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WHAT THE BAPTIST EXAMINER MEANS TO ME

The Baptist Examiner

Baptist Is Our Middle Name

Paid Circulation in All States and in Many Foreign Countries

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

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WHOLE NUMBER 2403

THE ASTONISHMENT OF THE QUEEN OF SHEBA

by Ron Boswell

"...behold, the half was not told me..." (I Kings 10:7)
The words in our text were spoken by the queen of Sheba. She had come from her homeland to see and hear King



Ron Boswell

Solomon. She had observed his kingdom and was so completely overwhelmed by what she had seen and heard, she spoke the words of our text. She was amazed, surprised and

speechless. Listen to how it is put in Scripture:

"...there was no more spirit in her" (I Kings 10:5).

I would like to consider four things about our subject as the Lord leads:

I. The Things That Astounded Her

II. The King Gave Her More Than She Could Even Desire

III. All Could Not Have Been Told Because It Was Unspeakable

IV. It Was All Too Good To Be True

The queen of Sheba had heard of Solomon in her homeland and had come for spiritual reasons. Listen:

"And when the queen of Sheba heard of the fame of Solomon concerning the name of the Lord, she came to prove him with hard questions" (I Kings 10:1).

The children of God are astounded much like the queen of Sheba. Often we have said like her, "The half was not told me."

I. The Things That Astounded Her

We are like her. The things that astounded her also astound us.

1. The Revelation Of Scripture

She had received answers to the great questions about God and life. Listen:

"...she communed with him of all that was in her heart.

And Solomon told her all her questions..." (I Kings 10:2, 3).

Human reasoning does not hold the answers. We need to commune with the King, the Lord Jesus Christ, and have the Scriptures revealed to us.

Before God saved me, I never realized what was in this book, the Bible. Though I had heard some things that were true, I had to say like the queen of Sheba, "The half was not told me."

God's working in us brings us to the King. There, in His presence, we receive the answers to great questions. We learn the truth about sin, righteousness, justification and the hereafter. Nowhere else will the answers to

(Continued on Page 3 Column 2)

WHY SHOULD A WOMAN WEAR A HEAD—COVERING IN THE CHURCH

by E.G. Cook

There are so many different teachings concerning the woman's covering. At least some of them have to be wrong. Some Baptists teach that a woman should wear a covering on her head in the assembly. Some others say that the woman's hair is the only covering she needs. Others say that since a covering

just may be the result of the translation. If our translators had been more careful to give us the different meanings of the different Greek words found in I Corinthians 11:1-15 it would have made it easier for us to understand. The way these

words are dealt with seems to justify the teaching that the

(Continued on Page 5 Column 1)

**SUBSCRIPTION
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The Baptist Examiner Pulpit

A Sermon by Pastor Joseph M. Wilson

THE SLIMEPITS OF SODOM

"And the vale of Siddim was full of slimepits; and the kings of Sodom and Gomorrah fled, and fell there..." (Gen. 14:10).

I will use a homiletical method in this sermon which is very rare with me. I will divorce my text completely from its historical connection and literal meaning, and use it as a motto-text for what I wish to say in this sermon. I ask that you will turn your ears on, turn your mind on, and tune your heart in to what I have to say. I consider it to be of grave importance. You may get angry. You may laugh at me, but you will be unable to prove me wrong. In your heart you will know that I am right. If I am right—and I am—you best listen to me and do as I say.

Now let us leave the ancient days of my text, and the cities of

Sodom and Gomorrah. Let us travel through the centuries and across the miles. Let us come to our day and to the place where you live. Let us talk about the slimepits of America. Surely, there are as many, and they are as filled with slime, as ever existed in Sodom.

The dance is a slimepit. Yes, it is. It is such because of the vile, vulgar, wicked and ungodly motions of the body therein. If some of you dancing parents would see your little girls making the vulgar movements with her body which you make on the dance floor, you would want to whip her. The dance is a slimepit because of the lust provoking music connected therewith. Music has great power. The people of God have been lifted closer to the Lord and greatly blessed by good and

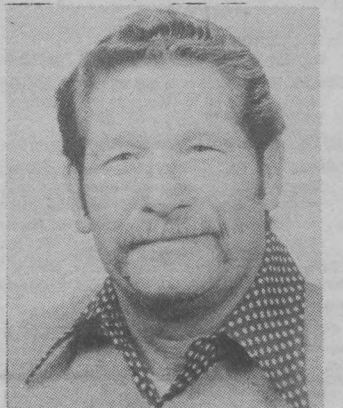
godly music and song. The devil knows the power of music, and he uses it to move his disciples downward and hellward. The music of the dance hall is designed to motivate and increase the desires of sexual lust.

The dance is a slimepit because of the places in which they are usually held. Where is there a decent dancehall? I know of none such. The dance is a slimepit because of the improper familiarity between the sexes. Let another man hold your wife or your daughter in public as intimately as they do in the dance — let them do this somewhere else — and you would be ready to fight. The contact between the bodies of those of the opposite sex which take place in the dance are designed to, and do, promote

(Continued on Page 2 Column 1)

authority. Thank God for T.B.E., as it was what He used to lead us to a true Church.

We called a meeting with the MAN that started the Gladwin Baptist Church, which we were attending at that time. In this meeting, which we recorded and still have the tape, thereof, this man admitted that he had never heard of Church Truths. He said there wasn't a Baptist Church in town so he started one. His words were that "it was his baby." This meeting settled the issue in our minds. We needed Church authority. The pastor, who had introduced T.B.E. to us, now reversed his



Bernie Foor

stand on Church Authority. This paper that He once had bragged on, he now hated. Or was it the truths this great paper stood for? He said now that Church authority was not necessary. Five families (after being denied all the privileges of church membership) left and sought Church authority, realizing without this we were no better off than the Y.M.C.A. or any other organization, so far as

(Continued on Page 7 Column 4)

THE HOLINESS OF MARRIAGE

by Kenneth E. Leonard

"Marriage is honorable in all, and the bed undefiled: but whoremongers and adulterers God will judge" (Hebrews 13:4).

In my initial preparation of a series of messages on the book of

Hebrews, my first inclination was to bypass Hebrews 13:4. Numerous reasons presented themselves to my mind why this verse should be omitted. Naturally, the first thought was the awkwardness of dealing with this subject in a mixed audience of adults and children. Then I considered the fact that a number of faithful members of



Kenneth Leonard

our fellowship are and will probably remain unmarried. Further, I reminded myself that many of us have been married for a long time and are rather conditioned to our state. Probably nothing could be said to change many of us.

Over against these considerations I placed my ministerial responsibility to declare the whole counsel of God. As a minister of Jesus Christ I am compelled to preach on every

(Continued on Page 5 Column 5)

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The Baptist Examiner

THE BAPTIST PAPER FOR
THE BAPTIST PEOPLE

JOSEPH M. WILSON, Editor

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SLIMEPITS

(Continued from Page 1)

sexual desires.

The dance is a slimepit because of what goes on in connection therewith. Where is there a dance that does not involve the drinking of strong drink? What kind of hellholes do dances take place in? The lights are low. The atmosphere is foul with cigarette smoke, and the awful odor of beer, wine and liquor. The dancers frequently become so drunk they cannot stand, and fall around on the dance floor. The men and women are improperly dressed. They deliberately dress and move their bodies in such a way as to inflame lust in others. The dance is a slimepit because of what frequently follows. How very many have gone from the dance hall to the bed of sexual sin? Multitudes of young girls have lost their virginity following the lust inciting dance. Yes, from the dance floor, to the bed of sexual sin, to the flames of hell. What a road to travel!

Television is a slimepit. Television is the most harmful thing to come along in my lifetime. How it hurts the spirituality of the Christian! It is almost impossible to visit in the homes, and give a good witness for Jesus Christ, and have a season of prayer because of Television. If a man will not turn that monster off, you might as well say goodbye and leave. You can do no good for God at all because he is glued to the TV set. Sometimes even Christians will stay out of church services to watch some TV program. Yes, TV is a most hurtful thing.

But that is not all. It is also a slimepit. It is such because of the crime and violence portrayed thereon. There are a multitude of witnesses to the crime and violence provoking influence of TV. This is beyond dispute. And how can one whose mind is imbued with the violence and bloodshed of a TV program, then turn his mind to spiritual things, have a season of

Bible reading and prayer, and go to bed with God-glorifying thoughts on his mind and heart?

TV is a slimepit because of the improperly clad actors and actresses. You women would not want a woman in your living room dressed as many are on TV. You men would not want such a nearly naked man parading around before your wife either. There was a time when folk would be arrested for appearing in public so nearly nude. It is wrong and sinful for you to watch a program on TV which promotes evil and lustful desires. Can you really watch lust boat without any evil influences upon you? I say lust boat, because love is a misnomer here. Love is of God and can only exist in a proper and Scriptural situation.

TV is a slimepit because it specializes in illicit lust affairs. How many programs are there on TV which magnify good old fashioned love between a man and his wife? Thank God for the few — very few. I do not say that TV is totally sinful. But I do say, without fear of successful contradiction, that it mostly is sinful and degrading. I do not believe that any Christian can spend much time daily before the TV set without it having a very adverse effect upon his spirituality. What are the soap operas? Stories of sinful and illicit love. Isn't that true? What are the nighttime soap operas? More of the same, except moreso. How can we watch the shows we watch and allow our children watch them and even imagine that God is going to bless and use such to our good and to His glory?

Furthermore, TV is a slimepit because it takes time, much time, which could surely be put to a better use doing something else. We are a nation of TV addicts. We are chained to and by this evil monster. Where is old-fashioned companionship in the family? Where are the family talks? Where are the good times of just being together? Gone, stolen from us by the one-eyed monster of television. Yes, it is a slimepit.

Movies are a slimepit. I do not say this is true of all movies. Thank God for Walt Disney and the decent movies he put before the viewers. But by and large, movies are surely a slimepit. They are such because of the moral character of most of the actors and actresses. Most of them are whores and whoremongers. They have less moral character than animals in the barnyard. If a woman wants to win an Oscar, she dare not play the part of a decent human being. She must play the part of an immoral prostitute. Remember, that these men and women of the silver screen become the idols of your boys and girls. They want to be just like them. And not one in a thousand is fit to be a copy for another human being.

Movies are slimepits because of the sin portrayed on the screen. The same thing goes for movies as for television, except movies for television, except usually more so. Crime, staples of movie fare. Some of them are worse than others, but most of them are vile, soul-degrading slimepits of terrible filth.

Adult theatres and adult bookstores are the slimiest of the slimepits. No decent person will own one, operate one, work in one or go into one. Human tongue would be hard pressed to describe the filth of these places of sin and shame. Surely, no preacher could ever use the

language such a description would demand. These places are the worst places that stain the streets of our cities and the roads of the country. There is absolutely no justification for their existence. Only a morally sick generation would tolerate them for a moment of time. There was a day when it was against the law for such places to exist. And the fact that those days are no more speaks ill of the lawmakers of this land. No decent human will ever defend the right of such places to exist. They have no such right. They exist for the sole purpose of ministering to the depraved lusts of mankind. Thank God, there will be none such in the glorious millennial reign of Jesus Christ. I warn you that these places are slimepits, and are usually stopovers on the road to hell.

Houses of prostitution and massage parlors (the same thing) are slimepits of the most depraved sort. Proverbs 7:27 tells us that the house of the prostitute is the way to hell. No decent society will allow such in its midst. No proper lawmaking body will defend the right of such to exist. They wreck lives, homes, and worst of all, they speed a multitude down the broad road that leads to destruction. I might add that "shacking up" is in the same category, and is just another name for whoredom.

Beer joints, night clubs, liquor stores, and any drinking place is a slimepit. Did you hear about the pig that got drunk. He was brought to trial before his fellow pigs. They decided to let him go when he promised that, as long as he lived, he would never act like a human again. Yes, pigs, wallowing in the mire, are not as filthy as the drunks who fill the places of strong drink in our land. What mind can conceive or what tongue tell of the slime and sin and filth of the drinking places. A policeman in Ashland told me that the crime rate had tripled in Ashland since the coming in of strong drink. The foul language, the foul atmosphere, the awful stench of places of strong drink must surely be an apt prelude to the hell to which most of the occupants are going. No one thing has caused more hurt to our country than has strong drink. How many homes have been badly hurt or destroyed thereby? How many of those behind prison bars are there because of some crime committed while under the influence of strong drink? How many lives have been destroyed thereby? No computer on earth can total up the damage that has been done by strong drink. Yet, there are people who profess to be decent people who will defend and advocate such.

Most magazine racks in book stores, now even in grocery stores and drug stores, are slimepits. They are filled with magazines which are filled with slime in the pictures and in the stories contained therein. Oh, how America needs a bonfire like the one in Ephesus (Acts 19:19)! How many of the books and magazines on the newsstands of America need to be burnt! Most of the readers of them and the sellers of them will one day burn in hell. I suggest that their books be there with them to increase their torments.

Well, these are some of the slimepits in America. Surely, I am not through with the subject. Surely, I do not have the time or the space to delineate all the slimepits which darken this fair land of ours. There are a multitude. Those who enter

them are a greater multitude. Spirituality is about gone from America. Morality and decency is almost a thing of the past in our country. The slimepits thereof are an evidence and a cause of the terrible condition in which we find ourselves. America is going to go from bad to worse, to worst, to hell, if something is not done about these slimepits.

In our text we learn that the kings of Sodom and Gomorrah fell in the slimepits. Oh, what a multitude have fallen in the slimepits mentioned in this sermon. It is impossible to stand up in the slimepits. You will fall if you enter them. The unsaved fall in these slimepits. As the hog wallows in the mire — and the hog is not guilty and sinful because of such — so do the unsaved wallow, roll over and over, in the slimepits of America.

See that man there. It is Friday. He has his week's pay. See him hurry home, change clothes, and rush off to the hell hole of a beer joint, or a gambling den, or a disco, etc. See him wallow in the slime of such. Oh, that he would hurry on the job, hurry to the church Sunday morning as he hurries to the slimepits of sin! He can't wait to get there, to spend his hard earned money, to meet his slimy companions of the slimepit. Yes, the unsaved fall in the slimepits, roll over in the slime, lap up the

slime, love the slime, rather than there than anywhere else.

But hear this, the saved sometimes fall into the slimepit. The saved cannot stand up in the slime any better than the unsaved. What a horrible thing. For a saved person to fall in the slimepit! But it does happen. Say, dear friend, when was the last time you were in a slimepit? You say you are saved. I hope so. But you better check up on your attitude towards the slimepit. It could mean that you are not truly saved. How can one who is saved love the same slimepits of sin which the unsaved love? Something is wrong here.

You cannot go into the slimepit without getting slime on you. It will get all over you. You are not immune to slime. The only way to keep from getting slime all over you is to stay out of the slimepit. Are you listening to me? Especially you who profess to be Christians, are you listening to me?

When the saved are in the slimepits, you can not tell them from the unsaved. We saved people are supposed to deliver others from the slimepits. You cannot help anyone get out of the slimepit unless you are of the outside yourself. What a lost testimony it is when a Christian falls into the slimepit!

Oh, what a sad and horrible

(Continued on Page 3 Column 1)

FROM THE EDITOR

I have now been editor of The Baptist Examiner a little over six months. I do praise the Lord for placing me in this position. I count it a high honor. I thank the Calvary Baptist Church for honoring me by calling me to be her pastor and to edit this paper. This paper has been a great blessing to my life for many years. God has enabled me, in the past, to introduce T.B.E. to many churches and individuals. I was a supporter of T.B.E. many years before becoming its editor. I never dreamed that my God would so highly honor me as to place me in this position.

I praise the Lord for the many friends I have made through this paper, even many new ones since becoming its editor. It is my most sincere desire to do the best job God will enable me to do in this position. I desire to use T.B.E. to encourage, unite, and publicize our kind of Baptists. I desire to use T.B.E. to be a blessing to many and most of all, to glorify the Lord.

Most of the mail I have received so far has been very encouraging. I thank you for this. I still stand ready to prayerfully consider the criticism, advice and counsel of any who will write me. I do not know it all. I need help — from the Lord, and from my friends in Jesus Christ. Feel free to write me. I try to personally answer all my mail. Please pray for me. It would be an added blessing to us here if you readers could come and visit in our home and in our church. You are most welcome.

There have been a few changes in T.B.E. since my becoming editor, but not many. I desire to keep the paper pretty much as John R. Gilpin, Sr. had it. I am one of his many admirers. The paper will bear some imprint from whoever edits it, but I feel that I am in the John Gilpin school and mold, and will keep it pretty much that way. Of course, I will do some things a little differently.

I realize, more than ever, that we here could not carry on this great mission work without the help of the many individuals and churches who support us. We seldom have a service in which we do not pray for those who help us in this work. Thank God for each and every one of you — and thank you very much.

I desire to greatly increase the mailing list for T.B.E. Please help me to do this. Send us more subscribers, and we will do our best to be a blessing to them with the truths of the Word of God.

One of my greatest handicaps in putting out The Baptist Examiner is lack of material. I need for many, many men to write sermons for publication in the paper. Of course, I will have to decide what is printed. But seldom have I failed to print that which has been sent to me. I appeal to the many sound preachers who read T.B.E. to please send me some sermons to use in the paper. I do insist that writers in T.B.E. be Sovereign Grace Landmark Missionary Baptist men and members of these kind of churches. I do not want material from any other kind. If you send me material and I do not know you, tell me about yourself as to these things.

I desire to print proper announcements relative to our kind of preachers and churches. But please do not ask me to print any announcements relative to a church or preacher who is unfriendly to Calvary Baptist Church, The Baptist Examiner, or Fred Halliman and New Guinea Missions. I will not print such if I know this to be the case. I have done this in ignorance, but will not when I know such to be the situation.

Brothers and sisters — readers of T.B.E., I need your encouragement, your advice and counsel, and above all, your prayers. May God help me to make this paper better and better as the weeks go by. I promise to try to do my best at this. I ask for your help. May God bless you all!

SLIMEPITS

(Continued from Page 2)

story — this story of the slimepits. But, ere I close, I have some good news to bring. Thank God that the preacher has some good news. Let the man of God preach against sin and its blackness. Let him preach the horrors of an eternal hell. But let the man of God be sure to frequently preach the good news of the glorious gospel of Jesus Christ. I come to tell you now that there is, or there can be, deliverance from the slimepit and cleansing from the slime thereof. By the regenerating work of the Holy Spirit, using the gospel of Jesus Christ, a multitude have been delivered from the slimepit. By the precious cleansing power of the blood of Jesus Christ, a multitude have been washed from the slime of the slimepit. Oh, friend, I point you to the one and only way of deliverance from the slimepit. I point you to Jesus Christ. Believe on Him and you will be lifted from the slime pit. You will be placed on the Rock. You will have a new song in your heart and in your mouth, even praise to the Lord.

I warn you that, unless you are delivered by the grace and power of God from the slimepit, you will one day move from the slimepits of sin into the roasting pit of hell. Oh, be warned. Flee to Jesus Christ ere it is everlastingly too late.

Let me say that all Christians should be against the slimepits and do all in their power to destroy them. Let it be known that this pastor and this editor stands with anyone who wants to cleanup the slimepits. I am against some of Jerry Falwell's theology. But, be it known that I am not against his efforts to clean up the slimepits of America. I stand ready to work with anyone anywhere who desires to clean up the slimepits of America. May God bless all such efforts as it pleases Him.

I thank God that He, in sovereign grace and with irresistible power saved me from the slimepits. Oh, I was addicted thereto. I would have wallowed therein until moved from them to hell, had it not been for the grace of God. I give Him all the glory for the fact that I am not now ensnared in the slimepits and fallen therein. I ask Him to keep me from getting entangled therein again. I ask Him to help me to be used to deliver others from the slimepits. I ask Him to help me to be faithful in preaching against and doing all in my power against the slimepits of America. May God bless you all!

King's Addition Baptist Church
1983 Bible Conference
FRIDAY 7:00 P.M.—The Great & Terrible God, Bob Allard; Preaching the Word, Rex Smith; Home Devotions, Don Pennington; Irresistible Grace, Mike King.

SATURDAY 9:00 A.M.—The Work of Angels, Gene Kiger; The Promise of Heaven, Mike Green; Church Authority vs Priesthood of Church, Joe Wilson; Pretrib vs Post trib, Sam Wilson.

SATURDAY 1:45 P.M.—The Virgin Birth, Luther Hilton; Jesus & Prayer, Oscar Mink; Missionary Baptists, Don Shockey; Independent Baptists, Ray Brown.

SATURDAY 7:00 P.M.—The Whole World Guilty Before God, Dan Phillips; Limited Atonement, Keith Carter; A Literal Hell, Harry Balmer; The Gospel Message, Bob Patton.

SUNDAY 9:00 A.M.—A Sovereign God, Doug Newell; Music & the Worship Service, John Lenegar; The Fiery Furnace, Jim Crace; Easter & Christmas, Don Mikitta.

SUNDAY 1:45 P.M.—Christian Responsibility, William Pyle; David & Goliath, Peter Halliman; Jonah & Fish, Sam West; Destruction of the Earth, John "Pete" Horn.

SHEBA

(Continued from Page 1)

these great questions be found. The Scriptures will not be revealed to us until we come to the King. She received no answers until she came to the king.

2. The Riches Of The King

The queen of Sheba, even though a queen, had never seen such riches. The riches of the Lord Jesus Christ far exceed that of Solomon. We can not even imagine His riches in the material realm.

Only He is rich enough to forgive our sins. When I think of my multitude of sins, surely it would take great riches from the storehouse of Divine Grace to forgive them. It would take priceless blood to wash them away. Listen:

"In whom we have redemption through his blood, the forgiveness of sins, according to the riches of his grace" (Eph. 1:7).

Only Christ is rich enough to forgive sins. Though we might listen to thousands of sermons on redemption, someday we will have to admit that only the half was told us.

When, by Divine Grace, we are brought to the Lord Jesus Christ, we catch a glimpse of His rich mercy in loving us. Listen:

"But God, who is rich in mercy, for his great love wherewith he loved us" (Eph. 2:4).

He loved us without foreseen works or faith before the foundation of the world. He loved us unconditionally.

I am amazed at how rich God is in mercy that He could love me. I could understand God loving others but never why He would choose to save me.

It takes exceeding riches of grace to save God's elect — not just riches of grace, but it takes grace unlimited — grace that is beyond measure. Listen:

"That in the ages to come he might shew the exceeding riches of his grace in his kindness toward us through Christ Jesus" (Eph. 2:7).

All of the riches are through the King of Kings, the Lord Jesus Christ.

King Solomon amazed the queen of Sheba, but he was like a pauper compared to Christ.

Christ is so rich we cannot even search it out. His riches are just unsearchable, listen:

"...the unsearchable riches of Christ" (Eph. 3:8).

Beloved, are you not astonished at the riches of the King? Some day you will say the half was not told you.

3. The Provisions For His People

The queen of Sheba was astonished at the way the king's people were provided for. Listen:

"And the meat of his table, and the sitting of his servants, and the attendance of his ministers, and their apparel, and his cupbearers..." (I Kings 10:5).

When we think of the provisions for God's people we are astounded.

Every mean and wicked deed or word against the children of God will ultimately work out for their good. You just cannot hurt, in the long run, a child of God. The King has provided in such a way that all things work out for the good of His subjects. With each passing day I can see how that even evil which has befallen me has worked out some good in my life. I am amazed and astounded at the

provision of the king. This is true of your life and the life of every Christian.

The King has provided us strength for every situation in which we are placed, listen:

"...as thy days, so shall thy strength be" (Deuteronomy 33:25). He does not give it to us before we need it, but when it is needed, it is there.

Beloved, you can look back at the trials in your life and wonder how you ever survived. Then you realize there was a supernatural strength given. The King's provision was there during the trial. God's Word stood fast and was true in your life.

The King's provisions are unconditional. Perhaps you did not realize the King had such provisions for you. Even though you were ignorant of the promise, it still came to pass during the trial.

Jacob of old, was ignorant of the promise in Romans 8:28 which says,

"And we know that all things work together for good to them that love God..." (Rom. 8:28).

He just did not believe it because he did not know it existed. Listen to his statement which shows he did not believe that all things would work together for his good:

"...all these things are against me" (Genesis 42:36).

If you will read about Jacob's life you will find that all those things that he thought were against him actually worked together for his good.

These provisions of the King are unconditional because they are provided by matchless grace. The provisions are provided whether we believe them or not.

If I were to spend hours upon hours telling of the provisions of the King, you could still say the half was not told you.

4. The Happy State Of The King's Subjects

Listen:

"Happy are thy men, happy are these thy servants, which stand continually before thee, and that hear thy wisdom" (I Kings 10:8).

We may not be happy with the world and our trials, but we are certainly happy with the King, and our God, and our state in grace. We are the only people in the world at peace with God. What a blessing to lie down to sleep knowing that if we awake or not, it is well with our soul.

In a world so marked with death, it is a blessing to know we shall live forevermore.

Who can describe the happy times of fellowship with the Lord's people? Who can describe the happy times at Bible conferences? Who can describe the happy times alone with the Lord?

We must say there is no people like the King's people. Their state is a happy one that is beyond description.

This feeble effort of mine can not even tell you the half of it. I felt that Christians were miserable people until the Holy Spirit brought me to Christ. Now I am amazed at the happy state of God's children.

5. The Greatness Of God's Provided King

"Blessed be the Lord thy God, which delighted in thee, to set thee on the throne of Israel: because the Lord loved Israel for ever, therefore, made he thee king, to do judgment and justice" (I Kings 10:9).

The queen of Sheba had seen many kings but she never saw a king like Solomon. He surpassed anything she had ever seen. Solomon, in all his splendor, is not a patch on the Lord Jesus Christ, the King of Kings.

This mighty King is the saviour of the helpless, the hope of the hopeless. He is God's provided King, listen:

"...I have laid help upon one that is mighty; I have exalted one chosen out of the people" (Psalm 89:19).

"His seed also will I make to endure for ever, and his throne as the days of heaven" (Psalm 89:29).

Such statements just could not be made about anyone other than Christ.

When we read about King David, we see shadows of the Christ, and it thrills our very souls. If the shadow can thrill, what must the reality be like?

I believe we will be speechless when we behold Christ as King. The thought will come to mind, "What I heard was true, but only the half was told me!"

The queen of Sheba was truly astounded as she beheld all of these things. It is no wonder that she spoke the words in our text. Yet there was still more to astound her.

II. The King Gave Her More Than She Could Even Desire

Listen:

"And king Solomon gave unto the queen of Sheba all her desire, whatsoever she asked, beside that which Solomon gave her of his royal bounty" (I Kings 10:13).

The Lord Jesus Christ gives His people far more than they could even desire or ask for.

Each child of God has hidden glory within them, listen:

"For I reckon that the sufferings of this present time are not worthy to be compared with the glory which shall be revealed in us" (Romans 8:18).

When adding up all the sufferings of this life, remember, they do not even compare to the hidden glory inside you that will one day be revealed.

The glory within will exceed even your grandest desires. That which has been prepared for each child of God is beyond words. Listen:

"...Eye hath not seen, nor ear heard, neither have entered into the heart of man, the things which God hath prepared for them that love him" (I Corinthians 2:9).

I am reminded that I am preaching to the richest people on the face of the earth.

You say, Brother Boswell, your congregation is very poor. Most of them live from pay day to pay day. They do not know if they will have enough money to pay the rent or buy their groceries. How can you say they are rich?

That is all true, but they have storehouses of treasures in the world to come. It is all reserved for them. Listen:

"To an inheritance incorruptible, and undefiled, and that fadeth not away, reserved in heaven for you" (I Peter 1:4).

How did God's people get such riches that exceed dreams and desires?

They did not "get" these riches, they were freely given to them by the King. It is purely a matter of grace freely bestowed and resting on the King's resurrection from the dead.

King Solomon freely gave the



QUESTION — Who fed on wind?

ANSWER — Ephraim (the Hebrew people personified), Hosea 12:1 - "Ephraim feedeth on wind, and followeth after the east wind: he daily increaseth lies and desolation;..." The meaning of feeding on wind was evidently much like that of our slang phrase, "hot air."

queen of Sheba far more than she could desire. King Jesus was freely given us far more than we could desire. He has given us out of His royal bounty.

I say God's people are the richest people on the face of the earth. I am astounded by it and can not even tell you how rich you are. One day you will surely say the half was not told concerning my riches and all the preachers will gladly say, "Amen."

III. All Could Not Have Been Told Because It Was Just Unspeakable

The queen of Sheba could not have expected to have heard everything because the things concerning Solomon's kingdom were just unspeakable. There is no language or words to fully describe the things she saw.

The Christian life is just like that. There is an inner joy that is unspeakable that wells up inside the believer. Upon seeing Jesus by faith, there comes this indescribable joy flooding our soul. Listen:

"Whom having not seen, ye love; in whom, though now ye see him not, yet believing, ye rejoice with joy unspeakable..." (I Peter 1:8).

No words can likewise describe the hereafter state for the child of God.

Paul, upon being called up into the third heaven where God's throne is, heard things that were just unspeakable, listen:

"How that he was caught up into paradise, and heard unspeakable words..." (II Corinthians 12:4).

Many believe the hereafter will be boring, but the Bible says there will be pleasures forevermore — a place of great pleasures that never end. Listen:

"...at thy right hand there are pleasures for evermore" (Psalm 16:11).

When our bodies are resurrected and changed like unto His, we will have complete satisfaction. Today people are not satisfied with anything. Someday, God's people will be satisfied. Listen:

"...I shall be satisfied, when I awake, with thy likeness" (Psalm 17:15).

Can you imagine perfect satisfaction in every detail of your life? It is just unspeakable!

Who can fully describe Christ? He is the unspeakable Christ! Listen:

"Thanks be unto God for his unspeakable gift" (II Cor. 9:15).

None, no matter how gifted, can tell all the glories of Christ.

(Continued on Page 5 Column 1)

The Baptist Examiner Forum

SUBMIT QUESTIONS ON ANY BIBLE SUBJECT

THE BAPTIST EXAMINER — P.O. Box 71 — ASHLAND, KENTUCKY 41105-0071

If a believer is actively involved in his church and spends time in the Word, does he need to fear being led astray by reading books or listening to radio programs that are not sound as to doctrine: especially as to Grace and Church truth? Should we seek to steer young Christians away from such?

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Mark 4:24: "And He said unto them, Take heed what ye hear..."

The answer to both of these questions is yes. Let us deal with them one at a time.

First, yes, we should fear being led astray by reading and listening to programs or books that are heretical. I think of many of the men who once stood with us on the truths of Grace and Church and related subjects. I could name many of them who have gone astray concerning these truths. I believe this could have been prompted by listening to and reading heresy. I think it can be very dangerous to make a habit of reading or hearing heresy. There are times when we may have to study heresy in order to better defend the truth. I feel that this is probably the only time when we should engage in the reading of or listening to error.

Let me now answer this question in another way. Why would a sound person want to read or hear heresy? As for myself, I have no desire to waste my time with heresy. There is much in the Bible about us and our relationship to heresy. No where in the Bible are we told to read or listen to it. Rather we are told repeatedly to avoid it. Let us remember that heresy appeals to the flesh. We may be saved but we still have the old nature that heresy could and sometimes does appeal to. Our proper attitude towards error is to hate it. Psalm 119:104, "Through Thy precepts I get understanding; therefore, I hate every false way." Surely we should not spend time with that which we are to hate.

I wish to give one more reason why we should not read or listen to heresy. I feel this is perhaps the best reason of all. The time we spend reading or hearing heresy is time that could and should be spent reading and hearing the truth. Why should we waste time with error, when that time could be spent with the truth? It is as easy to read truth and hear truth as it is to read and hear error. Most of us have so-called religious radio stations that we could listen to. I want to take your excuse that listening to this is better than watching T.V. or listening to country or rock radio. It is true that you may hear some truth on these stations but the God dishonoring Arminianism and universal Church heresy does not make it worth-while. I would urge you to shut that

radio off and spend that time doing even more reading of truth and especially The Word of God. If you want to listen to something, then let me recommend that you listen to truth. I know there is not truth on the radio very often, so I am going to make a suggestion that, if you are sincere about your desire to hear the truth, will be an answer to your problems. There are many of our brethren (sound, Sovereign Grace, Landmark, Missionary Baptist) who have tape ministries. It does not take much more effort to put a cassette tape in than to turn on the radio. I would urge you to write these brethren and they will send you free, as long as you return them, tapes that are full of the great truths we believe. If you listen to error, it is your own fault for there is truth available. Several of the members here at Grace Baptist Church receive and listen to tapes from preachers in our circle and they would attest to the spiritual benefit there-of. I will request of the Editor of T.B.E. that perhaps a list of Churches that have tape ministries be listed in the paper. Beware of reading and hearing heresy for you could be led astray, and this is a waste of valuable time.

The answer to the second question would be an even stronger yes. We had a case such as this in our church. A young member moved away and met a young man. She began to attend His church which was not even Baptist in name. I warned her of the danger in going to this or any other false church, even if it claims to be Baptist. I urged her to let me send her tapes and to listen to these with her boyfriend. She refused. This young lady is now excluded from our church for the belief and propagation of heresy. This came, I believe, from listening to heresy. Let this be a lesson to us to urge our young people to stay away from heresy and cleave to the truth.

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The devil knows it is near to impossible for him to take over the pulpit of one of the Lord's churches, so he does what he considers is the next wisest thing, that is, he uses his preachers to present false doctrine to the ears of God's people by way of radio and he uses the printed page to present his heresy to their eyes. Beware!

Proverbs 19:27 "Cease, my son, to hear the instruction that causeth to err from the words of knowledge."

No Baptist, be he ever so correct in doctrine, is in the absolute sense insulated against or immune from error, so the strongest among the strong needs to be highly censorious in

what he reads and hears. This being true of the saint seasoned in grace and truth, how much more is it true of the young christian who as yet needs the milk of the Word.

It is the duty of the pastor and the church to warn young christians against the snares of the devil, and to fortify them with the whole armour of God so as they may withstand his fiery darts.

Wood, hay, and stubble is not part of the believer's spiritual diet, it is detrimental to his soul and should only be negatively considered and then with the utmost caution.

"...The church of the living God, the pillar and ground of the Truth" (I Tim. 3:15). The church for this age is the repository of Divine truth, and it is the truth which frees the believer from sin and sanctifies him from doctrinal error (John 8:32; I Peter 1:22). For growth in grace and truth it is imperative that the believer adhere to the church, and in so-doing he will find he has little to no time to give to heretical books or subversive radio programs. "God will not hear vanity," (Job 35:13), why should a Baptist?

The time which a believer gives to hearing or reading that which is against Bible truth should be of a critical nature.

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Many times in His Word, God has warned His people to be on guard against the wiles of the devil, who uses every device possible to lead us astray. We are told in I Peter 5:8, "Keep a clear head and watch! Your enemy, the devil, is prowling around like a roaring lion, looking for someone to devour." Sometimes he does this by sending men in, from without, as Paul told the elders of the church at Ephesus, "Take heed therefore unto yourselves, and to all the flock — For I know this, that after my departing shall grievous wolves enter in among you, not sparing the flock" (Acts 20:28, 29). Sometimes he works from within as Paul continues in Verse 30, "also of your own selves shall men arise, speaking perverse things, to draw away disciples after them." In the book of Galatians it seems that the whole church had been led astray, for Paul wrote them, "I marvel that ye are so soon removed from Him that called you into the grace of Christ unto another gospel" (Gal. 1:6). Also, "O foolish Galatians, who hath bewitched you, that ye should not obey the truth..." (Gal. 3:1).

Yes, the Bible warns all, even those who consider themselves

strong in the faith. We are told, "Wherefore let him that thinketh he standeth take heed lest he fall" (I Cor. 10:12). Also in II Peter 3:17 "Ye therefore, beloved, seeing ye know these things before, beware lest ye also, being led away with the error of the wicked, fall from your own steadfastness."

These passages as well as many others which could be quoted show that there is a constant danger of being led astray even though we may be ever so active in the church and well read in the Bible. In my own personal observations, I have seen many, who at one time were sound in the faith, led astray by listening to men instead of the Word. I can recall ministers who were sound, who now have fallen from their own steadfastness.

The Bible tells us how we can be on guard against this device of the devil. We are told to, "Study, to show thyself approved unto God, a workman that needeth not to be ashamed, rightly dividing the word of truth" (II Tim. 2:15). Also, "Dearly beloved, stop believing every so-called spiritual utterance, but keep testing them to see whether they come from God, because many false prophets have gone into the world" (I John 4:1 Williams tran.).

We can test these the same way as did the people of Berea when, "...they received the word with all readiness of mind, and searched the Scripture daily, whether those things were so" (Acts 17:11).

Whether we read a book, listen to a radio program, or hear a sermon from the pulpit of one's church, we need to test everything said by the Word of God. This applies both to those well established in the faith as well as the young Christian. We all need to see that, "...If they speak not according to this word, it is because there is no light in them" (Isa. 8:20).

We are commanded by the Lord to, "Seek ye out of the book of the Lord, and read..." (Isa. 34:16).

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Does he need to fear as being led astray by reading books? Absolutely. The Bible tells us plainly about this. "If there come any unto you, and bring not this doctrine, receive him not into your house, neither bid him God speed: For he that biddeth him God speed is partaker of his evil deeds" (II John 10, 11). Whenever we bring a man's writing into our house or watch him on TV or listen to his words on the radio we are bidding him God speed. If he is teaching truth, fine, but if he is teaching heresy, then we must not listen or read his heresies. "A man that is an heretick after the first and second admonition reject" (Titus 3:10).

We are told in Romans 16:17: "Now I beseech you, brethren, mark them which cause divisions and offences contrary to the doctrine which ye have learned; and avoid them." And again in II Thessalonians 3:6: "Now we

commend you, brethren, the name of our Lord Jesus Christ, that ye withdraw yourselves from every brother that walketh disorderly, and not after the tradition which he received of us."

All the above Scripture show that we are not to have anything to do with those who walk contrary to the doctrines. No matter how strong you may be, you will be affected by reading and listening to error, "Preach the word; be instant in season, out of season; reprove, rebuke, exhort with all longsuffering and doctrine. For the time will come when they will not endure sound doctrine..." (II Tim. 4:2). Teach the young people that they do not need to have anything do with error heresy. Be firm with the Bible.

Appreciated Letters

I have been reading and reading my copies of the Baptist Examiner for this month. don't think I have ever enjoyed reading them as much before. Your sermons on revival and chosen people have really affected me. I just now finished reading the revival sermon and feel revived already! It really stirred me up.

All I can say is, keep up the good work and, of course, know you will, as God so lead. In Christ,
Mark Sweet

We seldom take the opportunities that are ours to share but just to drop a line to you and thank you for the Baptist Examiner paper and to tell you what importance it has held in our closeness to the Lord, and helping us to understand so many things in God's Word.

We covet your prayers and want to pray for all of you, you seek to please Him with your work there for Him.

God Bless you in His love.
Charles & Jean Byland

SUPER SPECIAL

During the month of April you may purchase THE FOUNDATION OF LIFE and/or THE METHOD OF GRACE by John Flavel. Each sells for \$3.95. These may be purchased during April for one half price.

SPECIAL ANNOUNCEMENT

We have no further news concerning Brother Halliman's condition at this time. He is at his home in New Guinea, slowly recovering. Please pray for him. More details in next issue.

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SHEBA

(Continued from Page 3)

We could listen to all the sermons ever preached. We could read all the books ever written. We could read all the hymns ever penned by the poets, and still we would have to say, "The half was not told us concerning Christ." He is indeed the unspeakable Christ.

I am afraid that where some worship, they will have to say they heard hardly any truth at all.

IV. It Was All Too Good To Be True

One reason for the queen of Sheba's statement was that it was all too good to be true.

When God revealed the Gospel to me, it seemed too good to be true. One moment I had no hope, the next moment Christ was presented as having paid it all on Calvary. Not only was He buried to ransom me from the grave, but God raised Him from the dead and He is alive forevermore. There was nothing for me to do. To a bankrupt sinner — having no righteousness — it all seemed too good to be true.

The church at Jerusalem had been praying without ceasing for the release of Peter from prison. God delivered him from the prison just before he was to be executed. The women were having a prayer meeting on his behalf when suddenly Peter showed up at the door. They just could not believe that it was him. They should have believed that God would answer their prayers, but it was too good to be true. Listen:

"But Peter continued knocking: and when they had opened the door, and saw him, they were astonished" (Acts 12:16).

Many things with God are like that — too good to be true. Yet they are in fact true.

When Jacob heard that Joseph was not really dead, but alive and Governor of Egypt, it was too good to be true. Listen:

"And told him, saying, Joseph is yet alive, and he is governor over all the land of Egypt. And Jacob's heart fainted, for he believed them not" (Genesis 45:26).

Everything connected with Christ is just too good to be true. Someday we will echo the words of the queen of Sheba, "Behold, the half was not told me."

The queen of Sheba found everything to be too good to be true, yet it was all true.

TO THE LOST

The queen of Sheba came to Solomon. She came a great distance. It was a long, tiring journey. Yet, my friend, you do not even find the time to listen to a sermon about Christ. Listen to the words of Jesus:

"The queen of the south shall rise up in the judgment with this generation, and shall condemn it: for she came from the uttermost parts of the earth to hear the wisdom of Solomon; and, behold, a greater than Solomon is here" (Matthew 12:42).

Only those that actually come to the Lord Jesus Christ will be saved. Listen:

"Come unto me, all ye that labour and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest" (Matthew 11:28).

May God bless you all!

WHY

(Continued from Page 1)

woman's hair is all the covering she needs. For instance, the word "covering" in verse 15

seems to be the same as "covered" in verse 6. But really there is a world of difference between both the meaning and the manner in which they are used in the original. Please do not get the idea that I am setting myself up as an authority on this, or any other subject in the Bible.

I once heard a speaker say that an educated person is not someone who knows everything, rather he is a person who knows where to find everything. I sure do not know everything, and I have an awful hard time trying to find some things. But I do know how to find some things. The word "covered" in verse 6 comes from the Greek word KATAKALUPTO which means to cover, or something down upon. And the word "covering" in verse 15 comes from PERIBOLAION. This Greek word does not mean a covering. But if this covering can take the place of the cover in verse 6 it poses some problems for me. If you notice, in verse 6 we are told that if she does not have her KATAKALUPTO (covering) on her head, then let her be shorn. That means that if she does not have that covering on her head, then let her be shorn, or have her hair cut off. If the hair is all the covering she needs, then verse 6 would read, if she does not have her hair on her head, then let her have her hair cut off. All this means to me that if she does not have the KATAKALUPTO (covering) on her head, then let her have her hair cut off. That means to me that she must have two coverings on her head. And if she leaves off the man-made covering, then let her hair be cut off also. Then verse 6 goes on to say that if it be a shame for her to have her head shaved, let her wear the KATAKALUPTO, or man-made covering.

Another problem for me, if the hair (PERIBOLAION) is all the covering she needs, why the different voice in the two verses? In verse 6, we have the middle voice, but in verse 15 we have the passive voice. I will try, as best I can, to explain the difference between these two. In our study of grammar we have what is called active voice, passive voice, and middle voice. In the sentence, John killed the rabbit, John is the subject, and he is the doer of the action. So this makes it active voice. If we turn the sentence around and say, the rabbit was killed by John, that makes rabbit the subject. And since the rabbit is the receiver of the action, that makes this sentence passive voice. But if we say that John shot himself, that makes John the doer and also the receiver of the action, that makes this sentence the middle voice. I am not trying to teach a lesson in Grammar, rather I am trying to show the difference between verse 6 and verse 15. Verse 6 is middle voice which means that the KATAKALUPTO (covering) is something the woman puts on herself. She puts this covering on, just as she does her dress and shoes. No one else plays any part in this transaction. But if you notice, verse 15 is passive voice. She just receives the hair the Lord puts on her head. She plays no part in it. She may spend a lot of time pampering, and changing it to make it look more to her liking. She may even change the color of it, but it is still the hair the Lord put on her head.

I hope I am making myself clear. In verse 15, the woman has absolutely nothing to do with putting this covering on her

head. In verse 6 she has to do it all. There is just no way one of these coverings can be substituted for the other one. Another problem that I am unable to solve connected with these two verses is, if the hair is all the covering the Lord requires the woman to wear, why was verse 6 put in Holy Writ? I am persuaded, and that fully, that the Holy Spirit used Paul to write both verses. So, did He have Paul write verse 6, and then change His mind and have him give the woman an altogether different kind of covering in verse 15? In Malachi 3:6 our Lord says, "I change not." So, do you believe that He changed His mind between verse 6 and verse 15? I sure hope you don't believe anything like that about our Lord. If the woman's hair is all the covering the Lord requires, verse 6 has no business in the Book. It is absolutely worthless. And I simply cannot believe the Holy Spirit put any worthless thing in His Book. And I hope you do not believe any such thing about Him either. I have had some to tell me that the original really says in verse 15 that the woman's hair is given her as a covering instead of the KATAKALUPTO (covering) in verse 6. To me that seems to belabor the subject. It is true that the new King James version, and Berry's "The Interlinear Greek-English New Testament" does not have the word "instead" in this verse. But if that be the right translation, why did our Authorized Version, and all others that I know of, overlook that word "instead?" However, if that were to be the right translation in verse 15, that would still mean that verse 6 is superfluous, that is, not necessary. So I prefer to stay by the Authorized Version concerning the verse.

Now that I have tried, in my weak way, to show that a woman should wear a covering over her hair, may we look for the reason why she should do so? We have already mentioned that some Baptists do not contend for women to wear a covering, because the woman would be a hypocrite if she wore a token of subjection when there is no subjection there. But, beloved, if the Bible commands her to wear a covering and she refuses because she is not under subjection to her husband, is she not rebelling against the Word of God? Is the sin of rebellion not as bad as hypocrisy? In this case, who will our Lord hold more responsible, the woman, or her pastor? As a pastor, I sometimes fear that I have not taught this part of God's Word as I should have. Wearing a covering in the Lord's house is the woman's responsibility, but teaching what the Bible says about it is the pastor's responsibility. And I fear that if the pastor fails to meet his responsibility, he is rebelling against the precious Word.

Verse 10 of I Corinthians 11 tells us that the woman should have a token of her subjection to her husband on her head, because of the angels. Some say these are our ministering angels, and they may be right. But the word "messengers" in Luke 9:52 is the same identical word as the word "angels" here in verse 10. The Greek word ANGELOS means either a Heavenly angel or a messenger. So if we change the word "angels" to the word "messengers" in this verse no one can accuse us of changing God's Word, because this Greek word means messenger just as

much as it does angels. So it is my feeling that the woman should wear a head covering because of the Lord's messengers, or pastors. The pastor who has a burning desire to see his flock being obedient to every iota of Scripture has an aching heart when he sees some of them not being obedient. But I want to hasten to say that the disobedience may very well be our fault, rather than the member's fault.

Another reason for some Baptists not taking this teaching seriously is the way verse 16 is translated. The translation here seems to cause some to think it does not really matter. But our Lord does not say anything that you can take it or leave it and it really makes no difference. He always means what He says. A better translation of this verse says, "But if anyone is inclined to be contentious about it, I for my part prescribe no other practice than this, and neither do the churches of God!"

Still another reason for the woman wearing a covering over her hair is one that I have never heard set forth before. And, to me, it may well be the most important one of all. But here may I stop and say something about the nature of the covering? Some seem to think that this covering must be a hat. I for one like to see a woman in the assembly with a hat on her head. But the original Greek does not require a hat. It calls for a veil, or a shawl. Hats as we know hats today, were unknown in that day. The important thing is that she have something over her hair. And the real reason is that her hair is her glory, verse 15. Our Lord made woman and her lovely hair for man's glory. And He expects men to enjoy, and appreciate the glory He has given us, if we do that at the right place. But the place for His glory to be manifested is in His churches. He wants us to see His glory in the assembly. So He tells the woman to cover her glory while in the assembly in order that His glory may shine forth without competition. In Psalm 4:2 He says, "O ye sons of men, how long will ye turn my glory into shame?" In Isaiah 48:11 He says, "My glory will I not give to another." In John 17:24 in His great intercessory prayer He says, "Father, I will that they also, whom thou hast given

me, be with me where I am, that they may behold My glory." Now where is He today? He, in His body, is seated on the Father's throne. But in Revelation 1:13 we see Him in the midst of His churches. So He, in His body is seated at the right hand of the Father, but in the person of the Holy Spirit He is present with His people in His churches. To be sure, He is with His individual saints where ever they may be. But He is with us in a special way in His churches. I want us to notice that He says, "That they may behold MY glory, which thou hast given Me." The complete fulfillment of this will be after the rapture. But the pre-fulfillment of it is today. Today He wants us to behold His glory in the assembly, and then forever more. So He tells His beloved women in His churches to cover their glory in order that His glory may shine the more brightly. Is that not plenty of reason why a woman should wear a covering in the assembly?

MARRIAGE

(Continued from Page 1)

aspect of Biblical truth. For a long time the church has seemingly adopted a "conspiracy of silence" on the subject of text. To promote this attitude would be to commit sin as an unfaithful servant of Christ. Coupled with this is the fact that we do have a number of young people ready for marriage and they need to understand the Biblical aspect of sex and marriage. The alarming rise in the divorce rate alone drives me to expound this text. Today we hear a great deal about sex. Over 1,200 smut magazines, as well as other dignified and respectable magazines, have grossly distorted and corrupted sex. It is the solemn responsibility and duty of the church to speak out on this subject which is of such vital importance to our daily lives.

My intention this morning is to set forth the Biblical teaching on marriage as it was instituted in Genesis 2:18-25. May what is said give each married couple a deeper sense of the holy state of matrimony. May it offer sound Christian guidance to our youth who are bombarded with such an avalanche of twisted thoughts on this subject. Perhaps our study will also stir some of our unmarried members to have second thoughts.

Hebrews thirteen has been dealing with love and especially, love in the relation of Christians to each other. The Author carries his thoughts on love to the domestic realm. Our text is open to two possible interpretations: It could be an assertion: "Marriage is honorable." It could be a command or an exhortation: "Let marriage be honorable." No doubt the idea is a command in accord with the exhortatory nature of the passage. "Let marriage be honorable among all." All people, young or old, the married or unmarried, are to respect the marital state. The sanctity of marriage is not to be abused nor violated by the married or unmarried.

Marriage is honorable and to be held in respect by all people for, at least, two very substantial reasons:

1. MARRIAGE IS HONORABLE BECAUSE IT

(Continued on Page 6 Column 4)

★ AT LAST ★

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**THE BAPTIST EXAMINER
MARCH 26, 1983
PAGE FIVE**

TRAIL OF BLOOD



Willard Willis
Monroe, Ohio

by Willard Willis

The learned historians (Lyon, Rowen and Hamerow) which we have quoted previously have even informed us that the church was modeled after the empire, and that the church was required to compromise, and admit numerous pagan ceremonial practices and mystic beliefs into the church. They have even informed us that the church was required to relax its primitive discipline and doctrine so as to accommodate itself to the masses of people who swarmed into its folds.

It is obvious to me that we have not been reading about the Lord's church, since our Lord promised that the gates of death would not prevail against His church. We, by the gates of death not prevailing against His church, are to understand that the church would remain intact as to His body, His doctrine and practice. It becomes obvious that we must dig deeper so as to find the history of the Lord's church. We must brush aside these claims of false churches and look elsewhere for the Lord's body. We must look for a body that has been patterned after the Scriptures and one that has not compromised with the world. We must look for a church which has heard and heeded Romans 12:2:

"And be ye not conformed to this world: but be ye transformed by the renewing of your mind, that ye may prove what is that good, and acceptable, and perfect, will of God" (Rom. 12:2).

That which we have said can be summed up by that which is stated in the Scaff-Herzog Encyclopedia:

"The old church demanded purity; the new church had struck a bargain with the world, and had arranged itself comfortably with it, and they would, therefore break with it." (Moller, Montanist in Scaff-Herzog Encyclopedia, 111. 1562).

The "break" referred to in the above quotation, was initiated by the Montanist churches in A.D. 156.

The Montanists insisted that those who had "lapsed" from the faith should be rebaptized, because they had denied Christ and ought to be baptized anew. On this account they (Montanists) were termed "Anabaptists."

John T. Christian in "A History of the Baptists," page 43, advises us that the Montanists were deeply rooted in the faith. Their opponents, in fact, admitted that they received the entire Scriptures of the Old and New Testaments; and that they were sound in their views of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit. (Epiphanius, Hoer. XVIII, I).

The historical record shows that the Montanists movement spread rapidly through Asia Minor and North Africa, and for a time in Rome itself. Montanism, according to John T. Christian, page 44 of "A History of the Baptists," had made such

a stir in Asia Minor before the close of the second century, that several councils were called against it, and finally the whole movement was officially condemned. Montanism continued for centuries, and finally became known under other names. Baptist is her name today.

We are very fortunate to have the testimony of Tertullian—a Montanist who was born about fifty years after the death of John the Apostle. Mr. Tertullian said:

"There is to us one and but one baptism. One God, one baptism, one church in the heavens. But it must be admitted that the question, what rules are to be observed in regard to heretics, is worthy of being treated. Heretics have no fellowship in our discipline. Their baptism is not one with ours, either, because it is not the same; a baptism which, since they have it not duly, doubtless they have it not at all. Nor is that capable of being counted which is not had." Ante Nicene Fathers, Volume 3, page 676.

I'm very happy to report that the Montanists were what we know today as Baptists. We, in fact, in that which follows, have a host of informed men who concur with my findings. My reference is to "Crossing the Centuries," edited by William C. King, having as associate counselors, editors and contributors such as "Cardinal Gibbons, Roman Catholic; Bishop John H. Vincent, Methodist; President Theodore Roosevelt; W. H.P. Founce, President of Brown University; Albert Bushnell Hart, Ph.D., L.L.D., Head of the history department of Harvard University; George B. Adams, M.A. Ph.D., Litt. D., of Yale, and many more such famous men, say:

"Of the Baptists it may be said that they are not reformers. These people, comprising bodies of Christian believers, known under various names in different countries, are entirely independent of and distinct from the Greek and Roman churches, and have an unbroken continuity from the apostolic days down through the centuries. Throughout this long period they were bitterly persecuted for heresy, driven from country to country, disfranchised, deprived of their property; yet they swerved not from the New Testament faith, doctrine and practice."

We, in the above quotation, were informed that our fathers were "bitterly persecuted." We have, in "Foxe's Christian Martyrs of the World," many accounts of the ways in which our fathers and mothers were persecuted. The following is the account of how one particular person was persecuted to death in about 200 A.D.

"The persecutions about this time extended to Northern Africa, then a Roman province, and many persons were martyred. One of these was Perpetua, a married lady of about twenty-six years of age, with a young child at her breast. She was seized for being a Christian, and her father, who tenderly loved her, went to the prison during her confinement, and attempted to persuade her to renounce Christianity. Perpetua, however, resisted every entreaty. This resolution so much grieved her father, that he did not visit her again for some days, and in the mean-

time, she and some others who were shut up in prison were baptized."

"On being taken before the proconsul Minutius, Perpetua was commanded to sacrifice to idols. Refusing to do this, she was put in a dark dungeon, and deprived of her child; but two of the keepers, Teritius and Pomponius, who had the care of persecuted Christians, allowed her some hours daily to breathe the fresh air, during which time she was allowed to nurse her baby. Seeing, however, that she would not long be permitted this privilege, she begged her mother to care for it. Her father at length paid her a second visit, and again entreated her to renounce Christianity. But, firm in her faith, his daughter refused to be persuaded, and said to him, "God's will must be done." He then, with an almost breaking heart, left her."

"After a few more days of imprisonment, the Christians were summoned to appear before the judge. One by one they were exhorted to forsake their religion and deny their Lord, but they one and all remained firm. When it came to Perpetua's turn, suddenly her father appeared, carrying her child in his arms; he came near to the young mother, and pointing to the helpless little one, dependent on her for subsistence, entreated her to have compassion on her babe. Even the judge seemed to be moved, and added his persuasions to those of her father. "Spare the gray hairs of your father," he said. "Spare your child. Offer sacrifice for the welfare of the emperor." But Perpetua answered, "I will not sacrifice." "Art thou a Christian?" demanded Hilarius, the magistrate. "I am a Christian," was her answer."

"Still her father continued his entreaties, until the judge, tired of his frequent interruptions, ordered him to be removed by the guards. He then passed sentence on the Christians; it was that they should be killed by wild beasts as a spectacle for the people on the next holiday."

"While in prison, awaiting their doom, the jailers freely admitted friends of the prisoners to see them, and among these came the unhappy father of Perpetua, who sat silently in his dumb grief. All of this was bitterly hard for Perpetua to bear; but God did not leave His servants comfortless. During those days of awful expectation, they were cheered with many bright rays of consolation. Bright visions of heavenly glory came to many of them, and to Perpetua among the rest. At length the too swift, too tedious days wore away, and the dreaded time arrived."

"An attempt was made to dress the Christians in the profane robes of the priests and priestesses of heathen idols. Against this they protested, saying that it was to avoid such superstitions that they were willing to lay down their lives. Their enemies could not but see the justice of this appeal, and they were therefore spared this last insult."

"They came forward to the place of execution clad in the simplest robes, Perpetua singing a hymn of triumph. The men were to be torn to pieces by leopards and bears. Perpetua, and a young woman named Felicitas were hung up in nets, at first naked; but even the brutal assembly of spectators, who delighted in scenes of horror and blood, demanded that

they should be allowed their garments."

"When they were put into the arena, a bull, goaded into mad fury, was let loose upon them. Felicitas fell mortally wounded. Perpetua was tossed, her loose robe rent, and her hair unbound. Drawing her robe over her once more, she hastened to the side of the dying Felicitas, and gently raised her from the ground. The savage bull made no further attack upon them, and they were dragged out of the arena. But soon the fierce multitude were heard clamoring that they should be brought back to receive their death-blow in public. Having kissed each other, they were led forth into the arena again, to be dispatched by the sword. Perpetua fell into the hands of a young gladiator, unused to such scenes, who tremblingly wounded her ineffectually more than once. When she saw his emotion, she guided his sword with her own hand to a vital part, and so expired." "Foxe's Christian Martyrs of the World," pp. 68, 69, 70.

I, before continuing our study of the Montanists, thought it wise to give you the above record so that you can appreciate more than ever before, the freedom to worship which you now enjoy. We should not take our freedom to worship for granted, but we should give thanks constantly to our Father for this great privilege.

Let us continue our study of the Montanists by referring to Henry C. Vedder's book entitled, "A Short History of the Baptists." Mr. Vedder states:

"They (the Montanists) clearly apprehended the truth that a church of Christ should consist of the regenerated only... of course the Montanists immersed—no other baptism, so far as we know, was practiced by anybody in the second century. There is no evidence that they baptized infants, and their principle of a regenerated church membership would naturally require the baptism of believers only."

MARRIAGE

(Continued from Page 5)

WAS DESIGNED BY GOD.

Marriage is not an institution of human origin. We often hear it said, and usually quite flipantly, that marriages are made in heaven. Whoever originated that statement was expressing a great truth. In a very real sense, marriages are made in heaven because they are purposed and designed by God. In our age marriage is treated quite lightly and is entered into unadvisedly. Yet, it is honorable and a holy state, because marriage is ordained of God. If we examine the Genesis account of creation, we observe three reasons why marriage was designed by God.

A. HUMAN PARTNERSHIP.

Man was the crowning work of creation. In the production of man, God had produced the highest possible order of earthly existence. Man was made just a little lower than the angels. In the case of all other living creatures, male and female had been created. Man stood out as a lone individual. God, in His infinite wisdom, knew that it was not good for man to dwell alone. "And the Lord God said, 'It is not good that the man should be alone; I will make him an help-meet for

him," (Genesis 2:18). Thus God designed to create "help-meet" for man. A help-meet is simply a helper, one suited to aid man. The plan of God was a male-female partnership in life, love, and service. God arranged that male and female should live together as one — planning together, working together, sharing together, praying together. The Apostle Peter expresses it very profoundly. Man and woman are "heirs together of the grace of life" (I Peter 3:7).

Throughout the history of Christianity there have been those who have magnified the unmarried state. Especially this true within the Roman Catholic church. It is assumed that the single or celibate state is more holy than the married state. But this is not in accordance with the Creator's designs. The single state is an exception and not the ideal. Remaining unmarried does not make one any more holy or righteous than the married person. Who can deny that the single state provides more opportunity to cultivate holiness, but in itself it does not make one holy. God's plan is marriage. Jesus spoke about those who had made themselves eunuchs for the sake of God's kingdom. If God chooses that any of us should not follow His general design, He will compensate our lives for what we miss. There have been some outstanding Christians who never married. Paul was perhaps the greatest Christian and he was single. So was the prophet Jeremiah. Yet, marriage is the ideal. God designed marriage for human partnership. It is not good for man to be alone.

B. HUMAN PLEASURE.

Marriage was designed to prevent loneliness. But it was also planned for man's enjoyment and pleasure. In the marital bond there is ample opportunity to enjoy the highest and most intimate of human pleasures. This thought may appear strange to many. Some have a distorted view of God as One who wants to shut us up in prison and deny us any real pleasure or enjoyment in this life. The opposite is true. God Himself created us with certain appetites and has designed legitimate and honorable ways to satisfy those desires. How many have so easily corrupted the good gifts of God! Sexual abuse is rampant today. No other gift of God, except salvation, has been so grossly distorted and corrupted. The average person whispers when he talks about sex or treats it like an unclean or dirty thing. Any dirt or contamination attached to sex is what man has added by his own sinfulness. Sex is HOLY — HOLY. The desire of male and female is God-given. And the marital state was designed for the expression of these desires. Never entertain the notion that marriage is merely a means of releasing our animal drives. Marriage is a holy state where divinely created desires can be expressed and enjoyed. The bed of the married is

(Continued on Page 8 Column 3)

ANNOUNCEMENT

Elder Herbert Cade has resigned his present pastorate and is available for pastoral work wherever the Lord might lead. His address is Rt. 1, Box 103-A, Mansfield, La., 71052. His phone number is (318) 872-5418.

A groundless hope is a mere delusion.

BRIEF STUDIES ON THE CHURCH

By The Editor

of such a teaching blunder as this which is ascribed to the all-wise Spirit of God by every universal church heretic.

Next, let us notice how the Bible uses the word "ecclesia" which is the word translated "church" in the New Testament. This word occurs 115 times in the New Testament. It is used three times in the secular sense where it is properly translated "assembly." (Acts 19:32, 39, 41). Please read this Scripture, for it clearly shows forth the proper meaning of the word "ecclesia," and proves that it must refer to a local, visible assembly. The word is used one time in a Jewish sense, (Acts 7:38). Of course, the church is a New Testament institution which is never referred to in the Old Testament. One would have to be blind to truth on the subject not to see this. But Israel, as a nation, did assemble in the wilderness in the Old Testament, and thus they were an "ecclesia" in the proper sense of the word.

The word "ecclesia" is used in the New Testament 90 times to refer to a local visible church. No one can argue this point and no one does. See "The church of God which is at Corinth" (I Cor. 1:2), and "The churches of Galatia" (Gal. 1:2) as samples of these 90 times.

Sometimes the word is used in an abstract or institutional sense. We constantly use words in this way. We say that the husband is the head of the wife. We do not mean to imply that there is a great big universal invisible husband consisting of all the local visible husbands. We do not mean any particular husband. We use the word in the abstract. We say that the automobile is a great invention. We do not mean that all the automobiles make up a great big universal invisible one. We do not refer to any particular automobile. We are using the word in the abstract. Everyone understands this usage of language. So, occasionally, the Bible uses "ecclesia" in this way, referring to the church as an institution which finds real expression in local visible assemblies.

Then there are a few uses of this word which, of and by themselves, are somewhat doubtful. However, when we interpret these places in the light of the true meaning of the word, all doubt vanishes, and they fit perfectly with the teaching of a local visible assembly.

So we see that the Biblical usage of this word proves conclusively that the church is local and visible. To combat this argument, the universal church heretic must say, that the Holy Spirit took the word "ecclesia," which has a clearly understood and accepted meaning, used this word over a hundred times with that meaning; then used this word a few times with an entirely different meaning; and never once explained this fact or explained this new and unheard of meaning. Now, really, brother, who can imagine that the Holy Spirit is such an inept blundering teacher as this?

Next, let us notice the Lord Jesus Christ's usage of this word "ecclesia." Jesus used this word in Matthew 16:18, the Scripture which heads this article. What did He mean thereby? Well, the word means that which is local and visible. Jesus meant to be understood. Therefore, He used the word with its clearly understood meaning. Jesus used this word "ecclesia" twenty-one times. He used it once in Matthew 16 and twice in Matthew

18. He used it eighteen times in Revelation. Twenty of these times, He used the word to refer to a local visible church. No one can, or even tries, to dispute this fact. In Matthew 18, He uses the word to refer to that to which a matter can be told, and which can deal with that matter. Surely, anyone can see that this can only refer to a local, visible assembly.

Jesus uses this word in Revelation, and names the location of the churches to which He thus refers. They must be, and they are local and visible. There is no question about this. Now to combat this argument, the universal church heretic must say that Jesus took a word with an accepted and clearly understood meaning, used it twenty times with that meaning, then used it one time (Matt. 16:18) with an entirely different meaning; and that He did this without a word of explanation. Now, who can really believe that the all-wise, master teacher would be guilty of such an inept, blundering way of teaching? The universal church heretic, that's who.

Again I say that the strongest argument for the local visible church truth and against the universal invisible church heresy is the meaning of the word used by the Holy Spirit to refer to the Lord's church. Again I say that we must use words in their accepted and clearly understood meaning, or all understanding is at an end. Some years ago our children concocted a scheme to fool Mother and Dad at the table. They decided among themselves that they would say "salt" when they meant "pepper," and "pepper" when they meant "salt." They got quite a kick out of the confusion this caused Katie and myself in passing to them what we thought they were asking for. But you can see from this that, unless the person speaking means the same thing by a word that the person spoken to understands by that word, then understanding is at an end, and confusion is the result. You see, the children had to explain, that they meant something different from the usually understood meaning of the word used, to one another so they would know what they were talking about. Now, had Jesus played this child's game, and explained that, when He said "church," he did not mean what was usually understood by that word; but that He meant something else, and something entirely contrary to the meaning of that word; then we could understand what He was saying. BUT He did not do this. Therefore, we must believe that He meant, by using the word "ecclesia," exactly what everyone understands by the word. May God bless you, as we study The Church, to learn this very first Church Truth: that the church is a local visible assembly, and is not, and cannot be universal and invisible.

WHAT

(Continued from Page 1)

being a church.

In 1972 we received scriptural Baptism and Church authority and now are members of one of The Lord's True Churches. Brethren, The Baptist Examiner will always be precious to me for teaching me the truths about His Church. The Lord could have used other means, but in His sovereignty He chose to use T.B.E.

I have also learned many other great truths from this

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paper. I truly appreciate the stand of T.B.E. on the Doctrines of Grace, prophecy, church truths and holy living. Surely, there are thousands of people like us here at the Grace Baptist Church who have been taught much by the Holy Spirit using T.B.E.

The Baptist Examiner means much to me because of the people we have met through this paper, and the Bible conferences this paper has advertised. It is a comfort to know that, in dark times, we do not stand alone; but there are others who are standing for the truth. Indeed, T.B.E. has been used to make us many friends whom, without it, we would have never met. I rejoice over the preachers and the members of other Churches we have come to love through T.B.E.

We are so happy that T.B.E. has such a leader as Joe Wilson. We will pray that God will use the Examiner to help bless others as He has used it to help and bless us here in Gladwin, Mi. The Grace Baptist Church is a regular supporter of T.B.E. and would urge you other churches to do the same; as we believe this is a great mission work. Think of many that do not hear the truths this paper stands for. At least, through T.B.E., they are able to read these truths. We love this paper and pray for its continued ministry.

ANNOUNCEMENT

The King's Addition Baptist Church of South Shore, Ky. will host its annual Bible Conference Friday, April 1, through Sunday, April 3, 1983. For any information contact James Hobbs, the pastor. (614)-259-2402.

THE BAPTIST EXAMINER
MARCH 26, 1983
PAGE SEVEN

I am getting a little more material for The Baptist Examiner. I am grateful for this. I urge you brethren to continue sending sermons in. I am going to have a short series of articles on THE CHURCH myself. I hope that, by the time I finish these, I will have and continue to receive, enough material on hand to discontinue any extra sermons by myself, except on rare occasions. Then, I would just have my sermon in THE TBE PULPIT and a brief editorial. It is my desire to present the sermons of many different preachers (of our kind) to the readers of this paper.

"...and upon this rock I will build my church; and the gates of hell shall not prevail against it" (Matt. 16:18).

It is of utmost importance that one be very clear on the subject of The Nature of the Church. One simply can not be right on the many matters relative to the church, unless he is right on the nature thereof. If the church is universal and invisible, or if it is local and visible; this will determine the answers to many other important questions about the church. There is a proper method of procedure in studying The Church as in studying any subject. One cannot study multiplication until he knows addition. In like manner, one cannot know about the work, perpetuity, authority, and future, etc. of the church until he learns the nature of the church. One must first learn the nature of the church, then its identity, then its perpetuity, then its work and authority and then its future.

There are many false ideas of the nature of The Church abroad. Some foolishly think of the building in which a church meets as The Church. The Catholics teach that the church is, "all those throughout the world who embrace the Catholic religion and are in subject to the Pope." Thus they have a universal, visible, so-called church. Many believe that the totality of each denomination is a church, and so speak of The Baptist Church, The Methodist Church, etc. Some think that all professed Christians in one nation make up the church with the national name. Some think that true Christians make up the true church, and that each denomination is a branch thereof. What a strange vine is this: a tomato branch, a potato branch, and a green bean branch, etc.

However, the most popular theory about the church today — and the one I vehemently combat in this sermon — is the universal invisible church theory. This theory is held in two different ways. Some say that the saved of all ages make up the true churches. Others say that the true church consists of the saved from Pentecost to the Rapture. Though this is a very popular theory, held by the vast majority of believers: there is not a verse in the Bible to back it up; and it contradicts EVERYTHING which the New Testament says about The Church. There are three heresies which I hate with a passion: Arminianism, Hardshellism and Universal Invisible Churchism; and I just do not know which I hate the most.

A gospel that does not suit everybody does not suit anybody.

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We Will Give Them The Truth**

MARRIAGE

(Continued from Page 6)

undefiled, but only the marriage bed and no other.

C. HUMAN PARENTHOOD.

Marriage was planned and provided that we might not be alone and that we might enjoy ourselves together. But God also adds, "Be ye fruitful and multiply and replenish the earth" (Genesis 1:28). Children are a normal and natural part of God's design. In some cases, through physical defects or other disabilities, children are denied to a couple. But this again is the exception. Any marriage that refuses children to be born because of inconvenience or desire for material gain are violating God's plan. Such a marriage cannot expect God's blessing, nor the realization of full happiness. Any marriage without children is only half a marriage. None can dictate how many children we ought to have. Have as many as you can afford. In our age this may curtail the number greatly. But God has said: "Be fruitful and multiply."

Summary: Marriage has been designed by God for human companionship, human enjoyment and human propagation. It is honorable and holy. Let us not be guilty, as some are, of assuming that the marital bond is a sign of bondage or a sacrifice of our independence. With all of its hardship and sacrifices, marriage is the fulfillment of the design of an all-wise God. To you wives and mothers, let me urge you not to treat your position lightly. Being a wife and mother is not pure drudgery and meaningless existence. See yourself as fulfilling God's plan and not as being deprived of a higher destiny in life. There are some career women — and a career isn't necessarily wrong or sinful, but woman was created and ordained to be a wife and mother. Don't feel that you are being cheated if you must settle for a home and the care of children. You have been highly favored of God.

2. MARRIAGE IS HONORABLE BECAUSE IT IS DEFENDED BY GOD.

Marriage is to be held in high repute by all men because it is an institution ordained by God. Marriage is also to be respected by all, because God defends what He has designed. Let me develop two thoughts about the divine defense of marriage.

A. MARRIAGE WAS DEFENDED BY GOD'S APPOINTMENT.

In the establishment of marriage, God has hedged this institution with certain safeguards. If we observe the safeguards that God has provided, we can guarantee happy and successful marriages. If we ignore the appointed ways of God, we jeopardize the marriage state. Our divorce courts are jammed, because too many have been ignorant of, or have ignored, God's pattern. Let me illustrate this truth by considering three great obstacles that hurt and kill marriage:

a. **PERSONAL INCOMPATIBILITY.** The biggest reason for separation and divorce is personal incompatibility. It simply means that "We can't get along." Both partners want their own way and they strive to secure it at all costs. When God designed marriage, He was fully aware of personality differences and the friction created by our individuality. But God's plan was that a man should "leave his father and mother and cleave unto his wife and they should be one flesh." God's arithmetic

**THE BAPTIST EXAMINER
MARCH 26, 1983
PAGE EIGHT**

for marriage is that one and one equals one. A wife is not a supplement which adds something extra to man. She is a complement which produces quality. Woman is the other half of man's self and without her man is incomplete. He isn't all here. But the same is true of woman. She is incomplete without man. Marriage brings a couple into a state of oneness. In this union, each is called to love the other as himself. Instead, selfishness prevails and we hear the wail of incompatibility. If every home in our country really followed the divine design concerning oneness, if every husband loved his wife as himself and every wife her husband as herself, personal incompatibility would not exist. God had designed marriage to preserve it against personal incompatibility.

b. **PARENTAL INTERFERENCE.** A second danger to marriage is unsolicited and unwanted interference from well-meaning relatives. We often exaggerate about our in-laws. Yet, many of the mother-in-law jokes aren't far removed from the truth. Parental interference can ruin a marriage. But again, God has designed that a man should leave his father and mother and cleave unto his wife. Two basic principles of marriage are leaving and cleaving. No longer are we under parental supervision or accountable to our parents. This doesn't mean we are to ignore or neglect our parents. But each couple must run their own life, making their own choices and answering to each other. We can't run home with our problems. No longer are we mother's girl or father's boy. If we follow God's appointed way of leaving and cleaving, we can prevent this threat to a happy marriage.

A word needs to be added to parents. Mother-in-law, mother, father-in-law, father — love your children, encourage them, by all means pray for them, but for the sake of their happiness, don't interfere. Don't make their decisions. Don't try to run their lives. If you do, you are violating God's way.

c. **PUBLIC INFLUENCE.** A third area that threatens marriage is public opinion. Pressure is brought to bear upon our home from the outside. We naturally want to be like others, so we tend to conform to the patterns of our age. The world's pattern in general is:

No restraint before marriage.
No faithfulness in marriage.
No permanence of marriage bond.

Our age is one of unrestrained sexual expression within and outside the marital bond. Wife-swapping is a common practice, even within some churches. No doubt we may feel like swapping our wives at times, but I hope we never yield to the urge. Today, triangular relationships are condoned. But God has said: "What God hath joined together, let no man put asunder." Let no one influence your marriage. Don't permit the lack of morals in our age to govern your conduct and ruin your marriage. Today marriage vows are treated too lightly. Some people are married and divorced before they can celebrate an anniversary. Public opinion only represents the low standards of a Godless world or, more accurately, the world's abandonment of moral standards. The marriage bond is sacred and should only be broken by death. "What God has joined, let no man put asunder."

In the appointment of marriage, God has so arranged this holy estate that it contains built-in safeguards to preserve it. May we observe God's appointed ways that personal incompatibility, parental interference, or public influence

may never threaten our marriage.

B. MARRIAGE WAS DEFENDED BY GOD'S ATTITUDE AND ACTIONS.

God has not only defended marriage as honorable by His appointments, but also, by His attitude and actions. Let me illustrate this in two ways:

a. **IN THE GARDEN OF EDEN.** God solemnized marriage by His ordination of the marriage state. Marriage was the second institution ordered by God. Only the Sabbath was instituted before marriage. Why did it that the first two institutions of God have been the most abused? God solemnized the first marriage in Eden to indicate His approval and defense of marriage.

b. **IN THE PERSON OF CHRIST.** When God took human form He showed His approval of marriage. Christ could have entered the human race in many ways. He could have come as a teenager or as a full grown adult. But He came as the babe born of a virgin. Thereby Christ endorsed marriage and the home. At the feast of Cana in Galilee, Christ placed His imprimatur on marriage. It was His way of telling us that any young couple who will invite Christ to their wedding, that He will honor them with His presence and bless their home. Recall the parables of Christ. He discourses on the high relationships which exist within the kingdom of God and between Himself and the Church. He employs the marriage relationship as an earthly illustration of these higher spiritual relationships. Christ Himself indicated that apart from personal conversion, marriage is the most momentous of all earthly events and experiences.

In Eden and in Christ, God defended the honor of marriage, but our text adds another important ingredient. God will punish all who are guilty of whoredom and adultery. Notice that these two phrases are inclusive. The former has reference to all sexual abuse among the unmarried. None are excluded. Marriage is to be respected by all. And God has promised to defend the honor of marriage. Abusers may escape human exposure and condemnation, but they cannot escape God. God's ordinances are holy and He will judge all who violate them. Today we see the alarming abuse of sex and the deterioration of marriage, but God will handle every transgressor. No man can treat lightly the gifts and the institutions of God. God will punish the fornicator, the adulterer, and the unclean person. They shall not enter into His Kingdom unless they repent and receive forgiveness in Christ.

CONCLUSION: The Word of God comes to us with forceful injunction. Hold marriage in high respect, honor its lofty and holy estate. In God's sight marriage is honorable and all its relations are undefiled. May we lift it out of the filth into which men have trampled it and may we bring it into the holy presence of God, that we might see clearly His appraisal of marriage and His attitude toward sex. May we cultivate a lofty view of this holy estate, that we may transfer this high conception to our own children. Thereby they will have a solid foundation to erect better and more Godly homes. Herein is the starting point for a revival of true religion and Godliness in our country. It is no small task, but remember the theme of our epistle. We have a great High Priest, Who has passed into the heavens, even Jesus Christ. Let us draw near to find forgiveness for every time we have cheapened this holy state. Let us find grace to restore it unto a place of honor and holiness.