer the night;
The Thought that fills my mind;
The Best of All to find—is Jesus!
—Anonymous

Predestination

(Continued from page 7)

Jesus knew them before He started His message in Capernaum, He still knows who they are today.

Neither do I believe that Jesus is trying to save every one today. I do believe He is doing just exactly as He pleases. I know He is pleased to save those whom He has predestinated to save. I cannot see God on His throne unhappy, can you? He would be most unhappy were it not absolute predestination. Because of His predestinating work, God looks at Heaven, Hell and this earth, for all things are coming to pass according to His will or purpose.

I have left one verse of Scripture until now, and I believe that God has predestinated that I should read it last.

"As thou hast given him power over all flesh, that he should give eternal life to as many as thou hast given him. And this is life eternal, that they might know thee the only true God, and Jesus Christ, whom thou hast sent." — John 17:2, 3.

Beloved, from these verses, we can gather that God has power to dress you in riches or in rags, power to cast you into Hell, or take you into Heaven. God gave Christ power to do with all flesh as He pleases, and He is pleased to give eternal life only to those whom the Father gave Him.

May the Spirit of God (The Comforter) bless the message and bring honor to our Sovereign God.

May God bless you.

THE BAPTIST EXAMINER

JANUARY 3, 1970

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The Redeemer's Return

(Continued from page six)

scenes of misery and bloodshed to be for ever with Himself; and the ONLY hope for this poor sin-cursed and Satan-dominated world is the Second Advent of the Son of Man to rule and reign over the earth in righteousness and peace. This is the world's LAST hope, for every other hope has failed it! We turn now to consider—

II. THE AUTHORIZATION OF OUR HOPE.

The insufficiency and failure of the various hopes of the world reviewed above, serve only to furnish a background upon which, by way of contrast, may shine forth more prominently and gloriously the certainty and sufficiency of our hope. Every hope of man which originates in his own mind and heart is doomed to end in disappointment. If men refuse the light which is furnished by Divine revelation then they must expect to remain in darkness, and, as our Lord said, "If therefore the light that is in thee be darkness how great is that darkness!" (Matt. 6:23). The value of a hope lies in the authorization of it, what then are the grounds for our hope?

What warrant have we for expecting the Return of the Redeemer? After all that has been said in the previous pages and in view of the various Scriptures therein cited, a lengthy reply to this question is not necessary. In brief, it may be said, the inspired and infallible Word of Him who cannot lie is our warrant and authorization for looking for that Blessed Hope. But, briefly, to particularize.

1. We have the Promise of the Lord Jesus Himself.

We have already quoted from John 14 in other connections but we now refer to it again. On the eve of His crucifixion our Saviour turned to His disciples and said, "I go to prepare a place for you, and if I go and prepare a place for you, I will come again, and receive you unto Myself; that where I am there ye may be also" (John 14:2,3). Here is an assertion about which there is no ambiguity whatever. Here is a promise that is positive and unequivocal. Here is a word of comfort from the lips of Truth incarnate. The Lord who has gone away from this earth to prepare a place for His people is coming back again for them, coming back in person, coming to receive them to Himself that they may be with Him for evermore.

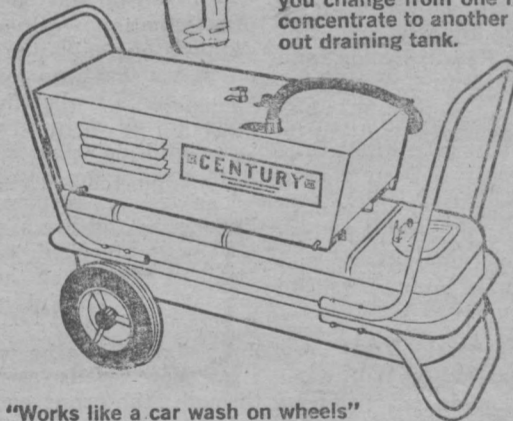
(To Be Continued Next Week — D.V.)

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