

Wild oats and old rye grow in the same field.

THE STORY OF JEPHTHAH'S DAUGHTER

By CHARLES W. CURRIER

There is a fascination in the story of Jephthah's daughter that time does not dull. Even the casual reader does not escape its sad attractions. The brief story brings before one the person of the warrior-father returning to his home in the glory of conquest and the pride of having redeemed his place in the nation. Out from the entrance of his home, dancing with joy at his safe return and his success in battle, comes the blooming, Jewish maiden who is the pride of his heart and the hope of his house. But the love that made her ear keenest to detect her father's coming and her step quickest to run in greeting, becomes the means, in God's mysterious providence, of her taking off. First from her father's house, she must be her

father's offering—for the vow must be kept though hearts do break and hopes are crushed. Jephthah's rashness had cost him dear; and his "Alas, my daughter!" is the moan of a heart beholding the innocent crushed by the wrong of the guilty. Two months of respite—how full of bitter sorrow to both who can tell?—are followed by the last cruel rites of sacrifice and the soul of the maiden wings its flight from earth, the victim of an unholy vow and a perverted fidelity.

The story, as it is told in our English Bible, makes the fate of the maiden clear. And yet the question is an ever recurring one, whether we may not take the seeming want of precision in the final words of the story as a foothold for the hope that she was not offered in sacrifice. Desire strug-

gles with evidence to establish the conclusion that in some way her life was spared. The wrongful vow under which she was sacrificed, the cloud of mystery in which her fate is held to be enwrapped, her youth, her filial love, and her heroic loyalty to her father's vow, combine to arouse in the reader a genuine sympathy for the maiden, and to stir a laudable curiosity to settle beyond doubt, if can be, in what form the vow was kept. But whoever sets himself to the determination of this inquiry finds that the story itself is his only resource, and that his conclusion must come from an unbiased examination of the simple record of Holy Writ.

The present paper does not attempt to review the versions of the story put forward by many inter-

preters, from the Jewish Rabbis to Dr. Cassell; nor is it an essay at a new interpretation. It is simply an endeavor to see the incident in the setting of its own times, and to read the story of the Jewish maiden in the light of its own statements. To this end three things must be considered,—the times, the man, and human sacrifices.

The Book of Judges recounts the history of the Hebrew people through a period of three hundred years, that is, from the death of Joshua to the times of Eli and Samuel. The political history of the people during this period is a mixed record of bondage and independence. Now on the one side and now on the other, they are subject in turn to the Moabite, Canaanite, Midianite, Ammonite, and the Philistine, at least one-third of the

time. Bound together only by the ties of a common origin and a peculiar faith, they lacked the centralized organization through which they might have made successful resistance to their foes.

Differences in tribal characteristics and the growing up of local interests weakened such bond of unity as there was. And when one considers how few went out to any of the struggles for independence, from tribes other than the one principally oppressed, it may well be thought that we see here, not a nation, but an aggregation of petty states. Their lack of political unity separated them from each other in matters of religion. As one section after another came under the dominion of an idolatrous oppressor, the people took on, in (Continued on page 3, column 1)

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The Crucial Suprachurch Conspiracy Of Today

RAYMOND A. WAUGH, Sr.
Midland, Texas

PART II RESPONSIBILITY

In view of the responsibility that God lays upon us as His servants and as Christians, "I beseech you, therefore, brethren, by the mercies of God, that ye present your bodies a living sacrifice, holy, acceptable unto God, which is your reasonable service" (Romans 12:1). I believe that it is imperative that we "be not children in understanding" (I Cor. 14:20). The Lord goes on to emphasize, "So then everyone of us shall give account of himself to God" (Romans 14:12).

Ours is personal responsibility! We are fools of the rankest sort if we are "Fundamentalists" because this happened to be the religious bias of our parents. We are equally as foolish if we are "Conventionists" because our parents or grandparents had such an interest. There is an old "saw" which some condescend to call a song that pretty well illustrates the point that is made, "I'm a Methodist, Methodist, Methodist, Methodist, I'm a Methodist till I die"! All who practice such "see no evil, hear no evil, and speak no evil" religion or spiritual and Scriptural irresponsibility certainly will be held accountable in accord with Romans 14:12.

If we are Christians, in fact, and servants of the Lord, God's call is rather specific. He details, "Beloved, believe not every spirit, but try the spirits whether they are of God; because many false prophets are gone out into the world" (I John 4:1). Again, God specifies, "What concord hath Christ with Belial? Or what part hath he that believeth with an infidel? And what agreement hath the temple of God

with idols . . . Wherefore come out from among them and be ye separate, saith the Lord, and touch not the unclean thing . . ." (II Cor. 6:15-17). He makes a rather hard demand which sometimes troubles some of the more gracious and



RAYMOND A. WAUGH, SR.

kindly among us, "Look to yourselves that you lose not those things which we have wrought, but that we receive a full reward. Whosoever transgresseth and abideth not in the doctrine of Christ, hath not God. He that abideth in the doctrine of Christ hath both the Father and the Son. If there come any unto you and bring not this doctrine, receive him not into your house, neither bid him God speed" (II John 8-10).

(Continued on page 5, column 2)

"ONCE"

F. B. MEYER
(1847-1929)

There is a word here which recurs, like a note on an organ, beneath the tumult of majestic sound. Five times, at least, it rolls forth its thunder, pealing through all ages, echoing through all worlds, announcing the finality of an accomplished redemption to the whole universe of God. "Once!"

And there is another phrase which we must couple with it, spoken by the parched lips of the dying Saviour, yet with a loud voice, as though it were the cry of a conqueror: "When Jesus, therefore, had received the vinegar, He said, It is finished, and He bowed His head and gave up the ghost." It is very seldom that man can look back on a finished life-work. The chisel drops from the paralyzed hand ere the statue is complete; the chilling fingers refuse to guide the pen along another line, though the book is so nearly done; the statesman must leave his plans and far-reaching schemes to be completed by another, perhaps his rival. But as from His cross Jesus Christ our Lord looked upon the work of redemption which He had undertaken, and in connection with which He suffered even to the hiding of His Father's face, He could not discover one stitch, or stone, or particle deficient. For untold myriads, for thee, and me, and all, there was done that which never needed to be done again, but stood as an accomplished fact for evermore.

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The Church In Philadelphia And The Bride Of Christ

MARTIN E. HOLMES
Ocala, Florida

In this day when brethren of like faith and order are breaking fellowship, one with the other, and making unChrist-like remarks about one another's person and doctrine, I think it behooves us to take a long hard look at what Christ has instructed John to write to the pastors of the seven local New Testament Baptist Churches in Revelation. Of the seven it would seem to me, we need to study the sixth one of the Church in Philadelphia.

In our Lord's letter to the Church



MARTIN E. HOLMES

in Philadelphia, as is recorded in Revelation 3:7-13, we read as follows: "And to the angel of the church in Philadelphia write; These things saith he that is holy, he that is true, he that hath the key of David, he that openeth, and no man shutteth; and he that shutteth, and no man openeth; I know thy works: behold, I have set before thee an open door, and no man can shut it: for thou hast a little strength, and hast kept my word, and hast not denied my name. Behold, I will make them of the synagogue of Satan, which say they are Jews, and are not, but do lie; behold, I will make them to

come and worship before thy feet, and to know that I have loved thee. Because thou hast kept the word of my patience, I also will keep thee from the house of temptation, which shall come upon all the world, to try them that dwell upon the earth. Behold, I come quickly: hold that fast which thou hast, that no man take thy crown. Him that overcometh will I make a pillar in the temple of my God, and he shall go no more out: and I will write upon him the name of my God, and the name of the city of my God, which is new Jerusalem, which cometh down out of heaven from my God: and I will write upon him my new name. He that hath an ear, let him hear what the Spirit saith unto the churches."

Of the seven letters to the seven churches our Lord instructed John to write, this one is the most unusual. It contains no condemnation, just a short commendation, much instruction and some promises that

(Continued on page 6, column 5)

PREVENTIVE MARRIAGES

Someone cynically said, "Marriage is the principle cause of divorce." But there is more truth than poetry in that statement! Sociologists, counselors, preachers and all searching for the "causes of divorce." Marriages do not fail, people do. Couples divorce because they married for wrong reasons. Church instruction, parental guidance should not be only from the "not divorce angle" but from the "right marriage" angle. Our problem is not divorce but marriage. Right marriages and divorces. Unless you know why people married you cannot begin to know why they are divorcing.

Couples marry from physical attraction, rebellion from an unhappy home, an excessive dependence upon the opposite sex, fear, lonesomeness, inferiority complexes, status, etc. Only when couples know themselves as individuals, know marriages as responsibility, and the privileges and responsibilities of marriages will they be equipped to handle them.

It is not factual, biological sex that couples need to know—they know too much of that already. They do need to know God's purpose in marriage—that man is incomplete alone. That in marriage the two become one (Gen. 2) and a wife is the husband's other body (Eph. 5). The Israelites were warned against foreign wives and unholy marriages. Paul said Christians were not to be "unequally yoked" (II Cor. 6). Parents should of all things be interested in whom their children marry—and especially why. To find the right person through wisdom and prayer is God's blessing. To be the right kind of mate is the responsibility of each. A Christian marriage built upon Christian principles brings Christian blessings! The answer to divorce is "right marriage."

FRIENDSHIP BAPTIST NEWSLETTER

The Baptist Examiner Pulpit

A Sermon by Milburn Cockrell

SALVATION ALTOGETHER BY GRACE

(Preached on the Independent Baptist Hour July 22, 1979)

"Who hath saved us, and called us with an holy calling, not according to our works, but according to his own purpose and grace, which was given us in Christ Jesus before the world began" (II Tim. 1:9).

I do not deny that in the writings of the Apostle Paul there are "some things hard to be understood, which they that are unlearned and unstable wrest, as they do other Scriptures, unto their own destruction" (II Pet. 3:16). My text is one of those hard to be understood Scriptures. It is hard

to be understood because the carnal mind rejects the plain teaching of this verse. The language here is not ambiguous, for the doctrine of free grace is abundantly set forth. The meaning of this verse is so easily grasped until a wayfaring man, though a fool, should take it at face value.

When the aged Paul wanted to encourage young Timothy in his ministerial labors for Christ, he reminded him how grace reigned in salvation. As salvation was not earned by Timothy, he had every reason to suffer for the gospel

of free grace. The belief in the doctrines of grace have always encouraged God's servants, enabling them to suffer and die for the name of Christ. This was what put boldness in the martyrs of old and caused men to preach in the face of certain death.

This being the case, I might well raise the question as to why so little mention is being made of sovereign grace in our pulpits of today? Why are most churches brainwashed from Sunday to Sunday with Arminian foolishness and

(Continued on page 2, column 1)

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Salvation . . . By Grace

(Continued from page one)
the idle tales of work-mongers? Why is the sinner being repeatedly told of certain deeds of virtue he must perform in order to obtain salvation? Most churches have substituted socials for the Saviour and the gimmicks of men for the gospel of the grace of God. In most cases nowadays, very little is being heard of the free, sovereign, distinguishing grace of God.

In our generation if a man has courage enough to give the actual meaning of a Scripture like my text, he is assailed as a hyper-Calvinist or a hardshell heretic. Critics are quick to declare he received his message from the writings of John Calvin instead of the Holy Scriptures. But it is not my business to answer all my critics, or to silence all cavilers of the truth. It is my heavenly calling to teach the ways of God in truth. If I preach what the Bible says I shall have the approval of God and be rewarded by Him, even if I incur the wrath and disapproval of all men.

THE AUTHOR OF SALVATION

Let us honestly examine the meaning of my text, laying aside all preconceived ideas and personal prejudice. The first part of it reads: "Who hath saved us . . ." The antecedent of the pronoun "Who," the first word in my text, is "God," the last word in the preceding verse of I Timothy chapter 1. The text declares that it is God Who brings us into a saving state. Salvation springs directly and entirely from Him and Him alone. On this point the Scripture gives no uncertain sound.

Salvation comes from beyond the natural and has its source in God. It draws its strength from the eternal Spring; its sanction comes from the Deity. God is the sum and substance of salvation. The Psalms declare it is so. Psalm 3:8 reads: "Salvation belongeth unto the Lord: thy blessing is upon thy people." Psalm 37:39 informs us: "But the salvation of the righteous is of the Lord: He is their strength in the time of trouble." Jonah wrote: "Salvation is of the Lord" (Jon. 2:9). These verses teach what we believe about the way of salvation.

The Bible says: "Salvation belongeth unto the Lord." Our opponents say, "Salvation belongs to the free will of man. Salvation is in the church. Salvation is in keeping the law of God." But these statements of men are not only without any Biblical basis, but they are in direct opposition to the Word of the Lord. No man can force God to save him. No man can be saved unless God wills to save him. Salvation is a Divine prerogative.

Through the inspired pen of Isaiah Jehovah declared: "I, even I, am the Lord; and beside me there is no saviour" (Isa. 43:11). The Prophet Jeremiah said: "Truly in vain is salvation hoped for from the hills, and from the multitude of mountains; truly in the Lord our God is the salvation of Israel" (Jer. 3:23). There is no deliverance from eternal death except by the Lord. In His own way and time He must work salvation for all His people.

By "God" in my text I understand God the Father. It was the Father Who chose a people out of Adam's fallen race to be heirs of salvation. He chose Christ as the covenant Head of all the elect. He conceived blood redemption by the substitutionary atonement. It was His compassion that sent Christ to be the Saviour of His people. It was the Father Who had the names of His selected ones inscribed in the Book of Life before the foundation of the world. Our salvation in a very definite sense has its source in God the Father.

But it is also true that the other members of the Trinity also have a part in our salvation. The Son promised to die (John 10:11) for those the Father chose to salvation (II Thess. 2:13). Christ came in the fullness of time to "save his people from their sins" (Matt. 1:21). This was the design He sought to accomplish. By His death He washed them from their sins in His own blood (Rev. 1:5). He rose for their justification, and He lives in Heaven to make intercession for them when they sin. He sustains them in trials and tribulation. He will not desert them in death. He will watch over their spirits in the Paradise of God, and then raise their dead bodies at the first resurrection.

The Third Person in the blessed Trinity is also concerned in our salvation. The Holy Spirit is sent forth from the Father and the Son to apply the benefits and blessings of Christ's redemption. He convicts of sin. He gives spiritual life and draws to Christ. He works in us both to will and to do the good pleasure of God (II Cor. 10:5).

THE ORIGINATOR OF CALLING

The text not only declares God is the Saviour of His people, but it also teaches that God effectually calls sinners unto Himself. Some are greatly disturbed because the elect are here said to be saved before they are called: "Who hath saved us and called us . . ." Paul speaks here of one being saved in the sense of God's elective purpose. He does not speak in these words in the sense of the work of the Holy Spirit, nor in the sense of our own experience. He speaks concerning being saved in the purpose of God and in our covenant Head. The elect are called by Christ sheep before they are given eternal life in time (John 10:16, 27-28). In this same sense they are called sons before regeneration (Gal. 4:6) and are said to be glorified before their actual change at the Rapture (Rom. 8:29-30).

The elect are not actually such from eternity except in the sense of their covenant Head. In the mind and purpose of God the whole redemption of the elect is as good as already done. Hence the Scripture speaks sometimes of salvation and calling as an accomplished fact, because what God purposes is as certain as if it had already taken place. God calls those things that are not completed as though they were accomplished. Romans 4:17 says He "callesth those things which be not as though they were."

The effectual call comes wholly from God and claims the elect wholly for God. Calling is an early operation of God on those chosen to obtain salvation. Romans 8:30 tells us: "Moreover, whom he did predestinate, them he also called . . ." In Romans 8:30 we learn that

BRIEF NOTES

The Grace Missionary Baptist Church, 2750 South 53 West Avenue, Tulsa, Okla., and Pastor David O'Neal have two cassette tapes of singing in their church for sale. One has 20 songs, titled "Since Jesus Passed By," by soloist Annetta Beeler. The other has 21 songs, titled "The King Is Coming," by the Wilson Sisters. Both Annetta and the Wilson Sisters are members of Grace Missionary Baptist Church. These tapes can be ordered by writing to Grace Missionary Baptist Church, 2750 South 53 W. Ave., Tulsa, Okla. 74107. The price is \$3.00 each.

The Indore Baptist Church of Indore, W. Va., and Pastor Ray Brown will conduct special services August 20-24. Services will be nightly at 7:00 p.m. with the editor as the speaker. The church invites all within driving distance to attend these services.

We deeply appreciate the numerous Forum Questions we have been receiving. As a matter of fact, we are five months ahead with questions when I write this. Keep the questions coming but please be patient with us in giving the answers. If you send us a question today it would be about five months before it would appear in the paper. We are not complaining; we are asking you only to be patient.

Interest is growing in the Forum. It is one of the most popular sections in TBE. Perhaps the increasing interest in the Forum will encourage Bro. James Hobbs and Bro. Jon Rule to be faithful in sending in their answers, thus producing four answers instead of only two as is sometimes the case.

the called are the predestinated, and the predestinated are the called. All the predestinated are called and none else. Effectual calling is the proper and necessary consequence and effect of sovereign election. It is called in the Bible a high and heavenly calling because it comes from God above. It is called a holy calling because it comes from a Holy God.

Those who receive the call are styled in the Bible "The called of Jesus Christ" (Rom. 1:6; 9:24). These selected ones are called by the Spirit and the Word to "Receive the promise of eternal inheritance" (Heb. 9:15). The calling is an exercise of God's holiness and it leads us to holiness. I Peter 1:15 says: "But as he which hath called you is holy, so be ye holy in all manner of conversation. God is infinitely holy and infinitely above the possibility of ever becoming unholy. This call we receive from the Holy One is a powerful motive for those effectually called to be holy themselves. Those conformed to the Holy One in an inward state ought also to be in outward acts. Holiness in the heart manifests itself in the eternal life.

SALVATION NOT OF WORKS

With reference to salvation and effectual calling, Paul adds: ". . . not according to our works . . ." The works of men have nothing to do with our salvation. Saving work is God's work and not

man's. Titus 3:5 declares: "Not by works of righteousness which we have done, But according to his mercy he saved us, by the washing of regeneration, and renewing of the Holy Ghost." Note that the apostle says: "Not by the works of righteousness we have done" and goes on to say that "He saved us." The sinner can do nothing to induce God to save him or call him. Good works do not influence God to save a man, for then salvation would be a matter of boasting. Good works follow salvation and calling and never come before it (Eph. 2:10).

If salvation is of God as the text says, then it cannot be in any sense owing to human merit. Man cannot blot out his own sins, for they are written in the memory of an unforgetful God. He cannot atone for his own guilt, for the price is too great and he is too poor to pay it. He cannot change his incurably wicked heart any more than an Ethiopian can change his skin. He cannot purchase salvation with his own works, "For by the works of the law shall no flesh be justified" (Gal. 2:16). Man by nature is "without strength" (Rom. 5:6), "without Christ," "without God," and has "No hope" (Eph. 2:12).

Once Jesus was asked, "Who then can be saved?" (Matt. 19:25).

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He replied: "With men this is impossible; but with God all things are possible" (Matt. 19:26). Oh, that religionists would take seriously the words of the Son of God! He said it was impossible for a man to save himself. This forever excludes good works as a means of salvation. A sinner cannot make himself a saint. A fallen man cannot redeem himself. An old creature cannot make himself a new creature, any more than an old man can make himself young again. A dead sinner cannot give himself life. A slave cannot liberate himself. It is possible for a sinner to be saved only if God saves him.

ACCORDING TO GOD'S PURPOSE

God does not save people accidentally. My text says: "Who hath saved us and called us, not according to our works, BUT ACCORDING TO HIS OWN PURPOSE . . ." Those saved by the Lord are "called according to his pur-

pose" (Rom. 8:28). Calling is "the purpose of God according to election" (Rom. 9:11) in action. Men are saved in time and called according to "the eternal purpose which he purposed in Christ Jesus our Lord" (Eph. 3:11). No man is saved merely because he purposed to be saved, but because God purposed to save him through Christ's atonement. The whole of salvation is "according to his good pleasure, which he purposed in himself" (Eph. 1:9, 11).

Mark carefully the words of my text: "His own purpose". Consider also the words in Ephesians 1:9: "He purposed in himself." These words can mean no less than that God was self-moved, not from without by any actions of man, but from within His own bowels of Divine compassion. His design of mercy was called forth by no deserts or worthiness within us. There can be assigned no reason for the salvation of the elect but the sovereign will and pleasure of God. No other reason can be given for their call to salvation.

ACCORDING TO GOD'S GRACE

Paul gives two reasons for the salvation and calling of a sinner in my text. He said: ". . . according to his own purpose and GRACE . . ." Grace is free favor, a favor granted upon the grounds of which are in Him who bestows it, not in him who receives it. This is sovereign and distinguishing grace because it is granted to some and not to others. Only those who are actually saved and called are the recipients of it.

THE WHOLE OF SALVATION A GIFT

Paul did not stop at saying that salvation was according to God's purpose and grace. He went on to say: ". . . which was given us . . ." Our being saved and called is the free gift of Heaven's charity. Salvation is a free gift, not at all depending upon any condition in the creature, but proceeding entirely from the sovereign will of God. Salvation is not what God sold us or offered us. Rather, it is what He has given us freely for Christ's sake.

The salvation of any sinner is wholly gratuitous on the part of God. A sinner has no claim upon God. God's justice demands that he be punished for his sin. He can plead no right to mercy. If a lost man is to be saved it must be by "the grace given unto" him (Rom. 12:3). He is saved because God the Father gave His only begotten Son (John 3:16; II Cor. 9:15). Those Christ "gave himself for" (Gal. 2:20) are saved by grace "through faith; and that not of themselves: 'it is the gift of God'" (Eph. 2:8-9).

A GIFT IN CHRIST

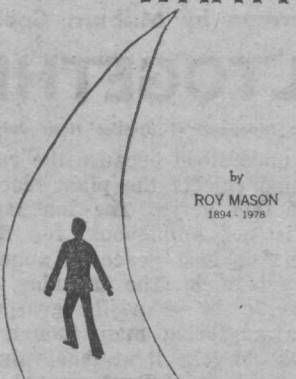
According to the text there was grace "given us IN CHRIST JESUS." This grace given us in Christ is all the spiritual blessings we receive through Christ's redemption. The Son of God is the well-head of all grace. "The God of all grace" (I Pet. 5:10) made Christ "full of grace and truth" (John 1:14). "And of his fulness have all we received, and grace for grace" (John 1:16). The elect are saved and called by the means of Christ's saving work. God purposed they should be saved by Christ and share the benefits of His atonement. It is in Christ that we are made acceptable to God (Eph. 1:6).

BEFORE THE WORLD BEGAN

When did God purpose to save us? When was grace given us in the Person of Jesus Christ our covenant Head? When we believed the gospel? When we made a profession of faith before the church? No! My text said it was "before the world began." God never does any thing in time that He did not purpose to do from eternity. The expression, "Before the world began," looks back to eternity past. It means prior to the series of ages during which the universe has existed. Some versions give it "eternal ages ago" (A.N.T.), "before time began" (T.C.T.), "from all eternity" (N.E.B.), or literally from the Greek text "before eternal times."

In my text Paul puts the beginning of salvation in God's purpose before the time of the world (I Cor. 2:7; I Pet. 1:20). Back in (Continued on page 4, column 3)

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Jephthah's Daughter

(Continued from page one)

some degree, his religious practices. For a third of the time at least some part of the people were to be found worshipping by the dark rites of Baal, while they were held to the worship of Jehovah during the intervening periods only by means of the harshest discipline. But a people so prone to idolatry, and that worshipped Jehovah only at times, could not be conspicuous for religious fidelity. Even their times of repentance and return fail to impress one as notable examples of pure religion.

We shall obtain a correct idea of the features of the national life in the time of Jephthah, if we read carefully the two closing incidents of the book. These events must probably be dated back to a time near the beginning of this period of the judges; and so they antedate Jephthah's time by at least one hundred and fifty years. But the same dead level of religious declension appears at both periods, and the incidents are of a piece with what occurred in the time of Jephthah.

In a village of the Benjaminites there was no one of that tribe who ever cared to exercise the grace of hospitality, that virtue so prominent in the East, and the general practice of which made inns and places of refreshment, in our use of the terms, entirely unnecessary and unknown. Then they followed up this neglect of the bounden duty of hospitality by an outrage that savored of the days of Sodom. The whole scene is abominable; and while the indignation excited throughout Israel at such atrocity shows that there still survived some regard for virtue and honor and the claims of the helpless, still the very fact that such a crime could be permitted in the midst of the nation proves that the sense of moral and religious obligation was strangely loosened.

Micah, with his house of God, and with a Levite as priest, and the Danites traversing the land and taking for themselves the gods of Micah and his Levite, are still other indications of the body politic. Here is a large number of men traversing the country in search of a place to settle. They are armed, and propose to take possession of any place that may strike their fancy. There is no one to say to them nay, or to inquire why they do these things. In the setting up of the gods we see the effect of the idolatrous surroundings in breaking down the reverence of the people for the very first of the moral laws of Jehovah while, as if to intensify this disregard, a Levite, with no more lawful right to the priesthood than a son of Benjamin or Naphtali, has consented to undertake the sacred functions of the priesthood—and this, too, within the second generation after the death of the great law-giver.

It is true that these things occurred several generations, or about one hundred and fifty years,

before the time of Jephthah; and between them and Jephthah's day there were several fluctuations in the political and religious history of the nation. But the successive falls were equally disastrous, and the successive rises do not come above the earlier tide-water mark. In the time of Samson, the next great deliverer after Jephthah, the want of spirit in the people to rise against the Philistines shows them to be thoroughly cowed and contented under a foreign rule. In the times immediately preceding Jephthah the condition of the people was nowise distinguishable from what it had been. Gideon had passed away; Abimelech's play at usurpation had come to an ignominious end. Tola and Jair had followed their predecessors in a more or less limited judgeship among the tribes; and then come those words used so many times in this book to describe the rebellious tendencies of this people: "And the children of Israel did evil again in the sight of the Lord, and served Baalim and Ashtaroth and the gods of Syria and the gods of Sidon and the gods of Moab and the gods of the children of Ammon and the gods of the Philistines, and forsook the Lord and served him not." Against this sweeping charge there is not much to be said. Of the feasts and religious observances provided for in the law we have no record. The tabernacle seems to have remained in Shiloh, as the central gathering point of the people; but to what extent they worshipped and sacrificed there in their temporary returns to Jehovah we have no knowledge. This is to be noticed, that altars for the sacrifice were erected throughout the land; at first reservedly, and then freely and openly. Into this condition of things comes Jephthah, the son of a Gileadite.

The land of Gilead lies to the east of the Jordan, a rich, fertile district, far more productive than the ground west of the river. It was the country upon which Reuben and Gad fixed their eyes when first the Israelites came out of the desert to occupy Canaan. They were rich in cattle, and this seemed to them their most fitting abode. They continued somewhat the nomadic habits of the herdsmen, and lived in a state of constant warfare with their neighbors on the east. It was here that David found a refuge, and that the sons of Saul established themselves.

Into this nomadic and warring life Jephthah was born. Unfortunately for him he was the son of a concubine. His father's legitimate sons looked upon him as an intruder, and thrust him out from home. Exiled and friendless, he betook himself to the wild country on the east, and there gathered to himself other "vain", and, as David did subsequently, he became the leader of a company of free lances, waging predatory warfare on either side, but principally, we believe, against the traditional enemies of his people, the Ammonites. In this mode of life Jephthah



The Baptist Examiner

BIBLE STUDY LESSON

By WILLARD PYLE

Pastor—First Baptist Church of Naples Park, Florida

For August 19, 1979

II Peter 3:13-18.

Intro.:—Peter has dealt with a variety of subjects, primarily with reference to both remembering and anticipating which seems to stabilize and to prepare the saints for their role in the present. He concludes this letter on a high note and with one more strong plea for consistency on the part of the saints.

VERSE 13

"Nevertheless we." In spite of the flood of wrath which shall descend on this sin cursed world and the destruction and death which shall take place, Peter emphasizes the God of all grace and power will resurrect and bring forth an entirely new order. All things shall be new. Peter uses the plural pronoun "we" to show this was the common belief among the saints of God and especially the writers of the Word of God.

"According to His promise." The true basis for faith is the promise

spent the years of his youth and early manhood. He built himself a home, and in that home there grew up to him one only child, a daughter, whom he loved with the passionate fondness that a father may feel for an only child, intensified by the fact that all his hopes for the perpetuation of his name and family lay in the future of that child. In these years his reputation for daring and skill in leadership had spread among his people and when they at last resolved no longer to endure the oppressions of their Ammonitish lords they could think of no one who could lead them with so much hope of success as Jephthah, the outcast. The affairs of the nation were in such straits that he was able to drive a good bargain for himself with the sheiks who came to help. They covenanted with him that he should be raised from the condition of head of a roving band to be head of the land of Gilead. How his heart must have swelled with satisfied pride when at last he, the despised outcast, had become by his own merits the recognized ruler.

The picture of life in Israel that we have been compelled to draw is a dark one; and yet that picture is lighted up by occasional gleams of a better spirit and a true piety. One of the first things that Jephthah does after the compact with the rulers is to go to Mizpeh, the place where Jacob and Laban had raised a heap of stones to mark the covenant there made, and which Jephthah now chooses for his home, and there to utter "all his words before the Lord." At the very interview with the elders of Gilead, speaking of the possibility of the Hebrews being the conquerors in the impending struggle, he refers the anticipated success to the Lord, in the words, "And the Lord deliver them before me."

He is familiar with Israel's story when the nation was a wanderer. His final words to the king of Ammon contains an appeal to the Lord to be the judge of the righteousness of his cause. And when he proceeded against Ammon the spirit of the Lord came upon him as upon the other judges and in that power he conquered. We must undoubtedly admit that Jephthah was a man of a religious spirit, though with but meager truth to enlighten his mind. He was not slow to appeal to the Lord.

But this grouping of Jephthah's religious traits can not make him a character even fairly educated in the essentials of Christian faith. We are looking upon a sort of Old Testament crusader—a man of arms and deeds; a man who resorted to rude severity to keep his rule over his lawless band; a man whose moral perceptions were not

of the God Who cannot lie (Heb. 6:17,18; Tit. 1:2). How we should be like Abraham who, "being fully persuaded that, what He had promised, He was able also to perform" (Rom. 4:21) and like other Old Testament saints who "died in faith, not having received the promises, but having seen them afar off, and were persuaded of them" (Heb. 11:13). Read again verses four and nine.

"Look for new heavens and a new earth." Thank God, the child of God doesn't just have to wish for, but because of the promise, can look for the fulfillment. The saint has had a new birth by which all things become new, and is now waiting for a new body but is also going to live in a new heaven and a new earth. The preparations are being completed at this present hour (John 14:1-3). Read Revelation 21 and 22.

"Wherein dwelleth righteousness." We now see the effect of sin both in our lives and in all of society. Surely, we live in polluted and defiled world; a world of crime and corruption, but one day when the completion of salvation takes place, all sin and its effects will be gone. There will be nothing but peace and tranquility.

VERSE 14

"Wherefore, beloved." There is always an application to the truths of God. So if preachers want a spiritual church, they should consistently proclaim God's Word in its fulness.

"Seeing that ye look for such things." Since these things are true, and you have already acknowledged them, they are to have a continual affect in your daily activities.

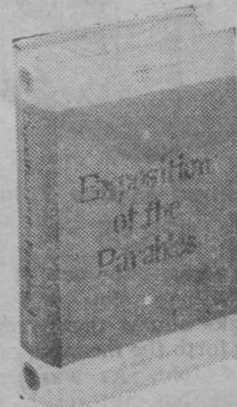
"Be diligent." Be ever studious in your efforts concerning the things of God (Gal. 2:10; Eph. 4:3; I Thess. 2:17; II Tim. 2:15, (the word study) II Pet. 1:10).

"That ye may be found of Him." What a vivid reminder of the coming of Christ and of the judgment seat of Christ (II Cor. 5:10).

"In peace." As far as our standing is concerned, Romans 5:1 says: "Therefore being justified by faith, we have peace with God, through our Lord Jesus Christ." However, experimentally many times, because of disobedience and lack of faith, we become discontented and this aggravation leads to more sin. Therefore we need to daily endeavor to keep the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace and allow the peace of God to keep our hearts and minds through Jesus

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Christ. "Without spot and blameless." The child of God should desire to be without offence till the day of Christ (Phil. 1:10) therefore not be ashamed before Him at His coming (I John 2:28).

VERSE 15

"And account that the longsuffering of our Lord is salvation." The child of God is not to be discouraged because of the fact that Christ hasn't come back, but is to account or to consider this in view of the salvation of the elect. "Even as our beloved brother Paul." This is so impressive because it was Paul who had rebuked Peter to his face.

"Also according to the wisdom given unto him hath written unto you." A great thought, in view of the inspiration of the Scriptures. Peter realized that his writings and the other apostles were under the inspiration of God (II Pet. 1:21; I Cor. 2:12,13).

"As also in all his epistles." The scriptures are co-equal regardless of who wrote them, and in every epistle of Paul we have unity, as well as with all other writers.

"Speaking in them of these things." Therefore we should compare Scripture with Scripture to get the complete teaching on any subject. It won't change the truth on the subject, but it will cause us to look at it circumspectfully, or from all angles (Eph. 5:15).

"In which are some things hard to be understood." In view of this, we should remember we are studying God's Book and His ways are not our ways, and His thoughts are not our thoughts (Isa. 55:8,9). We should therefore pray for the leadership of the Holy Spirit (John 16:13).

"Which they that are unlearned and unstable." Both those who are babes in Christ and those who are not strong in faith.

"Wrest, as they do also the other scriptures, unto their own destruction." Herein lies the main cause of all false doctrine among professing Christians and churches. This is in contrast to "rightly dividing the word of truth." The Devil in his attempt to trap Christ, used Scripture, but he perverted or twisted it to suit his own purpose. Therefore this is still a tactic he uses today.

VERSE 17

"Ye therefore, beloved, seeing ye know these things before." Peter, like Paul, had forewarned the saints (Acts 20:28-31). How many preachers are preparing the saints today?

"Beware lest ye also, being led away with the error of the wicked." No saint is exempt from the snares of the Devil (II Tim. 2:18). Therefore we should heed the advice of Paul in Ephesians 6:10-18.

"Fall from your own steadfastness." Peter knew very well what this meant (Matt. 26:58,69-75).

VERSE 18

"But grow in grace, and in the knowledge of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ." How we need to "grow up into Him in all things" (Eph. 4:15). We do this by desiring the sincere milk of the Word (I Pet. 2:2), and by searching the Scriptures daily (Acts 17:11). We, like Paul, should want to "know Him" (Phil. 3:10). Jesus admonished in Matthew 11:29, "learn of Me."

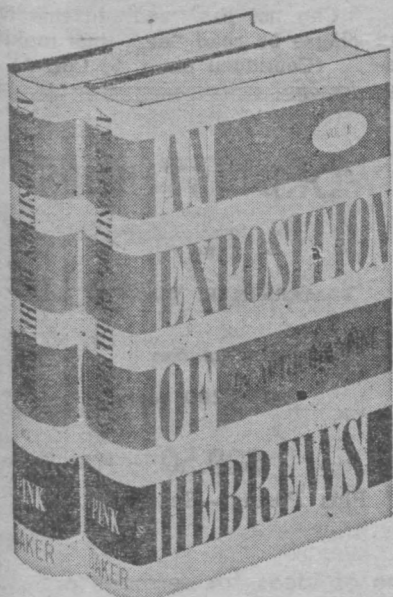
Conclusion: There is no better way to conclude this letter than to magnify the expression, "To Him be glory both now and for ever. Amen."

(EDITOR'S NOTE:—If you would like to write to Bro. Pyle expressing your appreciation for the lessons or ask him questions about his exposition of the Scripture his address is Rt. 11, Box 1198, Fort Myers, Fla. 33908.)

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"Will we know one another as husbands and wives in Heaven? Please explain I Corinthians 13:12."—Cunningham, Ky.

E. G. COOK
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We are not going to be dummies in that coming day. Rather we will know Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, having perfect knowledge then. It would be foolish for me to think that I will know Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob and at the same time, not know the dear wife with whom I lived for 57 years, and also the dear wife I have now. Certainly, there will be no husband and wife relations in that day regardless of what the Mormons teach. But though I will know my wives, I will be by them just as I will by all the rest of the saints. To me I Corinthians 13:12 simply means that we will have a perfect knowledge in that day. We are told that we shall know as we are known, and believe it or not, we are pretty well known by our dear Lord. He knows more about us than we know about ourselves. I do not believe that it will be necessary for Brother Halliman to introduce the brethren in Nigeria, or those in New Guinea to me, or to you.

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I Corinthians 13:12 is a positive declaration that the redeemed will know each other in Heaven. Every Christian is speedily advancing toward the heavenly scene, there we shall see and know our blessed Saviour as He is, and if we were never to recognize anyone else, knowing Him perfectly should be incentive enough to keep, keeping on. On earth it will always be "knowledge in part," but upon arrival in our heavenly Father's house knowledge will be perfected. A fair translation would read, "Now I know in part, but then shall I know, even as I am known" (I Cor. 13:12). This leaves no doubt as to recognition in Heaven, it teaches the saved will know one another better in Heaven than they do on earth. This thorough knowledge the redeemed will have of each other will prevent all misunderstanding, making Heaven a much more desirable place than earth.

The Lord Jesus defines Heaven as our Father's house, and Paul speaks of the family (God's family) in Heaven. Can one conceive of a family of children in their father's house, and they be total strangers to each other? Some Christian people refuse to believe in heavenly recognition because they say, it would forever make them miserable to learn that a loved one was not there. But this refusal to believe in heavenly recognition does not help the case, on the contrary, for if they recognize no one, they may be eternally doubtful whether any loved one was saved. Our earthly family may be eternally sundered, but God's family, consisting of all the saved, shall be in Heaven. Therefore, while carnal relationships will be severed, in Heaven every spiritual tie will be continued, and with the redeemed

marriage is more than a carnal relationship, it also has a spiritual nature to it. The Christian marriage has Christ's love for His church for its standard, and only the marriage following this model is qualified to bring up children in the nurture and admonition of the Lord (Eph. 5:2-33; 6:4). A spiritual mind is necessary to the ideal marriage. Immortality does not preclude personal knowledge, it relegates physical things to physical conditions, and it is the physical aspect of marriage that shall be left behind, all spiritual ties shall be eternally perpetuated.

A Scottish wife said to her dying husband, "Will you know me in Heaven?" To which he replied, "My Dear, do you think that I will have less sense in Heaven than I do here?" Husbands and wives will know each other in Heaven, but will not prefer nor love one another above any of the other redeemed of God.

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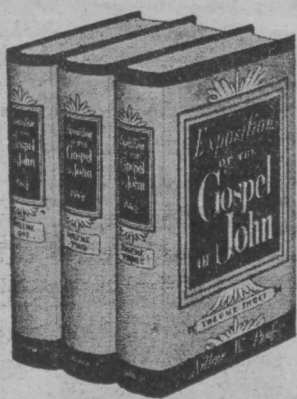


We will not be individual families as we are here. Christ was asked about a woman who had married seven brothers as to whose wife she would be in heaven. His answer was, "... ye do err, not knowing the scriptures, nor the power of God. For in the resurrection they neither marry, nor are given in marriage, but are as the angels of God in heaven" (Matt. 22:29,30).

We will know each other as to our relationship on earth but we will all be as brothers and sisters and not as separate families. As for your question regarding I Corinthians 13:12: "For now we see through a glass, darkly; but then face to face: now I know in part; but then shall I know even as also I am known." While we are here

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on earth we are limited in our ability to see eternal things because of the mark of sin. When we are changed and made perfect in Christ we will be able to understand all of the different things that are taught in the word. "... We know that, when He shall appear, we shall be like Him; for we shall see Him as He is" (I John 3:2).

Salvation .. By Grace

(Continued from page two)
that timeless past grace was given the elect in God's decree as their covenant head. Before the ages of times there existed a mysterious union between Christ and all the elect He represented. Grace was given to Him for them and to them in Him.

What is really conveyed by the expression "before the world began"? Let us try to grasp its meaning to some degree in our puny finite minds. Go back before the sun, the moon, and the stars were ever hung in space. Go back before the foundation of the earth was laid in the morning of time. Go back beyond the time the morning stars sang together and all the sons of God shouted for joy. Go back to the time when creation was only an embryo in the eternal Mind. Back there in the silence of eternity where the Trinity dwelt alone was when grace was given us in Christ.

Oh, foolish work-monger! Where was your good works then? Where was your baptism and church membership? Where was your obedience to the law of God? Where was your repentance and faith "before the world began"? Where was your merits and deserts in the time before all time? You did not even exist at that time. You had done neither good nor evil. Nothing existed at that time but the purpose of God and the grace given us in Christ. Human works have no part in salvation because God purposed to save us in Christ before we were born—yea, before the world had a being.

CONCLUSION

What a text II Timothy 1:9 is! In it we see God reaching forward from eternity to a man who was not yet in being and purposing great mercy for his soul. From the day of that man's natural birth Divine grace pursued and encompassed him. One day that grace made an assault upon his soul, leading him to repentance and faith. From that day forward the same grace guided and instructed him, kept him from falling and changed him into the very character of the Son of God. One future day this grace will take him home to God in Heaven. There he will stand to the praise and the glory of Divine grace. All that this man has ever known and all that he has ever done of good, all that he is in character and power, has come from the grace of God. Without grace he is nothing, to grace he owes it all.

I have honestly given you the meaning of the Scripture of truth. What can you say of God's eternal purpose to save a people in Christ? If you know "the grace of God in truth" (Col. 1:6) you can only say with the Apostle Paul: "By the grace of God I am what I am" (I Cor. 15:10). You can only utter from the depth of your soul: "God forbid that I should glory, save in the cross of our Lord Jesus Christ" (Gal. 6:14). You can only cry: "Not unto us, O Lord, not unto us, but unto thy name give glory" (Ps. 115:1). You can only shout to the top of your voice with tear-filled eyes: "Salvation to our God which sitteth upon the throne and unto the Lamb" (Rev. 7:10).

Sinner, if salvation were a matter of merit where would that leave you? Could you ever be good enough to be saved? Your own conscience and God's Word teaches

you cannot be your own saviour. But salvation is all of the Lord. Christ finished the work the Father gave Him to do. Sin has been put away by the death of Jesus Christ. You need only to be brought by the blessed Spirit to see what Christ has done for you. May this be the hour that the Holy Spirit will reveal Christ to you.

Jephthah's Daughter

(Continued from Page Three)

above the standards of an age in which such men as Ehud, Shamgar, and Samson were the chosen of the Lord. A critical judgment should compel us to resist the impulse to look at the Jewish hero through nineteenth century glasses, and keep us to the fact that his character, shaped by a training so imperfect and so harsh, could not be sensitive to moral teachings that were almost buried under the loose and mixed beliefs of the day. One thing more is to be considered. Admitting the darkened moral condition of the age, was there anything in its practices that would suggest to Jephthah the idea of making a human sacrifice? To this question the answer must be made in the affirmative. Vows were not required among the Hebrews; but they were permitted, and once made, their fulfillment was exalted.

But no such vow as this we are now considering has any place in the provisions of the Jewish law. The offering of human sacrifices was brought in from without. Nothing could be more obnoxious to the Jewish religion, in its purity, than human sacrifices. Yet such was the decay of faith, that idolatrous practices, many and gross, had been adopted by the Jews, until even the idea of making human sacrifices had lost its abhorrent character, and was thought to be a thing well pleasing unto God. That the custom of offering human sacrifices prevailed among Canaanitish people hardly needs any special remark. It was a custom common to all pagan nations. Dane, Gaul, Celt, Roman, and Oriental made their regular sacrifices of human victims without stint. The worship of Molech (the god of the Ammonites) was the center of this heartless practice about Palestine. And with this worship the Jews were familiar. It is prohibited in the law, and yet we find the progress of the practice among the Hebrews traced in such passages as Psalm 106:37-38; II Chron. 28:3; Jer. 7:31; II Kings 28:10, and others.

Even the sacrifice of a child by its own father was not unknown a little later, and probably was not an unusual fact in the history of such unnatural worship. Hence the suggestion of a human sacrifice, as suited to the demands of an extraordinary occasion, would not have seemed to Jephthah to be the monstrous thing we now know it to be. He was prepared for it by his moral ignorance and by his corrupting contact with heathendom, and it seems the natural outcome of his probable beliefs.

Such were the times, such was the man, and such was his educa-

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tion in the matter of human sacrifices. The vow and its fulfillment must fit into the life as here presented; it must be read as a part of the whole story of that age, and it is only by bearing these facts in mind that it can be so read.

We are now ready to turn to the words of the vows and the account of how it was kept.

"And Jephthah vowed a vow unto the Lord and said, If thou shalt with out fail deliver the children of Ammon into mine hands, then it shall be, that whatsoever cometh forth of the doors of my house to meet me, when I return in peace from the children of Ammon, shall surely be the Lord's; and I will offer it up for a burnt offering."

The Hebrew word rendered "whatsoever" is without distinction of gender. It means "whosoever" or "whatsoever" as the context may demand. The only grammatical help to the right rendering of this word is in the form rendered "it" in the clause "I will offer it up." Now the Hebrew pronoun is naturally masculine, and instead of "it" should be read "him." That would compel us to translate the preceding word "whosoever;" and this correction removes from the mind the wrong impression that our English version makes, that Jephthah was thinking only of some ordinary animal-offering.

Jephthah never could have supposed that any of the sacrifices commonly made would have answered the purpose in a vow uttered under such exceptional circumstances. To believe that a common sacrifice only was in his mind is to destroy all the significance of the vow. When Jephthah says, "Whosoever cometh forth from the doors of my house to meet me I will offer HIM up," he means a probable human sacrifice; and while he may not have thought, nay, did not think, of his own daughter as the possible offering, yet the phraseology of the vow compels us to believe that he must have intended to devote some one of his family, some one from among his personal attendants to the altar.

To avoid this conclusion, that Jephthah actually consummated his vow by a human sacrifice, many devices for differently translating the term of the vow have been employed. Of these I notice two that are purely grammatical.

Can not the "and" in this last clause be read "or," thus making (Continued on p. 5, Col. 1)

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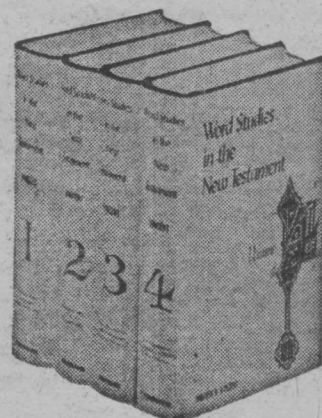
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Jephthah's Daughter

(Continued from page four)

the vow alternative in form? "There is," says Dr. Robinson, translator of Genesis, "in one place a probable distinctive sense, but probably nowhere else in all the Old Testament." Nor is it a rational supposition that Jephthah should have made a vow with such alternative statements as these would be. Whatever was offered in sacrifice was the Lord's, and the first clause would have no meaning as implying that a burnt offering was not the Lord's.

It has been suggested that the last clause might be read "I will offer to him a burnt offering." But the form "him" is not a dative but an accusative or objective suffix, rarely denoting a remote object, and almost never the person affected; while the following noun is without the objective sign that it would naturally have if it was the object of the verb.

We stand then by the ordinary English reading of the vow as corrected, "Whosoever . . . and I will offer him up for a burnt offering;" and it is necessary to be strenuous upon this point, because the story is to be read in the light of the terms of the vow.

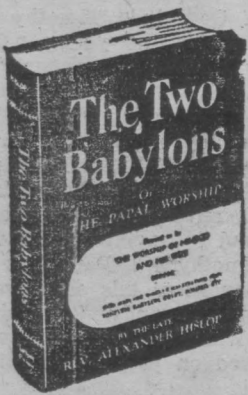
The closing verses offer a single loop-hole to those whose tender mercies would rescue the maiden from the horror of her sacrifice and the character of Jephthah from the stigma that such an offering would fasten upon him. The record does not literally say that Jephthah offered her, and in this lies a hope, that to us, at least, seems a vain one. If the vow be understood as it is here given, then the record that he "did with her according to his vow that he had vowed" would be a plain enough assertion that he carried out his purpose; horrible to us, but only horrible to him, in that it was his own child that he offered.

Stress has been laid upon the following words as indicating the nature of the doing in the preceding clause, that her father devoted her to a celibate life. But the fact that "she knew no man" would be no meeting of the terms of the vow. And, indeed, it is not

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so offered by the sacred writer. It is only an additional particular, adding to the hardness of Jephthah's lot, inasmuch as by the death of the maiden he must forfeit all hope of perpetuating his line. That it is offered as an additional particular and that only, is shown by the fact that in this clause the pronoun "she" is given, thus noting it as emphatic. Cheyne and Driver translate, "now, as for her, she had known no man," thus separating it from the preceding clause, and rendering it entirely independent of that statement.

Another device, to avoid the conclusion advocated, is to pen the clause "and it was a custom in Israel" with the preceding clause, thus making it teach the founding of a celibate order of women by the daughter of Jephthah. So far as the Hebrew goes the clause may be so read. But, there is not the least trace of any such celibate order in Israel at any period of its history. Certainly the women serving in the tabernacle were not celibate. And, besides, the celibate life was repugnant to every religious feeling of the Hebrew women. It may, in strict justice, be said further that we have no other traces of a custom of lamenting (or better, of celebrating) the daughter of Jephthah "four days in a year;" but a custom that drew its meaning from the act of a single person in the local history of the time would not probably be long-lived. And the maiden's own companions lived to see the day when, though the memory of her willing devotion was retained, the custom itself had fallen into desuetude.

We thus come to this conclusion, that the story is that of a human sacrifice made in fulfillment of a wicked vow; and there is everything in the circumstances in which the incident is set to compel us thus to accept the simple reading of the account. Whether we find excuse for Jephthah in the facts of his education or not, our interest goes out rather to the maiden; and we read with pleasure of the beautiful custom of commemorating the unassuming devotion of a young life, cut down at the very moment when it was rejoicing most in the triumphs of a father.

In the words, then "who did with her according to the vow which he had vowed," we read the fate of the maiden; words chosen, perhaps, by the sacred writer as if he felt that he ought to lessen the shock to the reader's sensibilities, by abstaining from saying in so many words that she had been sacrificed. However objectionable and unnatural such as immolation of one's own child may be, the fact can not be changed; while a study of the times, with its fearful looseness and absorption of heathen ideas, shows how it was even possible for one who became a deliverer in Israel to make and execute such a vow.

(BAPTIST REVIEW, 1882, Vol. 4, pp. 102-112).

Crucial Suprachurch

(Continued from Page One)

God's message seems to be plausible, persuasive, and pervasive. Yet, it obviously is a message which men resist with all of the powers that are available to them. It seldom is heard in the councils of men or in the churches that have committed themselves to parachurch or suprachurch organizations. Without any regard whatever to the inviolability of the Word of God, these may mouth a few of the Scriptures to which we have reference and others, but they continue on pursuing their worldly devices, godless doctrines, and commandments of man.

It would seem, that every true church of the Lord Jesus Christ, even in this hour, should set its heart to learn, know, and speak the truth of God's Holy Word. Those who do will hear His message, and though penned almost 2000 years ago, it will come through loud and clear.

MOCKERY

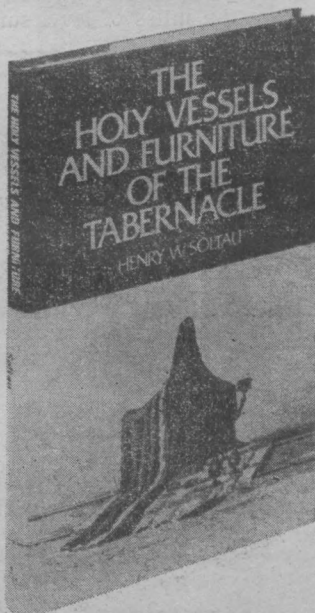
Perhaps because of the Scriptural ignorance of the multitudes who profess to be church members in our day, notorious or famed evangelists, so called, apparently

without conscience, can profess a relationship with the Lord Jesus Christ, and then make a mockery of the Word of God by quoting "Bring ye all the tithes into the storehouse, that there may be meat in mine house, and prove me now herewith, saith the Lord of hosts. . ." (Mal. 3:10) as an appeal device for their own parachurch welfare!

It is understandable, therefore, why such paragons of parachurch virtue would call for "union meetings" and "city-wide revivals"! They despise the true churches of the Lord Jesus Christ, fearing that the offense of the Cross and the truth of God might besmirch or detract from their worldly fame,

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but they work long and loud in their efforts to fill their stadiums and auditoriums with "church people" in order to make a worldly show! Every generation, perhaps, has its peculiar depravity. Certainly, however, nothing in history has ever exceeded the mockery of Christ Jesus, the churches, and the Word of God which is being indulged by those who are called evangelists in our generation!

Those who are called evangelists, especially the famed ones of our day, without any evidence of conscience whatever obtain free publicity as they make themselves available to the Satan-serving, godless entertainers of our day. Then, again apparently without conscience, these supposed evangelists spend unnumbered millions of "tithe," "offering," and "gift" dollars to advertise their parachurch entertainment extravaganzas that they unscripturally call "revivals"! Though such should be enough evil to satisfy the most crass and the most greedy, it seemingly is not enough for them. Thus, they go on to lure "church folk" to their parachurch, anti-Church, "union meetings," and then scheme so as to lead observers to suppose there is a great spiritual movement or awakening as So-Called "Counselors" make

their "timed-progress" toward the front, or the altar, or the speaker's centralized podium as a scheme to make it "easier" for sinners to follow.

Such devices of men certainly were never "hatched" in the Heaven of our God, by the Lord Jesus Christ, or by the Spirit of the Living God. Such scheming "entrapment" certainly was never designed by the God who inspired, "For the preaching of the cross is to them that perish foolishness; but unto us who are saved it is the power of God" (I Cor. 1:18). Such scheming "entrapment" certainly was never designed by the God who inspired, "I am not ashamed of the Gospel of Christ; for it is the power of God unto salvation to everyone that believeth . . ." (Romans 1:16). Such scheming "entrapment" certainly was never designed by the God who inspired: "I declare unto you the gospel, which I preached unto you, which also ye have received and wherein ye stand; by which also ye are saved if ye keep in memory what I have preached unto you, unless ye have believed in vain" (I Cor. 15:1-2).

Schemes of men, such as these, may appear very impressive to a world of men who are being entertained and who ever seek more entertainment to give a little variety to their "eating, drinking, marrying, and giving in marriage" (Matt. 24:28) activities. These scheming men, and sometimes scheming women, may make a great show of religion, but being parachurch they are anti-church and thereby anti-Christ. They may have pervasive and persuasive appeals, but they are enemies of God and of His Christ, and they live to rob the churches of their treasures, both the human and the monetary!

Men who have the name of being religious Convention, Fellowship, or Association executives may boast of their swank offices, their bulging or overflowing coffers, and their swooning followers, but they are parachurch or suprachurch monsters who are giving their lives and their substances to the attempted, ultimate destruction of the churches. In a very real sense, they are "biting the hand which feeds them," but they are so confused that they are not even aware of their plight.

These may allege themselves to be more competent and more capable than the churches of the Lord Jesus Christ to distribute funds for missions, the poor, and those suffering from disaster or catastrophe. With such high-handed and unholy conclusions, they show how incorrigibly they hate Christ Jesus and what little respect they have for Him who deemed it to be sufficient to say, "Upon this ROCK (PETRA) I will build my church, and the gates of hell shall not prevail against it" (Matt. 16:18). Very simply, their parachurch and suprachurch intentions are satani-

cally designed to undermine the Cause of the Lord Jesus Christ in the earth and to discountenance and destroy, if such were possible, the influence and impact of the churches in the hearts of men.

DISHONESTY

Statistically, these who give their lives and their substance to parachurch and suprachurch organizations and operations may seem to be able to sell their religious "bill of goods" to the Scripturally-ignorant multitudes. With properly programmed statistics, these can boast of "the souls they have saved," or "the influence they have had" on leading religious groups, government leaders, politicians and world leaders.

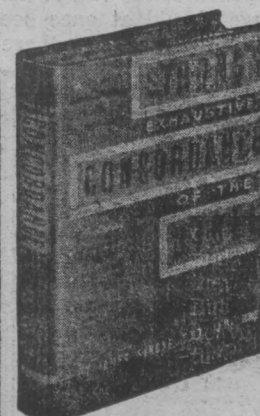
But their every statistical expression is designed so as to influence the Scripturally-ignorant multitudes whom they desire to separate from their hard-earned or easy-to-come-by cash. "The truth, the whole truth, and nothing but the truth" never enters or troubles their minds. Already they speak "lies in hypocrisy, having their conscience seared with a hot iron" (I Tim. 4:2). These suppose that their desired ends—the separation of the people from their money or their princely gifts—justify their means. Consequently, it never enters their minds or their hearts that they should be honest with the people.

The pastor and the executives of the Cathedral of Tomorrow would never have dreamed of letting their contributors know that they were using the "tithes," "offerings," and "gifts" to purchase multimillion dollar businesses, the profits of which they would attempt to clear as non-profit through the Cathedral many miles away! The famed Pentecostal-Methodist healer never dares inform his hundreds of thousands of contributors and duped souls how many million dollars of their "tithes," "offerings," and "gifts" are expended in the worldly shows which enable them to maintain their religious sham!

It is no happenstance that the world-famed evangelist, secreted his coffered millions for causes he did not think the people would have sense enough to understand or the insight or the grace to support while he continued his "begging ways" by radio, TV, and the printed page, as though he were in need. Needless to say, the statistical reports were doctored sufficiently to keep the contributing multitudes and the people in darkness. Yet, even today, with a bit of news having been leaked to the press, the Scripturally-ignorant multitudes who "hang on his every word" as though he were an oracle of God still declare "he can do no wrong." I doubt not that were there a choice between Jesus and the famed one, that there are multiplied millions in America and unnumbered millions throughout (Continued on page 8, column 5)

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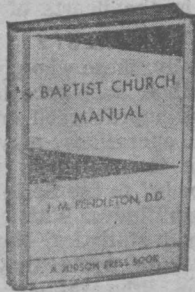
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"Once"

(Continued from page one)
THE "ONCE" OF A
COMPLETED WORK (9:26)

In these words there is a sigh of relief. A thought had for a moment flashed across the sunlit page of Scripture, which had suggested an infinite horror. In pursuing the parallels between the incidents of the great day of atonement and the great day when Jesus died, we had been suddenly reminded of the fact that that solemn spectacle was witnessed once a year—"The high priest entereth into the holy place every year with blood of others" (25). Every year the same rites performed, the same blood shed, the same propitiation made. Suppose that after the same analogy, Jesus had suffered every year! Every year the agony of the shadowed garden! Every year the bitter anguish of the cross! Every year the burial in the garden tomb! The earth would have been overcast with midnight, and life would have been agony! Who could bear to see Him suffer often!

But there was no necessity for Him to suffer more than once, because repetition means imperfection, of which, in His work, there is no sign or trace. The repetition of the sacrifices of the Jewish law meant that they could not take away sin, or make the comers thereunto perfect. Again and again the crowds of pious Jews gathered, driven to seek deliverance from the conscience of sins, which brooded deeply and darkly over their souls. Perhaps they would receive momentary respite as they saw the elaborate ceremonial, and felt that they were included in the high priest's confession and benediction. And so they wended their way homewards; but ere long a weary sense of dissatisfaction would again betake them; they would reflect on the inadequacy of the atonement which stood only in the offering of the life of slain beasts. Sins were remembered, but not put away; it was impossible that the blood of bulls and goats could do that (5:4). And so, doubtful in the more thoughtful,

hearts must have failed, and consciences moaned out their weary plaint unsatisfied. Therefore the sacrifices had to be presented continually.

On the other hand, Christ's work needs no repetition. It is final because it is perfect. Its perfection is attested, because it has never been repeated. "In that He died, He died unto sin once." Our Saviour set His hand to save us; He did not mean to fail; He came into our world with His distinct purpose; He died to do it; and, having done it, He went home to God. But, if from the vantage ground of the throne, reviewing His work, He had discerned any deficiency or flaw, He would have come back to make it good; and, inasmuch as He has not done so, we may be sure that the death of the cross is perfectly satisfactory.

"Now once, in the end of the ages, hath He appeared to put away sin by the sacrifice of Himself."

Oh, ponder these wondrous words! Once.—He liveth for evermore; and shall never again pass for a moment under the dark shadow of death.

"Hath He appeared" (or been manifested).—What then? He must have existed previously. The incarnation was but the embodiment in visible form of One who existed before all words; and the death of the cross was the unfolding in a single act of eternal facts in the nature of God. As the great sun disc may be mirrored in a tiny mountain stream, so in the one day of crucifixion, there were set forth to men, angels, and devils, love sacrifice, and redeeming mercy, which are part of very essence of God. Marvelous, indeed, the rending of the veil, by which such marvels are revealed.

"In the end of the world," or of ages.—God is called the King of the ages. Time is probably as much a creation as space, or distance, or matter. It is an accommodation to finite thought; a parenthesis in eternity; a rainbow flung across the mighty age of Deity. We break time into hours, God breaks it into ages. There are ages behind us, and ages before. We stand on a narrow neck of land between two seas. The first age of which we know anything is that of creation. The second, of Paradise. The third, of the world before the flood. The fourth, of the Patriarchs. The fifth, of Moses, ending with the Fall of Jerusalem, and the death of the Messiah. The sixth, of the Gentiles, in which we live. And, before us, we can dimly discern the forms of the Age of Millennium, the Age of Regeneration and Restitution, the Age of Judgment, and the Age in which the kingdom shall be delivered to the Father. There is thus a complete analogy between the creation of the material world and the creation of the new heavens and earth.

Geologists love to enumerate the strata of the earth's formation through which the processes of world-building were carried, and we shall probably discover some day that God has been building up the new creation through successive ages of history and development. Christ's death is here said to have happened at the end of the ages; and we should at once see the force of this even though there

IS "THAT" IN THE BIBLE?



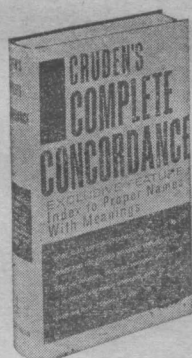
Question:

WHO HAD HIS WAGES CHANGED TEN TIMES?

Answer:—Jacob, Genesis 31:4-7 —"And Jacob sent and called Rachel and Leah to the field unto his flock, And said unto them, . . . your father hath deceived me, and changed my wages ten times; . . ."

may remain several great ages to be fulfilled ere time run out its course, if only we knew how many ages have preceded. Compared to the number that have been, this is the end, the climax, the ridge of the weary climb; what lies beyond are the miles of level sur-

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face, till the sudden dip down of the cliffs in face of the ocean of eternity.

"He hath put away sin."—Oh marvelous word! It might be rendered to annihilate, to make as if it had never been. The wreath of cloud may disappear, but the separated drops still float through space. The bubble may break on the foam-tipped wave, but the film of water has gone to add its attenuated addition to the ocean depth. But Jesus has put sin away as when a debt is paid, an obligation is canceled, or a sin-laden victim was slain, burnt, and buried in the old days of Moses. . . .

He was made sin. He stood before the universe as though He had drawn upon Himself all human sin which has ever rent the air or befouled the earth, or put the stars of night to the blush; and, bearing the shame, the horror, the penalty during those dread hours which wrung from Him the cry of desolate forsakenness, He put it away, and wiped it forever. . . .

THE "ONCE" OF
MORTALITY (9:28)

With a few exceptions mentioned on the page of Scripture, where miracles of raising are recounted, men die but once. For those there

was one cradle, two coffins, one birth, two burials. But for most it is mercifully arranged that the agony and pain of dissolution should be experienced only once. And this, which is the ordinary lot of humanity, also befell Jesus Christ. He could not die often, because He was literally man, and it would have been inconsistent to violate in His case the universal law. He must become man, because only through the portal of birth could He reach the bourne of death; but, having been born, and assumed our nature, He must obey the laws of that nature, and die but once.

THE "ONCE" OF DEITY (9:27)

There must have been something more than mortal in Him, who in His one death could bear away the sins of many. Good and great men have died, who would have done anything to cancel or atone for the sins of their nation, their family, and their beloved; but in vain. How marvelous then must be His worth, whose sufferings and will countervail for a world's sin.

And we can see the imperious necessity that our Saviour should be God manifest in the flesh; and that He who was obedient to the death of the cross should be also He who was in form of God, and thought it not robbery to be God's equal. If it be true that His death "once" has put away sin, then, bring hither your songs of worship, your wreaths of empire, your ascriptions of lowliest adoration, for He must be God. No being of inferior make could do for man what, in that brief but dreadful darkness, He has done once for all, and for ever.

THE "ONCE" OF A
PURGED CONSCIENCE (10:2)

We are not in the position of the Jews, needing to repeat their sacrifices year by year, in sad monotony; our sacrifice has been offered once for all. Therefore, we have not, like them, the perpetual conscience of sins. Our hearts are, once and forever, sprinkled from an evil conscience. (22).

There is no necessity to ask repeatedly for forgiveness for the sins that have been once confessed and forgiven. God does not accuse of them; we need not accuse ourselves. God does not remember them; we may well forget them, save as incentives to gratitude and humility. There is daily need for fresh confession of recent sins; but when once the soul realizes the completeness of Christ's work on its behalf, it cries with great joy: "As far as the east is from the west, so far hath He removed our transgressions from us."

THE "ONCE" OF A
FULFILLED PURPOSE (9:10)

Space forbids our lingering longer. In our next text we may show completely the purpose of God has been realized in Jesus, and, therefore, that there is no necessity for a repetition of His sacrificial work. The will or purpose of God for man's redemption asks for nothing more than that which is given in the life and death of our Saviour. Nothing more is required for the glory of God, for the accomplishment of the Di-

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vine counsels, or for the perfect deliverance and sanctification of those who believe.

"Once for all, oh, sinner, receive it!
Once for all, oh, brother, believe it!
Cling to the cross, the burdens will fall;
Christ has redeemed us once for all."

(FORD'S CHRISTIAN REPOSITORY & HOME CIRCLE, July 1889, pp. 8-13).

Church And Bride

(Continued from page one)

are beyond human comprehension. Let us begin with the first verse of this letter and travel down a most beautiful highway of fellowship with our Lord that causes the mind to go back through the hallways of time and review the twenty-third Psalm.

Notice in Revelation 3:7 this letter is addressed to this Church in Philadelphia through the pastor. We can never put too much emphasis on the thought of the pastor's great responsibility to one of our Lord's churches. The pastor of one of our Lord's churches has his duties in his teaching and preaching the Word clearly defined by the Holy Spirit in the Word of God. In I Timothy 4:13 Paul instructs the young pastor, Timothy, after this manner, "Till I come, give attendance (do not neglect) the reading of the Word, the preaching of the Word, or the doctrine of the Word." This is not an exact quotation of these verses, but it is an accurate account of what Paul is saying to Timothy. In II Timothy 4:2, Paul puts this same thought to this same young pastor in this manner, "Preach the word." When teaching or preach-

(Continued on page 8, column 1)

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THE BAPTIST EXAMINER
AUGUST 11, 1979
PAGE SIX

"WHAT'S HAPPENING IN THE RELIGIOUS WORLD TODAY?"

Millionaires in the U.S. today are not confined to the Rockefellers, Kennedys, or the Fords. According to a report from a study by the U.S. Trust Corporation, there are 520,000 whose net worth is \$1 million, debt not included. This is 15 percent above 1978's 450,000. Back in 1969 there were only 121,000 millionaires. The list is growing at about 15 percent a year. But with the rate of inflation running at about 13 percent, some of today's millionaires may be hundreadaires in the next 10 years.

The Bible centuries ago predicted there would be a time of run away inflation, causing rich men to weep and howl just prior to the return of Jesus Christ (Jas. 5:1-8). I preached this back before the modern wave of inflation hit us. People laughed and made fun. But today there are not many honest doubters left. Fearful times are ahead for planet earth. The only ray of light is the soon coming of our Redeemer to rapture us away in the clouds of glory.

In Minneapolis an ad in the paper contained this message: "If all you want from church is hell, fire and brimstone, burn this ad. Hell, fire and brimstone you won't find in the Episcopal Church. But if it's warm fellowship and the love of a forgiving God you want, join us in worship this Sunday."

Would you believe that this ad which appeared in a small community newspaper under sponsorship of St. Luke's and St. John's Episcopal Churches of Minneapolis, has been selected by the Newspaper Advertising Bureau as one of the best ads produced in the United States and Canada? Would you also believe it won an award of merit from the New York Art Directors' Club? Well, you had better believe this because it did.

It just goes to show that we live in a Bible-denying world. Religious people deny the existence of a

literal, burning Hell while the ungodly love to have it so. But always remember that all the lies of men cannot put out the fires of Hell.

WASHINGTON, D.C. (EP)—State courts do not necessarily have to refer to church law when resolving disputes between different factions claiming the same church property, the Supreme Court ruled in a case that a court minority said probably will increase the involvement of civil courts in church controversies.

By the narrowest 5-4 margin, the high Court concluded that Georgia state courts may decide which faction of a divided Presbyterian congregation in Macon may lay claim to the disputed property rights. The Court fell short, however, of awarding the property in dispute to the majority faction of the Vineville Presbyterian Church, holding that the Georgia courts must now determine if Presbyterian Church policy mandates that the property go instead to its "loyal" minority.

More than six years ago, at a duly constituted meeting of the Congregation, 164 of Vineville's members voted to withdraw from Presbyterian Church in the United States (PCUS), while 94 voted to remain. The majority informed the denomination of its action and proceeded to unite with another group, the Presbyterian Church in America, a new denomination composed of congregations unhappy with what they perceived as "liberalism" in the PCUS.

Consistent with Presbyterian Church polity, the Augusta-Macon presbytery appointed a commission to investigate the schism. That panel concluded that the "loyal" minority remained the true congregation and was thus entitled to the church property. After appealing unsuccessfully in federal court to reclaim the property, the majority took its case to a state trial court, which ruled that under Georgia property laws the majority

owned the property. The Georgia Supreme Court affirmed.

In sending the case back for further action, the high Court hinted that the Georgia courts may find it necessary to rule for the PCUS, thereby reversing their previous decisions. That would happen, the Court said, if the PCUS can prove that its polity requires that disputed property go to the denomination. The Georgia courts earlier failed to address that question, holding simply that under state law in any such dispute the property in question belongs to the majority of church members.

CHEYENNE, Wyo. (EP)—Two Unification Church members were

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awarded \$250 in lawyers' fees for their successful challenge of city ordinances in Douglas, Wyo., which restricted door-to-door solicitation.

U.S. District Judge Clarence A. Brimmer said the laws were overly broad and unconstitutional when applied to religious groups or their members. The ordinances required licensing of all fund-raisers and barred all door-to-door solicitation without prior invitation of the property owners.

EDMOND, Wash. (EP) — Ten years after being removed from a local Southern Baptist association for "Pentecostal tendencies," the Woodland Baptist Church here has been received back into membership.

When the Puget Sound Baptist Association refused to receive delegates and messengers from the Woodland Church in October, 1969, it cited the congregation's practice of speaking in tongues and holding faith-healing services and charged it with "heresy."

Since then, the Pentecostal practitioners have left the Woodland Church. The new pastor, Gus Bohot, urged the church to apply to be reinstated with the Puget Sound Association. Its application was approved by the association's credentials committee, and it was received back into membership by unanimous vote of the association at a recent meeting.

WINONA LAKE, Ind. (EP)—"I could never have been elected except it be ordained of God," the new prime minister of Rhodesia (Zimbabwe), Bishop Abel Muzorewa, told Free Methodist Bishop W. Dale Cryderman in a private interview at the prime minister's home in Salisbury. A United Methodist bishop, Mr. Muzorewa was sworn in as Rhodesia's first black

prime minister on May 29 ending 90 years of white rule in the former British Colony.

Cryderman, who presides over Free Methodist conferences in southern Africa, was in Salisbury to meet with Free Methodist Church leaders there. "He's (Muzorewa) a man committed to democracy. He's totally committed to an interracial society with equality for everyone . . . He believes in the dignity of man regardless of what his color is or anything else," asserted Cryderman. Cryderman does not believe a black puppet government will exist. "He's a quality man," he said. "He knows what he believes."

Unconvinced that Rhodesia held a free and fair election, President Jimmy Carter has refused to recognize the new government and lift economic sanctions against the country. President Carter claims that Rhodesia's black citizens, who constitute 96 percent of the population, never had a chance to consider or vote for or against the constitution. "The vote has been questioned by some countries as being an illegal vote," noted Cryderman. "I couldn't find anybody in my conversations (in Rhodesia) who felt that it was an illegal vote." According to Cryderman, 65 percent of the population turned out at the polls in the first election that blacks have been allowed to do so.

Bishop Cryderman believes that African terrorists fear United States and England's support of Rhodesia and that U.S. recognition will greatly diminish terrorism on the continent. He said he finds the new government closer to western democracy than anything else he's seen in Africa. When asked if President Carter had contacted him since his election, Bishop Muzorewa answered that, although he had written the President before and after Rhodesia's election, "I have never had the courtesy of reply."

WASHINGTON, D.C. (EP) — Mississippi Congressman Thad Cochran has introduced legislation to exempt from federal income taxes the first \$20,000 earned by overseas American missionaries.

Cochran said this bill was needed because the Foreign Earned Income Act of 1978 now requires religious and charitable workers in foreign countries to pay from \$1000 to \$4,000 annually in additional U.S. income taxes. "Tax hikes of this size would have an adverse impact on private missionary and charity activities," said Rep. Cochran.

"In recent years, many charities have experienced increasing difficulty in adjusting pay scales to keep pace with inflation and the declining dollar overseas," said Rep. Cochran. "Charities, unlike their counterparts in private industry, have no mechanism for passing along cost increases to their 'customers', and can increase salaries only by cutting the services they provide."

NOTTINGHAM TOWNSHIP, Pa. (EP)—An independent Nazarene

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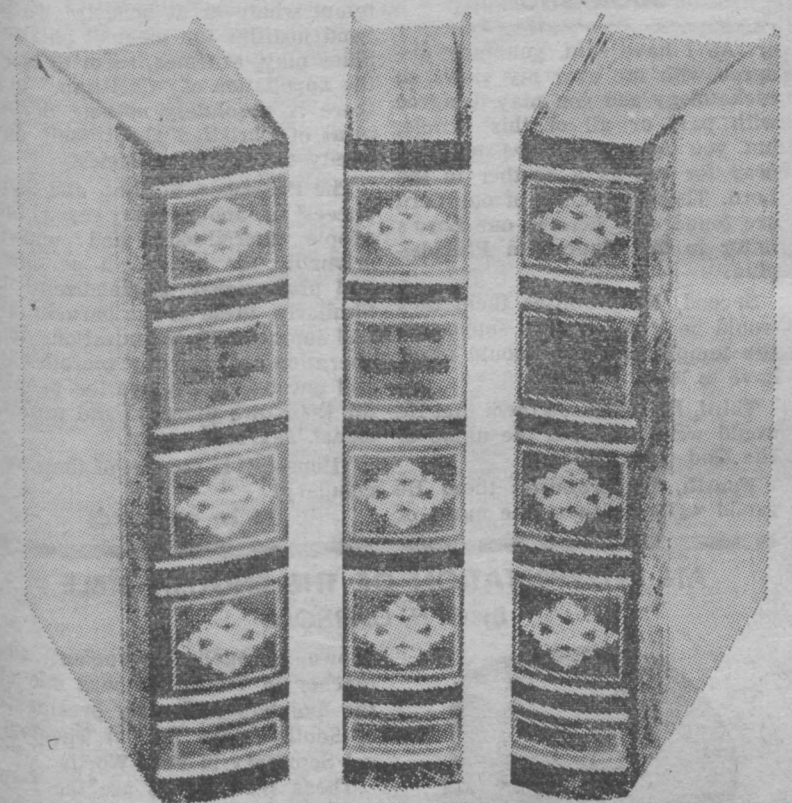
congregation here was fined \$978 for singing and praying too loudly and disturbing the peace of the neighborhood.

Citations signed by Justice of the Peace Joseph P. Reichel were delivered to the Voice of the Nazarene Association of Independent Churches as some 500 members of the church and their pastor, W. L. King, were preparing for their Independence Day service. The papers said \$326 fine would be added for every day the meetings continued. The congregation continued its songfilled prayer meeting, undaunted by the orders. Nottingham Township is about 30 miles south of Pittsburgh.

SAN DIEGO (EP)—The Conservative Baptist Association of America and its aligned missionary societies have approved steps toward shedding some of their individualistic, independent ways and adopt, among other things, guidelines for ordination and affiliated schools.

Conservative Baptists, who held their 36th annual meeting here, have about 250,000 members in 1,100 U.S. churches. Substantial voice approval was given by the 1,375 delegates to resolutions which will go to a study commission for final shaping and submission to next year's convention.

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*WKNG, Tallap'sa, Ga.	Sun.— 8:00-8:30 a.m.	1060	2500 AM

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Church And Bride

(Continued from page six)

ing the Word the pastor must preach ALL of the Word and nothing but the Word. Our Lord, through those He chose to write His Word, causes them to place much responsibility on the pastor's teaching and preaching of the Word to one of His blood-bought churches (Acts 20:28).

In this seventh verse of Revelation three, our Lord identifies Himself as the One Who is both holy and true (John 14:6). Then He speaks of His having in His personal possession the key of David. What does He mean by this statement concerning this key, when He states that this key, He, and only He, can open or close a certain door and that this authority is in His hands and not that of any man?

In Isaiah 22:20-25 we find Eliakim has the key to the treasure house of David and that he only can open or close this door. Eliakim has received this authority from no other but the King himself. Our Lord, as the antitype of Eliakim, has in His personal possession the key to God's treasure house of blessings and only He can open or close this door, not any man with all of his "gimmicks" and "programs."

In Revelation 3:8 our Lord tells this church that He knows all about them and their works. Take time to read, at this point, in this article Psalm 139:1-16 both carefully and very prayerfully.

As our Lord continues in His speaking to this Philadelphia Church, He tells them that He has opened to them the door of God's treasure house of blessings and no man can close it to them. He then explains to them why He has opened this door to them. Though they were a small and despised assembly in the eyes of the world and in the eyes of "the big churchites," they were very great and precious in His eyes. They belonged to Him; they were one of His churches. They had kept, guarded and protected His Word and never denied they were His personal possession, both individually and as a local Baptist church.

In Revelation 3:9 our Lord speaks of the false Jews, those who claimed to be true Jews, but they lied, for they were owned and controlled by Satan (John 8:34-44). He assured this little church with the big loving heart that if these Jews ever worshipped Him in spirit and in truth, they would have to come humbly confessing Him as both, Lord and Saviour and worship Him with them. By so doing they would know His great love for His churches.

In Revelation 3:10 our Lord speaks to this church of the Great Tribulation that was coming for the purpose of testing and trying the earth dwellers, those folk who love this world and the things of this world more than they love God and the things of God. He hastens to assure this church, they would be kept from this hour (time period) because He had ordained

it so. This is as far as I will go with this verse at this time, as it is not the purpose of this article to try to swing folk to the pre-tribulation rapture, which is the view I hold to be true to the Word of God. I know some may be reading this article that disagree with me in my holding to a pre-tribulation rapture for the saints of this day and age. It is not my wish to argue the point with you. Brethren, you may disagree with me on the time of the Rapture or whether there is to be a Rapture or not, but, if we are truly born again believers, we are still brethren in the Lord and we must love one another as Christ loved us and gave Himself for us.

The main thrust of this article is to prove from verses 7-13 of Revelation 3 that the Philadelphia Church and its proto-types from the Church in Philadelphia until this present day are the part and parcel of the bride of Christ.

In Revelation 3:11 our Lord speaks of His soon or imminent return for His own. He continues in His speaking to them by telling them to continue in their persevering for Him (John 10:27, 28). He also speaks of a danger of their losing a crown. What crown? The same crown Paul speaks of in II Timothy 4:6-8 that he looked forward to receiving, as could all other saints who loved the Lord Jesus Christ and faithfully followed and served Him all the days of their lives.

In Revelation 3:12 our Lord makes some statements that sound so very mysterious but the more we study them, the more important they become to us as members of New Testament Baptist churches. To fully understand this 12th verse we have to define the meaning of the name (Philadelphia) of this church and how it is used in this passage of Scripture. This word "Philadelphia" in its Greek form is used 6 other times in the New Testament. They are as follows: Romans 12:10; I Thessalonians 4:9; Hebrews 13:1; I Peter 1:22; and twice in II Peter 1:7. If you have taken the time to examine these verses in your Bible, you haven't had any difficulty in arriving at the true meaning of this word. Philadelphia means "brotherly love." In other words, the Church in Philadelphia was made up of believers in the Lord Jesus Christ, who love the brethren with pure hearts fervently (I Peter 1:22).

At one time, in the years that are past and gone, my eldest brother was a "Melter" on the open hearth of a large steel foundry. I wanted to see what his job was, so I visited him there. One gave me a pair of very thick and very darkly colored lensed glasses. He then opened a very small "peek" hole in one of the doors of one of these steel furnaces. He cautioned me to just take a quick glance into the furnace, and then look away as the heat and the blare of the molten steel would burn my eyes. I did as he told me and in this furnace I saw molten steel bubbling like water. It was hotter than white hot. This is actually the meaning of the word fervently from the Greek as is used in I Peter 1:22. Our love for the brethren in Jesus Christ is to be hotter than white hot. Hear me again, brethren, our love for one another as brethren of like faith and order is to be hotter than white hot, or with all the love that Jesus Christ enables us to love one another. Brethren, I believe we are failing miserably to be as were the believers in the Church in Philadelphia. John tells us this is the way we can know we are truly saved (I John 3:14).

I believe verse 12 teaches us this Church in Philadelphia is a part of the bride of Christ. If we are going to be a part of that bride, these things must be true of us and the churches we are members of. What things are you speaking of, preacher? The five things we find the Lord speaking of in Revelation 3:1-2. First, we must love the brethren with a pure heart fervently. We can disagree on some parts of doctrine but it must not affect our love for the household

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of faith. In Genesis 13:8 we find two believers, who are about to be separated, the one from the other, because of their difference of opinion on what constitutes separation from all worldliness. But look at the love that great old patriarch Abraham had for his nephew Lot, who was both young and very foolish. Listen to Abraham's words to Lot, "Let there be no strife, I pray thee, between me and thee, and between my herdmen and thy herdmen; for we be brethren." We may disagree on parts of doctrine, but we cannot disagree on the fact that we are to love and to pray for one another.

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er. As I have said, you may disagree with me over my views on eschatology and you may disagree with part or all of this article, but you must still love me and pray for me as a brother in the Lord. These promises of our Lord are found only here in our Lord's letter to this Church in Philadelphia.

Second, He promises them they would be a pillar or a support in His temple and they would never have to leave it.

Third, He promised them that He would write on them the name of His God (Rev. 22:3, 4).

Fourth, He promised them He would write on them the name of

the city of His God. What is the City of the Lord's God? According to this verse it is the New Jerusalem that comes down from God out of Heaven (Rev. 21:1,2). In Revelation 21:9-22 we find it is the dwelling place of the bride who hath made herself ready (Rev. 19:7, 8). I believe the bride who hath made herself ready for this great day is the faithful members of our Lord's churches that is patterned after the church that is in Philadelphia. Remember, these promises are made by the Lord only to this sixth church out of all of the seven that were written to.

Fifth, He promises to write on them His new name. What is that name? In Ezekiel 48:35 we find it is Jehovah-Shammah, "the Lord is there." Notice in Revelation 21:22 and Revelation 22:3 where the Lord and His bride will be in the eternal ages.

Let me close, this already too long article, by asking you the question that could be asked from Revelation 3:13, "Can you hear what the Holy Spirit is saying to these seven churches?" Let me ask you a personal question on my own, "Will you be in the bride of Christ?" You will not unless you are a believer like those in the Church in Philadelphia faithfully serving the Lord in one of His churches where you are presently living.

Thank you very much and may God richly bless you one and all.

Crucial Suprachurch

(Continued from page five)

the world who would choose this famed one as the Jews once cried, "We have no king but Caesar" (John 19:15)

Honesty?

If one can read that which is written and proclaimed aboard, these whose lives and substances are involved finally in their parachurch and suprachurch organizations and operations make no attempt whatever at honesty! Their "end justifies the means" philosophies may, at times, seem to bear the appellation of "Christian," but there is absolutely nothing Scriptural of Christian about their duplicity and their dishonesty!

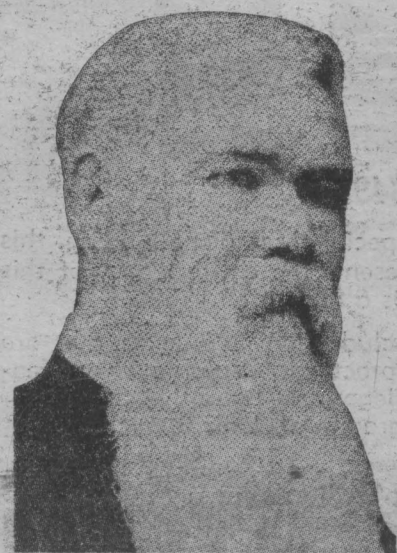
The Pharisees, Scribes, and Sadducees of another day used the people mercilessly and unconscionably for their own personal and professional aggrandizement. Similarly, these in the parachurch and suprachurch organizations and operations of our day mercilessly and unconscionably use the people for their own personal and professional aggrandizement.

"Honesty" is no part of their vocabulary!

(to be continued)

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