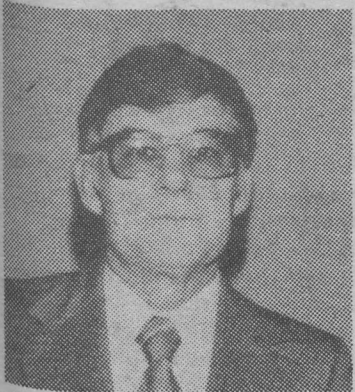


THE PRIVILEGE OF GOD'S ELECT

by Ray Brown
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"But as many as received him, to them gave he power to become the sons of God, even to them that believe on his name" (John 1:12).

It's foolish for us to think that



Ray Brown

we have the power to become the sons of God or that God gave us power to become the sons of God. That is not what the word power means. It means right or privilege of sonship. Who has the power to be a child of God? Who has the power that he may be born into the family of God? Who has the right or privilege of that sonship to be that son or that daughter in that family? He has the right to own that and the right to proclaim that, but only by the power of God can anyone be born into the family of God.

How do we have this right or privilege? "According as he

(Continued on Page 10 Column 3)

THE NEW BIRTH

by Wayne Cox
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Memphis, TN. 38122

"There was a man of the Pharisees, named Nicodemus, a ruler of the Jews; The same came to Jesus by night, and said unto him, Rabbi, we know that thou art a teacher come from God: for no man can do these miracles that thou doest, except God be with him. Jesus answered and said unto him, Verily, verily, I say unto thee, Except a man be born again, he cannot see the kingdom of God. Nicodemus saith unto him, How can a man be born when he is old? can he enter the second time into his mother's womb and be born? Jesus answered, Verily, verily, I say unto thee, Except a man be born of water and of the Spirit, he cannot enter into the kingdom of God. That which is born of the flesh is flesh; and that which is born of the Spirit is spirit. Marvel not that I said unto thee, Ye must be born again. The wind bloweth where it listeth, and thou hearest the sound thereof, but canst not tell whence it cometh, and whither it goeth: so is every one that is born of the Spirit. Nicodemus answered and said unto him, How can these things be? Jesus answered and said unto him, Art thou a master of Israel, and knowest not these things?" (John 3:1-10).

The subject under consideration is not one that is unfamiliar

(Continued on Page 3 Column 2)

The barrenness of busy-ness.

THE DAMNABLE TEACHINGS OF THE JEHOVAH'S WITNESSES

by Doug Newell
Rt. 2, Box 170
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"But evil men and seducers shall wax worse and worse, deceiving, and being deceived" (II Tim. 3:13). We'll take into consideration, in this article, the so-called Jehovah's Witnesses. This religious organization fits our text well. They are great deceivers. I consider these people to be a cult. By this I mean that if their

members truly believe what they preach, they cannot be saved



Doug Newell

people. I believe that there are many that are saved in the denominational churches. We can not deny this fact. But cults such as these deny too many important doctrines concerning salvation for me to believe that they are saved. The Jehovah's Witnesses are not what they claim to be. I have heard brethren refer to them as Jehovah's false Witnesses, but this is not so; mainly because they are not Jehovah's Witnesses

(Continued on Page 10 Column 5)

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The Baptist Examiner

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

VOL. 58, NO. 3

ASHLAND, KENTUCKY, FEB. 8, 1986

WHOLE NUMBER 2478

THE LAW OF SOWING AND REAPING

by John Alber
6935 Dexter St.
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Introduction: In the book of Second Samuel we have the story of David's life as it unfolds before our eyes. We are told in the previous book that David was a different kind of a man than King Saul. Nevertheless, in these two books, one can see the "Law of sowing and reaping" that the Apostle Paul



John Alber

A TESTIMONY TO FREE AND SOVEREIGN GRACE

By Charles Spurgeon
(Now in Glory)

"But the salvation of the righteous is of the Lord" (Psalm xxxvii. 39). Salvation is a blessing peculiar to the righteous. The ungodly do not, as a rule, believe that they have any need of salvation: therefore they do not desire it, or seek after it. The righteous know that they are born in a fallen state; they acknowledge that they have destroyed themselves by personal sin; and they are conscious of a thousand dangers which surround them. Hence they

need salvation, and seek it, and find it. It is to them that salva-



Charles Spurgeon

Galatians. "Be not deceived: God is not mocked: for whatsoever a man soweth, that shall he also reap" (Galatians 6:7).

Thus, in the life of Saul, King of Israel, three great tragic sins caused him great grief and grief to his entire family. (1). King Saul had failed to wait upon Samuel the prophet and offered up sacrifices unto God when it was well known that only the

(Continued on Page 11 Column 4)

tion has come to make them righteous, for until they are saved they are unrighteous, even as others; but now that salvation has come to their house, they bring forth the fruits of righteousness to the glory of God their Saviour.

This may be used as a description of the believer's life: he lives a life of salvation. He is saved in Christ, who is his life, in whom he has forgiveness of sins, and every other covenant blessing. He is always being delivered, or saved; and from

(Continued on Page 6 Column 3)

The Baptist Examiner Pulpit

A Sermon by Pastor Joseph M. Wilson

THE SIN PREDESTINATED AND THE SINNER CONDEMNED

"And truly the Son of man goeth, as it was determined: but woe unto that man by whom he is betrayed!" (Lk. 22:22).

I started to use the word "but" in my title which would have indicated some contrast. This would not have been correct. There is no contrast between the two things taught in the text and in my title. Both things are true, and there is no contradiction. Sin, all sin, is predestinated. The sinner who commits that predestinated sin is condemned. Now, there is much controversy over this mat-

ter. This controversy comes from a misunderstanding, or perversion of the doctrine of predestination.

Let us look at the doctrine of Absolute Predestination. This doctrine teaches that God hath, from all eternity, predestinated whatsoever comes to pass. Now, we do not have to limit that statement in any way. Let it stand as it is given. God has predestinated everything that comes to pass. Everything in inanimate creation is predestinated of God. The sun, wind, rain, snow, hail, or whatever takes place in in-

animate creation is foreordained of God. The wind blows when, where, and how God pleases. The rains come or are withheld according to His counsel. The Lord hath His way in the whirlwind — and in all weather.

Everything in animate creation is according to God's eternal and sovereign will. The lion devours his prey, or his mouth is closed at the bidding of God. The flesh eating raven holds its own appetite and brings food to God's prophet according to the bidding of the Almighty. Every creature of the forest always

(Continued on Page 2 Column 1)

(USPS 042-340)

CONVERSION TO JESUS CHRIST

by Ron Boswell
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21783

"...the abundance of the sea shall be converted unto thee..." (Isaiah 60:5). I want to speak to you from the words of this prophecy in the book of Isaiah. I believe that this prophecy is talking about the Lord Jesus Christ and if I was to title this message, I would entitle it, "Conversion To Jesus Christ."

The first point I want to make is that: I. Multitudes Are



Ron Boswell

Strangers To Bible Conversion. It is true that some people are converted from one party to another in politics when somebody changes parties. To many people, this is the kind of religion they have — they were something, and then they were converted to something else, but our text speaks of being converted to the Lord Jesus Christ. Now, most people are religious and the Bible gives us a story in the book of Judges of a man who was very religious. It shows us just how religious a person can be and still be a stranger to Bible conversion.

"And there was a man of mount Ephraim, whose name was Micah. And he said unto his mother, The eleven hundred shekels of silver that were taken from thee, about which thou cursedst, and spakest of also in mine ears, behold, the silver is with me; I took it. And his mother said, Blessed be thou of the LORD, my son. And when he had restored the eleven hundred shekels of silver to his mother, his mother said, I had wholly dedicated the silver unto the LORD from my hand for my son to make a graven image and a molten image: now therefore I will restore it unto thee." (Judges 17:1-3).

We have presented to us a man that robbed his own mother of her silver. She did not know who took it. She was very upset, in fact, the Bible says she cursed. Later her son comes to her and says, "I took it." the mother then called him blessed of the Lord. She said in effect, "Micah, my son, you are a religious man and we are going to dedicate this silver to the Lord."

This incident reminds me of a preacher that had a radio broadcast that was heard in a mental institution. He had received many letters from the patients in this mental institution. He said, "You know, I believe that a lot of people that are in the mental institution should be on the outside and a lot of people on the outside

(Continued on Page 9 Column 4)

(USPS 042-340)

The Baptist Examiner

THE BAPTIST PAPER FOR
THE BAPTIST PEOPLE
JOSEPH M. WILSON, EDITOR

Editorial Department, located in ASHLAND, KENTUCKY, where all subscriptions and communications should be sent. Address: P.O. Box 71, Zip Code 41105-0071.

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Two years \$11.00
When you subscribe for others or
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Entered as second class matter March 4, 1978, in the post office of Ashland, Kentucky, under the Act of March 3, 1879.

POSTMASTER: Send address changes to The Baptist Examiner, P. O. Box 71, Ashland, Kentucky 41105-0071.

PREDESTINATED

(Continued from Page 1)

does exactly as God predestinated from eternity. God has His way in the world of human government. He ordained the method of government for each portion of the world at each moment of its existence. He setteth up rulers and He brings them down. He often setteth up over earthly empires the basest of men according to His eternal decree. One has not learned a chief lesson of the book of Daniel until he has learned of God's absolute and sovereign rule in the affairs of men.

Everything with respect to the good deeds of good men is ordained of God. God, working by sovereign grace and irresistible power, saves some from among fallen mankind and gives them the desire to do good. He directs them as to the good they do and empowers them in the doing thereof. All the good in man and through man is according to the eternal predestination of God. And look at this: all the evil that is in man and done by man is also according to the predestination of God. Not that God gives them the desire to do evil — this comes from man himself — but God controls all the evil that comes from and through man, according to His eternal decrees. I repeat: God has predestinated everything that comes to pass in this world.

Let us look at a few of the many Scriptures which teach this truth. "But he is in one mind, and who can turn him? and what his soul desireth, even that he doeth" (Job 23:13).

"The LORD hath prepared his throne in the heavens; and his kingdom ruleth over all" (Psa. 103:19). "Whatsoever the LORD pleased that did he in heaven, and in earth, in the seas, and all deep places" (Psa. 135:6). "The LORD hath made all things for himself; yea, even the wicked for the

day of evil" (Pro. 16:4). "The LORD of hosts hath sworn, saying, Surely as I have thought, so shall it come to pass; and as I have purposed, so shall it stand" (Isa. 14:24). "Declaring the end from the beginning, and from ancient times the things that are not yet done, saying, My counsel shall stand, and I will do all my pleasure" (Isa. 46:10). "...he doeth according to his will in the army of heaven, and among the inhabitants of the earth; and none can stay his hand, or say unto him, What doest thou?" (Dan. 4:35). "...being predestinated according to the purpose of him who worketh all things after the counsel of his own will" (Eph. 1:11). It is simply astounding that men can read these Scriptures (and there are many more like them) and fail to see that the Bible teaches God's



Joe Wilson

absolute and sovereign control over all the events of time — and that this is according to His eternal and absolute predestination.

Absolute predestination includes the predestination of sin. Many will argue with this; but it is true, and it must be true. The fact is that no man can believe in God's absolute predestination of all things without also believing that God has predestinated the sins of men. It is foolish for any man to pretend such. However, this predestination of sin is not causative, but permissive and controllative. Read that over about a hundred times, and you will have an understanding of what I am saying in this article. You will also have the key to a proper understanding of God's absolute predestination of all things and its connection with the sins of men. Let me say it again: God's predestination of sin is not causative, but is permissive and controllative. Let me expound. God does not cause sin. God is not the author of sin. The man who says that He is, is a heretic of deepest hue. God is infinitely holy, and infinite holiness cannot be the cause of sin. Be it clearly understood that this preacher is willing to be called an Arminian (though he is not) before he is willing to charge the thrice holy God with being the author of sin. God permits sin. God allows men to commit a portion of the sin that is within them. God controls sin. God controls the sins that He allows men to commit, so that they come to pass according to His eternal predestination. Study these three statements. God does not cause sin. God does permit sin. God does control sin.

"Surely the wrath of man shall praise thee: the remainder of wrath shalt thou restrain" (Psa. 76:10). This verse is a clear statement of God's sovereign control over the sins of man. "Wrath" speaks of the sins of man. The possibility of every sin is in the heart of every man. God allows to come out of the depravity of man's

heart that which is according to His sovereign will. God causes that these sins will be to His praise. God restrains the rest of the possible sins that are in men. Note again: Man is filled with sin. God allows some of that to come out. God controls this to His glory. God restrains the rest of the sin that is potential in man.

The sin of Joseph's brethren is an illustration of this truth. "...And he said, I am Joseph your brother, whom ye sold into Egypt. Now therefore be not grieved, nor angry with yourselves, that ye sold me hither: for God did send me before you to preserve life... And God sent me before you to preserve you a posterity in the earth... So now it was not you that sent me hither, but God..." (Gen. 45:4-8). "But as for you, ye thought evil against me: but God meant it unto good..." (Gen. 50:20). Joseph's brethren thought and meant evil against Joseph. They were accountable to God for their great sin. However, this sin was predestinated by God, and through it God worked out His eternal purpose. This sin was in their hearts. God did not cause them to do this. God did permit this sin. God controlled this sin according to His eternal predestination.

The betrayal and crucifixion of Christ is the supreme example of what I am teaching in this article. My text tells us that, "...the Son of man goeth, as it was determined..." The betrayal of Christ and His crucifixion had been predestinated (determined) from eternity. "Him, being delivered by the determinate counsel and foreknowledge of God, ye have taken, and by wicked hands have crucified and slain" (Acts 2:23). The death of Christ was according to the determinate counsel of God. And the men who crucified Him did so with wicked hands. "For to do whatsoever thy hand and thy counsel determined before to be done" (Acts 4:28). In the crucifixion of Christ we see the sovereign will of God being accomplished. We also see the terrible guilt and accountability of man for the doing of such a deed. God did not cause them to commit this sin. God was not the author of their sin. It came from the depths of the depravity of their own hearts. But God did permit that sin. God did control that sin. God did use that sin in the bringing to pass of His eternal predestination.

I am saying that God predestinates the sins that men commit. I am saying that God condemns the man for committing the sins that God predestinates. I am saying that the Bible teaches both of these truths again and again. God predestinates the sin. This does not mean that He causes it. God permits the sin. God controls the sin. When we preach like this, a problem arises in the minds of men, and objections are made to what we preach. When we preach that God predestinates sin, men excuse their sins, men even blame God for their sins. Some over-zealous preachers, in their wrong exposition of the doctrine of predestination, leave room for men to thus excuse sin. My brother, it is a very wicked thing to excuse your sins and to blame God for them; and it is very wicked for a preacher to give anyone sufficient excuse for so doing. Men will sometimes say, "I could not help doing that sin, I was predestinated to do

it." Tommyrot, hogwash, blasphemy: you sinned because you wanted to sin, not because God predestinated it. My friend, every sin of every man lies at his own door. Man is totally to blame for his own sin. God is not to blame in anywise. You are a vile, wicked, depraved sinner. You sin because you want to and as you want to. The cause of your sin lies in the depths of the depravity of your black heart. Man adds sin to sin when he charges God's predestination with his sin. Man

is responsible. When he sins, he is guilty. He will be held totally accountable for all his sins. God's eternal predestination is not the cause of, and will not be an acceptable reason for any sin men commit.

"Thou wilt say then unto me, Why doth he yet find fault? For who hath resisted his will?" (Rom. 9:19). Men need to realize that the will of man is involved in the commission of sin. Man sins freely, willingly. God's will is also involved.

(Continued on Page 3 Column 1)

FROM THE EDITOR

"Now there was leaning on Jesus' bosom one of his disciples, whom Jesus loved" (John 13:23). By comparing the Scriptures in John which refer to this "disciple whom Jesus loved," we see that the reference is to John. How are we to understand this statement? What does it mean? Of course, it does not mean that John was the only one of the disciples whom Jesus loved. We know that Jesus has an everlasting love for all His elect, and that He will draw each of them savingly to Himself (Jer. 31:3). We know that Jesus loved His own which were in the world and that He will always love them (John 13:1). I do not think we need to spend much time in proving this point. We all agree that Jesus Christ loves all the elect.

I do not believe that this statement means that Jesus loved John more than He did the other disciples. I see no evidence in this statement, or anywhere in the Bible, to support such a theory. In fact, I just do not believe that any Scripture can be given anywhere to show that Jesus Christ loves any of His disciples more than He does any other one. If anyone disagrees with this statement, I would like to see that verse of Scripture which teaches that Jesus loves one, or some, of His disciples more than He does others. In His sovereignty, He may give one more of this world's goods, more of health, longer life; but this does not prove a greater love. Christ may give some of His disciples more opportunity to serve Him, with greater abilities and gifts; but this does not prove a greater love. Christ may bless the service of some of His disciples more than others, but this does not prove a greater love. In fact, I am saying that there is no proof whatsoever that Jesus Christ loves any one disciple more than another.

Well then, what did John mean by the statement of my text which is repeated at other places in the Gospel of John? Well, what does he say? He says that Jesus loved him. That is all that he says. Read the text again and see what it actually does say. It does not say that Jesus loved John, but did not love the other disciples. It does not say that Jesus loved John more than the other disciples. It simply says that Jesus loved John. It says no more and nothing other than this. Any other meaning must be read into the text, for it cannot be deduced from the text. We, in our interpreting of the Bible, need to be careful to just stick to what the Bible does say, and not be reading into the Bible our own opinions.

Now, I have taken nothing from the text. I have not robbed John of any special blessing contained in the text. I have simply and properly explained the text as to what it actually says. Now, I desire to apply the text. This which John says of himself — that Jesus loved him — every saved person can also say. And beloved friend, what a joy and blessing it is to be able to say, "Jesus loves me, this I know." To be loved by Jesus Christ is the greatest blessing of all. All our hope and all our good for time and eternity is wrapped up in this matter that Jesus loves us. John was simply saying about and for himself that Jesus loved him. Praise God! Every believer can say the same thing. Let me just add here that those who say that Jesus loves everybody rob the love of Jesus of any special meaning to the individual. If Jesus loves everyone, and some whom He loves go to hell; what comfort, encouragement, or assurance is there in that love for me? I might still go to hell. But if Jesus does eternally save all those whom He loves (and He surely does), then to know that "Jesus loves me" is truly the greatest blessing in time and eternity.

No, no, John did not mean that Jesus loved him, but did not love the other disciples. Neither did he mean that Jesus loved him more than He loved the other disciples. He simply meant that he was so thrilled that Jesus did love him that he delighted to refer to himself as an object of Jesus' love. Every child of God can do the same thing.

Let me illustrate this by another verse of Scripture. "...and the life which I now live in the flesh I live by the faith of the Son of God who loved me, and gave himself for me" (Gal. 2:20). Now Paul did not mean that he was the only one that Jesus loved or for whom Jesus died. Paul did not mean that Jesus loved him more and died for him more than He did for any other, or for all of the elect. Every one of the elect can say, "Jesus loved me and died for me." Again, we must be careful to just take what a verse actually says, and not to read into the verse our own opinions.

Yes, John just meant that Jesus loved him, and that he was so glad for this that he delighted to say it. He did not mean anymore than this. He did not mean that Jesus did not love the other disciples. He did not mean that Jesus loved him more than He loved the other disciples.

I know that some of our readers will disagree with me on this, but I challenge you to prove your point by the Word of God. Comments welcomed.

EDITOR'S NOTE: Please know that I do not desire to make a big, certainly not a divisive thing over this. Many of you know that I delight to have some fun at times. Let me say in loving jest: There are three preachers (you know who you are) that I would like to write me and admit that they are wrong and I am right about this, or prove me wrong.

PREDESTINATED

(Continued from Page 2)

ed. God permits that sin, and permits it willingly. God controls that sin. But God does not cause that sin. Man sins of his own will.

Let me quote my original text again, "And truly the Son of man goeth, as it was determined: but woe unto that man by whom he is betrayed!" (Lk. 22:22). Note these things: 1. It was determined that the Son of man goeth. This means that His betrayal and crucifixion were determined before by God. 2. This that had been determined by God would surely come to pass. 3. The man (Judas) who betrayed Him was guilty of a terrible sin, and "woe" was upon him because of this sin. Surely this text teaches the subject of this article: "The Sin Predestinated And The Sinner Condemned." Note the strong term relative to the man who betrayed Christ. "Woe unto that man." This man is responsible for his sin. The fact that the betrayal and crucifixion of Christ had been predestinated from eternity — the fact that God would, in this way, save the elect — this did not detract from the guilt of Judas in betraying Christ. The sinner is responsible and accountable. There is no — there can be no — mitigation of his guilt. God's eternal predestination of the sin, as it does not cause, so it does not justify or excuse the sin. Man is as guilty of his sin as if there were no predestination. Man will be judged for his sin. The fact that God predestinated the sin does not enter into the judgment of man's sin. Man will be punished for his sin. The fact that God predestinated the sin will not lessen the punishment thereof one iota.

Oh, my brother and sister, I wish we could get settled on this matter. I wish we could be done with controversy over it. I wish that none of the brethren would preach God's predestination of sin as if God were the cause and author of sin. I wish none of the brethren would preach this doctrine in such a way as would seem to excuse men's sins. I do want you to understand that I believe that God predestinated all things. I therefore do believe that God predestinated sin. I do not believe that God causes sin. I believe that God permits and controls sin. I believe that God predestinated to permit sin. I believe that God willingly and eternally predestinated to permit sin. I believe that God predestinated to control sin according to His sovereign will. I wish men would quit equating God's predestination of sin with their idea that this means that God is the author of sin.

Let me seek further to show what I mean. God has absolutely predestinated all things that come to pass. That is the big doctrine that covers everything. There are two parts to this big doctrine. 1. God predestinated to cause some things by the putting forth of His mighty power. 2. God predestinated to permit some things. But understand that this does not mean that He permitted because He could not help but do so. This means that He willingly permitted such things. He willingly predestinated to permit them. Now, understand that a consequence of this doctrine is that God controls everything. He controls what He causes — no one would argue with that. He also controls what He permits —

and that according to His eternal predestination. Let me illustrate. God predestinated that some men would repent and believe. He predestinated that by the exercise of His mighty power He would cause them to do this. God predestinated the awful sins of men. But He does not put forth His power and cause them to sin. He allows them to sin. He permits them to sin. Frankly, I do not understand why many men have so much trouble with this. It is clear as can be in the Word of God.

There is a comfort in my subject. All sin is under the control of God. All sin is according to the predestination of God. All sin will work out for the good of God's elect. All sin will eventually work out to the glory of God.

There is a warning in my subject. Let the sinner beware. No doctrine of Scripture will ever excuse the sinner, will ever relieve him of his guilt, will ever save him from the just punishment of his sin. (Of course, I omit the doctrine of salvation through the blood of Christ, for every sinner who repents and believes the gospel will thereby be saved from the punishment of his sin). The doctrine of God's absolute predestination of all things will not excuse the sinner, relieve him of his guilt, or deliver him from punishment.

There is the gospel in my text. Jesus Christ was betrayed. He was crucified. He did arise from the dead. Any man, woman, boy, or girl who will believe in Jesus Christ as Lord and Saviour will be eternally saved. As Joseph's brethren thought evil against him and sold him into slavery; but God meant it for the good of the preserving of Israel through the years of famine — so Judas and those who crucified Christ meant it for evil, but God meant it for the good of saving all the elect. The sin was predestinated. The sinner was condemned for his sin. Yet, the eternal salvation of the elect family of God was accomplished. God used the sin of man to bring about His own eternal predestination. This is not only true in the matter of Joseph and his brethren, not only true in the matter of the crucifixion of Christ; but it is also true relative to every sin committed in all the history of the world. The sin is predestinated. The sinner is condemned. The purpose of God therein is accomplished. Oh, the wisdom and power of our God manifested in these matters. He maketh even the sins of men to work out His own purpose, to promote the good of His elect, and to rebound to His own eternal glory. "O the depth of the riches both of the wisdom and knowledge of God! how unsearchable are his judgments, and his ways past finding out" (Rom. 11:33).

I hope that the reader will carefully study this article. I am convinced that the subject is an important one. Questions or comments concerning this article will be courteously received and prayerfully pondered. May God bless you all.

NEW BIRTH

(Continued from Page 1)

by any means. It is, perhaps, one of the most familiar subjects in all the Book of God — that is, the new birth. I will have to admit, however, that in these modern days very rarely do you ever hear a sermon on the new birth; for the simple reason that

a "social gospel" is being proclaimed and people are believing, accepting it. There is nothing in the world more damaging to the cause of Jesus Christ than the "social gospel" that is being preached today. It sounds good to the alien sinner; it is certainly good news to them; it tickles their ears, but it damns their souls.

If the Bible is plain on any subject that we might name this morning, it is certainly plain on the doctrine of the new birth, and I forewarn you that the new birth is a doctrinal subject; it is filled with the great doctrines of Jesus. It is needed, perhaps, in this hour of skepticism and unbelief more than it has ever been needed across 6,000 years of human history.

The reason that the new birth is not being preached more today is because people rebel at the idea of the miraculous, denouncing and denying that God works a work in the human heart. It seems from the false premise that salvation is dependent upon a man's character rather than the specific, direct work of God.

I believe, with all my heart, that if we would lay aside every preconceived idea and notion and with open hearts and minds examine these verses that I have read, accepting the truth of them, believing what Jesus Christ here tells us, we will leave this building this morning fortified against skepticism and doubts, grateful for this marvelous passage in the Book of God; rejoicing in the fact that we, as believers in Christ Jesus, the Lord, are twice born.

A great deal has been said about this third chapter of the Gospel according to John which is not true. First of all, I want you to notice why Nicodemus came to Jesus in the first place. Now we are not concerned with the time element that becomes involved (he came to Jesus by night), but we are concerned with the purpose of the visit itself.

Only recently I noticed an editorial on "Why Nicodemus Came to Jesus" in a religious paper, and the writer said this: "Nicodemus came to Jesus to ask of Jesus the way of life." Now there isn't anything further from the truth than that. Here was a man of noble birth, steeped in the traditions of the Jews, who had completely gotten away from the spiritual side of the law; he was only concerned and only concerned himself with the moral issues involved in the law itself. The spiritual precepts set forth in the teachings of the law were overlooked and completely forgotten. He came to Jesus to court the favour of the Master and that only. He commended Him for performing the great miracles that He had performed, and here is what he said: "We know that thou art a teacher come from God: for no man can do these miracles which thou doest, except God be with him" (John 3:2).

Where is the question? Where is the inquiry? Where do you find that Nicodemus asked the Master, "Lord, what about the way of life; will you tell it to me?"

The Bible is silent on that. It is foolhardy to read in the Word of God something that the Word of God doesn't say. The mind of the Spirit knew what He wanted us to learn from these passages, and that which He wanted us to learn is set forth in words easy to be understood. Therefore, Nicodemus came to court the favour of Jesus, and offered to

Him words of praise and commendation.

Then I want you to notice the tactfulness of Jesus — those of you who do personal work can learn something from this. The Lord Jesus Christ, who knows all there is to know about us, knows our uprisings and our down sittings, knows the end from the beginning, and knows the thoughts and intents of our hearts, knew that the thing closest to the heart of Nicodemus was not his wealth, not his prestige because of the office he held, but the thing closest to the heart of Nicodemus was his birth, his background. He was a descendant of the great patriot — he was a man, therefore, of noble birth, and being a man of noble birth, he exulted in that fact; thus, Jesus knowing his heart, began to speak to him concerning a birth.

So we see the tactfulness of Jesus. When He talked to a man who derived his livelihood from the business of fishing, He talked to him about fishing — only on a spiritual plane. When He talked to a man about a spiritual thing He searched the background of that man, reading his heart, and He would turn that which was closest to the man's heart into a spiritual fact; thus, gaining the man's attention and everlasting gratitude. To the rich man, He talked about riches; to the poor man, He talked about poverty, that He might win him, but always He directed His conversation in the channels of a spiritual nature just as He did here in the third chapter of John.

Here in the text, Jesus turns to Nicodemus and has this to say: "Ye must be born again; you have an illustrious background; you are a descendant of one of the twelve spies who spied out the land and gave an honest and true report. You have much of which to be proud, but in spite of your illustrious background, your good morals, ye need to experience another birth."

Jesus said, "Ye must, ye must be born again." And in the third verse of the text: "Except a man be born again, he cannot see the kingdom of God." It makes no difference, beloved, how good you appear to be; it makes no difference about your background, what family you are from, Jesus would come to you and say, "Ye must be born again." There is no substitute for the new birth. May I say, beloved, that there are no substitutes for the cardinal doctrines of the Book of God. When Jesus said, "Ye must be born again." He meant just exactly what He said. There is no evading the truth; there is no denying the fact of the necessity of the new birth. Men need not close their eyes to this great fundamental truth; they must face the inevitable fact that the new birth is necessary; it is essential.

In order for you to have lived in this world, you had to experience the birth that we call the birth of the flesh. Before you can live in the kingdom of God, you must experience the birth from God, the spiritual birth. Let me pause long enough here to throw this out for your consideration: did you do anything toward bringing yourself into the world? Did you have any part in your conception and birth? Certainly not. A power outside yourself, a power other than that which you had yourself, was the cause of your conception and your birth. Therefore, men cannot have any

part in producing the new birth; they cannot work their way into God's creation. Regardless of how men try, regardless of the efforts they put forth, regardless of all their good intentions, they must be born again.

You can study the lives and characters of men, and you will not find a man in all the Book of God with a more illustrious background than Nicodemus, and yet Jesus said, "That is beside the point; ye must be born again."

Then we would notice the third thing this morning: what the new birth is not. You know, many people get the mistaken idea that they can turn over a new leaf. In just a little over two months we begin a new year. On New Year's Day people will make their resolutions. They will promise themselves: "I am going to be better this year; I'm going to quit drinking, gambling, cursing; I'm going to change thoroughly; I'm going to be a new person." And they actually mean that. But a few weeks after those New Year's resolutions they drift right back into the same old rut, because they found out that the reformation of life wrought no satisfaction and no peace; there was something definitely lacking. So the new birth is not the turning over of a new leaf. The new birth is not New Year's resolutions. The new birth is not the reformation of life, as some would have you believe.

In II Peter 2, and in the closing verses of this remarkable chapter, the Apostle Peter is describing false teachers and prophets. He points out those who follow after these deceivers, and then the Apostle Peter said, "But it is happened unto them according to the true proverb, The dog is turned to his own vomit again; and the sow that was washed to her wallowing in the mire" (II Peter 2:22).

That is the consummation of the reformation of life. Peter is discussing the person that tries to clean up and follow after that which teaches that salvation is by character; they make good resolutions; they try to reform their lives, but in only a little while, they are like the old "dog is turned to his own vomit again; and the sow that was washed to her wallowing in the mire."

"But," somebody will say, "Brother Cox, that is a case of apostasy. Those people were actually saved and then they became lost."

I deny that. Since when does the Bible class God's people as "dogs and hogs?" When you find in the Word of God where the Holy Spirit has designated God's people as hogs and dogs, I will believe that apostasy is possible.

I have before me this morning C.I. Scofield's reference Bible, containing the King James Version, put out by the Oxford Press. I think that C.I. Scofield's Bible is a fine Bible. It is fine on how that men are saved; it is sound on the security of the believer in Christ; it is sound on the premillennial coming of the Divine Son of God, sound on the new birth, but it is rotten to the core on the doctrine of the church. On church truth he missed the truth a country mile.

He speaks concerning the Lord's church and talks constantly about the church's

(Continued on Page 4 Column 5)

The Baptist Examiner Forum I

SUBMIT QUESTIONS ON ANY BIBLE SUBJECT

THE BAPTIST EXAMINER — P.O. BOX 71 — ASHLAND, KENTUCKY 41101

If Deuteronomy 22:5 means that it is a sin for a woman to wear pants, why do not the teachings of verses 6-12 apply today as well?

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I'm curious as to why you single out verses 6-12. Why not the entire chapter? Why not the entire book?

Certainly one should care for God's creation since He Himself watches and numbers the sparrows. We must not kill God's creation just for the fun of killing them. If they are used for meat or clothing, that is what they were given to us for, but not to be harmed just for the sake of harming them. This is simply pointing out that motherhood of all kinds is to be respected as in the Ten Commandments. It is also showing that no matter how small a commandment it is it must be respected. "Thou shalt keep therefore his statutes, and his commandments, which I command thee this day, that is may go well with thee, and with thy children after thee, and that thou mayest prolong thy days upon the earth, which the Lord thy God giveth thee, for ever" (Deut. 4:40).

All through the Bible we are told not to mix things together, the ox and ass, the clean with unclean, believers with unbelievers, linen and wool. We are not to dress in a gaudy, ungodly manner. "Likewise, ye wives, be in subjection to your own husbands; that, if any obey not the word, they also may without the word be won by the conversatin of the wives; While they behold your chaste conversation coupled with fear. Whose adorning let it not be that outward adorning of plaiting the hair, and of wearing of gold, or of putting on of apparel; But let it be the hidden man of the heart, in that which is not corruptible, even the ornament of a meek and quiet spirit, which is in the sight of God of great price" (I Peter 3:1-4).

Since God's people are to be a separate people in every way distinguished from others, we should dress in such a way as to show our godliness. (Thus the fringes which designated Israelites from others.)

Now let's go back to verse 5. Of all the verses that you ask about, this is the only one that says plainly that to disobey it is an abomination. Now brethren, we are to take heed to any commandment from God, but when He says something is an abomination, it seems to me that we had best listen closely to Him.

Frankly, I do not understand the opposition to obeying this verse. Even the ungodly will admit that a woman looks better in

a dress and no woman looks good in pants. Would you believe that someone objected to women wearing dresses because, they said, that the mini-skirts should not be worn. Certainly a Christian should not wear any garment that is not modest, but that is not a reason not to wear proper garments. What makes you think a Christian has to follow the fashions set up by ungodly people.

Some object by saying that everyone wore robes in those days. Are they saying that their garments were so much alike that this verse was unnecessary? Even though they wore robes there was definitely a distinction between those worn by men and those worn by women. We are told that priests wore breeches in those days. "And thou shalt make them linen breeches to cover their nakedness; from the loins even unto the thighs they shall reach" (Ex. 28:42).

Please don't say that women's pants are made for them, you know better than to use that argument. You know, as well as I do that even if they make them for women they were patterned after men's. The verse says "...for all that do so are abomination unto the Lord thy God?" (vs. 5). Do you want to be an abomination before God? If you wear men's garments or do men's work you are.

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First of all, does verse 5 teach that it is a sin for a woman to wear pants? At the time God gave these laws to Moses, both the men and women wore long robes of which the bottom parts were called skirts. We find this to be true from several passages of Scriptures, "—he laid hold upon the skirt of his mantle—" (II Sam. 15:27), "—and cut off the skirt of Saul's robe—" (Sam 24:4), "—spread therefore thy skirt over thine handmaid—" (Ruth 3:9), "—with such robes were the king's daughters" (II Sam. 13:18). The pants as an article of clothing was unheard of at that time, either for the man or the woman.

The verse says, "the woman is not to wear that which pertaineth unto the man." I do not know if the man's robe or skirt of that day was different from that worn by the woman, but the pants or slacks worn by women today are different from the trousers worn by men. Other articles of clothing worn by women are as near or nearer to being like the men's as are their pants. Some coats, shirts, ties, and hats are somewhat similar to that worn by men, yet I have never heard it said that it was a sin for a woman to wear these. I believe in Deuteronomy

22:5 has a much deeper meaning than the clothing worn by men and women. When God made man He made him, "Male and female." Each has his or her station in life which was established by God. He has stated very plainly that the woman is not to, "—Usurp authority over the man." For her to do so is to, "Wear that which pertaineth unto man." For the man to permit the woman to usurp authority over him is for him to take the role God decreed for the woman, that he has put on, "a woman's garment."

The Holy Spirit has told us that what counts in the sight of God is how a woman is adorned in the heart, not the outward adornment. "Likewise, ye wives, — Whose adorning — let it not be that outward adorning, But let it be the hidden man of the heart, in that which is not corruptible, even the ornament of a meek and quiet spirit, which is in the sight of God of great price. For after this manner in the old time the holy women also, who trusted in God, adorned themselves, being in subjection unto their own husbands" (I Pet. 1:1-5). This was true even before the law was given for verse 6 gives Sara, Abraham's wife as an example.

Is it a sin for a woman to wear pants? To paraphrase the apostle Paul, "Let every woman be fully persuaded in her own mind, to her that esteemeth any thing to be sin, to her it is sin." But on the other hand, "Happy is she that condemneth not herself in that which she does." Each woman must answer that question for herself. The apostle Paul warns us about judging others "Who art thou that judgest another man's servant? to his own master he standeth or falleth. Yea, he shall be holden up: God is able to make him stand" (Rom. 14:4).

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Let's consider first of all verses 6-12. These laws were given to Israel, and they were expected to be kept. Verses 6-7 tell of the law concerning protection of birds. If they came upon a nest and the mother was sitting in the nest with young or eggs, they weren't allowed to take the mother. This allowed the mother to reproduce again. This law can be applied today as we still need to practice conservation. This is a practical law. Verse 8 deals with building a battlement or a railing around the roof of the house. In those days the roofs were flat and were used quite a bit. This also is a practical law, in that it insures against injury to those that might fall off the roof. This law also should and could be applied

today. Our man-made laws require us to fence swimming pools, cover open wells, or repair anything that could cause physical injury or even death. These two laws were given to the Jews, but they can be applied in our lives. Verses 9-11 deal with sowing divers seeds, plowing with an ox and ass, and wearing divers colors as woolen and linen. Now these laws were given particularly to the Jews. These laws were given for them to keep, and to remind them that they were to be separated from the world. Verse 12 deals with wearing fringes upon their vestures. The fringes were put there to show that they were Israelites and to distinguish them from other people. We can learn some important lessons from these latter laws. But as far as applying them to us I see no practical value here. Just as we are priest today. We don't wear the priestly garments as the Jews did.

Now concerning verse 5. If you think that verses 6-12 will excuse you from verse 5 you are wrong. Let me say first of all that some of the most godly, moral, and Christian women that I know wear pants. I cannot and will not discredit a woman's morality when she puts on pants. Although I will not back down on the stand that I take concerning pants. The Bible is as plain as it can be on the subject. Verse 5 says that it is an abomination for a woman to wear that which pertaineth to a man. She is not to wear men's clothing. It also says that a man is not to wear women's clothing. I'm sure that if a group of women went to visit the pastor and found him in high heels and a dress, they would probably ask for his resignation as pastor. Now beloved, as I see it, it is no more wrong for the pastor to wear a dress than for the women to wear pants. Both are an abomination unto the Lord. Notice some Scripture. I Corinthians 6:9, "Know ye not that the unrighteous shall not inherit the kingdom of God? Be not deceived: neither fornicators, nor idolaters, nor adulterers, nor effeminate, nor abusers of themselves with mankind. Notice that not only Old Testament, but, also the New says that it is wrong for one sex to dress like the other. If you will study history you will find that the custom of women wearing pants is not very old. We know that as time progresses that man will get worse and worse. Knowing this we must realize that the style of dress will also get worse and worse. Just because the devil says its okay to wear pants, doesn't make it so. I believe that a woman's own conscience tells her that it is wrong. You women wouldn't dream of wearing pants to the Church service because you know that is wrong. The Bible is plain on the subject. No matter how you try to get out of it. Women are not to wear men's clothing, and the man is not to wear women's. May the Lord grant insight on this matter.

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Deuteronomy 22:5: "The woman shall not wear that which pertaineth unto a man, neither shall a man put on a woman's garment: for all that

do so are abomination unto the LORD thy God."

This is one of the best questions I've had to answer while in the Forum. I agree with the questioner, why do not the teachings of verses 6-12 apply as well today as does verse 5?

I want to be very careful in answering this question. I do not wish to offend those who teach or preach against women wearing pants. But I don't want them to offend me with their teaching either. I have no quarrel with those who believe a woman should not wear pants. However, I do not believe they have any Bible whatsoever to back them up. I consider this to be a question of conscience. If your conscience will not allow you to wear pants, then by all means, don't. I would be very slow in taking a strong stand against others who do not see it that way.

I know of at least one man who says if a woman wears pants and continues to do so without being chastised by God, that she is lost and going to hell. To me this is an absurd and heretical statement. This same individual opposes the use of wine in the Lord's Supper. I would fear for him if he were not chastised before I would fear for the women who wore pants.

I think a close study of the text used will teach that the nation of Israel was not to do as the heathen did and have a special feast in which the men and women switched clothes and a great amount of adultery and fornication took place. The word "pertaineth" sometimes means armour and had to do with women dressing like soldiers.

I have several books on the manner, customs, and dress of the people in Bible times. One of these books has a picture of a woman dressed in a garment that has two legs. I would call them pants. We know that both men and women wore robes and sandals. According to my study, their dress was different in detail and not design. This simply means that the women would decorate their robes more so than the men.

One writer says that the only people of that day that dressed different were soldiers and Pharisees.

I might also mention that I Timothy 2:9 which mentions modest apparel has nothing to do with this question. The word modest there does not have anything to do with that which is decent but has to do with pride and pride.

There are other things I could say relative to this subject but space will not allow it. Let me make a couple of comments in closing. First, to me this is not a Bible or moral issue, it is a conscience issue. I have no objections to any woman not wearing pants. I also have no objection to a woman wearing pants. Secondly, I feel that there are enough named sins in the Bible that if we will preach against them, and practice not committing them, we will be way ahead and hope that you will not make this a matter of fellowship. Surely we can disagree on this in love and still have fellowship about the things we agree on. May God bless you all.

NEW BIRTH

(Continued from Page 3)

apostasy, that the Lord's church would apostatize. I don't believe the first word of that — not the Lord's church. You are going to (Continued on Page 5 Column 3)

The Baptist Examiner Forum II

SUBMIT QUESTIONS ON ANY BIBLE SUBJECT

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

Does the Fourth Commandment apply to men today?

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Yes, but not in the same sense, as it is applied to the children of Israel. Mark 2:27 says, "...The sabbath was made for man, and not man for the sabbath." We are told in Genesis the second chapter that God finished the work of creation in six days and rested on the seventh. He blessed and sanctified it. Jesus Christ finished His work of redemption, on the seventh day rested in the tomb, and arose on the first day from His rest.

The Old Testament Sabbath was a rest from creation. The New Testament Sabbath is a rest from redemption. Exodus 20:8-9 says, "Remember the sabbath day, to keep it holy." "Six days shalt thou labor, and do all thy work." God gave to man the Sabbath as a reward for his labor. The man who labors needs rest. God made it that way, and told him to keep the Sabbath in order to keep his body healthy, in order that the creature might serve the Creator. If we will listen to God and keep the Sabbath holy, then we will be in a position to serve Him. Our bodies will be rested, our minds will be rested, therefore, we can reason and worship.

Man today can not keep the Sabbath that was given to Israel, or to the Old Testament saints. I realize that there are some who claim that they do, but I question that. We are told in Numbers 15:32-41 that an Israelite was found gathering sticks on the Sabbath Day and the Lord commanded him to be stoned to death. This didn't seem like much work, but God was displeased with him. So there was not to be any work performed on the Sabbath under the Old Covenant.

Man today can not keep the Jewish Sabbath, because of the way we attend worship services. Our church people are scattered from here to yonder, and the Jews were restricted as to the distance they could travel on the Sabbath. A Sabbath day's journey was less than a mile. We, the New Testament Baptist Church in Bristol only have one family that lives in this distance.

Beloved, there is a Christian Sabbath. Hebrews 4:9-10 says, "There remaineth therefore a rest (sabbath) to the people of God." "For he that is entered into his rest, he also hath ceased from his own works, as God did from his." There is a rest for Christians, a Sabbath keeping if you please. The word rest is found eleven times in the third and fourth chapters of Hebrews. However, the word for rest in our text is a different word in the Greek than the others. The Greek word here is sabbatismos, a verbal noun, meaning a sabbath keeping. We

are not restricted as were the Israelites, therefore, we can travel as far as necessary to find a church that teaches and preaches the truth. We can rest from the toil of work on our job. We can take our minds off the job and the things of the world on the Christian Sabbath, or as we often say the Lord's day, for the Christian Sabbath is the Lord's day.

The Christian Sabbath is called the Lord's day for the same reason that the Supper is called the Lord's Supper. The Lord's supper commemorates His death; the Lord's day commemorates His Resurrection. Hebrews 7:12 says, "For the priesthood being changed, there is made of necessity a change also of the law." It is obvious that this refers to a change in the ceremonial and not the moral law of the Ten Commandments. The Sabbath relates to both the moral and ceremonial law. God gave us the Sabbath because every man needs to be recreated. Just as a battery can run down and needs to be recharged, so with man. I hope this answers your question. God bless.

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God blessed the seventh day because in it He rested from all His work which He did. It was set aside because He rested on the seventh day. This day was honored, or sanctified. Later the children of Israel rested on the seventh day. It was a day that the Lord had appointed for them to rest from all their labors. They were not to do any kind of work whatsoever, even to picking up sticks, and that under the penalty of death (Num. 15:32-33).

Men must obey God. It is not a light thing to disregard that which the Lord tells us to do. It is important that we see to it that we obey God. So the children of Israel were commanded to keep the Sabbath day. It was holy to them, sanctified, set aside for a special purpose by the Lord, and that special purpose was to rest. The Sabbath was made for man and not man for the Sabbath.

When Christ was on the earth, He entered the synagogue on the Sabbath day and taught the people. It was a special day of service unto the Lord. The Jews tried to get Jesus into trouble for doing good on the Sabbath day. That is, doing those things that was needful as getting the ox out of the ditch, or the Lord and His disciples picking the grains of corn to eat as they went through the grain field.

The Sabbath day belonged to the Jews during their time of worship in the synagogue and during the time of the tabernacle in their traveling from Egypt to Canaan.

When Christ arose from the dead, He arose on the first day

of the week the Sabbath was past. The first day of the week had come, and Mary Magdalene and some other women came to anoint the body of Jesus. It was early in the morning (Mark 16:2) and they found the empty grave. Jesus was not there, He had arisen from the dead. He arose on the first day of the week for the Sabbath had ended. After the resurrection of our Lord, He met with the disciples on the first day of the week. (John 20:19; 20:26).

Christ arose on the first day of the week, and we are to meet on this day as a special day of service unto the Lord. It is a day set aside to serve the Lord in memory of His death, burial and resurrection. We honor and adore Him for the sacrifice He made for sinners like ourselves.

The fourth commandment is not binding on us in the sense that it was the nation Israel; but we do have a special day set aside to serve the Lord, not a day of rest, as the Sabbath day was a day of rest. Ours is a day of serving the Lord on a special and particular day, the Lord's Day.

NEW BIRTH

(Continued from Page 4)

have to agree with the Divine Son of God and accept what Jesus said in Matthew 16:18, 19, or disbelieve what the Master has said and accept the theorizing of men.

What did the Master say? Did He say that the church, His church, would apostatize? Did He say that His church would go so far from the truth that it would lose its identity? No! He said, "...upon this rock (Christ Himself) I will build my church; and the gates of hell shall not prevail against it" (Matthew 16:18). And in Ephesians 3:21: "Unto him (that is God) be glory in the church by Christ Jesus throughout all ages, world without end. Amen." The Lord's church apostatize? I hardly think so; for Jesus said, "The gates of hell shall not prevail against my church." I believe that with all my heart. I believe that the council of the unseen world shall not prevail against the Lord's church.

And then we would notice another thing that the new birth is not: it is not the reformation of life. May I repeat with emphasis: I would accept this as a strong passage teaching the individual case of apostasy (in II Peter 2:22) if God's Book designated God's people as hound dogs and old sows that wallow in the mire. But here is exactly what the Apostle Peter is talking about: the person that made the resolution, reformed his life, quit his meanness and in a little while ran out of gas, did so because he didn't have much to begin with. He reformed his life; he was not transformed by Christ.

You can take an old sow, as the Proverb says, bring her into the parlor, cut her toe nails, trim her ears, paint her face, wash her until she smells like a baby; put powder all over her, wash and scrub her, clean her until

she is cleaner than a human, put a ribbon around her neck and a few on her ears. She looks fine, but turn her loose and it won't be three minutes until she is right back wallowing in the mire. Why? Because it is her nature to do so. Her nature has not been changed in the least by all the cleaning on the outside. They washed her on the outside, painted her face, trimmed her hoofs, trimmed her ears, but her nature remained the same; she remained a hog, and that is why she returned to the mud puddle. So it is with men, women, boys and girls who decide to clean up their lives. They join the church — that is all there is to it, they think — and in just a little while they go back as the "dog to his vomit and the sow to her wallowing in the mire." And it isn't a case of apostasy, beloved, but it is a case of never having experienced the new birth. Their nature has never been changed.

Now you might ask me the question this morning: "Brother Cox, what did Nicodemus mean?"

You know, I didn't realize that people could err so much from the truth. The third chapter of John, first 10 verses, is just as plain as John 3:16. There is nothing difficult about it. There might be some things involved in the new birth that you can't understand, but as far as the description laid down in the Book of God, there is nothing of a difficult nature about it. Yet I read one time where a man said that Nicodemus was so upset and disturbed because he didn't understand the new birth, inasmuch at this particular time, was the first he had ever heard about the new birth, that Jesus had introduced a new doctrine the Jews had never heretofore known anything about.

Now this is modernism pure and simple, and actually, as far as I am personally concerned, that is rank infidelity. It depicts one of two things: either a person disbelieves the Word of God or he has never read it. Notice what the 10th verse of John 3 has to say: Jesus, when Nicodemus asked Him the question, "How can these things be?" said "Art thou a teacher of Israel and knowest not these things?"

Do you think for one moment of time that if Nicodemus had no way of knowing previous to this conversation he had with Jesus, that Jesus would have deliberately mocked and criticized him for not knowing something about which he could not have possibly known, had it not been taught? But it had been taught: it had been taught for 4,000 years. God introduced it in the Garden of Eden — the doctrine of the new birth. The doctrine of the new birth is just as old as mankind; every person that has ever been saved, or ever will be saved, was saved when he experienced the new birth.

It makes no difference what people believe or say or think, there is no way for men to be saved apart and separate from the new birth. Jesus makes it plain in the text; for three times He said, "Ye must be born again." There is no substitute for it. It is a spiritual truth, not a fleshly birth. Jesus tells us in John 3:6, "That which is born of the flesh is flesh; and that which is born of the Spirit is spirit. Marvel not that I say unto thee, Ye must be born again."

That which is born of the flesh is flesh, that which is born

of the Spirit is spirit. Man, you know, is a triune being: he has a body, soul and spirit. The body of man is that which makes him world-conscious; the soul of man is that which makes him self-conscious, or conscious of self, and the spirit of man makes him capable of being God-conscious, capable of communing with God. The spirit, that is the thing that is born of the Spirit of God, the spirit inside of man, that which you cannot see — the spiritual birth.

I cannot pass up this text, John 3:5, without commenting on it. Jesus, the second time, said to Nicodemus, "Except a man be born of water and of the Spirit, he cannot enter the kingdom of God."

I wish to drive home this fact concerning this text: First, last and always the way that men enter the kingdom of God is through the new birth. He is born into the kingdom of God just as he is born into the family of God. But notice there are some people who say that the 5th verse means that men are baptized into the family of God. But men are baptized into the church, not the family or kingdom of God (I Cor. 12:13).

But I want you to get this: the word "water" spoken of here in John 3:5 has no reference to literal water; it is used first; it precedes the word "spirit;" then, if you take it literally, man has to be baptized; and then he experiences the new birth afterwards. Do you believe that? I don't; for the Bible doesn't teach it. I want you to get it now. In the first place, baptism is not a birth and we are talking about a birth. Where in all the Book of God can you find that baptism is a birth? Baptism is a burial in water. Romans 6:4 says, "Therefore we are buried with him by baptism into death: that like as Christ was raised up from the dead by the glory of the Father, even so we also should walk in newness of life." We are buried with Him in baptism into death.

Baptism, therefore, isn't a birth. If baptism were a birth then water would be the mother of the new born soul, but water isn't my mother, thank you! But get this now: water is used throughout the New Testament to illustrate the Spirit. In John 7:36-39, "In the last day, that great day of the feast, Jesus stood and cried, saying, If any man thirst, let him come unto me, and drink. He that believeth in me, as the scripture hath said, Out of his belly shall flow rivers of living water. (But this spake he of the Spirit, which they that believe on him should receive: for the Holy Spirit was not yet given; because that Jesus was not yet glorified)."

Therefore, water means the Spirit. So actually here is what Jesus said: "Except a man be born of water and (that word 'and' is kai in the Greek, and it means even) or even the Spirit he cannot enter the Kingdom of God."

Let us notice the verse in its entirety. "Except a man be born of water even the Spirit he cannot enter the kingdom of God."

I want you to notice the two agents God uses in producing the new birth. They both work harmoniously: you cannot

(Continued on Page 6 Column 1)



QUESTION: Who comforted a man by sitting silently beside him for a week?

ANSWER: — Job's three friends, Job 2:11, 13. "Now when Job's three friends heard of all this evil that was come upon him, they came every one from his own place... for they had made an appointment together to come to mourn with him and to comfort him... So they sat down with him upon the ground seven days and seven nights, and none spake a word unto him: for they saw that his grief was very great."

NEW BIRTH

(Continued from Page 5)

separate one from the other. They both have their own office, that is, the Word of God and the Spirit of God. God uses both agents to produce the new birth, and God did not mean here in the text that He uses the Spirit as the only agent. He uses both the Word and the Spirit. Actually, the Holy Spirit is the agent and the Word is the instrument.

Then notice in the 16th verse that He speaks of "believers." And we might ask the question: How do men believe? "So then faith cometh by hearing, and hearing by the word of God" (Rom. 10:17). Paul, writing to the Corinthian brethren said in I Corinthians 4:15, "For though ye have ten thousand instructors in Christ, yet have ye not many fathers: for in Christ Jesus I have begotten you through the gospel."

Again in I Peter 1:23, "Being born again, not of corruptible seed, but of incorruptible, by the word of God, which liveth and abideth forever... This is the word which by the gospel is preached unto you."

And then in James 1:18, "Of his own will begat he us with the word of truth, that we should be a kind of a first fruits of his creatures."

Thus, it takes both the Spirit of God and the Word of God to produce the new birth.

Then how do men, and when, do they experience the new birth? Men experience the new birth through the operation of the Spirit and the Gospel. "As Moses lifted up the serpent in the wilderness, even so must the Son of man be lifted up: That whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have eternal life... For God sent not his Son into the world to condemn the world; but that the world through him might be saved" (John 3:14, 15, 17).

But faith is the effect of the new birth, and not the cause. So men experience the new birth when the Spirit with the Word

imparts life to them. Jesus explained it. When men hear the truth of God, then the Holy Spirit uses the Word, the Word of God, to bring lasting conviction to their hearts and gives them enabling grace to trust in Jesus Christ — and this enabling grace is the impartation of life by the Spirit of God. "For ye are all the children of God by faith in Jesus Christ" (Gal. 3:26), actually sons. One who is a child by birth is a son by faith.

"Whosoever believeth that Jesus is the Christ is born of God..." (I John 5:1). Actually this should read: "Whosoever believeth that Jesus is the Christ has been born of God." So men believe in Christ as the effect of the new birth.

Now we come to the last thought and that is: What are the results of the new birth? Men become the children of God; they are born into the family of God. They have not been worked over; they have not been overhauled, but they have been made new creatures in Christ Jesus, the Lord: these are the results of the new birth.

"Therefore," said Paul, "If any man be in Christ, he is a new creature: Old things are passed away, behold, all things are become new" (II Cor. 5:17).

If a man be in Christ Jesus he is a new creation. Then what does the Master do on the inside of man? He doesn't reform; He transforms men's lives. There is a great deal of difference in self-reformation and the transforming power of God: He transforms. When men believe in Christ and experience the birth which is from above, they become the children of God, and they are born into the family of God, the kingdom, and it is the power of the Lord that transforms them; thus, they become new creatures in Christ Jesus the Lord. Their very life is changed. I want you to get it now: implanted in the believer's heart, implanted in the twice-born soul, is the very nature of the Divine Son of God. It is there, whether folk accept it or not. "Whereby are given unto us exceeding great and precious promises; that by these ye might be partakers of the Divine nature, having escaped the corruption that is in the world through lust" (II Peter 1:4).

When is the Divine nature implanted in a man's heart? When he experiences the new birth, because the nature of Jesus Christ that has been planted inwardly is that which transforms him, and he becomes a new creature. "Lie not one to another, seeing that ye have put off the old man with his deeds; And have put on the new man, which is renewed in knowledge after the image of him that created him" (Col. 3:9, 10).

He is a new man because he has been created in the very image of Him that created him. He takes on the likeness of God; implanted in his heart is the nature of Jesus Christ; he has been born into the family of God, and the power of Jesus transforms his life. If the power of Jesus doesn't transform his life, he hasn't experienced the new birth. This is the truth taught in the Word of God, and I am going to say with the old Negro preacher I heard many years ago — one of the greatest sermons I have ever heard — who asked in closing, the question:

"Have you been born again? Have you experienced the birth from above? Have you felt the power of God? Has the power of Jesus transformed your life? Have you been born again?"

That is what I would ask you this morning. If you have not, may the Spirit of God take the Word this morning and use it to implant life in you. Amen.

TESTIMONY

(Continued from Page 1)

the moment in which he begins as a believer till that last moment on earth when he shall be about to depart out of the world unto the Father, his whole life is encompassed within the divine circle of salvation. God is working salvation for him, and salvation in him, and salvation by him, and is giving him to receive the fulness of salvation which he shall for ever enjoy in the world to come.

Beloved friends, we rejoice in that right royal word "salvation." We would let its echo fly over the whole world. To us it is a word of great meaning. It does not signify alone salvation from the punishment of sin, though it comprehends that blessing, and we are glad that it does so; but it means complete and immediate salvation from the love of sin, conscious salvation from the power of sin, growing salvation from the propensity to sin, and ultimate salvation from all tendency to sin. When we have gained full salvation, we shall never, never sin again; but shall find ourselves before the throne of God as pure as that throne, made perfect by the work of the Holy Spirit, who will have sanctified us wholly, spirit, soul, and body. Men of the world think, when we talk of salvation, that we mean escaping from hell. This is all they would fear, and so it strikes them as the great matter: but we are not of their mind. Being delivered from the pains and penalties of evil is certainly a great boon, but it is by no means the greatest. It follows in the train of a grander blessing, even as the blaze of the comet follows the central light. The righteous dread sin more than hell, and wrong is more terrible to them than any punishment which awaits it. The joy of salvation to us is that we are delivered from this present evil world, delivered from the lusts of the flesh, delivered from the old death of natural corruption, delivered from the power of Satan, and from the dominion of evil. Our salvation will not be full till we are totally and finally delivered from every trace of sin, and are "without fault before the throne of God." Sanctification completed is our salvation perfected; purity without spot will be our Paradise Regained.

"The salvation of the righteous" in the broadest sense of the word "is of the Lord"; and the more breadth of meaning we give to it, the more completely we shall see that it must be divine. At the same time, our life is made up of a series of salvations, and each of these is of the Lord. We are constantly being saved, saved from this and that form of danger and evil. As each daily trouble threatens to engulf us, we are saved from it. As each temptation, like a dragon, threatens to swallow us up, we are saved from it. Our God is the God of

salvations, and unto him belong the issues from death. We escape from deaths oft; yea, and from the very belly of hell; and still we live to sing, as Jonah sang when he was in the depths of the sea, "Salvation is of the Lord."

I have said that this glorious salvation, which is of the Lord, is the peculiar heritage of believers. They alone know their need of it, and they alone participate in it. Look at the ungodly man who is pictured in this psalm. He does not want salvation. He flourishes like the green bay-tree: he spreads his branches to overshadow everybody else. Such men need no salvation. "Their eyes stand out with fatness: they have more than heart could wish." They want no salvation: their lands are abundant, their house is full of treasure, and they leave the rest of their substance to their babes. They put no trust in the name of the Lord: "They call their lands after their own names." They want no God: they have no sighs after him, they never cry, "As the hart panteth after the waterbrooks so panteth my soul after thee, O God!" They have no trials in their lives, and "there are no bands in their death: but their strength is firm. They are not in trouble as other men; neither are they plagued like other men." The rod of God's children does not fall upon them. "Whom the Lord loveth he chasteneth;" but often those whom He loves not, He leaves to indulge in such pleasure as they can find. He gives His swine good measure of husks, for He would not be unkind even to them; and there they lie and feed without fear, knowing nothing of another world, neither caring for it.

See the distinction between the righteous man who fears God, and him that fears Him not: were it not for this word "salvation," their ease and prosperity might make us envy the ungodly; but this turns the scale. Because "the salvation of the righteous is of the Lord," we would take the worst portion that ever was meted out to them in preference to the best that was ever given to the ungodly. Taking all for all, God's worst is better than the devil's best, and the portion of God's saints at the lowest ebb is better than the portion of the wicked, even when their joys are the flood.

I am going to speak at this time upon our text as a statement by itself. It is complete and self-contained. It is a diamond of the first water. Its words are few, but its sense is precious. "The salvation of the righteous is of the Lord."

I. Our first head is this: This is the essence of sound doctrine! "The salvation of the righteous is of the Lord." There are several young men here who go forth to preach the gospel. I hope that they will speak with clear knowledge and attractive speech; but this is far from being the main object of my desire: I want them really to preach the gospel, the whole gospel, and nothing but the gospel. I reckon preaching to be gospel preaching, and sound preaching, in proportion as it is consistent with this statement: "The salvation of the righteous is of the Lord." It is not every preacher who proclaims this truth in bold terms, and in plain English. More or less I hope that all who preach Christ crucified would subscribe to this; but some are a little afraid of it in all its breadth and

length. They must bring man in a little. They must have him do something, or be something. They are always afraid lest grace should be misunderstood, and should be turned into licentiousness; and, truly, I share in their fear, though I would not use their way of preventing the evil which I dread. I have known some of these timorous ones try to say "free grace"; but they have had little impediment in their speech, and the word has come out "free-will." They have meant that it should be all of grace, but by some means or other there has been so much hesitancy, and such a deal of fencing, that one could hardly tell grace from works. There will be no hesitancy on my part when I say that "the salvation of the righteous of the Lord": neither will you find me guarding the statement as if I thought it a lump of spiritual dynamite which might do infinite damage.

"The salvation of the righteous is of the Lord" in the planning. Long before we are in existence, God had planned the way of salvation. Before the fall, he had ordained the covenant by which the fallen should be restored; and that plan shows, in every line of it, that consummate wisdom and infinite love which can be found nowhere but in the Lord. He took counsel with none, and none instructed Him: He alone fixed the eternal settlements of unchanging love.

"The salvation of the righteous is of the Lord" as to the persons who are included in it, for God hath chosen from the beginning His people, and "whom he did foreknow he also did predestinate to be conformed unto the image of his Son." There is a choice somewhere, and I am persuaded we have not chosen Him, but He hath chosen us. Did not the Lord Jesus say as much? He is first and foremost in salvation, and though we gladly run when He calls, yet His call comes first, and His choice comes before the call. The salvation of the righteous was determined on in the council chambers of eternity, or ever the stars began to shine. It is of God, and of God only.

And as it is of the Lord in the planning, so it is of the Lord in the providing. It was He who gave His Son from His bosom, and truly our Lord Jesus Christ is the full purchase-price of our salvation. We do not add a penny to it. The mortgage upon lost humanity was paid off by Christ to the last farthing, without any contribution on our part to make out the matchless price.

The Spirit of God, who is another great item in the provision of salvation, is of the Lord. God has given us the Spirit. The Holy Ghost comes, not according to our mind or will, but according to the gift and purpose of the Lord. Nothing is lacking for the salvation of men. God has provided all. He has not left the garment almost long enough, but needing that we should add a fringe; nor has He provided a feast almost sufficient for us if we bring at least another loaf; nor has He built a house of mercy, almost completed, but leaving us to add a few more tiles to the roof. No, no. The work is finished, and from top to bottom salvation is of the Lord. All covenant provisions are already in the Lord Jesus in full, and the salvation of the righteous is entirely of the Lord in the providing.

(Continued on Page 8 Column 1)

STUDIES IN EZEKIEL CHAPTER FORTY

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"This and the eight following chapters contain a vision of a city and temple herein described, and are thought to be the most difficult part of the whole Bible. The Jews forbid the reading of it till a man is arrived to thirty years of age; and then he must expect to meet with things in it he does not understand, and must be left until Elias comes to explain them. Many christian commentators have omitted the exposition of these chapters; and all acknowledge the difficulty in them" (John Gill).

We should keep in mind, as we proceed to study the chapters before us, that the reference is to the house from which God will activate all of His promises to Israel relative to their Millennial rest. This is why, for example, that the door to the temple is twice as wide as that of Solomon's temple and why there are many windows.

"In the five and twentieth year of our captivity, in the beginning of the year, in the tenth day of the month, in the fourteenth year after that the city was smitten, in the selfsame day the hand of the Lord was upon me, and brought me thither" (Ezek. 40:1).

The year spoken of here in verse one was either 572, 573, 574 or even 575 B.C. Those who have researched this matter vary in their conclusions. It is believed that the month was Nisan - the seventh month. The tenth day was the time when preparations for the Passover were begun. Ezekiel explains further that this particular vision occurred in the fourteenth year after Jerusalem had been smitten. It is obvious that the subject before us has great significance, since Ezekiel is so careful to give the exact date. It is also very significant to observe that Ezekiel's exactness is tied in with Jerusalem and the temple. These, in fact, are the main topics which are before us. It was to Jerusalem and the temple that Ezekiel was transported in vision to observe the year, month and day which are before us.

"In the visions of God brought He me into the land of Israel, and set me upon a very high mountain, by which was as the frame of a city on the south" (Ezek. 40:2). Ezekiel, when arriving by vision into the land of Israel, was set down on a very high mountain. The mountain was probably Mount Zion. It was from this lofty place that he was privileged to observe the frame of a city on the south. He, in other words, was privileged to observe the plan for and the model of the city. God, then, lets Ezekiel in on His plans for the future Jerusalem and the future temple. We, of course, by way of Ezekiel, are granted the privilege to observe God's future plans too. We may say that God, in the chapters before us, lays out His blueprint before us.

"And he brought me thither, and, behold, there was a man, whose appearance was like the appearance of brass, with a line of flax in his hand, and a measuring reed; and he stood in the gate" (Ezek. 40:3).

Jesus is obviously the man whom Ezekiel saw in his vision, since it is by and through Him that Israel is to be restored. It is through Him that the city is to be rebuilt and the temple

restored. You will observe that our Lord's appearance to Ezekiel was like unto the appearance of brass, or what we know as copper. The brass carries with it the message of strength and endurance. It also signifies unwavering steadfastness. Note carefully the following passage:

"His bones are as strong pieces of brass; his bones are like bar or iron" (Job. 40:18).

Note also the following passage: "Because I knew that thou art obstinate, and thy neck is an iron sinew, and thy brow brass" (Isa. 48:4). The



Willard Willis

man whom Ezekiel was privileged to see had a "line of flax in his hand, and a measuring reed," and with these He measured the boundaries for the future temple which is to be built in Jerusalem. The measuring of the temple carries with it the exact boundaries of the temple structure and the exact rules by which all who worship there are to be governed. The Lord's church, for example, must always remain within the frame work of truth. He who has the appearance of brass will not tolerate false doctrine in His church. You will recall from the book of Revelation that He who walked among the churches had feet like unto fine brass.

The measuring instrument which is termed a "reed" comes from the Hebrew word "kaneh." It is from this word that we get the ecclesiastical word "canon." The words "kaneh" and "canon" both have reference to rule, especially a rule of religious belief and duty. This is why the books of the Old and New Testaments are called "The Canon." They, in other words, are an infallible rule of all truth, faith and practice. We, before purchasing land, have the boundaries laid out. We alone have rights inside these boundaries. All others must stay out if we say so. So will it be with God's new city and temple. The "line of flax" by which the temple is also to be measured, also carries with it the thought of the canon. The fiber of flax, in fact, is the source of linen - linen which is very durable.

"And the man said unto me, Son of man, behold with thine eyes, and hear with thine ears, and set thine heart upon all that I shall shew thee; for to the intent that I might shew them unto thee art thou brought hither: declare all that thou seest to the house of Israel" (Ezek. 40:4).

God, in chapter thirty six, revealed to Ezekiel how that He was going to restore the land area of Israel. God proceeded in chapter thirty seven to reveal to Ezekiel how that Israel, who was as very dry bones, was to live as a nation again. God, in chapters thirty eight and thirty nine, revealed how He had built a fence around Israel - a fence which the Russian army and her allies would not be able to

penetrate. God, now that He has restored the land area, brought Israel back to the land and routed all her enemies, sets up His house (temple) in the midst of them and proceeds to reign from Jerusalem. The temple, then, is to be a place where God is glorified and where His people are edified. All the particulars of the temple (windows, etc.) point to the fact that God is to dwell among His people and His people are to be enlightened and greatly blessed by His presence. The various rooms in the temple, the stairs, etc., all relate to the glorification of God and the benefits to those who are privileged to worship thee. We, therefore, as we proceed, must look for these things in the Scriptures which are before us. We will miss the mark if we do otherwise.

The words, "behold with thine eyes and hear with thine ears" (above), mean that Ezekiel is to cause these things to register, or be written with indelible ink on his mind and heart. We are prone to look and not see, to listen and not hear. God, however, admonishes Ezekiel not to make such a mistake. Ezekiel must give the vision his undivided attention, since this is why he was transported to this high mountain; furthermore, he was to declare all that he saw to the house of Israel.

We, too, have been transported by the Spirit to the high mountain of God's Word and we are to give diligent attention to all that the Holy Spirit shows us. We are to remember all that we have been taught so that we may glorify God and instruct others so that they may glorify God too.

"And behold a wall on the outside of the house round about, and in the man's hand a measuring reed of six cubits long by the cubit and an hand breadth; so he measured the breadth of the building, one reed; and the height, one reed" (Ezek. 40:5).

The measuring reed which our Lord is to use in measuring the temple is said to be six cubits and an hand breadth. The hand breadth is four inches. If we add the hand breadth on to the common cubit of eighteen inches, we will have a cubit of twenty two inches. This twenty two inch cubit then is the sacred cubit - the cubit by which it is proper that the temple be measured.

Let me emphasize again that the act of measuring is a judicial act and the instrument used is a reed (canon) which equals six cubits of twenty two inches each, or one hundred thirty two inches (eleven feet). Some think that the Hebrew cubit could have been about twenty one inches. This length plus a three and one half inch hand breadth would make a reed of twelve feet. The temple before us, the altar and those who worship there, are also referred to in Revelation 11:1. John, according to this passage, did the measuring. He, however, was not to measure the court, since it had been given over to the Gentiles for the last three and one half years of the Great Tribulation.

Let us now consider the "reed" again, since in Revelation 11:1 it is said that the reed used to measure the temple will be like a rod. This fact means that the reed, in addition to being a measuring instrument, is

also to be an instrument of chastisement. The chastisement of Israel, as set forth by the measuring, will occur during the last three and one half years of the Great Tribulation. It will be as stated in the following passages: "The burden of the word of the LORD for Israel, saith the LORD, which stretcheth forth the heavens, and layeth the foundations of the earth, and formeth the spirit of man within him. Behold, I will make Jerusalem a cup of trembling unto all the people round about, when they shall be in the seige both against Judah and against Jerusalem... And it shall come to pass in that day, that I will seek to destroy all the nations that come against Jerusalem" (Zech. 9:1, 2, 9).

We are to learn then from the measuring of the temple, that the judicial work of measuring will be a means of cleansing Israel by way of chastisement and a means of distinguishing things that are sacred. There will be a line drawn between falsehood and truth. It is as stated in the following passage: "And they shall teach my people the difference between the holy and the profane, and cause them to discern between the unclean and the clean" (Ezek. 44:23).

"Then came he unto the gate which looked toward the east, and went up the stairs thereof, and measured the threshold of the gate, which was one reed broad" (Ezek. 40:6). The heathen always worshipped toward the east, but here the entrance to the temple will be on the east while the holy of holies will be on the west end.

You will observe that the reference is made to stairs which ascend upward-upward from the earthly to the spiritual-upward toward God where worship is to be rendered. It is "come up hither" as stated in Revelation 4:1.

"And every little chamber was a reed long, and one reed broad; and between the little chambers were five cubits; and the threshold of the gate by the porch of the gate within was one reed. He measured also the porch of the gate within, one reed" (Ezek. 40:7, 8).

You will observe that the "chambers" were adjoining to gates. They are to be "little chambers" since they are about ten feet square. The chambers or lodges were for the purpose of accommodating the ministering priests. Perhaps the little chambers or small dwelling places for God's priests, inform us that His priests must not expect too much from the world. They are to seek only those things which come from above. We, in fact, as His people are to be thankful to be a part of the Lord's work even if we are only door keepers.

All of the little chambers are to be of equal size. There are to be no big "I's" and little "you's" as far as God's ministers are concerned. None of His ministers are to be lord over the others. He alone is the Lord of all. The temple, of course is God's dwelling place, or His house and in His house we have many "little chambers," or dwelling places. This fact reminds us of John 14:2 where it is said, "In my Father's house are many mansions." The Lord, today, dwells

in His church so that these many little chambers or lodges in God's house, may represent the Lord's churches where we dwell in His presence. It is to be remembered that He continually walks among His churches.

I desire to point out that the actual measurements of the temple are nothing in contrast to the obedience of those who reside there. The exact dimensions of a church building, for example, mean nothing in comparison to the actual doctrines of the body who meet there. I see also, then, in the measurements of the temple, a measurement of that which is to be taught there. You will observe that the measurements are exact. They are not to be deviated from, that is, nothing is to be added to them or taken away from them. Keep in mind that we are, when talking about the temple, talking about God's dwelling place. It is in His dwelling place that we find these "little chambers," or lodges. I may add that I would rather dwell in one of these "little chambers" where God is than to dwell in a mansion made of gold and to have ten thousand servants. I would even gladly accept the position of a door keeper to the place where God dwells.

"Then measured he the porch of the gate, eight cubits; and the posts thereof, two cubits; and the porch of the gate was inward. And the little chambers of the gate eastward were three on this side, and three on that side; they three were of one measure; and the posts had one measure on this side and on that side. And He measured the breadth of the entry of the gate, ten cubits; and the length of the gate thirteen cubits. The space also before the little chambers was one cubit on this side, and the space was one cubit on that side; and the little chambers were six cubits on this side, and six cubits on that side. He measured then the gate from the roof of the little chamber to the roof of another: the breadth was five and twenty cubits, door against door. He made also posts of three score cubits, even unto the post of the court round about the gate. And from the face of the gate of the entrance unto the face of the porch of the inner gate were fifty cubits" (Ezek. 40:9-15).

The specifications which these passages have set before us are, no doubt, the blueprint from which Israel will build God's future temple. Fausset, in his Bible Encyclopedia, says regarding this temple.

"The Millennial temple in Jerusalem (see Ezek. 40-48). The dimensions are those of Solomon's temple; and inner shrine 20 cubits square (Ezek. 41:4); the nave (central part running lengthwise) 20 by 40; the chambers round 10 wide, including the thickness of the walls; the whole with the porch, 40 by 80; but the outer court 500 reeds on each of its sides (42:16), i.e., a square of one mile and one seventh, considerably more than the area of the old Jerusalem, temple included. The spiritual lesson is, the

(Continued on Page 8 Column 1)

EZEKIEL

(Continued from Page 7)

church of God, the temple of the Holy Spirit, hereafter to be manifested on earth, shall be on the scale far surpassing its present dimensions; then first shall Jehovah be worshipped by the whole congregation of the earth, led by Israel the leader of the grand choir."

TESTIMONY

(Continued from Page 6)

So, dear friends, it is of the Lord in the applying. The first application of the blessings of the covenant to us is of God. Of course, that first application is in regeneration, when the soul first begins to live. The first sense of need of mercy springs, not from nature, but is a work of grace. The first desire we have to be right, the first prayer we breathe towards God — all this is the movement of eternal grace upon our souls, which else would have lain as dead as the corpses in their graves. The Lord first deals with us before we have any inclination whatsoever to deal with Him. We do not see this truth at first. Possibly we discover it months after our conversion, when we come to sit down, and look over our experience. Then we cry, "Yes! Hadst thou not sought me, I had never sought thee. Hadst thou not drawn me, I had never run to thee. Hadst thou never looked on me in love, I had never looked to thee in faith. It is thy free grace which began with me. I own that the Alpha of my salvation is of the Lord." The knowledge of this truth usually comes to us as we advance in knowledge: the full understanding of it is a fruit of the Spirit, and belongs to our riper years rather than to our spiritual infancy.

As salvation is of the Lord at the commencement, so it is as to the carrying of it on. Rest assured, beloved, there is no true growth in grace except that which is of the Lord. Nay, there is no sustaining the position to which you have reached except by the Lord.

"And every virtue we possess, And every victory won, And every thought of holiness, Are His, and His alone."

He has wrought all our works in us, and if we have produced any fruit to the honour of His name, from Him has our fruit come, for our Lord truly said, "Without me ye can do nothing." We must give Him all the glory, for certainly He has given us all the grace; and as it has been, so will it be. Between here and heaven there will be nothing of our own in the matter. We shall work out our own salvation with fear and trembling, because He first works it in us to will and to do of His own good pleasure. There is no working out our salvation unless the Lord works it in. We bring to the surface of our life what He works in the deep foundation of our inward nature; but both within and without the spiritual life is all of grace. When we put our foot upon the threshold of glory, and pass through the gate of pearl to the golden pavement of the heavenly city, the last step will be as much taken through the grace of God as was the first step when we turned unto our great Father in our rags and misery. Left by the grace of God for a single moment, we should perish. We are dependent as much upon grace for spiritual

life as we are upon the air we breathe for this natural life. Take the atmosphere from us: put as under an exhausted receiver, and we die: take thy grace from us, O our God, and we perish at once! What else could happen to us?

Brethren, we must always believe this and preach it, for it is the sum of all true doctrine. If you do not make salvation to be wholly of the Lord, depend upon it you will have to clip salvation down, and make it a small matter. I have always desired to preach a great salvation, and I do not think that any other is worth preaching. If salvation is of man, then you do not wonder that man falls from grace. Of course he does. What man begins, man also soon ends in his own way with a failure. When God saves He saves eternally. Some one said to me the other day, "I do not quite know about that doctrine of final perseverance whether it is true or not." So I said to him, "What kind of life does Jesus Christ give His sheep?" He answered very correctly — "He has said, 'I give unto my sheep eternal life.'" Very well, does not that settle it? If he has given them eternal life, they have eternal life. "But," he said, "might they not die?" I answered, "Is it not clear that those who die have not eternal life? If they had eternal life, how could they die? Does eternal life mean six months' life?" "No." "Does it only mean six hundred years' life?" "No, it must mean nothing less than life which has no end." Death is out of the question. I must live if I am one of those of whom the Great Shepherd says, "I give unto my sheep eternal life." But what is next? If you cannot quite see the truth from that one expression, what follows? Will the sheep of Christ ever perish? Here is His answer. "They shall never perish." Does not that secure them? What language could better describe their security? But another question is raised: — May it not mean that, if they get away from the Lord Jesus, they shall perish? Then comes the next sentence — "Neither shall any pluck them out of my hand." Does not that answer it? Oh, but perhaps the Saviour might fail! We think not so: but listen again: "My Father, which gave them me, is greater than all; and no man is able to pluck them out of my Father's hand."

There are four great reasons why believers are and must be saved; neither can anything shake the force of any one of them. If words mean anything, those who are in Christ are safe. The Lord God Almighty has given unto them eternal life, they shall never perish, neither shall any pluck them out of Christ's hand, and over that first hand of Jesus is the Father's hand to make assurance doubly sure.

Salvation, then, is of the Lord. This is a doctrine to be believed. If you do not believe it, you are sure to minimize and make small the salvation, and specially are you likely to deprive it of its certainty, and immutability. It is a pity that you should attempt this, for thus you rob Christ of His power, God of His glory, and the saints of their comfort. That is the awkward point about a salvation which is of man: it is worth nothing when you get it. We want an eternal salvation. We want a salvation which does really save. We want something which is not made up of "ifs and

ands," and "buts," and "peradventures," and "may be," and "if you do this," and "If you do that." We need sure, immutable, abiding, unchanging salvation; and this is what we get, and what we are not ashamed to preach, while we thunder out this truth, "The salvation of the righteous is of the Lord."

"All of grace" — from base to summit, Grace on every course and stone; Grace in planning, rearing, crowning, Sovereign grace, and grace alone!"

II. Secondly, this is not only the essence of sound doctrine, but this is a necessary fact. "The salvation of the righteous is of the Lord." Assuredly it must be so, or else they will never be saved. Look for a moment, you that love the Lord, to your own inward conflicts. Beloved, are we not all alike, tossed to and fro with the uprising of inbred sin; but there are times with most of God's saints when they are hard put to it to withstand a certain raging temptation: they have to struggle hard to keep it down. And when they have mastered that evil, another form of sin comes on the sly, and attempts to stab them in the back. You were giving all your attention to one insidious foe, and at that terrible moment you were set upon by another; and you had to turn round, and bend all your strength in the name of God to resist this second adversary. Nor was this all, a third evil bent its bow against you, and a fourth prepared a net for your feet. Thus you were beset behind and before; and had it not been the Lord that was on your side, you would have been quickly swallowed up. Some of us know the truth of this in our experience if the rest of you do not.

Salvation must be of the Lord with me, I know, or else my inward lusts, my proud spirit, my rebellious will, and my natural despondency will surely ruin me. Do you not feel it to be so with you? If God does not save you, you are a lost man. You must feel that. I know that those who have no conflicts sing another song, and praise themselves. Your carpet-knights, who wear the regiments of Christianity, but know nothing of battle with inbred sin, may talk about salvation by self, but he that is hard put to it to wrestle against all wrongdoing will tell another tale. He who grieves if he even utters a rash word, or allows an impure thought to cross his mind, feels that if God does not save him, saved he never can be; and he sees it to be a necessary fact that the salvation of the righteous must be of the Lord.

When you have looked within a sufficient time to convince you, just look at your outward temptations. Ah! we little know what many of our brethren and sisters have to endure in the form of temptation in their own houses from their own friends. Many have a very hard fight of it. I know some now present who will I believe persevere and hold on to the end, but almost every day they endure a martyrdom. Cruel words are spoken, and unkind actions are done, and a bitter spirit is shown towards them because they are the people of God. Salvation must be of the Lord to these poor persecuted ones, or they will faint under their oppressions. Outside in the world, what temptations abound! You cannot engage in any business without finding that it has its peculiar sins. Many things are done in trade — many matters

established by custom — which the scrupulously upright child of God cannot tolerate. He has to set his face against the general habit, and hence he has a battle. Need I go into particulars? Why, brethren, we are surrounded with snares! They are on the table: you may readily sin there. They are in your secret chamber: you are tempted there. They are in the counting-house, and on the study-table. You cannot sit down to read a book without being in danger; you cannot go among the crowd without risk. Depend upon it, if any man is saved in the midst of this wicked and ungodly generation, in which the very air smells of corruption, and the common talk is polluting — his salvation will be evidently of the Lord. If any believer remains steadfast in this day of philosophic doubt, verily, I say unto you, his salvation must be of the Lord. He cannot go through this Vanity Fair, he cannot pass through this horrible slough, this Stygian bog of modern society, and be pure in heart, and lip, and life, unless God shall grant him His salvation.

Besides that, our salvation will certainly be of the Lord because the world hates us. It cannot help it. If you are a genuine Christian, the world will not love you. There may be natural traits of kindness and goodness about you, which even the outside world may respect; but in proportion as you are definitely and thoroughly a Christian you will have the dogs at you. Worldlings will not see a little flaw in your character but what they will report it, and magnify it. Some of us cannot do anything but what we are misrepresented, so that we have become careless of what people say about us, so long as we know in our own conscience that we are clear. The act which we have done with the most transparent sincerity has been the very one which they have set upon as though it were a piece of trickery. Blessed be God, the world is crucified to us, and we are crucified unto the world! But if we are to escape its venom — especially those who stand in the front of the battle — if we are to hold on to the end with a stainless character, then we shall have to say and sing, "The salvation of the righteous is of the Lord."

We know, dear friends, that it must be so. It is a necessary fact, even if we only look at the contrary view. What professions some make, and how long they keep them up! We have said of such and such a man, "If he is not a child of God, who is?" We have even wished that our soul were in his soul's stead when we have heard him pray, and marked the impressive devotion of his demeanour; and yet we have lived to see the very person we admired rolling in filth, character gone, and hope gone. This happens in the church sadly often. Whenever we see it, we may truly feel that "the salvation of the righteous is of the Lord." If ever you see a Christian man, professedly so, suddenly disappear and melt away, you will say to yourself, "Ah! had it not been for grace divine it would have happened just the same to me, and my fellow-professors also." We should have gone out, like the snuff of a candle, if God had not preserved us, and kept us alight. The older we grow in the divine life, and the more earnestly we seek to exhibit the character of a Christian, the more we shall feel that, if we had to go to this warfare at our

own charges, it would be better for us that we have never been born. The life of many modern professors might be lived without supernatural help, but the life of a genuine Christian is a perpetual miracle, which could be wrought by none but the Lord God. True Christian life is produced by God himself working mightily, even as when He made the world, or raised His only-begotten Son from the dead. I say that this is a necessary fact, for there can be no salvation but that which is of the Lord.

III. In the third place, our text being true, that "the salvation of the righteous is of the Lord," This is a sweet consolation; for if my salvation is of the Lord, then I shall be saved. If it had been of anybody else, I should be lost. Ah, Gabriel! If my salvation had to be accomplished by you, and all your fellow-angels, I should despair. Ah, my brethren! if all of you put together were sent into this world to try and help poor me to heaven, you would never get me there. I should wear you all out. When it is written, "Salvation is of the Lord," I am comforted, for I am sure that the Lord will do it. He can, for He is omnipotent. He will, for He has promised to do it, and He is true and unchangeable. He will go through with what He has begun. If man began, he might leave off before he had finished, for want of stores to go on with it, or because he had made a mistake, and changed his fickle mind; but when God begins, as surely as ever He opens the war, He will push on till He has won the victory. As surely as He lays the first stone, He will not withdraw His right hand till he has brought forth the topstone, with shoutings of "Grace, grace unto it!" "The salvation of the righteous is of the Lord;" herefore it will be accomplished. Not all the temptations of life, nor all the terrors of death, nor all the furies of hell, shall prevent any soul upon whom God has begun His work of grace from reaching eternal salvation. What a blessing is this, and what a comfort it is!

This grand fact comforts us partly by leading us to believe in prayer. If the salvation of the righteous is of the Lord, then, whenever we get into any great trouble, we go to Him, and cry, "O Lord, my salvation is of thee! I have come to thee for it." When strong temptation seems to catch us, like birds in a net, and we cannot break loose, then we cry, "O God, salvation is of thee alone! Help me. Thou canst. I look to thee for it!" When our soul lies dead, as it sometimes does, like this heavy weather — when there is little sun to brighten us, or air to enliven us, we feel inactive, and cannot stir. Oh, then it is most blessed in prayer to feel "all my fresh springs are in thee, my Lord! Thou canst quicken me. Thou canst give me vigour, and force of character, and energy to do thy work, or suffer thy will!" In drawing nigh unto God we are coming to the right place; we are only asking God to do what He undertakes to do, since "the salvation of the righteous is of the Lord."

This, in addition to increasing our hope in prayer, urges us at all times to look out of ourselves to God. "The salvation of the righteous is of the Lord;" then I must not be always searching

(Continued on Page 9 Column 1)

within my own heart to find some good thing within me!

TESTIMONY

(Continued from Page 8)

must not be turning over evidences, and living upon past experiences; but I must remember that the salvation even of the righteous is of the Lord. I have often thrown all my evidences overboard — every one of them. I have felt that I would not give a farthing for the whole lot put together; and I have gone to Christ Jesus just as I went at first, singing my old ditty —

"I'm a poor sinner, and nothing at all, But Jesus Christ is my all in all."

We are encouraged to do this by the fact that salvation is of the Lord. Go again to the cross, and read your pardon there. Suppose the devil tells you, or suppose it even to be true, that all your experience is a fiction, all your past profession a lie, all your faith presumption, all your enjoyments delirium, all that you have known and felt a day-dream; well, then, Jesus Christ came into the world to save sinners, and He can save you. O my Lord, I can boast nothing whatever of myself, but I come and cast myself on thee, and thou hast said, "Him that cometh to me I will in no wise cast out"! Frequent beginnings again are the very safest things; in fact, we should, in a sense, be always beginning, for the spiritual life begins with coming unto Jesus, and the continuance of that spiritual life is described thus: "To whom coming as unto a living stone." To whom coming, always coming; always trusting, always looking out of self, always looking to Christ. When evidences are bright, you know where you are; but at such a time you could tell that without them. It is easy to tell the time of day by a sun-dial, but then the sun must be shining; and when I am at home and can see the sun, I know whereabouts the sun is at twelve o'clock and therefore I do not want the sun-dial to tell me the time. Evidences are exceedingly good things when you do not want them, and they are of very little use when you do. Evidences are clear when Christ is present; but when Christ is present you do not want their help; and when Christ is not present, evidences fail to comfort you. It is better to live by a daily faith upon Christ than to live upon evidences. They most readily turn mouldy, and then they are most unwholesome food. Live upon Christ, who is the daily manna, and you will live well. You will be driven to such a life by the force of this blessed truth, that the salvation of the righteous, just as much as the salvation of the wicked, is of the Lord. A sinner cannot be saved by himself; neither can a righteous man. A sinner must look to the Lord for salvation; so must a righteous man. We are on one footing here — the rich saint as well as the poor sinner. Christ must be everything to one as well as to the other; and what a blessed thing it is that He is everything to us! Let us hourly make Him so.

IV. Fourthly, and very briefly, this doctrine is a reason for humility. "The salvation of the righteous is of the Lord." Are you saved, my dear brother? And do you know it? Then all idea of pride must vanish, for it is clear that you did not save yourself. That regeneration, of which you are a partaker, is the free gift of God to an undeserving one — a work of grace upon one who could not have wrought it upon himself. Pride is exclud-

ed. Has the Lord granted you such a salvation that you have remained fast in your integrity all these years? Do not get proud of it, for your salvation from any gross outward sin has been of the Lord. It is none of your doing. Above all, do not begin to censure others; and when you see a poor brother down — ay, when you see a child of God who has erred, and grossly sinned, do not begin censuring him in bitterness, and giving him over to despair. If you had been in his case, you might have done worse. Do I speak harshly? Any man who says, "If I had been in that brother's place I should have done better," is a fool. He does not know himself. The probabilities are that he would have done worse. Ah, Sir Pharisee! You — yes, oh yes, you are a wonder! Marvelous is your purity! Splendidly you act! What a paragon you are! If you were to see yourself in God's light, you would see that you are a mass of corruption, smelling of pride. That is what you are. The man who begins to exult over his fallen brother is the likeliest man to fall himself. He who points at a rent in his brother's garment is the likeliest man to fall himself. If we have stood fast amid temptation, we may bless God that we have done so; but we must not find fault with others as though there was some good thing in ourselves. The salvation of the most righteous man that ever lived is of the Lord. If his sun has not been eclipsed — if his moon has not been turned into darkness — if his stars have not fallen like withered leaves from the tree, it is all owing to the grace of God, and the grace of God alone. It is needful to say this to keep us from being lifted up with foolish boasting.

So, dear friends, we shall have to sing to a grave, sweet melody as long as we are here, whenever we touch a matter that concerns ourselves. When we get to heaven, we shall see then much more than we do to-night that salvation is of the Lord. Mr. Bunyan represents this pilgrim as going through the Valley of the Shadow of Death, and even while he was in the darkness and horror of that defile he knew that he needed the Lord to help him. He felt that he had a terrible walk of it that night, when there was a bog on this side, and a quagmire on that, and hobgoblins and all sorts of horrid creatures all around; he knew that he needed divine aid. He held on his way, with his sword in his hand, and grasping the weapon of All-prayer, till at last he quitted that horrible place; and then he knew better than before how great was his necessity. He looked back when the morning rose, and till then he had not fully known what a place he had in his night-march. When we get to heaven, and look back upon our life below, we shall then see the wonders of delivering grace which at this time we do not fully appreciate.

I believe that in the day of our full deliverance we shall lift up, every one of us, such a song of praise as we are not capable of here. We shall sing with all our powers of heart and tongue at the sight of what we have been delivered from. Even then this will be the sum and substance of the song — "Salvation is of the Lord." He has wrought it all, and brought us safely through. The hymn of Miriam, and of all the children of Israel at the Red Sea, when they had passed through it, and all the Egyptians

were drowned, was a very exultant song, but what will ours be when the gates of hell shall have been overthrown, and all our enemies destroyed, and we shall find ourselves before the eternal throne saved forever! Shall we not exclaim, "Sing unto the Lord, for He hath triumphed gloriously"? Shall we not, each one, tell out his own experience, and bid our fellow-believer sing yet more and more rapturously unto the God of salvation? Will not some of you take up that note which Miriam dwelt upon when she could not see a single Egyptian? Pharaoh's chariots and horses were all sunk in the sea, his chosen captains also were drowned in the Red Sea; and so she struck her timbrel, and with all the maidens she danced right joyously as she sang, "The depths have covered them. There is not one, not one, not one of them left." Thus will we sing in heaven. "There is not one, not one of them left. Not one of all the sins, and all the trials, and all the temptations, and all the vexations of life: the Lord has removed them all. There is not one of them left. Salvation is of the Lord."

V. I close with one more remark, and it is this: this text gives us a comfortable ground of hope. "The salvation of the righteous is of the Lord." Then I believe He will save me. I trust myself with Him, and thus I become righteous by faith; and therefore He will save me from my trouble and care. Brother, draw the same conclusion. Sister, draw the same conclusion. You are in a terrible condition just now. Everything has been going wrong. You do not know what to do. But "the salvation of the righteous is of the Lord." He will bring you through. You are in good hands. The Great Pilot knows the navigation of the river of life better than you do. You cannot see a channel for your boat: there are snags everywhere, or quicksands, or rocks or shallows. He knows all about it. Rest. Trust. Wait. Commit your way unto the Lord. There is personal comfort in the fact that our salvation is of the Lord.

And there is comfort, next, with regard to all our tried brethren. It is my lot — my happy or unhappy lot — to be continually consulted by brothers and sisters in great trouble. They think I can help them, though I cannot. I hardly know what to say to them. I can only take their burden with my own unto the Lord. I often feel great pain in sympathizing with trials which I cannot remove; but then it is cheering to know that the Lord can help where we cannot, for "the salvation of the righteous is of the Lord." He can help the helpless, the forlorn, the improverished, the dying. He will bring His people safely through floods and fires. Their straits are very great, and their burdens very heavy, but the Lord will put underneath them the everlasting arms. Pray for them; sympathize with them; help them as far as you can; and then, when you cast yourself on your Lord, cast them there also.

Next, this ought to give us hope about seekers. I see some brethren and sisters before me whose lives are spent in trying to encourage poor erring souls to return unto the Lord. Sometimes you are balked and defeated. Well, "the salvation of the righteous is of the Lord." Surely, if the salvation of the righteous is to come from the Lord, much more must the

salvation of poor seekers. Have hope about the vilest and worst of men. If there are any such here to-night, let them have hope, for if the Lord bids the righteous, in whom there is a measure of His grace, to look to Him for salvation, assuredly He bids you to do the same, for you have nothing of your own. If those who are righteous before God yet find their salvation in Him alone, where are you to look? You must look to the Lord also. Look to Jesus on the cross, and find salvation in Him; for the Lord Jesus redeemed with His precious blood all who trust in Him. O my dear hearer, come and cast yourself upon Him! "In due time Christ died for the ungodly," so runs the Word. Look to that wondrous death of the Son of God which redeems such as you are, and in your case too it shall be found that your salvation is of the Lord. May God bless you, and cause you to rejoice in His salvation!

CONVERSION

(Continued from Page 1)

should be on the inside." When I read about someone like this mother in the Bible, I have to agree with that preacher.

Micah was a man making his own religion. He made an image, still there was something missing. He did not have a preacher, but Satan is always ready to supply his servants in the furtherance of false religion, listen:

"And there was a young man of Bethlehem-judah of the family of Judah, who was a Levite, and he sojourned there."

And the man departed out of the city from Bethlehem-judah to sojourn where he could find a place; and he came to mount Ephraim to the house of Micah, as he journeyed" (Judges 17:7, 8). Here we have a man that was trading on religion. He was making his living out of religion. There are many today like this young man. A lot of preachers on television are trading on religion. There are many that ask for money for the Lord's work that have a Rolls Royce sitting in the driveway. They live in huge mansions. They have the best of furniture. They travel anywhere in the world they want to. Do not misunderstand, it is not wrong to have nice things if you work for them. It is another matter to live like a king off the money that people give for the Lord's work. This young man was trading on the Word of God like many modern day evangelists do. He was definitely for hire and Micah was looking to hire a preacher, listen: "And Micah said unto him, Dwell with me, and be unto me a father and a priest, and I will give thee ten shekels of silver by the year, and a suit of apparel, and thy victuals. So the Levite went in" (Judges 17:10).

This is exactly like the religion of most today, it is all man-made. This religion was founded on sin and made by Micah. Everything was of man even down to the hiring of the preacher. His religion was all his own doing. By the way, you can not hire a preacher. A preacher must be called and sent of God. Nevertheless, all religion that is contrary to the Bible is just like Micah's. This is the kind of man-made, Satan-inspired religion that people are converted to. We are talking about conversion, not to religion, but to the Lord Jesus Christ.

Some are simply reformed instead of being converted to

Christ. The Bible speaks on the subject of reforming, listen:

"When the unclean spirit is gone out of a man, he walketh through dry places, seeking rest, and findeth none. Then he saith, I will return into my house from whence I came out; and when he is come, he findeth it empty, swept, and garnished. Then goeth he, and taketh with himself seven other spirits more wicked than himself, and they enter in and dwell there: and the last state of that man is worse than the first. Even so shall it be also unto this wicked generation." (Matthew 12:43-45).

The question is why did the unclean spirit go out? He went out because the man reformed. The man quit being mean and began to live right, he began to do good instead of bad. You can see from the Bible that it just did not work out. He became far worse as a result of reformation. We need conversion to Christ, not reformation. Those that simply reform will eventually fall to greater depths of sin than they had known before.

Some substitute self-righteousness for conversion to Christ. The Bible speaks on the subject of self-righteousness. We are given a divine view in Matthew 23:27, 28. "Woe unto you, scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites! for ye are like unto whitened sepulchres, which indeed appear beautiful outward, but are within full of dead men's bones, and of all uncleanness. Even so ye also outwardly appear righteous unto men, but within ye are full of hypocrisy and iniquity." A grave in that part of the world can look very nice. Everything looks so clean. There are pretty flowers. Everything is whitewashed. When you open the door to the tomb and go inside, you are met with the terrible smell of decaying flesh. Death, helplessness and hopelessness are on the inside. This is the picture of the self-righteous and many are in this condition. Some say, "I never did any harm to anyone. I never did anything bad and I expect God will admit me to Heaven." If you are trusting in your goodness, then you are not going to heaven for that is simply self-righteousness. You need to have the experience of our text — a conversion to Christ.

II. Conversion to Christ. First we looked at what multitudes have that are strangers to Bible conversion. Now I want to show you conversion to Christ. It is, first of all, conversion from righteous self to the Righteousness of the Lord Jesus Christ. We do not have any good works. We must trust in Him alone for our righteousness. The Bible says, "...their righteousness is of me, saith the Lord." (Isaiah 54:17). "...he shall be called, THE LORD OUR RIGHTEOUSNESS." (Jeremiah 23:6). Unless you have this righteousness, you can not go to heaven. You must go to heaven in another man's coat. You have got to go wearing the perfect righteousness of the Lord Jesus Christ because you do not have any. We must be converted from self-righteousness to the righteousness of Jesus Christ.

We must be converted from our works to the finished work

(Continued on Page 10 Column 1)

CONVERSION

(Continued from Page 10)

of the Lord Jesus Christ. A man once said, "I believe that Jesus made the down payment and now it is up to me to make the monthly installments." That is not the way it works. Either Jesus paid it all or He did not pay any. He does not make any down payments. Listen: "But this man, after he had offered one sacrifice for sins for ever, sat down on the right hand of God" (Hebrews 10:12). Why do you think Jesus sat down? He sat down because His work was finished. If you have work to do you can not sit down. You do not have time, you have work that has to be done. But Jesus sat down because His work on Calvary was finished, and He could sit down at the right hand of God, signifying that it was a finished work.

We must be converted from our works that we are doing by which we are trying to get to heaven. We have to be converted from that. We can not trust in that. We must be converted to Christ, or else we will wind up in the lake of fire.

We must be converted from our sinful ways to the cleansing blood of the Lamb. We might not have much money. But there is something that you and I have an awful lot of and that is sin. Sin has to be paid for. You are going to have to pay for each and every one of those sins that you have committed or else the Lord Jesus Christ is going to have to pay for them. They are going to have to be washed away in His precious Blood, or else you are going to have to pay for them. The Bible says, "...Jesus also, that he might sanctify the people (set them apart) with his own blood, suffered without the gate." (Hebrews 13:12). That is the only hope that a sinner can have, being sanctified — being set apart, being cleansed by the Blood of Calvary's Lamb.

We need to be converted to Christ in our affections. Listen: "Therefore if any man be in Christ, he is a new creature: old things are passed away; behold, all things are become new." (II Corinthians 5:17). Here is something that affects the emotions and affections of an individual. Old things are passed away and all things have become new. A radical change affects the affections!

The third thing in our text I want you to notice is, that this is an old prophecy that must and shall come to pass.

III. An Abundance Of Conversions Are Promised. This was written approximately 698 years before Jesus came to Bethlehem. It is a prophecy stating that an abundance of mankind would be converted to Christ. Do you think such a thing will ever happen? God said it would. Let me show you the final outcome, the picture in heaven.

In Revelation, chapter 5 and verse 9, we read these words. "And they sung a new song, saying, Thou art worthy to take the book, and to open the seals thereof: for thou wast slain, and hast redeemed us to God by thy blood out of every kindred, and tongue, and people, and nation" Now there you see a multitude of people. Now notice in Revelation 7:9, "After this I beheld, and, lo, a great multitude, which no man could number..." A man

can number many things. Now we can count pretty high, but the Bible here says you can not count all the saved people in heaven. That is proof that the abundance of the sea will be converted to the Lord Jesus Christ. This proves an unfailing Jesus.

Many years ago, a fundamentalist preacher was writing about hell. He said, "Hell is simply a monument to God's failure." He was dead wrong! God never fails! God is going to save every one that He intends to save by the blood of His Son. Listen: "...thou shalt call his name Jesus: for he shall save his people from their sins" (Matthew 1:21).

Even the devil can not interfere with this text. You realize that if the devil could get one of God's people down into Hell, he would succeed and be more powerful than God and that just could not be. God can not fail and Jesus can not fail!

When the Bible says, "...the abundance of the sea shall be converted unto thee..." it is talking about an unfailing Saviour. The reason He can not fail is because there is an election of Grace. Listen: "As thou hast given him power over all flesh, that he should give eternal life to as many as thou hast given him" (John 17:2). You see from this verse in the Bible that there is an election of Grace. Before God hung a star in heaven there were people given to the Lord Jesus Christ. Christ came to redeem those elect people. Jesus can not fail, and the abundance of people will be converted to Him. How many is He going to save? The Bible says, "...as many as thou hast given him." (John 17:2).

He is going to save every one that was given to Him before the world began. We can see that He is not going to fail.

What about you, have you ever been converted to the Lord Jesus Christ? You say, "Well, I do not have time for that, I do not want to think about those things." Listen you may rebel and you may never bow the knee to Jesus in this life, but a multitude will. You may go on in your sins, but yet there will be many that will come to the Lord Jesus Christ and have their sins washed away in His cleansing blood. You may go on in your life and you may say, "I'll not have this man to reign over me," and yet multitudes will say yes by the Holy Spirit working in their hearts. They will say, "Yes, I will have this man to reign over me because He is my Lord and Saviour." What I am saying is this, our text does not change whether you believe it or not. Whether you ever trust in the cleansing blood of the Lamb, it does not change what the Bible says about it. Multitudes will be saved and washed clean in His Blood.

Multitudes will be converted to Him and the question is, what of you? Will you be converted to Him? In the book of Acts and chapter 4, we have the words preached here by the Apostle Peter. You can see from the way he preached that he must have been a Baptist preacher because they are the only ones that preach like this, listen: "Neither is there salvation in any other: for there is none other name under heaven given among men, whereby we must be saved" (Acts 4:12).

It is the only way you can be saved. There is no salvation in any other name, there is not any other way to be saved except in the Lord Jesus Christ. The only hope there is for you, is to be

converted to the Lord Jesus Christ and to be cleansed in His Blood. Trust Him today as your only hope for heaven. May God bless you!

PRIVILEGE

(Continued from Page 1)

hath chosen us in him before the foundation of the world, that we should be holy and without blame before him in love" (Ephesians 1:4). The words "in love" belong with verse 5. Why? Because there has to be a substance here before there can be love. You can't love something that isn't in existence. God can do that but we can't. The true meaning here is that we existed in Christ and God loved us in Christ. If we weren't in Christ we weren't in anything. If we weren't in Christ, God didn't love us because God doesn't know any love outside of Jesus Christ. Verse 5: "In love having predestinated us unto the adoption of children by Jesus Christ to himself, according to the good pleasure of his will." We were adopted through the merits and the work of Jesus Christ. In other words we are adopted of Jesus Christ as God's legal son. He is God's natural son. But we are adopted sons through Jesus Christ. We are begotten of God by the power of God, and chosen of God in Christ, God's natural son. Jesus Christ was put in the womb of Mary when she conceived by the power of the Holy Spirit. By doing this God made Himself a body that He might come down to His earth. This is what we are talking about here. We were adopted by the power of the Holy Spirit, chosen of God and put in is Jesus Christ. He was our head and representative. This means that we were adopted children by Jesus Christ to himself, according to the good pleasure of His will.

The privilege of sonship began in the halls of eternity. It didn't begin when Jesus Christ was born in Bethlehem nearly two thousand years ago. It didn't begin when Christ died on the cross of Calvary. It didn't begin when he rose from the dead the third day. It began before Christ ever came to the earth. It was a legal process of the counsel of God that took place in the halls of eternity. This gave us the privilege we have of being God's elect people. The great privilege we have of being called the sons of God.

"But when the fulness of the time was come, God sent forth his Son, made of a woman, made under the law" (Gal. 4:4). Notice here that he was made of a woman. It means conception by the power of the Holy Spirit. He became part of Mary in the womb. God was his father, but Mary was his mother. God is the father of Jesus. Man didn't have anything to do with it. He was born under the law, under the nature and government of the law. Verse 5: "To redeem them that were under the law, that we might receive the adoption of sons." Through Jesus Christ's birth we are adopted sons of God through Christ. This adoption is the legal process of the eternal decrees of God. Verse 6: "And because ye are sons, God hath sent forth the Spirit of his Son into your hearts crying, Abba, Father."

Abba is the word framed by the lips of an infant. Jesus Christ cried from the womb of Mary to God. You can read about it in Psalms, Chapter 22. God even talked to us and knew

us in Christ. Read about this in Psalms 139. Before the members were made and before the substance was brought forth and wrought in secret God said David, "I am fearfully and wonderfully made: marvellous are thy works;"

We are now going to discuss God's counsel. God has only one counsel. "And we know that all things work together for good to them that love God, to them who are the called according to his purpose" (Romans 8:28). When you look at purpose; and you look at God's counsel, you will see it in the singular. You will never see it in the plural. God knows all His works and creations as stated in Acts, Chapter 15. God's knows everything.

"For as many as are led by the Spirit of God, they are the sons of God" (Romans 8:14). You can't deceive people. Sooner or later you'll be revealed by counsels of your heart. You can't get away with it if you are not truly a child of God. The Holy Spirit knows who the children of God are. The Holy Spirit identifies the children of God and gives them the privilege that they have. Verse 15: "For ye have not received the spirit of bondage again to fear; but ye have received the Spirit of adoption, whereby we cry, Abba, Father." The Holy Spirit is not the spirit of bondage. The Holy Spirit doesn't bring you into bondage. He brings you into liberty. He brings you into freedom. You are not a slave to sin anymore. You have been set free. When God sets you free you are free indeed. Verse 16: "The Spirit itself beareth witness with our spirit, that we are the children of God."

"Behold what manner of love the Father hath bestowed upon us, that we should be called the sons of God, therefore the world knoweth us not, because it knew him not. Beloved, now are we the sons of God, and it doth not yet appear what we shall be" (I John 3:1-2). The world doesn't know what we shall be. It hasn't appeared yet what we will be in glorified bodies when Christ sets up His Millennial Kingdom, and when we rule and reign with Him for a thousand years. We know that, when He shall appear, we shall be like him; for we shall see him as he is. Verse 3: "And every man that hath this hope in him purifieth himself, even as he is pure." Jesus Christ must recognize us as the Sons of God. God must recognize us as His sons and daughters. Why? Because of the legal process of the adoption. Through Jesus Christ his natural Son we have this right and privilege.

We are liable to many illegal condemnations, but not one legal one. People can slander you, bring illegal charges against you, and try to discredit your name, but no charge can anyone bring that will bring condemnation to a saint of God. There are a lot of illegal charges brought against people who are legally justified sons and daughters of God but no charge from the Son, for by His righteousness are we justified. Not one from the Holy Spirit, because He is the Spirit of sanctification that preserves us and keeps us eternally and forever. Not one from the Word of God. Why? Because the Holy Spirit wrote the Word of God. The Holy Spirit will not work contrary to the Word of God. Anytime you give credit to the Word you must give credit to the

Holy Spirit. Did He not come upon men and move men by the power of the Holy Spirit to write the Word of God? There is not one liable charge or one liable fear of our own hearts. We even charged ourselves to be the sons and daughters of God. Sonship brings the right and privilege of eternal security.

TEACHINGS

(Continued from Page 1)

at all. They do not belong to Jehovah God. These people have no idea who God is. They speak of a God. They worship a God. The only problem is that they don't know the God of the Bible. They claim that they do, but their doctrine declares differently. Jesus said, "I am the good shepherd, and know my sheep, and am known of mine." (John 10:14). Beloved you must know the God of the Bible. A cult such as this blasphemes the Lord's name. These people one day will answer to the Lord for the way they use His name. These people have no right to use this title, and in doing so they are liars.

These people not only dishonor God, but they also dishonor His church. While they lie and deceive, there are true witnesses on the earth who have the right to be called Jehovah's Witnesses. I'm referring to the Baptists. The last thing that Jesus said before returning to heaven was said to Baptists, and here is what He said. "But ye shall receive power, after that the Holy Ghost is come upon you: and ye shall be witnesses unto me both in Jerusalem, and in all Judaea, and in Samaria, and unto the uttermost part of the earth" (Acts 1:8). So you see beloved, that the Baptists are the true witnesses of God. This cult has no right or authority to call themselves the witnesses of God. Satan has so many liars out deceiving that we have to be careful what we call ourselves. What a shame this is. We ought to be able to call ourselves the Church of God, but we cannot because of a false people that go by this name. Or the Church of Christ, but we cannot because the Campbellites have taken this glorious title. Certainly beloved, we are living in the last days.

This cult did not come into existence until the year 1879. Like all of Satan's organizations, they came into existence too late to be of the Lord. In this case 1879 years too late. Jesus started His church while He was here in the flesh. "And he goeth up into a mountain, and calleth unto him whom he would: and they came unto him. And he ordained twelve, that they should be with him, and that he might send them forth to preach" (Mark 3:13-14). Anything started after this time is not of the Lord. Notice that the founder of the Church is the Lord Jesus Christ. The founder of the Jehovah's Witnesses cult was a mere lump of clay named Charles T. Russell. He started out with six people in a Bible study group, and it has grown into the monster that it is today. These six erred greatly when they put confidence in man instead of the Lord. As I said before, this cult teaches a damnable doctrine. To believe what they preach will send you into the fiery depths of a burning hell. Now beloved,

(Continued on Page 11 Column 1)

TEACHINGS

(Continued from Page 10)

remember that these people can be saved. They must hear of the true God. They must hear of the Saviour. It's our responsibility to give them the gospel that saves. No one is too evil or wicked to be saved. Remember that. Now I want you to notice some things that they teach concerning God's Word.

I. They deny the Trinity. They deny that God is one, yet He is all three persons of the Godhead. They deny the Father, Son, and Holy Ghost, as being one God, and all being equal. One of their preachers said: "The doctrine of the trinity has its origin in the demon-religions of ancient Babylon, India, and Egypt. The obvious conclusion is, therefore, that Satan is the originator of the trinity" (pg. 101, "Let God be True"). Beloved, the conclusion that I come to is that this writer is dead in his sins, and unable to understand the clear teaching of the Word of God. I will admit that the doctrine of the Trinity is a mindboggling doctrine, but it is not beyond the belief of a child of God. "For in him dwelleth in all the fullness of the Godhead bodily" (Col. 2:9). In Christ dwells all of the Godhead: the Father and the Spirit of God. All three dwelt in the body of Christ, yet they are all separate beings. The same writer went on to say on the following page of that magazine, "Sincere persons who want to know the true God and serve Him find it a bit difficult to love and worship a complicated, freakish looking, three-headed God." Again I say these are not the words of a saved man. No child of God could see Christ as a freakish looking monster. No, dear friends, the born again child of God sees Christ as that lovely Son of God. They see Him as the Rose of Sharon, and the Lily of the Valley.

II. They deny the Deity of Christ. Without controversy, this damns men to hell. If you don't believe that Jesus Christ is the virgin-born Son of God you cannot be saved. You can be wrong on a lot of doctrine, but if you are wrong on this point you will go to hell. The Jehovah's Witnesses say that God the Father alone is immortal, that Jesus and the Spirit are created beings. They believe that Jesus did not become immortal until after His resurrection. Again when they deny the deity of Christ, they deny the clear teaching of the Word of God. The Bible says, "In whom we have redemption through his blood, even the forgiveness of sins: Who is the image of the invisible God, the firstborn of every creature: For by him were all things created, that are in heaven, and that are in the earth, visible and invisible whether they be thrones, or dominions, principalities, or powers: all things were created by him, and for him. And he is before all things, and by him all things consist" (Col. 1:14-17). Before the world was, Christ was in His deity. When there were no stars, or moon, or sun; there was Christ. Before all eternity there was Christ Jesus in all of His glory and splendor. Praise the Lord that Jesus is that eternal God that saved us from our sins!

III. They deny the bodily resurrection of Jesus. I quote from "Studies in the Scriptures", pg. 129. "Whether it (His body) was dissolved into gases; or whether it is still preserved somewhere as a grand

memorial of God's love, of Christ's obedience, and of our redemption, no one knows." They see Jesus as a failure. If Jesus is still in the grave we all are doomed to hell. Our salvation depends upon the resurrection of Jesus from the grave. They teach that His spirit was raised but not the body. Again they refuse to believe the Word of God. They deny the account of Mary seeing Jesus after His resurrection "Jesus saith unto her, woman, why weepest thou? whom seekest thou? She supposing him to be the gardener saith unto him, Sir, if thou have borne him hence, tell me where thou hast laid him, and I will take him away. Jesus saith unto her, Mary. She turned herself, and saith unto him, Rabboni; which is to say, Master. Jesus saith unto her, Touch me not; for I am not yet ascended to my Father: but go to my brethren, and say unto them, I ascend unto my Father, and your Father; and to my God and your God" (John 20:15-17). Yes beloved, Jesus arose from the grave. He arose victorious from the dark domain. He lives forever with His saints to reign. He arose. He arose. Hallelujah, Christ arose. Our Saviour's body is not in the grave, but He is seated bodily at the right hand of God the Father; and there He is making intercession for us. Yes beloved, when He returns it will be in that same body in which He left. The Jehovah's Witnesses deny the very power of God. They deny Jesus Christ as being a sovereign God. This devilish doctrine condemns them to hell.

IV. They deny the atonement. According to their doctrine, Jesus wasted His time in coming to the earth. According to them He could have stayed in heaven, and left salvation entirely up to man. The atonement they trust in is one of their own works. They have a four step plan in order to earn their salvation. (1). They must study the Bible. (2). They must be a member of the Witness cult. (3). They must clean up their lives. (4) They must be a preacher. They believe that by being faithful in all of these, they can enter paradise. Well dear friends, a man can read the Bible through and through. He can know it verse by verse and still never be saved. A man can join a religious group and be one of its most faithful members, and still never be saved. A man can clean up his life, quit beating his wife, quit drinking and swearing, become a model citizen, and still never be saved. All of the afore mentioned cannot save. They are all forms of works, and the Bible is plain against works for salvation. "Not by works of righteousness we have done, but according to his mercy he saved us, by the washing of regeneration, and renewing of the Holy Ghost; Which he shed on us abundantly through Jesus Christ our Lord; That being justified by his grace, we should be made heirs according to the hope of eternal life" (Titus 3:5-7). Works cannot save. Man has tried to cover his own sins since the days of Adam. Adam thought he could hide his sins behind some fig leaves that he had sown together, but he could not. God saw him in his sin. Those leaves didn't hide anything from God. The same holds true today. Works cannot hide sin from God. No matter

how good a man thinks he is, if his sins are not covered by the blood of Jesus Christ, he will die and go to hell. Salvation is of the Lord. "For by grace are ye saved through faith; and that not of yourselves: it is the gift of God: Not of works, lest any man should boast" (Eph. 2:8-9). When a person depends on himself to be saved, he is denying the power of the atonement; and making it of none effect. This is what the Jehovah's Witnesses do when they present their four step plan of salvation.

V. They deny the need for being born again. According to the Witnesses only 144,000 witnesses need to be born again. They believe that only these 144,000 will go to heaven, and the other witnesses have no need to be born again. In 1931, the successor to Russell, Judge Rutherford, shut the door to heaven. Today, Witnesses do not go to heaven according to their doctrine. We find yet another damnable heresy. The new birth is a necessity to salvation. When man fell in the garden of Eden, he died spiritually. His mind was corrupted. His heart became desperately wicked. His conscience defiled. Man became totally depraved from head to toe. Paul told the Ephesians, "And you hath he quickened, who were dead in trespasses and sins" (Eph. 2:1). Man is dead in sins, and he needs life. Thus we find the need to be born again. Jesus said, "Verily, Verily I say unto thee, except a man be born again he cannot see the kingdom of God" deny the Biblical doctrine of salvation. They believe that they can stand before God in their self righteousness and please God. They believe that God will honor their four step plan of salvation. The Bible says "Therefore by the deeds of the law there shall no flesh be justified in his sight..." (Rom. 3:20). A man must be born again to be saved. He must hear the preached Word, for by the foolishness of preaching it pleases God to save them that believe. When that Word is preached, it then takes the Holy Spirit of God to make that Word effective. This matter of being born again is not a long drawn out process. The Spirit does not have to strive with man and try to convince him to believe the gospel. The work of the Spirit and faith come instantly.

VI. They deny eternal punishment. One member of this cult wrote, "The doctrine of a burning hell where the wicked are tormented eternally after death cannot be true, mainly for four reasons: (1) It is wholly unscriptural (2) It is unreasonable (3) Contrary to God's Word (4) Repugnant to God's justice" (Let God be true pg. 99). They believe in the annihilation of the lost soul. In other words, those that are not members of this cult when they die, their souls will cease to exist. Again, their doctrine is contrary to the Word of God. God breathed in man and he became a living soul. In other words he will exist forever. When God does something He does it eternally. Now, the Bible teaches that man will exist either in heaven or hell forever. You must and will go to one place or the other. They ignore the plain teaching of Luke 16. They read this and say that the rich man's hell is here on the earth. That these flames that he is in are not real flames. They believe that all of this torment will happen in

this life. They are saying that it really doesn't mean what it looks like it says. Well, I'm sure that Mr. Russell and Mr. Rutherford know now that hell is not unreasonable. They know now that hell is a real place, and that the Bible did mean what it said. I'm sure that if they could get back they would tell all of the Witnesses to throw away their four plan salvation, because it doesn't work. They know now that they deserve what they got. They know about God's love. That God doesn't love everybody. How sad this is. There are thousands going to hell every day and running as fast as they can to get there. I can see Mr. Russell as he stands before God and says: Look what I have done for you. I have preached over 30,000 sermons for you. I have traveled over one million miles for you. And then God will say, "I never knew you, depart from me ye worker of iniquity." All of Mr. Russell's accomplishments will amount to nought. All that he accomplished was to fulfill, Matthew 23:15, "Woe unto you scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites! for ye compass sea and land to make one proselyte, and when he is made, ye make him twofold more the child of hell than yourselves." Yes beloved, Mr. Russell's ministry was one of leading men to hell. The Jehovah's Witnesses today are partaking of the same ministry, leading men to hell.

In closing I would like to urge all men to drop their works and turn to Christ. I would like to urge all of those in this cult to stop preaching the hellish doctrine they are preaching. I'll tell you beloved, we need to pray for these people. We need to preach and witness to these people. They are not beyond saving. Our Lord saves the worst of men. I know, because He saved me. There is one thing that we can learn from these people and that is their zeal. Though they go for the wrong reasons and accomplish nothing, they go. Brethren, this old world needs the gospel of Jesus Christ more than ever. These false churches and cults are on every corner and we need to be out there with the truth. In the streets and going from house to house with the gospel. We have the gospel that saves. And that should give us the desire to go forth and preach.

THE LAW

(Continued from Page 1)

priests were to perform that function. (2). Saul had failed to obey the command of the Lord god of Israel when he was told to destroy the Amalekites. (3). King Saul went to the wicked witch of Endor and had her inquire of Samuel the prophet, who had already died, what would happen to him the next day in battle. The Holy Writ tells us that, because King Saul had not regards unto God or His Word, his kingdom and his life was taken. He reaped what he had sown over the years. He deserved what he got.

Not only does our text apply to King Saul, but to David, King of Israel. It also applies to us all. After the death of King Saul, David was made King over Judah and that for seven wonderful years. After that time, David was anointed King over all Israel. Thus, with a close look at the life of King Saul and King David, one difference seems to jump out at us. When King Saul was approached by God's man, the prophet, and especially with regards to

his particular sin. King Saul failed to accept God's stern rebuke and thus he refused to repent of his sinful actions. But David is another story. Though he had sinned greatly, and on more than one occasion, God always found a man whose heart would break and seek God's forgiveness. Oh, that we might learn to follow in the steps of King David and never in the evil steps of King Saul!

I. DAVID'S GREAT SIN — Second Samuel 11. God is not the author of sin or the cause of sin in the life of anyone. We are responsible for our own sins. God will hold us responsible and require that we give an account of ourselves unto Him. No one will ever be able to blame someone else or thing for his own actions. David would not, and thus recognized that great biblical truth. Saul could not and tried to put the blame on someone else when he was caught red-handed. That is the way it is with sinful man — never wanting to admit his own personal sin and guilt.

The Eleventh Chapter of Second Samuel gives to us the story of King David and his great sin. He had become a great and mighty King over all Israel. He was loved by most people within the United Kingdom. Time had come when kings go to war. The Kingdom was somewhat settled and so David sent his army out to do battle with the children of Ammon - vs. 1. "And it came to pass, after the year was expired, at the time when kings go forth to battle, that David sent Joab, and his servants with him, and all Israel; and they destroyed the children of Ammon, and besieged Rabbah. But David tarried still at Jerusalem." There was absolutely nothing wrong with David staying home. But that meant that he had nothing to do. While at home, David found life dull and uninteresting, with his army out fighting the children of Ammon. Idle hands usually gets the best of us and drags us down. David was no different. While walking on the roof top, he noticed a woman taking her evening bath beloved, that woman should have been more careful as to where she took her evening bath. David should not have continued watching until he burned within with an unholy desire. The actions of David just got him in deeper. He watched this woman long enough to cause him to inquire about her - vs. 3. "And David sent and enquired after this woman. And one said, Is not this Bathsheba, the daughter of Eliam the wife of Uriah the Hittite?" Thus, David begins to spin a web which will later make him wish that he had never inquired about this woman. Once King David learned who she was, that her faithful husband was one of the men out fighting the battle for him, he sent for her and then took liberties that did not belong unto him. vs. 4. "And David sent messengers, and took her; and she came in unto him, and he lay with her; for she was purified from her uncleanness: and she returned unto her house." Then, to make matters even worse, this woman conceives and is with David's child - vs. 5. "And the woman conceived, and sent

(Continued on Page 12 Column 1)

TUNE IN TO THE CALL TO CALVARY

Station: WEMM, Huntgn., W. Va. Time: Sun.—7:30-8:00 a.m. Dial: 107.9 Watts: 50000 FM

THE LAW

(Continued from Page 11)

and told David, and said, I am with child." Beloved, "Be sure, your sins shall find you out" and that, sooner than you think!

If David had only taken care of the matter then — but he decided to cover up the matter. The web just continued to get bigger and bigger as David was forced to deal with his new sin. He sends for Uriah the Hittite with the disguise of wanting to know how the battle was going - vs. 7. "And when Uriah was come unto him, David demanded of him how Joab did, and how the people did, and how the war prospered." After he reported the battle situation, King David told Uriah the Hittite to go home for the evening and spend it with his lovely wife - vs. 8. "And David said to Uriah, Go down to thy house, and wash thy feet. And Uriah departed out of the King's house, and there followed him a mess of meat from the king." Uriah the Hittite refused to go home and spend the evening with his wife - vs. 9. "But Uriah slept at the door of the King's house with all the servants of his Lord, and went not down to his house." When King David learned of Uriah's actions, he sent him back to Joab with his own death orders in a sealed letter - vs. 14, 15. "And it came to pass in the morning, that David wrote a letter to Joab, and sent it by the hand of Uriah. And he wrote in the letter, saying, Set ye Uriah in the fore-front of the hottest battle, and retire ye from him, that he may be smitten and die." Joab, being a good Captain of the Army of David, did as commanded, and Uriah the Hittite died as planned by King David - vs. 17. "And the men of the city went out, and fought with Joab: and there fell some of the people of the servants of David; and Uriah the Hittite died also." When David heard of the report of Uriah's death, after the proper time of mourning, he takes the wife of Uriah to be his wife - vs. 27. "And when the mourning was past, David sent and fetched her to his house, and she became his wife, and bare him a son. But the thing that David had done displeased the Lord."

II. David's Great Sin Becomes Revealed - Second Samuel 12. The cover up seemed to work in the favor of King David. No one knew of David's deeds. The Holy Writ does not tell us how long the baby was alive before God sent his faithful servant, Nathan, to deal with the matter. Your guess would be as good as mine. David loved the child. Perhaps more than any other of David's household. Would David be able to get away with this sin? Of course not! God sent Nathan the prophet to deal with the situation. Nathan tells King David a simple story - vs. 1-4. The King becomes enraged with the rich

man that had stolen from the poorman. He thus requires that the rich man must pay back the loss of the little lamb, four-fold, and that he should die - vs. 5-6. "And David's anger was greatly kindled against the man; and he said to Nathan, As the Lord liveth, the man that hath done this thing shall surely die: And he shall restore the lamb fourfold, because he did this thing, and because he had no pity."

Before David could get the words out and ask the next question, "Who was the man," Nathan the Prophet points his finger at David and says, "Thou art the man." vs. 7. What a rebuke! Unexpected and perfect timing. Nathan the Prophet is careful to point out that these are not his words of judgment, but God's. The Man of God needs to make sure that his message is of God and never his own personal judgment. It sometimes is hard to separate the two - but that must be the case if the Man of God is going to represent the Lord and His Divine Message. Nathan did that in verses seven through twelve. This rebuke was of the Lord. Many a time this preacher has spoken on a particular subject over the years and found later that the Lord of Glory had used it to reach down into the inner most part of someone. That is what happened here. God used his servant to deliver the message that was needed for the hour. Oh, that we preachers learn how to properly and honestly deliver God's message as did Nathan the Prophet.

III. The Wages of David's Great Sin is Severe and Most Grievous. 2. Samuel 12-18. The Lord told King David through His faithful servant, Nathan, that because he was King of Israel, God would not take his kingdom away from him as He did with Saul. The reason was that David had repented of his evil deeds. David had great respect unto the Lord God of Israel. Saul did not. Nevertheless, Almighty God told King David that he would be required to pay back a four-fold payment for his crime against Uriah the Hittite. (1). Seven days after his sin was revealed, the child born unto David and Bathsheba took ill and died - 2 Samuel 12:18-23. Beloved, many lessons could and should be taught from these few verses, but we are only interested at this point to show that God's judgment began as promised. (2). In the next chapter, one of the sons of David, Ammon by name, takes the opportunity at hand and rapes his own half-sister, Tamar - 2 Samuel 13. Literally, the heart of David is torn apart because of his own careless deeds a few years before. But, David's shame and misery is just beginning. (3). When Absalom, Tamar's full brother, hears of the crime against her, he takes vengeance by killing Ammon - 2 Samuel 13:23-36. Poor David, his punishment is becoming great. But, God is not finished with him yet. (4). Many years later Absalom causes a revolt in the Kingdom of David. David must leave the City of Jerusalem for a short season until the rebellion is put down by Joab. David gives very strict

orders that Absalom is not to be harmed. In 2 Samuel 18, Joab kills Absalom when he is caught in the tree by his long hair. Our text said, "Be not deceived; God is not mocked: for whatsoever a man soweth, that shall he also reap" (Galatians 6:7). Because King David had failed to count the cost before his actions, he paid the price. So did King Saul. These two Old Testament Kings, though they were God's anointed servants, when they sowed their wild seeds, reaped the whirlwind.

But, let's turn our attention to one who did not allow the seeds of sin and corruption to rule his life. Joseph was a man of high moral principles. He had every reason so far as man is concerned to be bitter and turn away from God and what was right. He was sold into slavery by his own brethren. The wife of Potiphar lied about his actions which caused him to be placed in the prison of Egypt. The chief butler forgot him after he promised to remember Joseph. Joseph never gave up. He never allowed sin to control him or his actions. He would not permit his feelings to take hold and punish his brethren when he saw them coming down into Egypt for corn. Therefore, because he did what was right in the sight of the Lord, he reaped only good. Blessings, were his to enjoy the rest of his life. You see, Joseph refused to have anything to do with wickedness, and because of that, God blessed him.

IV. The Law of Sowing and Reaping Is Still In Effect Today. God is the same today as He was yesteryear. If Almighty God judged David for his sin, you and I can be very sure that He will deal with us in the same manner. Furthermore, you can be sure that, since God blessed Joseph because he had done what was right; when you and I do what is right, we will also receive the blessing of the Lord as His dear children. Beloved, the Bible is the only standard by which we must live our life. If the Bible is thus true, and it is, then we had best pay attention to what it has to say about our life. You will reap just exactly what you sow! Don't forget that truth. Beloved, God's Book - the Holy Bible will either keep you from living in sin or sin will keep you from the Book. Dear christian, that is why we have tried to get you into the blessed eternal Word of God over the years. "Thy word have I hid in mine heart, that I might not sin against thee" (Psalm 119:11). If you are not reading the Bible daily - start today! It is more important to read the Bible than any other book or paper. Don't even substitute for the precious Word of God. I am not against books, religious papers, tapes and etc., only it is important that they ought to be judged in accordance as to how true they stay with the Bible. Let us be like the people of Berea who "searched the scriptures daily, whether those things were so" (Acts 17:11).

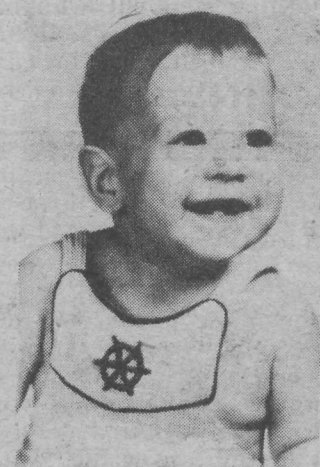
So many folk take what other people have written or said as gospel fact without searching the Scriptures to see if it agrees with God's Word. This paper (TBE) was established on the testimony of the precious eternal Word of God. Its motto over the years has been and still is — "To the law and to the testimony; if they speak not according to this word, it is because there is no light in them" (Isaiah 8:20). We do not ask you to believe us because it

is written in The Baptist Examiner, but because it can be proven true by the blessed eternal Word of God. It is the desire of this preacher that those who listen to my preaching of the Bible learn to prove all things said by "Thus saith the Lord."

Conclusion: The Law of Sowing and Reaping is still working today. So far as the child of God is concerned, that ought to be considered and thought through before allowing actions to take over. The Christian has one of two decisions to make with regards to any situation. He can obey the clear cut

teachings of the Scriptures and receive the blessing of the Lord, or he can disobey the teachings of God's Word and suffer the consequences. God is unchangeable. He is still the same and will not change. If you are a Christian, you have been made alive in Christ Jesus and therefore responsible before Almighty God as to your actions. On that account, would it not behoove us as God's dear ones to learn how to obey. If for no other reason than a selfish one: your own blessing. May the God of Heaven bless you as you think on these things.

I WISH MY MUMMY DIDN'T SMOKE



I know my Mummy loves me. She dresses me up in nice clothes. She feeds me only the things that are good for me. She buys me lots of things. She reads books about how to take care of me. She sits up with me when I do not feel good. She will do 'most anything for me. But I wish she didn't smoke!

I've never had a clean kiss in my life. Sometimes her breath is awful bad; and when she kisses me just after she has been smoking, it almost makes me sick. All the time there's something funny tasting about it. Once, it did make me dizzy and I cried, and she said it was from something that I had eaten.

She was fixing my oatmeal the other morning and smoking, and she got ashes into it. 'Course she didn't see it, but I had to eat it.

I get so tired of living in smoke all the time. It hurts my eyes and I rub them hard and she doesn't know what is the matter. The worst thing is when

she lays a cigarette down and the blue smoke get into my eyes and nose and stings and stings. She doesn't know why I fuss so much, and sometimes she shakes me for being bad.

Sometimes my lungs hurt from so much smoke, and I cry and Mummy gets cross, and I don't know how to tell her, and then we both get fussy and Mummy tells my Daddy that I have been just awful all day.

And I don't like the way that some men look at my Mummy when we are eating in a restaurant and she is smoking.

Maybe I'll get used to it, but it is awful hard on a little fellow like me. I like fresh air and clean things. I feel so good when I go outdoors and away from my Mummy's smoke.

Sometimes Mummy has company in the afternoon and when all the "girls" begin to smoke and there aren't any windows open, it gets terrible and I get cross and Mummy says, "I don't know what is wrong with that child today. Why can't he be good when there is company in the house?"

Once, when she was holding me and smoking, I got some ashes in my eye and it hurt awful and I screamed and screamed, and that night she told Daddy I had a temper tantrum. I don't know what a temper tantrum is, but it sure hurts.

It's awful hard growing up with grown-ups. And now, will you believe me — Grandma has started smoking too!

I don't know what people want to smoke for. I wish my Mummy didn't.

ANNOUNCEMENT

The editor will be preaching in special services February 17-23 for the Calvary Baptist Church of Hagerstown, Md. He will be preaching on Monday and Tuesday nights at 1013 Pine Road in Baltimore, Maryland. This meeting is in the home of Brother Lawrence Brown. On Wednesday through Sunday, the services will be held in the meeting place of the Calvary Baptist Church in Hagerstown.

Md. This is at 7 West Franklin Street. Services will be at 7:00 p.m. nightly and also on Sunday at 11:00 a.m. This church is pastored by Ron Boswell, a very able preacher, who is a frequent contributor to the pages of this paper. We invite all who can to visit this church during these services. Please pray for this meeting. Call Rodger Lewis at (301) 797-4714 for any information concerning this meeting.

A PRAYER FOR MY PASTOR

Father, let me be a pillar of strength to help hold up my pastor and not a thorn in his flesh to sap his strength, or a burden on his back to weigh him down.

Let me support him without striving to possess him. Let me lift his hands without shackling them. Let me give him any help that he may devote more time to working for the help of others and less time to gratifying my vanity.

Let me work for him as the pastor of all the members and not compel him to spend precious time in pleasing me. Let me be unselfish in what I do for him and in what I ask him to do for me.