

A GREAT BIBLE CONFERENCE

The 1977 Bible Conference of Calvary Baptist Church is now history. Our brethren came from Alabama, Arkansas, Florida, Georgia, Illinois, Indiana, Kentucky, Louisiana, Michigan, Mississippi, Missouri, New York, North Carolina, Ohio, Oklahoma, Tennessee, Texas, Virginia, West Virginia, and Brazil. God granted unto each speaker boldness to present a great message of inspiration and information. Due to death and conflicting circumstances some of the speakers were unable to attend.

There were a number of special songs which enriched the services. Fellowship was sweet among the brethren. Elder Richard Folger, Elder Arthur Gurley, and other workers from the Immanuel Baptist Church in Monticello labored unceasingly to make our stay with them a pleasant one. There were many first-time visitors and good book sales.

We registered 180 people in attendance. There were some unusual events such as a rock on the tin top in the middle of a sermon and a snake who attended

the last morning service only to be killed. Other remarkable events could be mentioned but I shall leave these for the brethren to laugh about in private in days to come.

We made tapes of all the sermons and most of the songs. The list and price of the tapes will be in next week's paper. Please watch for details on this.

Our church has already voted to have another conference next year at the same time and place. Please begin now to make your plans to attend.

THE RENTING OF THE VAIL

By JAMES HOBBS
McDermott, Ohio

"Jesus, when He had cried again with a loud voice, yielded up the ghost. And, behold, the veil of the temple was rent in twain from the top to the bottom" (Matt. 27:50,51).

In the passage we have just read is one of the most blessed accounts surrounding the death of Jesus that we know. A very significant action by Almighty God is recorded here and one that should be proclaimed.

In order to learn more about the vail we must look into the Old Testament accounts of it. When God told the children of Israel to make the various parts

twined linen; blue, purple, and scarlet; interwoven with cherubims. It was 10 cubits wide and 10 cubits high which is approximately 15 feet wide and 15 feet high. According to tradition it was as thick as a hand's breadth. The blue represents Christ's divinity, the purple His majesty, and the scarlet His blood.

When Christ died on the cross, many things happened. One most important event was the renting of the vail as described in our text. We see the mighty hand of God as He reached down in all His power and ripped the vail from top to bottom. Here was God's announcement to the world as the earth shook, rocks were ripped apart, graves were opened, and saints walked again.

God removed this vail which symbolically separated man from His presence. Now we all have access through our vail, the Lord Jesus Christ. "Having therefore, brethren, boldness to enter into the holiest by the blood of Jesus, by a new and living way, which He hath consecrated for us, through the veil, that is to say, His flesh; and having an high priest over the house of God; let us draw near with a true heart in full assurance of faith, having our bodies washed with pure water" (Heb. 10:19-22). He has abolished in His flesh the middle wall of partition between us (Eph. 2:13-18). "... He taketh away the first, that He may establish the" (Continued on page 8, column 5)

MISSIONARY PREMILLENNIAL BIBLICAL BAPTISTIC

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

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PART III

IDENTITY OF APOSTOLIC AND BAPTIST CHURCHES

WILLIAM W. GARDNER

V. THEY ARE IDENTICAL IN GOVERNMENT

The government of the apostolic churches was neither Episcopal nor Presbyterian, but congregational, or democratic. We have already shown, both from the New Testament and ecclesiastical history, that every church was charged with the discipline of its members, the election of its officers, and the management of all its affairs. This being the case, the independence and sovereignty of each church follows as a necessary consequence. The simplicity and apparent weakness of this form of church gov-

ernment may not comport with the suggestions of human expediency. But if it be the system devised and prescribed by infinite wisdom and goodness, it must be the best.

In the language of Dr. J. L. Reynolds, we say: "Experience has proved it to be so. It agrees best with the free spirit of Christianity, and is best adapted to the development of Christian life in the individual. It combines greater advantages, and is embarrassed with fewer difficulties than any system which human ingenuity, pride, or the lust of power has ever devised." (Church Polity, p. 98). It is mighty

through God to the pulling down of strongholds, and is adapted to all ages and climes.

Now, that the government of the apostolic churches was congregational and independent, is evident both from the New Testament and church history. As we have seen, the very word chosen by our Saviour to designate His churches signifies a local congregation of baptized believers, voluntarily associated together in His name for the execution of His laws and the maintenance of His worship. The whole matter of discipline, formative and corrective, was committed by Christ through His inspired apostles to each individual church as such, and not to church officers. (Matt. 18:15-20). And the instructions given by the apostles relative to the administration of discipline in the first churches, clearly shows their independent character.

For instance, Paul said to the church at Rome: "Him that is weak in the faith receive ye" (Rom. 14:1). "Now, I beseech you, brethren, mark them who cause divisions and offenses contrary to the doctrine which ye have" (Continued on page 8, column 3)

STEALING AWAY THE PANAMA CANAL

By G. RUSSELL EVANS
Norfolk, Virginia

"Use thou thy chance."—Vergil.

It is time for some plain talk about the Panama Canal. We are witnessing one of the tragedies of the 20th Century: the stealing-away of one of America's greatest assets. However, we have a chance for public opinion to turn it around with a flood of protests to our Congressmen and President, as never before in history. The approaching catastrophe is very real — but the logic behind this treachery is unreal, deceitful, frightening and treasonous.

The liberal church leadership is no help. The National Council of Churches, the United Methodist Church and other mainline denominations are all for "liberating" the Canal, thus sadly demonstrating once again their utter disregard of history, common sense and the sentiments of their membership.

We discussed the Canal on these pages a few months ago, but recent developments demand an update. The Scriptural warning of Matthew 7:16 is certainly appropriate: "Ye shall know them by their fruits."

Perhaps we need some very straight answers to a few basic questions.

Who owns the Canal? The U.S. Supreme Court has ruled that the Canal Zone and Canal belong to the United States and that title is proper. So has the U.S. Court of Appeals. It is American soil, very much as are the states carved out of the Louisiana, the Gadsden and the Alaska Purchases. The annuity paid to Panama is not a "rental," but merely the augmented annual obligation of the Pana-

ma Railroad assumed by the U.S. in the 1903 treaty which ceded the territory.

In fact, this 1903 Hay-Banau-Varrilla Treaty grants sovereignty, rights and power over the Canal Zone to the U.S. in perpetuity — and in plain words. Not a single time do the words "rent" or "lease" appear in the treaty, but the word "grant" appears nineteen times. The words "sovereignty and perpetuity" appear five times — inserted by the Panamanians themselves to induce the U.S. Congress to approve the treaty, since six earlier treaties had been rejected because the Canal would have been under the sovereignty of a foreign nation.

We bought and paid for the (Continued on page 7, column 4)

TUNE IN TO THE INDEPENDENT BAPTIST HOUR EACH SUNDAY

WCMI Ashland, Ky.
8:00 - 8:30 a.m.
WFTO Fulton, Miss.
1:00 - 1:30 p.m.

The Baptist Examiner Pulpit

A Sermon By Milburn Cockrell

PRESERVATION AND PERSEVERANCE

"And I will make an everlasting covenant with them, that I will not turn away from them, to do them good; but I will put my fear in their hearts, that they shall not depart from me" (Jer. 32:40).

There are two very definite truths set forth in this text. First, there is the preservation of the Saviour: "I will not turn away from them to do them good." Second, there is the perseverance of the saints: "They shall not depart from me." Both truths are Bible doctrines. The modern tendency on the part of some moderate Calvinists is to lay heavy

stress upon the preservation of the Saviour to justify the lives of their worldly church members. On the other hand, some sovereign gracers stress the perseverance of the saints and neglect greatly the preservation of the Saviour.

Neither doctrine should be slighted, for they are both God's truth. Perseverance is the human side of the spiritual process which, as viewed from the Divine side, we call sanctification or preservation. The Son told the Father: "I kept them in thy name; those that thou gavest me I have kept, and none of them is lost" (John 17:

11). While it is true that Christ keeps the believer, it is also true that there is a self-keeping on the part of the believer: "But he that is begotten of God keepeth himself" (I John 5:18). Both are put very near together in Jude. Verse 21 says to the saints: "Keep yourselves in the love of God." Verse 24 says of the Saviour: "Now unto him that is able to keep you from falling."

THE PRESERVATION OF THE SAVIOUR

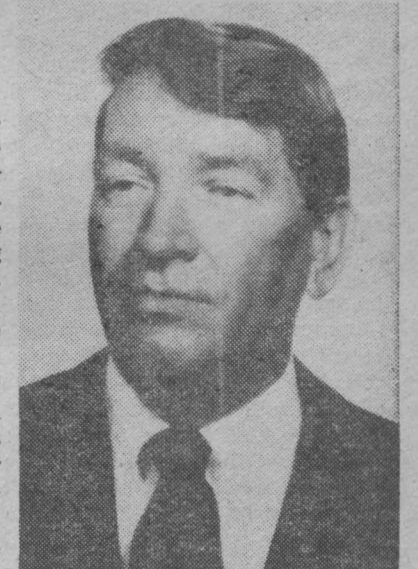
Man, although saved by grace, is still nothing more than a saved (Continued on page 2, column 1)

GLADNESS

By RAY HIATT
Hollywood, Florida

"Whereby they have made thee glad" (Psa. 45:8).

We dwell at great length on the sovereignty of God and so we should. It is not possible to honor God too much as God. Those who do not see our God as sovereign and as the eternal omni of all that is good draw heavily upon our patience. It is patently simple to us that God is all in all and cannot



RAY HIATT

be changed. All men do not have this knowledge and we have it only by reigning grace.

GOD IS SOVEREIGN. Blessedly true. Yet, our text directs our attention to men. A special class of men if you please. An elect class of men. The "fellows" of God. That bears repeating. The FELLOWS of God. It says of them that they have made Him glad. Now this is a feature of the truth that is seldom considered. Can mortal men make our sovereign God glad? Our text says they can. Our text says they do.

The natural man has no identity with God. He is estranged totally and is an abject creature. He has no godlike qualities. The only essential difference between the average middle class American and a Hitler or a Jack The Ripper is culture and opportunity. All lost (Continued on page 6, column 4)

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MILBURN COCKRELL --- Editor

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Preservation And . . .

(Continued from page one)

sinner. Because of the old nature
he is apt to fall into sin. It is com-
forting to know that Christ will
not cast us down to Hell because
of our sins, our hardness of heart,
our little faith, our poor dull pray-
ers, our frequent backslidings, nor
because every one else passes us
by. It is well to hold to God's
hand, but it is better to have God's
hand hold on to us.

The God of salvation is able to
keep His child from falling away
from his steadfastness. Through
the various experiences of life God
will save His child out of all evil.
God's ability to keep us from fall-
ing is not conditioned upon our
perseverance as Arminians teach.
Our preservation is conditioned,
not upon our weak will, but upon
God's ability and power. While I
believe with all my heart in the
perseverance of the saints, I be-
lieve more strongly in the preser-
vation of the Saviour.

Observe with me again the truth
of preservation as seen in the first
part of our text. The Lord said:
"And I will make an everlasting
covenant with them, that I will
not turn away from them, to do
them good."

First, it is seen that man's sal-
vation grows out of "an ever-
lasting covenant." Hence, those
saved through this covenant are
saved in the Lord with an ever-
lasting salvation. The covenant
of redemption was made from all
eternity with Christ and His peo-
ple in Him, yet it is revealed in
time to its beneficiaries. "The
secret of the Lord is with them
that fear him; and he will show
them his covenant" (Psa. 25:14).

Second, those saved by the death
of Christ in fulfillment of the ever-
lasting covenant are assured eter-
nally of God's gracious presence:
"I will not turn away from them,
to do them good." Earthly kings
are fickle. Often their greatest
favorites have fallen under their
frowns. But God's mercy endures
forever: "But the mercy of the
Lord is from everlasting to ever-
lasting upon them that fear him"

(Psa. 103:17). Whom God loves
He loves to the end of time: "Hav-
ing loved his own which were in
the world, he loved them unto the
end" (John 13:1).

God may seem to turn from His
people in the time of backslidings
which result in chastisement for
their sins (Isa. 54:8). He may
seem to be their enemy and fight
against them (Isa. 63:10). But
even in times like these He does
not turn from doing them good.
This must be so because all things
work together for our good and
God's glory.

PRESERVES THE FAITHFUL

It is written in Psalm 31:23: "O
love the Lord, all ye his saints:
for the Lord preserveth the faith-
ful, and plentifully rewardeth the
proud doer."

"Preserveth" is a translation of
the Hebrew word "natsar" which
means "to keep, watch, reserve." The
verse teaches that the Lord
preserves those who trust Him
with all the power which belongs
to the Almighty. He not only pre-
serves them in a providential way,
but He keeps them in a state of
grace. These are kept from total
and final falling away into Hell.
Their God keeps them from the
frowns and flatteries of this pres-
ent Satanic world system.

The Arminian in an attempt to
dodge this passage says, "God
does not forsake His saints, but
the saints forsake God and are
lost." But he ignores the last of
the verse which says those kept
by God are called by the psalmist
"the faithful." Neither does he
consider that later the psalmist
says: "I will never forget thy pre-
cepts: for with them thou hast
quicken me" (Psa. 119:93).

PRESERVED FOR EVER

Psalm 37:28 declares: "For the
Lord loveth judgment, and for-
saketh not his saints; they are

ELDER SHELNUTT PASSES AWAY



ELDER JOE SHELNUTT

Elder Joe Shelnutt departed this
life on September 3, from a heart
attack. Funeral services were
conducted at the East Side Bapt-
ist Church with Elder Wayne Cox
officiating on September 6. Bro.
Shelnutt was pastor of the East
Side Baptist Church for twenty-
four years, and a loyal friend and
supporter of TBE. The editor con-
sidered him one of his best
friends. Elder Shelnutt was an
able preacher and a fine Christian
gentleman. Please remember the
family in your prayers to the
Lord.

preserved for ever; but the seed
of the wicked shall be cut off."

The Saviour has taken it upon
Himself to preserve His saints
from the dominion and damning
power of sin. He will never allow
them to be devoured by Satan or
hurt of the second death. True
believers are taken under His pro-
tection and power. He will pre-
serve all of them to the end of
time, through all the temptations,
tears, torments, tossings, trials,
and tribulations to everlasting
happiness. He will never forsake
them in all their sins and back-
slidings. This a God Who cannot

"And the Lord God formed man
of the dust of the ground, and
breathed into his nostrils the
breath of life; and man became
a living soul" (Gen. 2:7).

On the question of where the
soul goes at death, there has been
endless confusion through the
years gone by — confusion not
only in the ranks of the Arminians
and the Universal Church crowd,
but confusion even among Bap-
tists. May I say that this confusion
is not God's fault, for the Word
of God says that God is not the
author of confusion. Listen:

"For God is not the author of
confusion" (I Cor. 14:33).

Therefore, this confusion which
exists on the part of this theolog-
ical concept as to where the soul
goes at death, is not God's fault.

It is like all the balance of the
confusion that is in the world re-
ligiously. Confusion is man's
fault. God is not responsible in

lie or fail, has promised to do.

But are not God's saints often
cast down and perplexed in this
old sinful world? The Apostle Paul
answers: "We are troubled on
every side, yet not distressed; we
are perplexed, but not in despair;
Persecuted, but not forsaken; cast
down, but not destroyed" (II Cor.
4:8-9).

But is it not true that the saints
experience dishonor and even
chastisement while in this vale of
tears? Again he answers: "By
honor and dishonor, by evil re-
port and good report: as deceiv-
ers, and yet true; As unknown,
and yet well known; as dying, and,
behold, we live; as chastened, and
not killed; As sorrowful, yet al-
way rejoicing; as poor, yet mak-
ing many rich; as having nothing,
and yet possessing all things" (II
Cor. 6:8-10).

Alas! do not the righteous die
the same as the wicked? Yes, this
is so, but Psalm 37:28 says God
"forsaketh not his saints." The
psalmist elsewhere says: "Yea,
though I walk through the valley
of the shadow of death, I will fear
no evil: for thou art with me;
thy rod and thy staff they comfort
me" (Psa. 23:4). For the believer
to be absent from the body is to be
at home with the Lord (II Cor.
5:8).

George Keith wrote: "How firm
a foundation, ye saints of the
Lord . . . Is laid for your faith in
His excellent Word . . . The soul
that on Jesus leans for repose . . .
I will not, I will not desert to his
foes . . . That soul, though all
Hell should endeavor to shake . . .
I'll never, no never, no never for-
sake!"

PRESERVES THE SOULS OF THE SAINTS

Psalm 97:10 reads: "He preserv-
eth the souls of his saints; he de-
livereth them out of the hand of
the wicked."

The Lord's saints are safe in
His keeping. He preserves their
lives as long as He has any work
for them to do. Often He delivers
them out of the hand of their per-
secutors who thirst after their
blood.

But the passage speaks not of
their lives, but of their souls.
Christ preserves the inward man
which is renewed even though the
outward man dies. Cruel men may
destroy the body of a saint, but
his soul is preserved safe in the
bosom of God.

Memorial Pulpit

By JOHN R. GILPIN

Our Beloved Pastor and Editor, Now In Glory



WHERE GOES THE SOUL AT DEATH?

any wise at all, but man is wholly
responsible for all the religious
confusion that exists in this world,
on this theological concept, and
all others as well. The fact of
the matter is, I am positive that
the Bible contains the solution
and actually presents the answer
to this question as to where the
soul goes at death.

With that in mind, if you will
come to my text, you will find
that the creative act, which is
described to us in Genesis 1, is
described a little more in detail
in our text. In the first chapter
of Genesis we read:

"So God created man in his
own image, in the image of God
created he him; male and female
created he them" (Gen. 1:27).

This is a description of the cre-
ation, but in order to give us a
little more in detail by way of
description of this creative act,
our text says, "And the Lord God

formed man of the dust of the
ground, and breathed into his nos-
trils the breath of life; and man
became a living soul" (Gen. 2:7).
Apparently, man originally was
nothing but a bundle of dust. He
was nothing more than a bundle
of dust until God breathed into
his nostrils the breath of life, and
it was then that man became a
living soul.

With this thought in mind, I
ask the question and I hope by
God's grace, through the Bible,
to answer it, as to where the soul
goes when the body dies.

I

THE SOUL ABANDONS THE BODY AT DEATH.

This ought to be a trite state-
ment. It ought to be a statement
that would be taken for granted,
yet may I say that it certainly is
not taken for granted by the ma-
jority of people. I repeat, the
(Continued on page 3, column 1)

PRESERVED TO THE HEAVENLY KINGDOM

In II Timothy 4:18 it is written:
"And the Lord shall deliver me
from every evil work, and will
preserve me unto his heavenly
kingdom: to whom be glory for
ever and ever. Amen."

Here Paul makes it plain that
the Lord's grace will not fail
him. In every temptation it would
preserve him till he reached the
heavenly kingdom. This hope was
not based upon his own strength,
or his maturity of Christian grow-
th. It was based upon the Lord's
faithfulness and power. In all his
dangers and difficulties he would
enjoy the presence of Christ. This
would continue until he reached
the heavenly kingdom.

PRESERVED IN CHRIST

Next to the last book in the
Bible begins with these words:
"Jude, the servant of Jesus Christ,
and brother of James, to them that
are sanctified by God the Father,
and preserved in Jesus Christ,
and called."

Those sanctified by the elective
purpose of God the Father are pre-
served in Jesus Christ. The idea
in the Greek Text is that the elect
are kept continually by God the
Father for Jesus Christ until His
second coming. Such persons "are
kept by the power of God through
faith unto salvation ready to be
revealed in the last time" (I Pet.
1:5).

Those set apart by God the
Father are in Christ, for they
were chosen in Him before the
foundation of the world (Eph. 1:

4). The elect were placed in the
heart of Christ and given into His
hands. They were represented by
Christ in the Covenant of Grace.
The Father said to Christ: "I will
preserve thee, and give thee for a
covenant of the people" (Isa.
49:8).

God's people were not preserved
from their fall in Adam, nor the
corruption of human nature, nor
their own actual sins and trans-
gressions. But by union with
Christ they are preserved in a
state of justification and sancti-
fication. They are not preserved
from the temptations of Satan,
but they are preserved from being
devoured by Satan. They are not
preserved from indwelling sin, yet
they are preserved from the dom-
inion of sin. They will endure
doubts, fears, and unbelief, but
they are preserved in the love
of God. They will experience many
slips and falls, but they will never
fall into Hell. Since they are pre-
served in Christ, they can no more
go to Hell than can Christ.

THE PERSEVERANCE OF THE SAINTS

For the time remaining may I
direct your attention to the second
truth of my text. In Jeremiah 32:
40 there is taught the persever-
ance of the saints: "I will put my
fear in their hearts, that they
shall not depart from me." In re-
generation God puts His fear in
our hearts, and this Divine prin-
ciple within causes the saints to
persevere.

There may be a partial depart-

(Continued on page 6, column 2)

WILL THIS BE YOUR LAST ISSUE?

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unique ministry in your home.

Where Goes The Soul

(Continued from Page Two)
soul abandons the body at death. Listen:

"And he stretched himself upon the child three times, and cried unto the Lord, and said, Let this child's soul come into him again. And the Lord heard the voice of Elijah; and the soul of the child came into him again, and he revived" (1 King 17:21,22).

If you will read the preceding verses, you will find that Elijah had been befriended here in this particular city, and that Elijah, himself, had befriended others. A woman, whose son had died, called unto Elijah, and Elijah gave her son back to her by way of life. The text says that Elijah stretched himself upon the child and prayed that the child's soul would come into him again, and the Word of God says that the soul of the child came into him again and he revived. That would show us then that the soul had abandoned the body at the time that this child died.

Notice again:
"For as the BODY WITHOUT THE SPIRIT is dead, so faith without works is dead also" (James 2:26).

In other words, when we die, the soul abandons the body; the soul leaves the body.

I couldn't begin to tell you how many times through the years I have heard brethren in Bible Conferences and elsewhere, particularly preacher brethren, argue the question about what happens to the soul at death. As a preliminary statement, let me insist that the soul abandons the body at the time the individual dies. When you stand beside one who is passing from this world, and you see that individual bid goodbye to the things of this life — when that one closes his eyes, and his heart ceases in its fluttering, and the lungs cease to resuscitate the body, and the individual dies, the soul has then abandoned the body.

II WHERE THE SOUL DOES NOT GO.

The soul does not go into the grave to sleep until the time of the judgment. The Russellites say that when a person dies the soul and the body are both put in the grave and the soul is there with the body until the time of the judgment. If I didn't have a Bible, I could refute that. To me, that is the most ridiculous theological philosophy that I ever heard in my life. I insist, beloved, that the soul does not go into the grave with the body, and I want to read to you a rather lengthy text that I think answers this very conclusively. Listen:

"There was a certain rich man, which was clothed in purple and fine linen, and fared sumptuously every day; And there was a cer-

tain beggar named Lazarus, which was laid at his gate, full of sores, And desiring to be fed with the crumbs which fell from the rich man's table; moreover the dogs came and licked his sores.

And it came to pass, that the beggar died, and was carried by the angels into Abraham's bosom: the rich man also died, and was buried: And in hell he lift up his eyes, being in torments, and seeth Abraham afar off, and Lazarus in his bosom.

And he cried and said, Father Abraham, have mercy on me, and send Lazarus, that he may dip the tip of his finger in water, and cool my tongue; for I am tormented in this flame" (Luke 16:19-24).

I want you to notice that two men lived, two men died, and two men lived on after death. There is not a hint nor an indication that the body and the soul of these individuals went to the grave. It says that "the beggar died, and was carried by the angels into Abraham's bosom." Undoubtedly, beyond the shadow of a doubt, it is referring to the soul. "The rich man also died, and was buried." Undoubtedly, it is referring to his body.

There is a song which says, "Death is only a dream." There may be some truth to that song if you define some of the terms within it, but in the main, the song is an heretical song. It is an unscriptural song. The soul does not go to the grave to sleep. The soul does not sleep until the time of the resurrection.

There was one man in our Bible Conference this past year who argued lively and long with one of our friends at the Conference that the soul sleeps in the grave, right in the body, until the time of the resurrection. Beloved, I say to you, I do not believe that. In the light of the passage that I have just read, I say to you, the soul does not go to the grave in any sense whatsoever.

There are two other passages that I am sure will clinch that truth. We read:

"And, behold, there talked with him two men, which were Moses and Elias; Who appeared in glory, and spake of his decease which he should accomplish at Jerusalem" (Luke 9:30-31).

This is a reference to the transfiguration of the Lord Jesus Christ, and it says that two men appeared with Jesus on the Mount of Transfiguration, Moses and Elijah. Notice, these two had been gone from this world for a long time. For example, Moses had died and was buried on Nebo's mountain. The Word of God tells us that God Himself, scooped out the grave with the hollow of His hand and buried Moses on Nebo's mountain, and nobody ever knew where his

IS "THAT" IN THE BIBLE?



Question:

"WHO WAS JESUS' GRAND-FATHER ON HIS FATHER'S SIDE?"

Answer: Matthew says "Jacob," but Luke says "Heli." Matthew 1:16 — "And Jacob begat Joseph the husband of Mary, of whom was born Jesus, who is called Christ."

Luke 3:23: "And Jesus himself began to be about thirty years of age, being (as was supposed) the son of Joseph, which was the son of Heli."

grave was. But now here is Moses coming back down to this earth to talk to the Lord Jesus Christ about His death. We know that Moses was disembodied. We know that it was Moses' soul that came back, for the simple reason that nobody knew where his grave was. Nobody could have found his grave. Nobody in this world today knows where Moses was even buried. I say that Moses' body was in the grave where God put it, and it was Moses' soul that was disembodied that came back and met with the Lord Jesus Christ to talk about His death that He was to accomplish at Jerusalem.

Let's notice the other passage:

"Then shall the dust return to the earth as it was: and the spirit shall return unto God who gave it" (Eccl. 12:7).

How could a man read a passage as plainly written as this, and as unequivocally stated as this, and say that the soul and the body are both in the same place — that both are in the grave waiting the morning of the resurrection? This verse says that the spirit returned to God who gave it, and that the body returned to the dust from whence it had come. So I say that the soul does not sleep in the grave until the judgment.

Again, to answer the question as to where the soul does not go, I say that the soul does not go to Purgatory. There are lots of people who talk about Purgatory, and when they speak of Purgatory, they mean a place that is an intermediate place between death and eternity, where men are purged from their sins. That would make Purgatory a great and successful reform school, where the incorrigibles of the world who would not be corrected in time, are corrected in eternity, and gotten ready to live then in the Kingdom Age that is to follow. To me that is an inconsistent, ridiculous statement. Listen:

"And as it is appointed unto men once to die, but after this the judgment" (Heb. 9:27).

Notice, this doesn't say anything about a Purgatory in between. It doesn't say anything about an opportunity in between for men to get right, that have been wrong here in this world. Rather, it says there is a day appointed unto men to die, and after that the judgment. So I say then, that men's souls do not at death go to Purgatory.

In making preparation for this message, I noticed particularly one statement that the Catholics made in the Catholic Question Box on page 308. They said: "The strongest argument for the existence of Purgatory is the witness of divine tradition."

Beloved, if I didn't have some

Scripture to back up my argument, I would keep my mouth shut. They say that the strongest argument for Purgatory is the witness of divine tradition. They are not talking about the Bible; they are talking about the traditions that have been handed down through the years. I'll say this: If you can't back up what you believe by the Word of God, you had better not believe it.

Let's notice another Scripture to show you that the soul does not go to Purgatory:

"And whosoever speaketh a word against the Son of man, it shall be forgiven him; but whosoever speaketh against the Holy Ghost, it shall not be forgiven him, neither in this world, neither in the world to come" (Mt. 12:32).

Notice, God says that sin is not going to be forgiven in the world to come. So I say that the soul that abandons the body at death does not go into the grave to sleep with the body, and it does not go into Purgatory to be changed by the fires, and transformed into a different being, but rather, that soul goes some place else, and I am going to show you where the soul goes.

III WHERE THE UNSAVED GO.

Where does the soul of the unsaved go? You certainly ought to be able to realize where it goes in the light of Luke 16:19-24, which I read to you. As I said, two men lived, two men died, and two men lived on after death, but they lived in different areas of abode. The Word of God says that the rich man in Hell "lift up his eyes, being in torments, and seeth Abraham afar off, and Lazarus in his bosom." They were in different places. Where do the unsaved go? It says that the unsaved was in Hell, "being in torments."

I am willing to admit that the word "Hell" here is the word Hades which I will explain presently, but I want you to notice this, that this man when he died, went to Hades, and that ultimately he was going to Hell. Listen:

"And I saw a great white throne, and him that sat on it, from whose face the earth and the heaven fled away; and there was found no place for them."

And I saw the dead, small and great, stand before God; and the books were opened: and another book was opened, which is the book of life: and the dead were judged out of those things which were written in the books, according to their works."

And the sea gave up the dead which were in it; and death and Hades delivered up the dead which were in them: and they were judged every man according to their works."

And death and Hades were cast into the lake of fire. This is the second death."

And whosoever was not found written in the book of life was

cast into the lake of fire" (Rev. 20:11-15).

Where goes the soul at death? The Word of God would indicate that the soul of the unsaved goes to Hades. And what is Hades? May I illustrate?

If a man commits a crime, he goes to jail and is held in prison. After he is tried, he is sentenced and is taken to the penitentiary. He is in punishment from the time he is arrested until he gets to the penitentiary. It is a little different place, but nevertheless, he is in punishment. I say, from the hour that he is arrested and put in prison, he is in the custody of the State entirely. He is in the prison first, and later, he goes to the penitentiary.

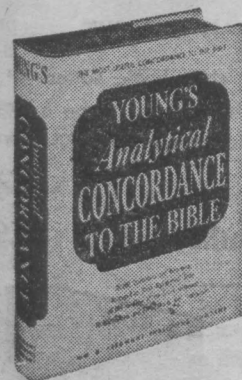
Hades is God Almighty's prison. Hell is God Almighty's penitentiary. Where does the soul go when it dies? It goes to Hades. It suffers there. It is in torments there. As long as one is there, he is suffering. There is no hope for alleviation of his condition. There is no thought of his condition ever being one bit better. Later, he is transferred from Hades to Hell, which is God Almighty's penitentiary. There is no hope of getting out. He is there, and there forever.

I look at this rich man as recorded in Luke 16. When he died, he went to Hades, and in Hades he lifted up his eyes, being in torments. He asked for water, but no water was given to him. He didn't ask to get out, but as a second request he asked that somebody be sent to his father's home, for he had five brothers who were hot-footing the road of vice just like he had. This request was denied. Here is a man that every prayer that he prays is entirely too late, and every prayer that he prays as a request was denied. He suffers in Hades. He begs for water — even for as much as a drop of water, that it might cool his tongue. Here is a man that has no hope of having his condition ever made one bit better.

I contend, beloved, that that man in Hades eventually comes to the judgment of the great white throne, and will be judged, and his body and soul will be cast into Hell. In Luke 18, it is the soul that is suffering; in Revelation 20:11-15, it will be body and soul combined that will suffer throughout a never-ending eternity.

Any hope of getting out? None whatsoever. There is no hope of getting out of Hades. There is no hope of getting out of Hell. There is no possibility of an alleviation of his condition in Hades. There is no possibility of an alleviation of his condition in Hell. I tell you, when the soul of the unsaved dies, it goes to Hades, then to Hell, and throughout a never-ending eternity suffers with no thought of a second chance, no opportunity to ever get out, but always remains in Hell through- (Continued on page 4, column 5)

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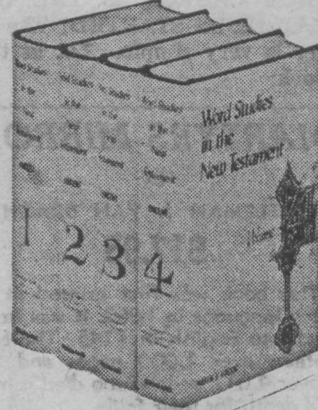
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THE BAPTIST EXAMINER

SEPTEMBER 24, 1977

PAGE THREE

The Baptist Examiner Forum

SUBMIT QUESTIONS ON ANY BIBLE SUBJECT TO:

THE BAPTIST EXAMINER — P. O. BOX 910 — ASHLAND, KY. 41101

"How can you prove beyond any doubt that you have Scriptural baptism when you cannot prove beyond any doubt that your particular church goes back by a link chain of churches to Christ?"

PAUL
TIBER

PASTOR,
NEW TESTAMENT
BAPTIST CHURCH
9272 Euclid-Chardon
Road
Kirkland, Ohio



This question is one which is being worn out by those who oppose church authority — they never tire of asking it, and never pay heed to the answer. We are constantly being required to go to history to prove Bible truth — but the sensitive saint will always believe the Word of God regardless of external proofs.

We need not run, however, from historical record of church perpetuity. There is much more human history on that subject than there is human record of our Lord's time upon this earth! Notice regarding His church:

- our Lord proclaimed her continuity (Matt. 16:18).
- our Lord gave her authority (Matt. 28:18).
- our God gave her power (Acts 1:8).
- history records her continual existence

In the face of the Biblical and historical evidence it would be rank disobedience not to make honest inquiry into your church's history, at least to the extent as it is recorded, in order to be certain that your baptism was not at the hands of a church with no authority at all.

In many instances it is a simple matter to find that there has never been authority obtained from a preceding Scriptural church, but only an organization started at the whim of a man.

The above precautions, I think, should rest the mind of the honest inquirer.

JAMES
HOBBS

Rt. 2, Box 182
McDermott, Ohio

PASTOR
Kings Addition
Baptist Church
South Shore, Ky.



We have had many questions on baptism lately. It has been made perfectly clear that Scriptural baptism is important and that there are certain requirements that must be met. These have been answered numerous times and therefore, I am not going to take the space to go into detail for this question. There must be the proper candidate (a believer), the proper authority (Baptist church), the proper mode (immersion), and for the proper reason (to symbolize the burial and resurrection).

The question that comes up mostly is concerning the church. Our church can be traced back approximately 200 years, but supposing some churches can't go back that far? Do we set a date and say that we must trace a church back that far or isn't a church? Absolutely not! Records are easily lost. How then can we tell if a church is Scriptural or not? We can accept a church if she was organized Scripturally,

if salvation by grace is preached, and if she does not accept alien baptism.

How can we be sure if our church is one of the Lord's churches? Does it stand for the truth of God's Word? Is it sound in belief and practice? Then rest assured that it is one of the Lord's churches. As Job said, "Who can bring a clean thing out of an unclean? Not one" (Job 14:4). If you have a sound church, then rest assured it came from a sound church. We have to have faith. If you love the Lord and are obedient to Him, then don't you believe that He will lead you to one of His churches? I do, and He did.

As for the first part of your question — How can you prove beyond any doubt? Frankly, there are some people that you could never convince. When we search the Scripture and are obedient to the clear teaching covering baptism, then that is all the proof we need. If after much study and prayer you are satisfied with your baptism — and it conforms to the Biblical requirements, then that should be satisfactory for anyone. Sometimes I am afraid that we spend too much time trying to prove things that need no more proof, and instead, should be busy preaching the gospel, teaching the church, and serving the Lord.

ROY
MASON

RADIO MINISTER
BAPTIST PREACHER
Aripeka, Florida



My proof is in the word and promise of the Divine Son of God, who started the church. We find this described in Matthew 16:18, where Jesus is recorded as saying, "I will build my church, and the gates of Hell shall not prevail against it." Two tremendous things are here promised. First, that He would build His church. Second, that He would not allow Hell to gulp it down. Nothing is clearer, plainer, or more conclusive than this promise that He would prevent this church from going out of existence.

But, there are hundreds of organizations in the world that claim to be churches. What about this? How can we get to the truth as to WHICH CHURCH IS THE ONE THAT JESUS STARTED? The answer is very simple. Let us take a look:

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All of those who are interested in Baptist church history will want to purchase this great book. It is well-bound and neat in appearance.

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The Catholic church cannot be the one Christ started. It in no sense resembles the church Jesus started. It had no Pope for centuries. Finally, after centuries, there was a rebellion against Catholicism, and the Protestant organizations were formed. Since that time, scores of religious groups have sprung up. Among these are Jehovah's Witnesses, The Seventh Day Adventists, various Holiness groups. These and scores of others have sprung up headed by men or women. Baptists differ from these in that they cannot be traced to a human founder. I became interested in this question early in my Christian life, and for some years, I made this question a subject of careful study. Forty or more years ago, I wrote a book entitled "The Church That Jesus Built," in which I traced Baptists back to the time of Christ. This book has been used as a textbook in several Baptist Colleges. It has been republished fifteen times, and has been translated into several different languages. With my own hands, I have baptized preachers of other denominations who were led to become Baptists by reading this book. No one has ever even tried to refute this book.

To try to trace a certain church back to the days of Christ would be a long and difficult task for a Baptist! Other religious groups would find it utterly impossible, because their origin leads straight to a human founder. But Baptists without engaging in link chain historical search, can readily depend upon the truthful promise of Jesus, "THE GATES OF HELL SHALL NOT PREVAIL AGAINST IT." If I can trust my soul to Christ, I can certainly trust His promise concerning His church.

C. G.
COOK

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Birmingham, Ala.

PASTOR
Philadelphia
Baptist Church
Birmingham, Ala.



Could it be that those who doubt or deny the chain link succession of the church do so because that kind of succession would be the death of their pet theology? If there is a chain link succession of our Lord's true churches, there is no way for Him to have a universal church. So far as I am able to see there is no Scripture that would justify two kinds of true churches. If Seofield's true church is universal as he claimed, then the local churches are false. There is just no way that both of them can be true. So it behooves us to search diligently for the truth concerning the church.

Our Lord gave the two ordinances, baptism and the Lord's Supper to His true churches to observe until He comes. And I do not recall any church that is universal enough for her to invite visitors to vote as to whether to receive the candidate for baptism. But I do not know of one of the universal type churches who does not invite just about anything and everything to observe the Lord's Supper with her. One ordinance is just as much a church ordinance as the other. So if you are going to invite everything to eat with you, why not be consistent and ask everything to vote with you? However, I have known some of them that would receive just about anything that is called baptism. In fact, I once saw a church bulletin that was put out

by a preacher who claimed to be a Baptist that said, "Baptism at any time by any mode recognized, communion open to all Christians." I am persuaded that old Santa Claus is as much Baptist as that preacher is.

The universal churchite seems to overlook the sovereignty of God. They seem to think that true church succession is in the hands of the people. They seem to leave God out of the picture altogether. I know of two groups who called themselves churches who have in the last year been led to see that they had no authority. Both groups have done something about it. And today they are rejoicing in the fact that now they are true churches. I know of another group of precious saints who are at this moment deeply concerned about their lack of authority. They, too, are planning to do something about it. It was the Lord who caused them to see the need of true church authority.

God is able to keep His churches pure. So the link succession of His churches is His responsibility. His churches are living organisms. And only something that has life can bring forth life. If you organize a church as you would a sewing circle or a garden club you will have a church like the ones we see in Rev. 3:1. There our Lord tells the churches that are represented by the prophecy found in the letter to the church at Sardis that they have a name that they live, but they are dead. It would be interesting indeed to know just how many churches there are in the country who think they have life, but in reality are dead. And the thing that is called the universal church is as dead as a "door nail." It has no ability to do anything at all whatever. In fact, George Washington has as much ability to sit in the oval room in the white house and carry on government business as the monstrosity called the universal church has to do mission work, or to observe the ordinances. The only thing it is good for is for its adherents to worship.

It would seem that the person who holds to a universal church does so through ignorance of the meaning of the Greek word ECCLESIA, or by means of ignoring that meaning. Our Lord used this word ECCLESIA twenty-one times in such a way that even a moron would know He meant something local. And in Mt. 16:18 He used the very same word that He had used in the other twenty-one places. So what grounds would I have for saying that He meant something altogether different in Mt. 16:18 from what He meant everywhere else? The answer to that question is very clear. I would not have any grounds for it.

I am fully persuaded that if a

person is sincere about his baptism, and if he has doubts about it, that He who walked some sixty miles in order for Him to receive Scriptural baptism will help that person to get that Scriptural baptism, and that He will then give that person peace of mind, and joy in the Lord. If I have erred in that I have denied that ECCLESIA has any hint of a meaning that would justify a universal church, please prove to me, and I will gladly swallow that proof. On the other hand, if I have told you the truth concerning this word, won't you please swallow it and rejoice in it?

Where Goes The Soul

(Continued from page three)

out eternity. Now that is rather hard on Catholicism. That is rather hard on the Russellites. The Russellites say that when a man dies, he just sleeps away, and he sleeps and sleeps and sleeps; he has a good long sleep until the Lord wakes him up in judgment and gives him an opportunity to be saved. If he won't be saved, then he is just shoved into Hell and burned up and that is the end of him. He'll be annihilated and he'll be the same as no more.

The Romanists have a little bit different approach to it. They say that when a man dies unsaved, he goes into Purgatory. There is only one person with the Catholics that ever escapes Purgatory and that is the woman who dies in childbirth. They say that she makes a sacrifice in bringing a new life into this world. Just as Christ sacrificed Himself on the cross for our sins, so the mother that gives birth to a child and dies in childbirth is sacrificing her life for a child, and she is the only person that escapes Purgatory. In other words, she, by her sacrifice, has escaped the fires of Purgatory. All others, including the Pope himself, go to Purgatory, so that their sins may be purged away, and after a good long while in which they are fricasseed on one side, and fried on the other, and baked possibly in the middle, they get out and get over into Heaven. Beloved, that makes Purgatory a great and successful reform school where the men that were the incorrigibles of this world and would not be corrected, are corrected in eternity.

But the Word of God says that when you die, you go to Hades, and when you are judged, you go to Hell. There is no hope of getting out, but throughout eternity the individual stays there in that state. We read:

"The same shall drink of the

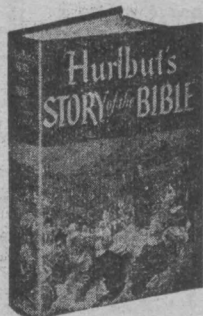
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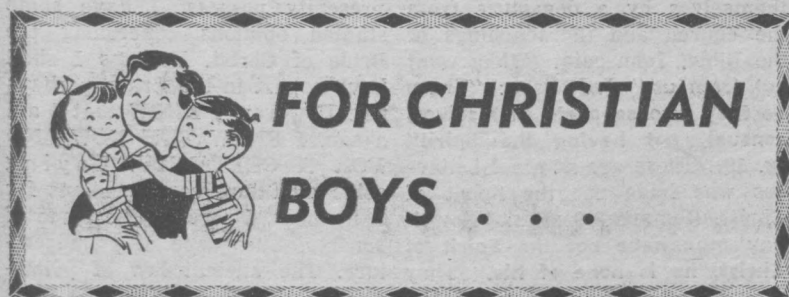
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The editor urges our readers to contribute articles to this column. Articles "FOR CHRISTIAN BOYS" should be written by Christian men and boys, and "FOR CHRISTIAN GIRLS" by Christian women and girls. Such articles must be at least one page, typed and doubled spaced, yet it must not exceed two such pages. Each article should be accompanied by your name and address as well as the name of the Baptist church where you are a member.

STUDY OF THE SCRIPTURES

A. ALEXANDER
Princeton, New Jersey

I would not, my young friend, have you study the Bible as a critic, but as a Christian. You should endeavor to derive some spiritual nourishment from every part of Scripture.

In studying the historical Scriptures, you can occasionally pause and meditate. You can inquire whether your mind distinctly comprehended the fact recorded, and its practical bearing. In this way, your memory will be strengthened, and your heart, I trust, often affected.

Before I leave this subject, permit me to say a word or two on the spirit with which you should peruse the sacred volume. It is a spirit of implicit faith, and childlike docility. There are many parts of Scripture, which, after the most diligent and careful investigation, will still appear, to short-sighted man, almost inexplicable. There are many doctrines too profound for human comprehension — many mysterious truths relating to God, to angels, and to Heaven. God has given to man a revelation which embodies the august truths of His eternity, and of His infinite attributes; which brings into view a spiritual world, and throws down upon us the light of the inconceivable glory; and such a revelation must necessarily contain things to us mysterious and incomprehensible. It necessarily presents certain truths to be received on the

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simple testimony of God; and this is faith.

Shall I, therefore, in perusing the Bible, reject one of its doctrines, because it is less intelligible than another? Am I not bound to receive even incomprehensible truths, if I find them there recorded? Having settled the fact that the Bible is inspired, I must come to it as an infallible oracle. I must feel, with the apostle, that although there are many things which, in consequence of my infirmity, I can only view as through a glass darkly; yet, if I am a Christian, the time is near when I shall see them as clearly as I can behold a friend face to face. Although I must confess that there are many deep truths which now I know in part, yet there is a day coming when I shall know them as fully as I myself am known. Even the venerable apostle ranks himself but as a child in the knowledge of divine things. He is content to wait that knowledge shall be expanded among the bright intelligences of Heaven.

Were your father, whom you so much love, an astronomer, conversant with the motions of the heavenly bodies — were he to take you, while a child, to his observatory, point you to those revolving orbs and tell you that he had measured their distances, and calculated their motions, would you believe him? O yes; he is your father, who would not deceive you, and you are his confiding child. You could not comprehend the fact, but you would believe your father; you would have no doubt of his veracity. Were he again to tell you, that should your life be continued, you also would, in a few years, be able to make these sublime calculations, your astonishment would be increased. Had not your father said it, you could not have believed it. But still you would confide in your beloved parent.

This is precisely the spirit which you must possess in studying the Scriptures. It is your Father who speaks. Sometimes He speaks of high and mysterious things; but remember, that you are bound to confide in His word. When scepticism would harass your mind, flee to the Word of God, and subject your understanding implicitly to its dictates. When troubles assail, betake yourself instantly to this fountain of consolation. When doubts of your acceptance come over your mind like a dark and portentous cloud, here, in this blessed volume, is the Sun of righteousness to chase away the cloud, and restore you to calmness and tranquility.

Whilst there is a spirit abroad that would undervalue the plain testimony of revelation, and make it, like the heathen oracles of old, speak an ambiguous and time-serving language, be it your resolution to cling to the precious Bible, and to love even its most self-denying and soul-humbling doctrines. Be not ashamed of those views of truth which, in the estimation of vain and proud men, are peculiar only to vulgar minds. The Bible, you will recollect, was written equally for the vulgar and the refined. The poor claim it as their most precious legacy. What though there be in it some mysterious and inexplicable doctrines; is it not the part of faith to sit meekly at the Saviour's feet, and

receive implicitly the words which drip from His lips?

Compass about as we are with infirmities — dependent as we are for the least ray of heavenly comfort — with intellectual pride on the one hand, and deep-rooted and sinful prejudices on the other — now wandering from God and duty; and now returning disappointed and dejected — let us sink into the deepest self-abasement. Let us bow, with the spirit of children, to the simple truth as it is in Jesus; let us implore the divine Spirit to guide us through this benighted desert; and let us look forward by faith to the period when we shall emerge from our darkness into unclouded and eternal day.—(ADVICE TO A YOUNG CHRISTIAN, pp. 151-154, 1843 edition).



Where Goes The Soul

(Continued from page 4)

wine of the wrath of God, which is poured out without mixture into the cup of his indignation; and he shall be tormented with fire and brimstone in the presence of the holy angels, and in the presence of the Lamb:

"And the smoke of their torment ascended up for EVER AND EVER: and they have no rest day nor night, who worship the beast and his image, and whosoever receiveth the marks of his name" (Rev. 14:10,11).

There is no hope of a changed condition, but every man that goes out of this world unsaved, goes hopelessly into eternity.

I stood there in Kings Daughters' Hospital a few years ago and saw a young mother die that I know died without Jesus Christ, and I know went out of this world unsaved. I stood there and saw her as she died, and I thought to myself that the demons of Hell were waiting for her. As she died, her last hope faded away.

I saw a man sometime ago that had been killed. I looked at his body after his death and I thought how I had preached to him, and talked to him, and prayed with him, and had read God's Word to him, all to no avail. I thought to myself as he died, all hope left that man. Humanly speaking, I would say there may have been hope for him up to the hour of his death, but when he died, all hope was gone, for the man that dies without Jesus Christ is without Jesus Christ throughout eternity. He is first in Hades, God's prison house, and secondly, in Hell, which is God's penitentiary. In either case, there is no appeal there from, and no possibility of ever getting out.

IV

WHERE THE SAVED GO.

When God's child dies, where does he go? I don't think that we have any doubt about it. I don't think that we need to question one particle as to what becomes of the soul of the saved. I know that it doesn't go to the grave. I have shown you that already. Let me show you what the Word of God says as to where the soul of the saved goes. Listen:

"For I am in a strait betwixt two, having a desire to depart, and TO BE WITH CHRIST: which is far better: Nevertheless to abide in the flesh is more needful for you" (Phil. 1:28).

Paul is saying, "As far as I am concerned, I would rather die, but as far as you are concerned, it would be a blessing for you if I could abide in the flesh, because I can be a help to you. But when I die — when I depart, I depart to be with Christ."

Where does a saint go when he dies? He goes to be with the Lord Jesus Christ. I have said repeatedly through the years of

my ministry, and I repeat it this morning, it cannot be too strongly argued that when a child of God dies, he goes immediately into the direct presence of the Lord Jesus Christ.

I saw a preacher's daughter die several years ago. It was one of the sweetest Christian deaths that I have ever witnessed. I stood there and she talked to me as calmly as though it were the least thing in her mind — the fact that she was about to die. Up to within two or three minutes of her death she talked as calmly and as rationally as you and I might carry on a conversation. Presently, she smiled and was gone. Where was she gone? Paul says, "To depart, and to be with Christ."

When Paul wrote to the church at Corinth, he said:

"Therefore we are always confident, knowing that, whilst we are at home in the body, we are absent from the Lord: (For we walk by faith, not by sight:) We are confident, I say, and willing rather to be absent from the body, and TO BE PRESENT WITH THE LORD" (II Cor. 5:6-8).

What does he say? He says that when you are absent from the body, you are present with the Lord. There isn't any doubt about where a saint goes when he dies.

The first time that I ever saw anyone die was when my father died many, many years ago. I never shall forget his death. He suffered intensely for many, many months from a rare disease. There hadn't been a smile on his face all through those months. But on the day he died, he said, "Can't you see them?" Then there was the sweetest smile that I ever saw on my father's face as he was trying to tell us what he was seeing, that none of us could see. Don't tell me that his eyes were not beholding things out yonder in another world that my eyes were unable to see. I tell you, beloved, when we are absent from the body, we are present with the Lord.

Listen again:

"But he, being full of the Holy Ghost, looked up stedfastly into heaven, and saw the glory of God, and Jesus standing on the right hand of God. And said, Behold, I SEE the heavens opened, and THE SON OF MAN STANDING on the right hand of God" (Acts 7:55,56).

This is talking about the death of Stephen, the first Christian martyr. Having gnashed upon him with their teeth as a result of his preaching, they then stoned him; and as they were stoning him, he said, "I see Jesus standing on the right hand of God."

What is Jesus' position today? Every place, to my knowledge, in the Word of God that you read about the position of Jesus Christ, He is seated at the right hand of the Father. When He finished His work, He sat down.

Priests in the Old Testament never had a chair nor a seat in the tabernacle. Why? Because

the priest's work was never done. We read:

"And every priest STANDETH DAILY ministering and offering oftentimes the same sacrifices, which can never take away sins" (Heb. 10:11).

That Old Testament priest never finished his work. He had to repeat his work, his daily sacrifices, over and over again. Therefore, there was no seat, no stool, no chair ever placed within the tabernacle, because he never had an opportunity to sit down, for his work was never finished. But when Jesus Christ died on the cross, the Word of God says that He sat down on the right hand of God. Why? Because His work was finished.

But notice: Here He is standing. What does it tell us? When Stephen finished his testimony and sealed his testimony with his last breath at this stoning, the Lord Jesus Christ gets up and reaches out a hand to welcome this saint home to Glory. Where does the soul of a saint go when he dies? It goes into the direct presence of the Lord Jesus Christ.

Notice another Scripture in this respect:

"And Jesus said unto him, Verily I say unto thee, TODAY SHALT THOU BE WITH ME IN PARADISE" (Luke 23:43).

Jesus is saying to this thief on the cross, "Today shalt thou be with me in paradise." Where is this man going? He is going to be with Jesus. Where are he and Jesus going to be? In Paradise. Where does the soul go when it dies? It goes to Paradise. It goes to be with Jesus.

Where is Paradise? We read:

"I knew a man in Christ above fourteen years ago, (whether in the body, I cannot tell; or whether out of the body, I cannot tell: God knoweth); such an one caught up to the third heaven. And I knew such a man (whether in the body, or out of the body, I cannot tell: God knoweth:) How that he was caught up into paradise: and he heard unspeakable words, which it is not lawful for a man to utter" (II Cor. 12:2-4).

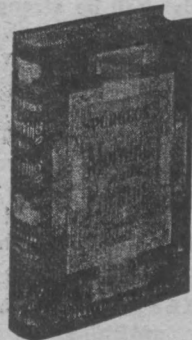
Paul is probably talking about himself. I wouldn't be a bit surprised but what he was talking about was the time when he was stoned and left for dead, just outside the city. He said, "I don't know whether this man was in the body or out of the body. I don't know whether the spirit had abandoned the body or not. I just can't say. God is the only one that knows." This individual was caught up to the third heaven (that is, in the Heaven of heavens — into God's abode), into the very presence of God. He was caught up into Paradise.

Where does the saint go when he dies? He goes to Paradise.

Where is Paradise? It is wherever God is. It is wherever Jesus Christ is, for He said on the cross, "Today shalt thou be with me in paradise."

Notice again:

"He that hath an ear, let him hear" (Continued on page 6, column 1)



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Where Goes The Soul

(Continued from page five)

hear what the Spirit saith unto the churches; To him that overcometh will I give to eat of the tree of life, which is in the midst of the paradise of God" (Rev. 2:7).

Where is Paradise? It is wherever God the Father is. It is wherever Jesus Christ is. It is wherever the Tree of Life is.

Notice another passage of Scripture:

"And he shewed me a pure river of water of life, clear as crystal, proceeding out of the throne of God and of the Lamb. In the midst of the street of it, and on either side of the river, was there the tree of life, which bare twelve manner of fruits, and yielded her fruit every month: and the leaves of the tree were for the healing of the nations.

And there shall be no more curse; but the throne of God and of the Lamb shall be in it: and his servants shall serve him:

And they shall see his face; and his name shall be in their foreheads.

And there shall be no night there; and they need not candle, neither light of the sun: for the Lord God giveth them light: and they shall reign for ever and ever.

And he said unto me, These sayings are faithful and true: and the Lord God of the holy prophets sent his angel to show unto his servants the things which must shortly be done.

Behold, I come quickly: blessed is he that keepeth the sayings of the prophecy of this book" (Rev. 22:1-7).

Thus we see that the Tree of Life, which is said to be in Paradise, is in Heaven itself. Therefore, we conclude that when a saved person dies, that individual goes to Paradise — where the Father is — where Jesus Christ is — and where the Tree of Life is.

May it please God today that you might be saved and that when you come to the end of the way, you shall go to Paradise to be forever with the Lord Jesus.

Paul said: "For I am in a strait betwixt two, having a desire to depart, and to be with Christ; which is far better" (Phil. 1:23).

When a Christian dies, he goes "to be with Christ."

Listen again:

"But he, being full of the Holy Ghost, looked up steadfastly into heaven, and saw the glory of God, and Jesus standing on the right hand of God.

And said, Behold, I see the heavens opened, and the Son of man standing on the right hand of God" (Acts 7:55-56).

The Word of God tells us that when Jesus ascended on high, He sat down, as a sign resting from His labors. In this instance though, we see Him as He stands up to greet Stephen as he enters into Paradise.

Here is another Scripture that

tells us when we pass from this life, we go immediately to be with Jesus.

"Therefore we are always confident, knowing that, whilst we are at home in the body, we are absent from the Lord:

(For we walk by faith, not by sight:)

We are confident, I say, and willing rather to be absent from the body, and to be present with the Lord" (II Cor. 5:6-8).

It cannot be too strongly argued that when a Christian dies, he goes immediately to the direct presence of Jesus Christ.

If you are unsaved, may God save you this morning, for you have a horrible future awaiting you outside of Jesus Christ. May God save you, and may God add you to this body is my prayer.

May God bless you!

Preservation And . . .

(Continued from Page Two)

ture from God as seen in the lives of many of the saints in the Bible. Noah got drunk. Lot moved to Sodom and committed incest with his daughters. Abraham lied about his wife. David committed adultery. Moses disobeyed God. Peter denied Christ and cursed. Thus the meaning in Jeremiah 32:40 is that the regenerate will not remain in a state of departure from God without repentance and restoration. There will never be a wicked, final, and total departure from the ways of truth.

The general tenor and course of the life of a redeemed man is one of fellowship with God and obedience to His Word. The saint will continue in the Word, worship, and work of Christ. His perseverance is not due to any natural goodness. It is due entirely to the principle of grace within, the fear of God which rules his heart and prevents his total departure. The believer will continue close and faithful to God purely by God's grace, not by any strength or resolution of his own.

RIGHTEOUS HOLD ON

Job 17:9 declares: "The righteous also shall hold on his way, and he that hath clean hands shall be stronger and stronger." Here two things are said of a regenerate man: he will continue in the way of holiness and grow stronger in it.

First, let us consider how a righteous man continues in the way of righteousness. If he has the righteousness of faith, he is faithful to walk in the path of righteousness. He will persevere in holiness and truth. Bonds and afflictions do not deter him in this holy way. Paul experienced both and said: "None of these things move me" (Acts 20:24). Neither the snares of Satan, nor the care of riches, nor the pleasure of the world will completely turn him aside. In times of darkness, desertion, depravation, discouragement, danger, difficulty, and disappointment he may momentarily slip and slide, but he will never forsake the way with no intentions of returning.

Second, this verse supposes a growth in grace: "He that hath clean hands shall be stronger and stronger." The man saved by grace will become more vigorous and lively in duty, more knowledgeable and Christlike, more warm and affectionate. This increase of strength is from the supply of God's grace: "Surely shall one say, In the Lord have I righteousness and strength" (Isa. 45:24).

SHALL KEEP HIS COMMANDMENTS

The Lord says in Ezekiel 36:27: "And I will put my Spirit within you, and cause you to walk in my statutes, and ye shall keep my judgments, and do them."

Those made alive by the Holy Spirit in regeneration are said to continue in the observation of God's commandments. This they do willingly and cheerfully from

the new heart within. God promises that His people in the main will keep His precepts.

SHEEP FOLLOW CHRIST

It is said of Christ's sheep in John 10:4-5: "And when he putteth forth his own sheep, he goeth before them, and the sheep follow him: for they know his voice. And a stranger will they not follow, but will flee from him; for they know not the voice of strangers."

The sheep do not disregard the voice of the shepherd; they hear it. They follow in His steps by exercising love, humility, patience, self-denial, and holiness. In a great measure they walk as He walked. The sheep who have eternal life have a discerning ear and an obedient heart.

Christ's sheep do not have to be driven by fear of Hell fire. They are said to follow Him out of love and a sense of duty. It is distinctly declared that they will not follow a false prophet. It is not possible for God's elect to be deceived (Matt. 24:24).

DIVINE SEED REMAINS

In I John 3:9 it is written: "Whosoever is born of God doth not commit sin: for his seed remaineth in him: and he cannot sin, because he is born of God." Even the best saints are not completely free from sin in their mortal flesh (I John 1:8,10). But a regenerate child of God does not make a business of sin. It is not the constant course of his life. He does not habitually make a practice of sinning. He is no slave to sin; it is not the law of his life. To continue to walk in sin is contrary to the new nature generated by the Spirit.

NO DRAWING BACK TO PERDITION

Hebrews 10:38 says: "Now the just shall live by faith: but if any man draw back, my soul shall have no pleasure in him." There are some who depart from the truth never to return. They do not persevere but succumb to an open apostasy from religion. They go down to perdition in their sins. But such persons are mere formal professors and hypocrites. God looks upon these nominal believers with great displeasure. They are wolves in sheep's clothing who draw back because they were never God's children.

In these days of rampant Arminianism and the craze for big churches, thousands are joining churches who are children of the Devil. Modern decisionism with all of its cheap, commercialized evangelism has led many to believe that you can be saved from sin while continuing to live a sinful, wicked life. Such goats leave the churches and return to the world because they never had the regenerating work of the Holy Spirit.

The writer of Hebrews goes on to add: "But we are not of them who draw back unto perdition; but of them that believe to the saving of the soul" (Heb. 10:39). God's children do not draw back unto perdition. They may draw back for a time, but they will return. They will persevere in a state of grace unto glory. They will endure to the end, and their faith will overcome the world.

SUPERFICIAL PROFESSORS DO NOT PERSEVERE

I John 2:19 informs us: "They went out from us, but they were not of us: for if they had been of us, they would not doubt have continued with us: but they went out, that they might be made manifest that they were not all of us." Note three definite facts stated here:

First, not all who profess to be God's children are true believers. Some profess to be what they are not. There are the spurious among the true churches. John says: "They were not of us." He did not say they were once of us and then fell from grace. These false professors never were of the number of God's elect.

Second, these spurious will show themselves by a departure from the church and the teachings of the Bible. John said: "They went out from us." Jude says: "These be they who separate themselves, sensual, not having the Spirit" (v. 19). These are nominal believers who have not the Spirit of Christ. Romans 8:9 says: "Now if any man have not the Spirit of Christ, he is none of his." They may take the Christian name but they never had the Christian nature.

Third, if they were truly born again, they would have continued in Christian union with the saints of Christ's church. John says: "If they had been of us, they would not doubt have continued with us." In that expression John makes it plain that the saints persevere in the faith and fellowship of the Christian church. This teaches the indefectibility of grace in the elect.

Gladness

(Continued from page one)

people are capable of all evil because they are all corrupt. The mass murderer and the upper class sophisticate are of one blood and of one nature. The natural man, be he sophisticate or savage, is debased completely.

The elect man of God is different. John 1:12 says, "But as many as received him, to them gave he power to become the sons of God." A fuller sense of this verse would say that, "He dignified them to become the sons of God."

The lost man has no dignity for he has no God likeness. He is incapable of it, but the free born sons of God have a deific dignity and a good bit more besides.

In order to prove their humility, Christians are rather fond of saying, "I am just a sinner saved by grace." I don't like that statement. It is poorly expressed and not far reaching enough. We are certainly saved by grace but we are a great deal more than "just a sinner," who has been converted. The elect of the Father are seed royal of a majestic house. Hear it now, we are SONS, WE ARE SONS. Ours is the preeminent place on the right hand of the Father. WE ARE SONS.

We had no more to do with our royal birth than an earthly prince has to do with his. Let pride be stilled. Yet, we are ROYAL SONS and that, my friend, is a good bit more than being "just a sinner saved by grace." Our inability to cause our own birth in no wise negates our standing as children of the sceptre. We are not street urchins and we shouldn't act like it.

We have been given a dignity that enables us to even cause gladness to the God of Heaven. We also have the capacity to grieve the Spirit that loves us. That is rather an awesome power for men to possess.

POWER. Politicians in their benighted ignorance grovel for it. Warlords kill for it and religious votaries char their enemies because of it. Yet, for all this panting lust for power few people on earth really appreciate the source of it and fewer still understand the depository of it.

The elect children of the Highest are the most powerful people on earth. We are recipients of grace it is true. We had our beginning in grace and we shall finish by grace. Yet, we are also depositories of awesome, awesome power; by grace. The literal ability to move literal mountains is no mean gift. The very real ability to gladden the Sovereign of creation is no small thing either.

We are not to be proud. I dislike the very word, but a people who shall soon judge angels should understand something more of the ability they presently possess.

I do not overstate it when I say that I treasure my sonship more

than any other gift of grace I presently possess. I have some studied opinions concerning the Bride of Christ. Perhaps I shall have a part in the Bride, perhaps not. However, I KNOW that I am a son. I KNOW THIS NOW AND FOR A CERTAINTY. Laying aside all future considerations for a moment, I revel in the place of sonship. The place of primogeniture. The ancient law of primogeniture has been in use in most all lands for millenniums. It provides that all the goods of the father MUST pass on to the first born son. Primogeniture was the law in much of Europe even during much of the last century. Primogeniture was enforced with penalties by civil authorities. The father had no option concerning this law. He must obey.

The elect have the aspect of first born sons under this law of primogeniture for we are not just heirs but "joint heirs" (Rom. 8:17) with Christ.

Since we possess this beautiful dignity and power, what shall we do with it? Shall we mar it and squander it in riotous living as one famous son did? Shall we bury it in the ground for fear it will come to harm? I trust not for that is sort of a Hardshell concept. Wise sons should use these gifts as a tribute to the One that bought them. To make Him glad.

We can do it you know. I do not know as much about our relationship with God as I would like. However, I know enough to believe our text and hopefully to attempt to fulfill it.

In Greek mythology a "hero" was a man with godlike qualities. He was man and god combined; a demi-god. He was man but

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somewhat more than a man. He was quite literally a "superman." I know the comic connotation of the term "superman" but I use it to establish the point.

All of God's elect are "heroes" in the mythological usage of the word. They are more than just mortal men. By an act of grace they have been enlivened spiritually and infused with the very nature of God. They are a "new creation" (II Cor. 5:17). They are men it is true, but they are "supermen." The pagan Nietzsche used the term "superman" to depict a people who elevated themselves by their own works. I use it to describe a people who are made that way by grace.

A person who is at once a king, a priest, a judge, a saint, a regal son of Heaven, a friend of God, an heir of eternal glory and who is made anew spiritually in the likeness of God is more than a man.

"The Lord taketh pleasure in his people" (Psa. 149:4). If this Scripture doesn't mean that the people of God can make God glad, then I am at a loss to know what it does mean. The concept is clearly established. Now for the operation.

How can we make God glad? Well, how do earthly sons gladden their fathers? Surley, it is when they are like him, made in his image. If we are to make God glad we must be like him as much as the limitations of the flesh will permit. The elect bear His image in prospect, but due to sin, we have

(Continued on page 7, column 1)

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PAGE SIX

Gladness

(Continued from Page Six)

the marks of the world upon us. Yet, we can still attempt to emulate him. "Be ye holy, for I am holy." I Peter 1:16 is beautifully simple and should be simply applied. What greater reason could there be to be holy except that our Father is holy?

"God is love" (I John 4:8). Here is a beautiful place of beginnings. Can we emulate Him in love and make Him glad? We surely can. Let us be wise though. What passes for love among many who say they are Christians is just a saccharine imitation of the real. You measure your love by what you are willing to give or sacrifice toward either God or man. It is a quantitative thing and also a matter of priorities. IT MUST BE SHOWN. If love is not shown it does not exist. It exists only as an expression; as a manifestation. It cannot be talked, it must be demonstrated. In the heavenly chronology of things, we love God first and before all. Yet, love breeds love. It is love for Christ which motivates us overall. If we benefit men by our love as we should, this is merely a by-product of our love for Christ. We would not love them had we not loved Christ first, and before that, have been loved by Him before earth's creation.

We can make Him glad by our gifts. David was a king at war with "mighty men" as his attendants. As a fugitive from Philistine wrath he once expressed a wistful desire for the water in the well at Bethlehem which the Philistines had garrisoned. His men heard the desire of their king. It was not a command but a barely uttered wish. It was enough. You remember the story in II Samuel 23. They broke through the lines of the Philistines and brought the precious water to their king. He was so awed by their devotion that he refused to drink it and poured it onto the ground.

These men were not David's sons, only his soldiers, yet they gladdened his heart. If each child of God would give gifts to their Lord in this fashion they would not only make Him glad but they would know something more of their status and prerogatives as sons. It is all well and good to speak of tithing and offerings, but these men gave their very lives for they endangered their very lives. Notice that these men do not speak in Samuel's account, they act. If Baptists would talk less and do more we would make our Sovereign Lord glad. I recently saw a maxim which said, "When all is said and done, more is said than done." That could almost be a trademark of Baptist people at times.

We can make Him glad by being glad ourselves. "Be glad in the Lord, and rejoice, ye righteous: and shout for joy, all ye that are upright in heart" (Psa. 32:11). A morose Christian is a poor testimony for Christ. We all personify different traits and some by their nature are more stolid and stern than others. But, regardless of varying personalities, if there is not an essential manifestation of gladness in the child of God he

can scarcely make Christ glad. We are happy when our children are happy. When they are melancholy and grieved we are grieved. When we find joy in our children it multiplies our own joy. A stoic, melancholy type with downcast face, a sorrowful demeanor and a gray, dreary outlook should stay indoors and not infect others with his affliction.

We can make Him glad by simply being ourselves. The American Congress is forbidden by the Constitution to convey titles of nobility. However, there is a royal family in the land. The elect of Heaven are the only aristocrats America has, and doesn't even realize it. We are not blue bloods but children of the blood of Calvary. We have ready access to the throne chamber of Heaven and we have myriads of angels as a ministering entourage. Royalty indeed.

Democracy is all well and good and we thank God for it as a workable ideology, but let's look ahead a moment or so. It is the eternal monarchy of righteousness that should excite our attentions and expectations, for we shall live under a monarchy forever.

We are to walk humbly before our God as befits princes of the blood. YET, WE SHOULD NEVER FORGET WHO WE ARE. The children of a royal house should comport themselves as ladies and gentlemen and not as base born spawns of the gutter. If God is your father, then for God's sake act like it. If you claim royal birth, then conduct yourself as a prince of the realm.

Can it honor a King when His children spend more time at the bazaars, marketplaces and hovels of the earth than in the palace? Can it gladden a royal Father to see His sons brawling, bickering and demeaning themselves like so many gutter snipes?

In the hey day of the Mississippi River steamboat days, Natchez, Mississippi was a clearly divided town. There was Natchez On The Hill and Natchez Under the Hill, and everyone knew the difference. Natchez Under the Hill was where the dregs of humanity congregated and no decent person went there. Thank God for the days of clear distinctions. There seems to be a lessening of distinction today over what is decency and indecency. However, if each child of God were to fully understand their royal status and constantly ask themselves "Does this make my Father glad," then the distinctions would become pleasantly sharp and clear again. Will it make your royal Father glad? Is what you are doing the thing that a prince of the realm should do? Ask this and it will clarify questionable conduct wonderfully.

If promoters and prelates of Baptist ecclesiastical empires were to ask themselves, "Does this make my Father glad," then their empires, boards, cliques and fashionable religious machinery would crumble into nothingness. There is a taint of Absalom in all Baptist empires for they exist to make Baptist emperors glad, not God.

We must be humble and meek without affectation. Yet, it seems that many Christians have a false

humility that makes them terribly afraid of giving the impression that they think they're better than other people. My friends, if a royal son of Heaven is not better than a low-born offspring of earth, then pray tell just what is he? I say that the saved are better than the depraved sinner, a prince is better than a commoner and the sceptre is better than the begging bowl. We are better because God by His grace has made us better. Let's don't conceal our royal heritage behind a false cosmetic humility, for that demeans the workmanship of God.

Let us not elevate ourselves in fleshly pride. True royalty doesn't do that. Let us just be ourselves and in being ourselves we shall make Him glad. Do not forget who you are. Acknowledge your sins before God and man, for even princes must do that. Yet, never forget that you are BETTER, and

beautified by salvation. "He will beautify the meek with salvation" (Psa. 149:4). Our Lord has taken us from the ugliness of the world and made us sons of the sceptre. We are a beautiful people.

Black is not beautiful but the children of light are. Let us walk in the light of grace and shine forth with a godly lustre that shall make our Sovereign glad.

Stealing Away . . .

(Continued from page one)

Canal Zone three times — once to Columbia, once to Panama and once to each individual property owner. In 1904, the enthusiasm of the Panamanian people was overwhelming. In 1976, "Chicago Tribune" reporter Ronald Yates, in lengthy interviews, found most Panamanians still happy with U.S. control and ready to fight on the U.S. side to keep it so.

The legal government of Panama was overthrown in 1968 and power was seized by pro-communist Gen. Omar Torrijos, a dictator who allows only the Communist Party to operate. Panama has been controlled by a Moscow-Havana-Panama axis for nine years now and with one main objective: control of the Canal, long a goal of communism. Just last July a high-level Soviet group visited Panama, now that the give-away treaty seems assured, to start consolidating trade and industry, and to plan a permanent base near Colon on the Atlantic side. The major news media ignored this story. Why?

What does the proposed new treaty say? Briefly, the U.S. would immediately transfer about 70 per cent of the territory to Panama and all by the year 2,000, while retaining defense responsibility until the treaty expires on December 31, 1999. In the meantime, we would shell out economic aid and increase "payments" by some 25 times. Not only would this treaty give away American property, but would pay the communists to take it off our hands (estimated at one billion to five billion dollars), plus military and economic aid. Is this wonderland fantasy?

Our State Department, in arguing for the treaty, says the Torrijos regime is not communist controlled. Senators Strom Thurmond of South Carolina answers this: "That's what the State Department said in 1959 about Castro and Cuba."

Who negotiated this treaty? President Carter's chief negotiator was Sol M. Linowitz whose background raises serious questions. The aging Ellsworth Bunker assisted. Linowitz in 1972 was a registered foreign agent for Communist Chile under the late Salvador Allende. Congressman Larry McDonald (D-Ga.) has blown the whistle on Linowitz with documented charges which have never been challenged nor disproved. Examples: Linowitz is still an active agent for Columbia which borders Panama. He is a former director of the Panama Marine Midland Bank which has loaned hundreds of millions of dollars to Panama, and the repayment of these loans largely depend on a new treaty favorable to Panama. He has links with the Marxist Institute of Policy Studies, the late Communist leader Orlando Letelier, Cuban dictator Castro and a group of pro-Castro leftists — to name a few — all seeking a new treaty.

In the late 60's, Linowitz was chairman of a Rockefeller-funded U.S.-Latin American Relations Commission which recommended abandonment of U.S. leadership in the Western Hemisphere and favored non-intervention against Communist aggression. This then, is America's negotiator for a new Canal treaty. It would be difficult to imagine a man with a greater conflict of interest.

What do the mainline churches say? The evangelicals are busy with the churches' mission of saving souls. But the mainliners have

an opinion on the Canal — just as they do on most political issues. In this case: Give it up and let's educate constituents. Specifically, the National Council of Churches, the United Methodist Church, the United Presbyterians and the Catholics have lots to say. One wonders what our elite hierarchy was doing when American history was being studied in school. Apparently, not paying attention!

Conservative Presbyterian G. Aiken Taylor said it well: "You can be sure the welfare of the U.S. and the cause of freedom are under attack" when the churches begin to take positions on national and international affairs.

What does the U.S. government say? Not one single convincing argument has been advanced for surrendering our Canal. Merely, let's show the world that the U.S. is fair and generous, and that we will gladly give up our Canal in order to be good friends of Panama and the rest of Latin America. (But, since when did "giving" gain any friends for America?)

President Carter doesn't like to lose. He waited until Congress was recessed before disclosing details of the proposed treaty. His foreign policy prestige is on the line, and he's mounted an all-out offensive to win members of Congress: telephone calls, telegrams and personal envoys. Never mind that Mr. Carter promised "never to surrender the canal" and never to tell a lie, before he was elected. Never mind that four former Chiefs of Naval Operations call the Canal one of our greatest military and economic assets. Never mind that loss of the Canal would cost millions more in shipping costs per year and billions more for a two-ocean Navy, would aggravate the energy crisis and cause world-wide inflationary trends — to name only a few results.

Mr. Carter's justifications seem straight from Alice-in-Wonderland. He feels that Americans will be happy because: The treaty assures the "permanent neutrality of the Canal," and promotes "a new creative era in our relations with all of Latin America." These are political terms — not for real in the real world! In addition, Mr. Carter is happy that the Joint Chiefs of Staff "believe these agreements are good ones." They better had, or they'll get the General Singlaub treatment (banishment). Let's see how many retired JCS chairmen agree.

For example, Admiral Thomas Moorer, the last JCS chairman, said: "I have yet to see any solid justification (for surrender of the Canal) . . . U.S. security as well as U.S. prosperity would be placed in serious jeopardy . . . The Canal Zone could become the satellite base of an adversary . . . In military affairs there is no substitute for ownership of the territory and the ability to control or to deny the waters and the air space."

It is simply unreal to believe that the communists are going to honor any treaty unless it promotes international communism. Panama has had one of the world's most unstable governments. General Torrijos leans toward the Reds and Castro, Moscow's agent, who next will be pressing for surrender of Guantanamo. There is no point in surrendering the Canal Zone, no point in appeasing Latin America — and there are grave risks (which need not be taken) that the Communists will totally control the Canal long before the year 2,000. We are saddling our children and grandchildren with disgrace — for lack of gumption!

The State Department uses three main arguments for surrender. First, the U.S. never had sovereignty. Second, we have only a "leasehold over the Zone." And (Continued on Page 8, Column 1)

ELDER JOHN STEPP PASSES AWAY



ELDER JOHN STEPP

Elder John Stepp departed this life in Tucson, Arizona, on August 29. His body was brought to Rome, Ohio, where funeral services were conducted by Elder Oscar Mink at the Grace Baptist Church on September 2. Bro. Stepp was for many years pastor of the Grace Baptist Church at Rome. His body was buried in the Orwell Cemetery. Bro. Stepp was a Baptist minister for fifteen years and a good friend and supporter of TBE. The editor only had a brief acquaintance with Elder Stepp, but it was a pleasant one. Please remember the family in your prayers to the Lord.

in remembering that, always ACT BETTER in your conduct as befits your station of grace.

I repeat that we are not to be proud, for that is sin. Still and all, I do not like to hear God's people equate themselves with the people of the world. It is not evil for us to admire God's handiwork in His children. We can do this without pride or false modesty. False modesty is sinful like pride, for it is just egotism turned inside out.

"For we are his workmanship created in Christ Jesus" (Eph. 2:10). "I am fearfully and wonderfully made" (Psa. 139:14). In spite of the regal position we now occupy we presently have trouble in the flesh, and while sin doesn't reign, it yet exists. However, we have confidence that the same God that gave us birth and has begun a good work in us will "perform it until the day of Jesus Christ" (Phil. 1:6).

It is said of Israel that they have been given "an inheritance by line" (Psa. 78:55). This speaks of the precision of God's gift. We read further in Psalm 30:8 that the people of God have been brought into "a large room." This speaks of the expanded magnitude of God's love for His children.

I have a book entitled "The Beautiful People" which is a minibiography of the great and near-great of the earth. Beautiful they may be to the world, but I insist that the only truly beautiful people are those who have been

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Stealing Away . . .

(Continued from page seven)
third, the 1903 treaty is outmoded. These arguments are false and raise the question: Is the U.S. State Department working for the interests of the United States or the Republic of Panama? The first two arguments are disproved by the treaty itself, as previously discussed. The third argument, an outmoded treaty? Just 36 years earlier, the U.S. bought Alaska; and 64 years before that, Louisiana — all by treaty and all at an agreed upon price. Do we now question the "sovereignty and perpetuity" of Alaska and Louisiana? How far back shall we go to assure liberation and justice for all?

What do the news molders say? They are subtly trying to drum up public support for the treaty proposal, some calling it a shame to sabotage thirteen years of negotiating by Bunker and Linowitz "in achieving a notable diplomatic success." May we inquire about the sabotage of 201 years of American freedom and progress? One editorializer belittles our pride in building the Canal — the engineering feat of the age, achieved through genius and determination.

The "regular" news media — such as the liberal "New York Times," the "Washington Post," and "Time" magazine — ignore public opinion polls on the give-away, distort or omit the historical background, and glamorize the "how soon" and "how much" terms for surrender. Nothing is published about the fuzzy language of the proposals, and particularly the part about U.S. intervention at any time "in the event of endangerment of the Canal." Mr. Linowitz told the House Merchant Marine and Fisheries Committee, "We will not use the word 'intervene' or 'intervention' in this treaty, I can guarantee." Linowitz

told the committee of the "great ignorance on the part of the American people," but he declined to enlighten the committee (or the people) "about such sensitive topics as the U.S. right to defend the Canal's neutrality." Unfortunately, so did the "regular" news media.

What can we say? Plenty. This is one issue that could well be settled by public opinion. President Ford didn't dare push the treaty in election year 1976. Now, Mr. Carter feels safe in an off-election year. Many polls show that about 80 per cent of Americans want **no change** in the status of the Canal. Is our republic to be governed by the people — or by presidential decree? How do we explain Mr. Carter? Is he getting bad advice? Is it an election debt to international money interests? Is it to secure a more favorable place for America in a world government?

At this very writing agitators are threatening riots and violence in Panama unless we quickly ratify the new treaty proposals. This could backfire badly and help assure the exact opposite result. Besides, would the Panamanians destroy their only income-producing industry? Are our "leaders" too weak to stand up for America's rights and honor in the world?

If ever there is a time to write to the President and to members of Congress, this is the time. Letters to the editor can also be very effective, including letters to religious publications. Editors always like to hear from their readers and many will publish letters on both sides of an issue.

The safety and security of our country far exceeds any imagined benefit from giving the Canal to Panama. If this treaty is ratified, it will just be a matter of time before the Canal is lost forever. If we are willing to speak up and to get others to speak up, this will

not happen. (Try telling your grandchildren why you didn't speak up when you had a chance)! Right now could well be a turning point in our nation's destiny. And we can be part of it!

Professor Donald M. Dozer, one of the world's leading experts on Panama and Latin America, expressed it this way:

"The Panama Canal is one of the great geopolitical assets of the free world, a world to which Panama with its illegitimate Marxist regime of General Omar Torrijos does not belong. The State Department's surrender of the Canal Zone to Panama, if allowed to be consummated, will be equivalent to a major military defeat for the U.S."

Editor's comment: I feel very strongly opposed to giving the Panama Canal to the Communists. I would urge that we write our Congressmen and President.

Identity Of Apostolic

(Continued from page one)
learned, and avoid them" (Rom. 16:17). These injunctions can be obeyed only by an independent and sovereign church; and they plainly indicate that such was the church at Rome.

The epistle to the Corinthians was addressed to "the church of God at Corinth," and Paul expressly declares that the right to judge of the character and conduct of its members, and the power to exclude or restore to membership in its body, was vested in the church itself "when gathered together in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ," and not in its officers. (See I Cor. 1:2; 5:1-13; II Cor. 2:6-8). Similar commands and instructions were given to other churches, all going to prove that they were sovereign and independent bodies, subject only to Christ and His laws, and intrusted with the right and responsibility of self-government.

The independence of the first churches is fully attested by historians and writers of the highest authority. For example, Dr. Mosheim says: "All the churches in those primitive times were independent bodies; or none of them subject to the jurisdiction of any other. For though the churches founded by the apostles themselves frequently had the honor shown them to be consulted in difficult and doubtful cases, yet they had no judicial authority, no control, no power of giving laws. On the contrary, it is clear as Monday, that all Christian churches had equal rights, and were in all respects on a footing of equality. Nor does there appear in this first century, any vestige of that consociation of the churches of the same province, which gave rise to ecclesiastical councils and to metropolitans. But rather, as is manifest, it was not till the second century that the custom of holding ecclesiastical councils first began in Greece, and thence extended into other provinces" (Mosh. Eccl. History, by Murdock, Vol. I, p. 72).

And speaking of the second century, Dr. Mosheim, adds: "During a great part of this century, all the churches continued to be, as at first, independent of each other, or were connected by no consociations or confederations. Each church was a kind of small independent republic" (Mosh. Eccl. Hist., Vol. I, p. 116).

Dr. Burton, a learned Episcopalian writer, states: "Every church had its own spiritual head or bishop, and was independent of every other church with respect to its own internal regulations" (Burton's Hist. Ch., p. 362, N. Y., 1839).

Dr. William Carpenter remarks, "It is too evident from the New

Testament to admit of controversy, that each organized and disciplined assembly of believers constituted a church of Christ, strictly independent of all other churches as to its government and internal economy; though united with all others in one common bond of faith and love, and in every respect ready to promote the interest and welfare of the whole by a reciprocal interchange of good offices. And in these primitive churches there was perfect equality among the members, no one having greater power or authority than another, but the whole constituting one body, in which the general authority was lodged" (Supplement to the Comprehensive Commentary, pp. 133, 134).

And Gibbon, speaking of the churches of the first and second centuries, says: "The societies which were instituted in the cities of the Roman empire, were united only by the ties of faith and charity. Independence and equality formed the basis of their internal constitution. Such was the mild and equal constitution by which Christians were governed more than a hundred years after the death of the apostles. Every society formed within itself a separate and independent republic; and, although the most distant of these little states maintained a mutual as well as friendly intercourse of letters and deputations, the Christian world was not yet connected by any supreme authority or legislative assembly" (Decline and Fall of the Roman Empire, Vol. I, pp. 171, 172).

Nor does the so-called "ecclesiastical council," recorded in Acts, 15th chapter, furnish any authority or precedent for a higher tribunal than a single independent Gospel church. In the language of Dr. William Smith, of London, a standard Episcopalian writer, we say: "There is no ground for calling the assembly at Jerusalem the first general council. It was no meeting of delegates from all the churches, for even those sent from Antioch went rather to consult a sister church, and especially the apostles, than to represent the views of their own church; and the divine basis on which the decision is placed takes it quite out of the category of synodical sentences, which decide grave differences of opinion by the mere voice of a majority. If in any sense the first council of the church, it was the last which had a right to say, 'It seemed good to the Holy Ghost and to us'" (New Test. Hist., pp. 455, 456).

The church at Jerusalem was involved in this question, for those judaizing teachers had gone out from that church, and misrepresented their views. It was necessary, therefore, that the question should be considered by "the apostles, and elders, and brethren" together, and finally settled both

for Jews and Gentiles throughout the world. But the appeal was to Inspiration; and when the Holy Spirit gave His decision by the mouth of James, "then it pleased the apostles and elders, with the whole church, to send chosen men of their own company to Antioch, with Paul and Barnabas," to bear letters to the Gentile converts in Antioch, and Celicia, making known that decision (see verses 13-23).

Now, there is a perfect identity in the government of apostolic churches and Baptist churches. Every Baptist church is entirely independent of all other churches, and forms within itself a separate and independent republic, subject only to Christ and His laws, while it is bound to sister churches by the ties of faith and love, and cordially co-operates in every good word and work. Each church, as Christ's executive on earth, directs and governs its own affairs according to the Scriptures, and does every thing that is proper for those in whom the supreme power is vested. Association, conventions, and councils may properly advise and recommend measures to the churches, but they have no legislative, or judicial, or compulsory power whatever over any church.

With Baptists, as with the apostles, a church is the highest and only ecclesiastical authority in Christ's kingdom, and it can not delegate its power to any association, convention, council, or committee. To the churches, as such, and to them alone, belong the keys of the kingdom; they can open, and none can shut; they can bind, and none can loose; and whatever they do in accordance with the Scriptures is approved and ratified in Heaven. Christ is their only Head, and the New Testament their only rule of faith and practice, and they stand fast in the liberty wherewith Christ has made them free. Such were the apostolic churches, and such are Baptist churches.

Renting Of The Vail

(Continued from Page One)
second" (Heb. 10:9). This, that Christ has provided, is a greater and more perfect access. "But Christ being come an high priest of good things to come, by a greater and more perfect tabernacle, not made with hands, that is to say, not of this building; neither by the blood of goats and calves, but by His own blood He entered in once into the Holy Place, having obtained eternal redemption for us" (Heb. 9:11,12).

No longer must blood be shed for us, Christ has completed eternal redemption for us. Now we can enter into the presence of God at any time through Jesus Christ, our vail. This ought to cause great rejoicing in our hearts.

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