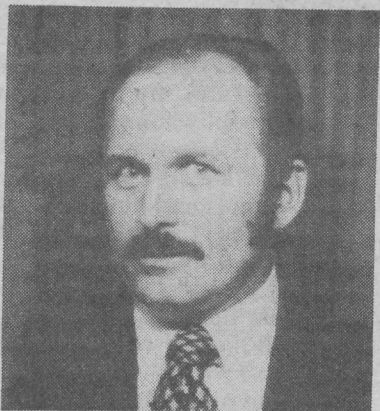


BREAKING FELLOWSHIP

by Eldon Joslin
801 Cambridge St.
Birmingham, AL 35224

I would like to take for my text and your consideration Genesis 45:24. "So he sent his brethren away, and they departed: and he said unto them, See that ye fall not out by the way." Most of us know the story of Joseph. It is a great story. It shows that God's sovereign power will accomplish the purpose that was intended. Man will be responsible for his action, but no matter what he does, he will not change in anyway the plan of God. We observe from this story how Joseph had dreams, and Jacob showed a little extra favor toward Joseph; and all of this caused his brethren to be angry with Joseph. From man's viewpoint these actions seemed to logically cause some of the anger that his brethren had, but it did not give them a right to do to Joseph what they did. Yet it causes us to see that God was behind the action controlling these things so that they would do what He had purposed for them to do. We find the same truth revealed to us when Peter stands on the day of Pentecost and tells those Jews that God had decreed the death of Christ before the world began. This was the work of God. Peter then states that these men had

wickedly taken Christ and crucified Him on an old rugged tree. God is sovereign, but man is still responsible. Some might ask, how can you reconcile these two truths? It is really not a problem, it is mostly a matter of receiving these truths. C. H. Spurgeon said that we do not have to reconcile two friends. The other great truth I want to



Eldon Joslin

touch on before I actually get into the story is that Joseph is probably the greatest picture and type of Jesus Christ in the Old Testament. When we look at all that happened to him, we see how he was sold into slavery, and how he was cast into prison. When we look at how he was later exalted and raised to a position where he could be of great help, and even be a savior to his family; my, how this pic-

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

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A GOOD SOLDIER OF CHRIST

by Pastor Ralph M. Luena
Philippines

(II Timothy 2:1-5).

Introduction: All true Christians are soldiers of Jesus Christ. The soldiers of Jesus Christ must approve themselves good soldiers.

There are some nations today who need good soldiers to fight for the cause of their nations — to stop and discipline people who are abusing within their vicinity. In my beloved country we also need good soldiers who are loyal and ready to defend our archipelago. We need soldiers who are brave enough to stand up for the cause of our nations.

Likewise, our local churches today need good soldiers to stand up for the gospel — to stand up for the faith — to stand up for the cause of Christ. But the question is, what kind of

good soldiers do we need today?

I. When we talk of good soldiers there must be some qualifications. The first qualification that I want to share in this paper is that a good soldier is:



Ralph Luena

1. Enlisted in the book of life. In the Philippine army you can't be recognized as in the army if

your name is not in the military log book or record. The only way you can be recognized as in the authorized army of the Republic of the Philippines is if your name is in that record.

Likewise in the service of the Lord, being a soldier of the Lord you must be sure first that your name is already in the Lamb's Book of Life. The sad fact is that there are so many people today who are serving the Lord, such as singing in the choir, giving alms, preaching, going to church every week, but yet never sure that when they die they'll get to Heaven. Why? Because they are not listed in the Book of Life. What about all those men? They are fake soldiers of Christ.

The Apostle Paul said in Philippians 4:3, "And I entreat thee also, true yokefellow," (Continued on Page 8 Column 3)

TAKING CARE OF THE CHURCH OF GOD

by Doug Newell
Assistant Editor

I. Timothy 3:5, "For if a man know not how to rule his own house, how shall he take care of the church of God?"

Our text deals with an extremely important subject, for taking care of the church of God is the most important task one could have in this life. The Pastor of a Sovereign Grace Landmark Missionary Baptist Church has and holds the highest office in the land. This office far surpasses the office of



Doug Newell

President, or any other governmental position in the land. Frankly speaking, this government would be better run if the President and others would counsel with Baptist preachers and seek God's way of government. The word "pastor" is a word that means shepherd, which would give the pastor a position of an overseer. The word "bishop" which is used in the verses preceding our text is a word that means superintendent. Thus, we see the bishop or pastor has the responsibility of overseeing the Lord's church. Due to the fact that this office has been misused by some, and not respected by others; I will attempt to set before you the

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THE THREE APPEARINGS OF CHRIST

by Claude Creech

Read Heb. 9:24-28

The Holy Spirit, through the writer of Hebrews, asks us to "consider the Apostle and High priest of our profession, Christ Jesus" (Heb. 3:1). So in this article we wish to consider Him in His three appearances as referred to in Hebrews 9:24-28.

These three appearances may be thought of as past, present, and future. In the past tense v. 26, we see Him as our good shepherd, in the present tense we see Him as our great shepherd, and in the future tense we see Him as our chief shepherd. We see Him also as the suffering servant, great High Priest, and King of kings.



Claude Creech

We trust this brief writing will stir the reader's mind, causing him to make a more intensive study, as there is much confusion in people's mind where they fail to divide the Word of God rightly. So in Hebrews 9:26 we

read: "For then must he often have suffered since the foundation of the world: but now once in the end of the world hath he appeared to put away sin by the sacrifice of himself." We recognize that this first appearing includes His miraculous virgin birth, sinless life, death, burial, and resurrection. This covers His entire life on earth.

Volumes have been written on this all-important subject, but in this brief writing we mention just a few of the high points. First we look at His miraculous virgin birth. "For unto us a child is born, unto us a son is given: and the government

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THE PROPHET LIKE UNTO MOSES

by John Alber
6935 Dexter St.

Commerce City, C. 80022
Deuteronomy 18:9-22.

One may begin by answering some simple questions. The first question: Who was Moses? Most every child could give you the correct answer to that question. He was the one that his mother hid in the bulrushes along side of the river's brink. Exodus 2:3. Furthermore, a child could and probably would tell you that it was Moses that delivered the Children of Israel out of Egypt many years ago. While out in the Wilderness of Sinai, Almighty God gave unto



John Alber

Moses the law-hence he is called "The Law Giver."

Secondly, one may ask another question. What is Moses best known for? Again the child would point to the delivering of the children of Israel out of Egypt. The Bible teacher may suggest that he was one of the greatest Old Testament saints that ever lived. The Jew would point to him as the "Law Giver" and in so doing, they would give unto him the greatest respect. But in our present text, Moses is known as a great prophet of God. A Bible dictionary tells us that a pro-

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The Baptist Examiner Pulpit

A Sermon by Pastor Joseph M. Wilson

DOES GOD LOVE EVERYBODY AND, WHAT IF HE DOES?

"For God so loved the world, that he gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in Him should not perish, but have everlasting life" (John 3:16).

We believe and preach the wonderful doctrines of grace. We believe that man is totally depraved and cannot do anything to save, or help save, himself. We believe that out of totally depraved mankind, God eternally and sovereignly elected a multitude that no man can number and predestinated them to be the recipients of eternal salvation. We believe that Jesus Christ died savingly, effectually, and only for the elect of God. We believe that the Holy Spirit irresistibly and effectually calls the elect to the salvation ex-

perience, working true repentance and faith in them. We believe that those whom the Father chose, whom the Son redeemed, and whom the Spirit calls are saved with an everlasting salvation. These are the doctrines of grace. This is the salvation set forth in the Word of God. Those who deny these truths do not understand the Word of God and do not truly believe in salvation by the free grace of God.

There are many who are enemies of these glorious and precious Bible truths — they hate and despise them. These often use John 3:16 to oppose what we believe — I should say "misuse"; for truly they do not understand this verse, and pervert it from its true meaning,

seeking to make it do service to their heresy of "free-will." They often say that we do not believe this verse of Scripture.

Oh, we do believe John 3:16. We do believe in the wonderful love of God. We believe that to be the object of God's love is the greatest blessing one can ever have in time or eternity. We believe that our all for eternity depends upon the wonderful love of God and what that love does for those who are its objects. We believe that one can know he is the object of God's love and can be assured of all the everlasting benefits that flow from that love. We do not believe the awful heresy that God loves everyone, but we do believe in the wonderful love of

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Nothing lies beyond the power of man if it lies within the will of God.

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God.

Does God love everybody? This is the most popular doctrine in the religious world today. In our area we recently had a S.B.C. push on "Good news America, God loves you." I saw signs proclaiming this all around, but I did not believe them. I thought that we need a campaign dealing with the awful sins of America, with God's wrath against such sins, and with God's sure coming judgment on America. America has been lulled to sleep on the verge of God's judgment to the tune of God's so-called love for everybody. But this is a song invented by the devil and is deceiving multitudes. I know that it is a dangerous thing to oppose that which is popular with the multitudes. However, I do most adamantly oppose the theory that God loves everybody. I make bold to say that God does not love everyone. I charge every preacher who preaches this with being a false prophet and preaching a lie. He is blind on this point and is leading the blind, and both have fallen into the ditch of false doctrine. He is deceiving many. I warn those who believe that God loves everyone that they are believing a false and dangerous doctrine.

One of the easiest things I know of to prove is that God does not love everybody. The Bible is very clear on this point — so clear that there is no real excuse for anyone being deceived on this matter. "As it is written, Jacob have I loved, but Esau have I hated" (Rom. 9:13). This should be enough to prove that God does not love

everybody. Esau is a part of "everybody." God did not love, but hated Esau. Therefore, God does not love everybody. No man can really believe this, verse of Scripture and believe that God loves everyone. I know the many desperate efforts that men make trying to get around



Joe Wilson

the clear meaning of this Scripture. The truth of the matter is that they do not believe this verse of the Bible, and they twist, wiggle, and turn trying to get away from the plain meaning thereof. They will say that it was the nation that descended from Esau, not Esau himself. But the Bible says "Esau" and speaks of their mother in v. 10, and of the children in v. 11. Men will say that God did not

hate Esau, but only loved him less than He loved Jacob. If it were wrong to hate Esau, it would be wrong to love him less. God would still be showing partiality. The Bible says "hated", and contrasts this with the love God had for Jacob. Yes, men try to get around the plain meaning of Romans 9:13, but this verse does teach what I am saying in this sermon — God does not love everyone.

"...Yea, I have loved thee with an everlasting love: therefore with lovingkindness have I drawn thee" (Jer. 31:3). Here we learn the effectual character of God's love. His love is not one that sits idly by while its object perishes forever. He effectually draws unto Himself all who are the objects of His love. Since all men are not thus drawn to Christ, it follows beyond doubt that all are not the objects of God's love.

"...having loved his own which were in the world, he loved them unto the end" (John 13:1). We see here the unending character of Christ's love for His own. We see that His love is not for everyone, but is for "His own." It is a limited love. We see that those whom He once loves, He loves forever. Few would be so foolish as to say that God loves those in hell.

Those whom God does not love then and there, He never has loved. God's love is everlasting.

"I pray for them: I pray not for the world, but for them which thou hast given me; for they are thine" (John 17:9).

There are those who have been given to Christ. God the Father chose them and gave them into the heart and hand of His dear Son. His Son took them and engaged to do that work for them which would eternally save them. The Son prays for these given ones. He prays not for the world. Surely, one could not be so foolish as to say that Christ loves those for whom He will not pray. He does not pray for all. Therefore, He does not love all. It is as simple and plain as that.

"As many as I love, I rebuke and chasten..." (Rev. 3:19). Now, most assuredly the Lord does not chasten all men. Many go on and on and on in sin, never once feeling the chastening rod of the Lord. God does not whip the devil's children. God chastises His own, but not another's. Since He chastens all whom He loves, and since He does not chasten everybody; of necessity, He does not love everybody. Else why would He fail to chasten one whom He loved. Oh, how easily can we prove that God does not love everyone. The Scripture is

so very clear on this subject. There is really no excuse for any child of God failing to see this truth.

But the Arminian — the Free-willer — will use John 3:16 to prove his "God loves everybody" heresy. The Arminian says that God loves everyone. I ask him for Scriptural proof. He says "John 3:16" "I ask him how this proves his doctrine. He says "God loved the world." I ask him how that proves his doctrine. He says that "world" means everybody. Let us see if this is valid proof for his doctrine. First, I call your attention to the indisputable fact that John 3:16 is the only verse in the Bible that the Arminian can use to teach that God loves everybody. Search and see. He does not have another verse. Note next, that the whole weight of his argument from this verse hinges on the word "world." There are 810,697 words in the Bible, and this is the only word in all the Bible that the Arminian can use to prove that God loves everybody. I could have given more. The Arminian can only give one word in one verse to prove his doctrine.

Now please notice this. In order to use the word "world" to prove that God loves everyone, the Arminian must give it his

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FROM THE EDITOR

It is my very firm position that any member of a church should be able to get anything he or she wants before the church for a vote. The church should vote on the matter. The majority should rule in the vote. I do not believe that any practice should be allowed in a church that would keep a member from getting a matter to a church vote. There are many ways in which this is done.

In some churches the pastor, as moderator of the business meeting, might refuse to bring before the church that upon which some member desires to have a church vote. I believe that if any member asks me to bring something before the church, I should do so. I may try to talk said member out of such. I may consider it to be such a matter as to not be brought before the church; but if the member insists that it be brought before the church, I would do so — and I should do so. I consider it to be the inalienable right of a church member to get anything he or she desires before the church.

Some churches have a set-up where a matter must be presented to a portion of the church, and it is left up to that portion whether or not to bring the matter to a church vote. This portion may be a deacon board, or the deacons without calling themselves a board. It may be a meeting of the men of the church. It may be a meeting of some committee. I firmly believe that no group within the church should have the right to kill a matter, and keep it from a church vote if some member desires such a vote.

Now, it could be that some member would want something absurd or unscriptural brought before the church. Such a member should be dealt with on this matter. Efforts should be made to show them the absurdity or unscripturalness of such a matter. Still, if we believe what we teach as to the equal position of every member in the church, this person has the right to have such brought before the church. The church could then deal with the matter, and if needed, could deal with the member as to this matter. It may be that a member should be disciplined for holding to such absurdity or unscriptural matter. This could be done in connection with giving that member the right to have such matter brought before the church.

I know that some will invent some far out situation and use such to argue against what I say here. However, I feel that we should practice what I write here, or we should re-define our long cherished teaching of the equality of members and democracy of a Baptist Church.

The practice of parliamentary procedure in church business could defeat the thing I am arguing for. Let me illustrate. A church has a majority of women in her membership. These women would like to have a matter before the church for a vote. They would vote affirmatively on the matter. This would mean that a majority of the church was in favor of said matter. However, no man will make a motion to get this to a vote. No man will make a second since no motion has been made. The matter which a majority of the church approved of is defeated by a minority of the church by this procedure.

The democratic process - majority rule - congregational government: I believe this is the Scriptural and Baptist way of church government; but this Scriptural way of church government has been defeated in the above mentioned way.

One answer to this problem would be to allow a woman to make a motion and/or a second. Many male chauvinist Baptists would vehemently oppose this. I do most adamantly take the position that, if a church is going to practice the "motion, second" parliamentary procedure in her business meetings, then a woman should most assuredly be allowed to make a motion and/or second. Immediately someone will say that Joe Wilson is advocating women speaking in church. I do no such thing. I strongly oppose a woman speaking in church. However, a woman could write out a motion and/or second

and could give it to the pastor or to some man to read for her. My practice is to state the matter for vote, call for a motion and then a second. A person can — many do — a woman certainly could — make this motion and/or second by the uplifted hand. In either of these ways a woman could make a motion and/or second without violating Scripture by speaking in church.

In my opinion, a better solution to this problem would be to abolish the parliamentary procedure of church business meetings. What Scripture commands us to carry out our business in this way? I would suggest that any member of the church state to the pastor or moderator that which he or she would like to have brought before the church. The men could discuss the matter before the church. The pastor or moderator could then call for the vote. The majority would rule. Another thing I have against the parliamentary method of church business is that the pastor does not get to vote except to break a tie. He is a member of the church. He has the same right to vote as any other member; but this method robs him, in the vast majority of cases, of his right to vote in church business. Also, a matter might carry which would have been tied by the pastor's negative vote; and thus majority rule has been defeated.

I said that the men could discuss the matter before the church. What about the women? Should they not have a right to express their opinions? Yes they should. But they cannot speak in church, so how could this be accomplished? All matters of importance, about which there is likely differences of opinion, should be stated to the church some time before they are voted on. The women could discuss this among themselves, with the men in the church, and with the pastor. They could ask that their opinions be expressed to the church if they desired it. An informal meeting of the church could be held in which there could be open discussion. Later a formal meeting could be called in which the matter was voted upon. If a matter was before the church, and a woman had some opinions that she wanted expressed; she could ask a man to express them for her, or she should be allowed to ask (without speaking in church) that the vote be postponed until her view could be set forth.

You might surmise from all this that I am for women's rights within the church. I surely am. Women are a vital part of nearly all churches. They attend services. They give for the support of the church. They are often the majority of the church. They are on an equality with men in the church, except that there are a few things they cannot do: 1. Lead in prayer in the church. 2. Speak in church. 3. Teach a class with men in it. I believe that a woman has a vote in the church the same as a man does; and her vote counts as much as his. Those who oppose women voting in church need to face the fact that they have one definition for "church" when referring to the church itself, and a totally different definition of "church" when talking about church authority and church business. I appreciate the women in my church. I defend their rights within the church.

Since I have said this much, let me say a little more. Some men teach that a woman has a right to vote in church business; but add that she cannot vote against her husband. Some might even say that she cannot vote against the men in the church. Well, this borders on hypocrisy and deceit. Why give a woman a vote with one statement, and take it away with another? The woman has the right — and duty — to vote as she believes the Lord is leading her. If the woman must vote as another tells her to, why should she bother voting at all?

Well, maybe this will raise some questions and comments. I will be happy to deal with such in future issues. I will be happy to ponder and pray about any opinions to the contrary on this subject. I really would like to hear from my readers on the questions raised in this editorial. I promise to receive your adverse opinions prayerfully and deal with them courteously. May God bless you all.

DOES GOD

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own arbitrary definition. This word "world" is used in different ways in the Bible. The Arminian will admit that it often does not mean everybody. Now follow this carefully. The whole weight of the Arminian doctrine that God loves everybody hangs on one word in the Bible, and in order to make "world" mean that, he must insist that it means what he wants it to mean; while he admits that often in the Bible it does not mean that. Let us see.

Now remember that the Arminian says that "world" in John 3:16 means everybody. His "God loves everybody" doctrine depends upon that. "There went out a decree from Caesar Augustus, that all the world should be taxed" (Lk. 2:1). Mr. Arminian, were you taxed under that decree? Was anyone living today so taxed? Were people in China and Japan included in that taxation? You will say, "of course not." But you said that "world" meant everybody. Yet, here you will admit that "all the world" means only a very small part of the totality of men who have, do, and will live on this earth. Where is your "world means everybody" now? "Behold, the world is gone after him" (John 12:19). Mr. Arminian, did all the world go after Christ? Did even all the people in Palestine go after Him? Of course not. Yet the Arminian says that world means everybody in John 3:16, but admits that it does not mean that in John 12:19.

Jesus said in John 17:9 that He did not pray for the world. The Arminian says that "world" means everybody. If this be true, then Jesus prayed for no one. I John 2:15 tells the believer to "love not the world." According to the Arminian interpretation, this means that we are to love no one at all. I John 5:19 tells us that, "the whole world lieth in wickedness." According to the Arminian interpretation, there would not be anyone saved, but the verse also says that "we are of God." Therefore, the "we that are of God" are not part of the "whole world" that lieth in wickedness. Therefore, "world" does not mean everybody. Revelation 13:3 says that, "all the world wondered after the beast." Verse 8 tells us that, "all that dwell upon the earth" shall worship the beast. However, the same verse tells us of those written in the Lamb's book of life, and that they do not worship the beast. Therefore, "all the world" in verse 3, and "all that dwell upon the earth" in verse 8 do not include those written in the Lamb's book of life - consequently, do not include everybody.

Now, I do hereby charge the Arminian with deceitfulness and hypocrisy. He refuses to face the facts when he uses John 3:16 to prove that God loves everybody. He says that "the world" in that verse means everybody. But he will admit that often in the Bible "world" does not mean everybody. He builds his doctrine on his definition of "world" in John 3:16, ignoring the fact that it could, and often does in the Bible, mean something less than everybody.

The doctrine that God loves everybody is an awful heresy, and it has terrible consequences. Let us look at "what if God does love everybody?" Such a doctrine brings great shame and reproach upon God. See the ob-

ject of God's love lost, undone, and suffering in hell. What good has God's love done him? What kind of God is this - what kind of love is this that does not do all it can for its object? The Arminian may say that God would have saved the man in hell, but that man would not let Him. Look at this carefully. It is the doctrine of the vast majority of the religious world. Please note that it makes the difference between heaven and hell to be in the actions of man. Do you believe this? Do you give man the glory for his salvation? You do if you say that God loves everybody, and the difference between the saved and the unsaved is all in man. Oh, this doctrine that God loves everybody strips the crown from the head of God and puts it upon man.

The doctrine that God loves everybody belittles and makes light of the love of God. I know the Arminian says that our doctrine of a limited love of God belittles God's love, but the reverse is true. We do say that God's love is limited to the elect - that He does not love everybody. But we also say that God's love is so wonderful, powerful, and effectual that it eternally saves all those who are its object. The Arminian says that God loves everybody, but that God's love will not save any man, unless man does that which makes God's love savingly effectual. We believe that God love does all it desires to do. Others believe that God's love is tied up, frustrated, and defeated by the will of man. Tell me, who is it that belittles the love of God?

The doctrine that God loves everybody robs the believer of his hope of salvation which is based on the love of God. You say that God loves Judas and God loves me. Well, Judas is in hell; so what hope is there for me in the love of God? So God loves me. So what. You say that that love is an unsaving love. You say that it all depends on me. Then, what does the love of God do for me in salvation?

I believe no such thing. I believe that God's love is so wonderful and powerful that He will save everyone who is the object thereof. If I can but know that "Jesus loves me," I can know I am saved for eternity. Oh, what a wonderful love is this effectual, powerful, saving love of God? It is so much more wonderful than that love which stands helplessly by while its objects plunge into a burning hell. We honor the love of God. We magnify the love of God. We believe in the love of God. We believe that it is such that it does not offer to save, does not try to save; but that it does save all who are the objects thereof.

This doctrine that we teach about the love of God - that it is limited, but effective - is a doctrine that gives honor to God and His love. It is also a doctrine that brings great blessedness to the believer. God's love is a saving love. It is a keeping love. It is a providing love. It is a glorifying love. The love of the Arminian god - that love that includes everybody - it is not a saving love. It is a love that stands by helplessly while its objects go to hell. It is a love that does not do all that it could do for its objects. How much more wonderful, how much more like God, is the love that I preach to you in this article?

You say, "how can I know that I am an object of God's saving, keeping, providing, glorifying love?" I am glad you asked

that. Most folk are unconcerned about such. But if you are really sincere in asking such a question, if you really desire to know if Jesus loves you, if you really want to be loved by Him - well, that is a good sign. The interest you have - if real - is an evidence that the Holy Spirit is working in your heart. Do you desire His love? Do you desire His salvation? Praise the Lord! Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ and you will be saved. You will love the Lord for saving you. You will know that you love Him because He first loved you. Trust Jesus as your personal Saviour, and you will know that you are an object of His love. May God bless you all.

THREE

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shall be upon his shoulder: and his name shall be called Wonderful, Counsellor, The mighty God, The everlasting Father, The Prince of Peace" (Isaiah 9:6). And again we read, "Therefore the Lord himself shall give you a sign: Behold, a virgin shall conceive, and bear a son, and shall call his name Immanuel" (Isaiah 7:14).

These two prophecies were given more than seven hundred years before Jesus was born. But when the fullness of time was come, listen to what the angel told Joseph, Mary's betrothed husband, "Now the birth of Jesus Christ was on this wise: When as his mother Mary was espoused to Joseph, before they came together, she was found with child of the Holy Ghost" (Matt. 1:18). "And she shall bring forth a son, and thou shalt call his name JESUS: for he shall save his people from their sins" (Matt. 1:21).

Next, we note Jesus, while on earth, as the suffering Servant. Read the 53rd chapter of Isaiah, who prophesied of this suffering. Then we have the examples throughout the New Testament. We read, "And being in an agony he prayed more earnestly: and his sweat was as it were great drops of blood falling down to the ground" (Luke 22:44). "And at the ninth hour Jesus cried with a loud voice, saying... My God, My God, why hast thou forsaken me?" (Mark 15:34) (in part). "Then opened he their understanding, that they might understand the scriptures, And said unto them, Thus it is written, and thus it behooved Christ to suffer, and to rise from the dead the third day." (Luke 24:45-46) (in part). "For Christ also hath once suffered for sins, the just for the unjust, that he might bring us to God, being put to death in the flesh, but quickened by the Spirit" (I Pet. 3:18).

Next, we find that Jesus was our (God's children) good Shepherd. We see a perfect example of this in His death: "I am the good shepherd: the good shepherd giveth his life for the sheep" (John 10:11). Note Jesus does not say He offers His life for His sheep, as some would have you believe, but says "I give my life for the sheep." "as the father knoweth me, even so know I the Father: and I lay down my life for the sheep. And other sheep I have, which are not of this fold: them also I must bring, and they shall hear my voice; and there shall be one fold, and one shepherd" (John 10:15-16).

It is very important to know that Jesus, as our good Shepherd, voluntarily gave His life for His sheep. We read: "Therefore doth my Father love me, because I lay down my life, that I might take it again. No man taketh it from me, but I lay it down of myself. I have power to lay it down, and I have power to take it again. This commandment have I received of my Father" (John 10:17-18).

One other glorious promise is that Jesus, our good shepherd, not only gives life, but He gives eternal life. Listen to His words; "My sheep hear my voice, and I know them, and they follow me: and I give unto them eternal life; and they shall never perish, neither shall any man pluck them out of my hand. My father, which gave them me, is greater than all; and no man is able to pluck them out of my father's hand" (John 10:27-29).

It took more than Jesus' death to complete our salvation, it also required His burial and resurrection, as we read in I Corinthians 15:1-4, "MOREOVER, brethren, I declare unto you the gospel... how that Christ died for our sins according to the scriptures, And that he was buried, and that he rose again the third day according to the scriptures." (I Cor. 15:1-4).

The Scriptures do not give too much light as to what took place while Jesus lay in the tomb for three days and three nights. Yes, Jesus was in the grave for seventy-two hours just as He had said, "For as Jonas was three days and three nights in the whale's belly; so shall the Son of man be three days and three nights in the heart of the earth" (Matt. 12:40).

The very fact that Jesus did lay in the tomb for three days and three nights should silence forever the modernistic religious world from all their exaggerated ado, and idol worship of good Friday (?) and Easter Sunday (?), which is not found in the Scriptures.

Then also, the manner and place of His burial is in fulfillment of prophecy given more than seven hundred years before Jesus' birth. "And he made his grave with the wicked, and with the rich in his death; because he had done no violence, neither was any deceit in his mouth. Yet it pleased the LORD to bruise him; he hath put him to grief: when thou shalt make his soul an offering for sin, he shall see his seed, he shall prolong his days, and the pleasure of the LORD shall prosper in his hand." (Isa. 53:9-10).

Jesus was still active while His body lay in the tomb. We read: "...being put to death in the flesh, but quickened by the Spirit: By which (whom) also he went and preached unto the spirits in prison" (I Pet. 3:18-19).

We may assume that there were marvelous things which took place while Jesus' body lay in the heart of the earth. Again we read: "Wherefore he saith, When he ascended up on high, he led captivity captive, and gave gifts unto men" (Eph. 4:8). We recognize this as taking place at His resurrection, doubtless at the time He took His own blood into the holy place, or the throne of God. "Neither by the blood of goats and calves, but by his own blood He entered in once into the holy place, having obtained eternal redemption for us"

(Heb. 9:12).

As to the exact time of Jesus' rising from the tomb, ascending to the throne of God with His blood, appearing to Mary and other disciples, we do not know. The glorious fact is that we do know these things took place and the Holy Spirit has recorded all that He was pleased for us to know. Jesus' resurrection, leading captivity captive and presenting His blood in heaven, is not to be confused with His bodily ascension some forty days later, as we read in Acts 1:1-4.

Jesus' resurrection is an important part of the gospel, therefore, our salvation depends on Jesus' resurrection. We need- ed justification also. Job asked the question, "Then Job answered and said, I know it is so of a truth: but how should man be just with God?" (Job. 9:1-2). Romans 4:23-25 answers this question. "Now it was not written for his sake alone, that it was imputed to him; But for us also, to whom it shall be imputed, if we believe on him that raised up Jesus our Lord from the dead; Who was delivered for our offences, and was raised again for our justification."

This brings us to His second appearing, or the appearing in heaven, as recorded in Hebrews 9:24. "For Christ is not entered into the holy places made with hands, which are the figures of the true; but into heaven itself, now to appear in the presence of God for us" (Heb. 9:24).

This appearing in heaven brings us to the present dispensation. Some speak of this period as the dispensation of grace, some, as the church age. Regardless of what we call this two thousand year period (the time from Jesus' ascension until His coming in the clouds for His people), we now have a great high priest in heaven. "...The Lord sware and will not repent, Thou art a priest for ever after the... order of Melchisedec: but this man, because he continueth ever, hath an unchangeable priesthood" (Heb. 7:21-24). (in part.) "Seeing then that we have a great high priest, that is passed into the heaven, Jesus the Son of God, let us hold fast our profession. For we have not an high priest which cannot be touched with the feeling of our infirmities; but was in all points tempted like as we are, yet without sin" (Heb. 4:14-15).

Dear child of God, this is a blessed thought to know that our great High Priest has been tempted as we are, yet without sin. Therefore He knows our infirmities, and is able to make a way for our escape. He has promised that His grace is sufficient for us. And as our High Priest He makes intercession for us. "Wherefore he is able also to save them to the uttermost that come unto God by him, seeing he ever liveth to make intercession for them. For such an high priest became us, who is holy, harmless, undefiled, separate from sinners, and made higher than the heavens;" (Heb. 7:25-26).

Therefore Jesus, our great high priest, is our mediator. None other can act in this capacity in spiritual matters, just as there is no other name whereby we may be saved. Even

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Temptation rarely comes in working hours. it is in their leisure time that men are made or marred.

The Baptist Examiner Forum I

SUBMIT QUESTIONS ON ANY BIBLE SUBJECT

THE BAPTIST EXAMINER — P.O. Box 60 - ASHLAND, KENTUCKY 41105-0060

*Is it unscriptural for one man to pastor more than one church?
What about the many cases where this has been true?*

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From the days of the apostles until the present time it has been the custom for ministers to help churches, serving as their pastor wherever possible. In pioneer days it was quite common for a minister to pastor two or more churches. This practice has continued, although not as common, even until the present. In a recent survey of Kentucky Baptist for the year of 1920, it was discovered that almost sixty percent of the Baptist churches for that year shared their pastor with other churches. This being true, it would be impossible to find a church today that somewhere in her lineage this had not been practiced. Only in recent times has this practice been questioned by those who spend their time in, "either to tell, or to hear some new things."

What does a search of the Word reveal concerning this subject? First, we need to learn what are the duties of a pastor. In Ephesians 4:11, 12 we find that along with apostles, prophets, and evangelists, the pastors and teachers or pastor-teachers are for the purpose, "For the perfecting of the saints, for the work of the ministry, for the edifying of the body of Christ." The pastor is not only to expound the Word of God, but also teach the doctrines of the Scripture. As a shepherd of the sheep, his work is, "the perfecting of the saints", that is, he is to prepare the church for Christian service. The "work of the ministry" is the carrying out of the commission given to the church. In doing this, the body of Christ (the church) will be edified (built up), souls will be saved and added to the body.

The question is, could a minister do this work for a church and not be a member of that church? We need to only look to the apostle Paul for the answer to this question. While a member of the church at Antioch and a missionary sent out by that church (Acts 13:1; 14:26), it was said of him, "—when Paul came to Corinth and preached, — many of the Corinthians hearing, believed, and were baptized, And he continued there a year and six months, teaching the word of God among them" (Acts 18:8, 11). Does that not sound like he was doing the work of a pastor? Remember he was still a member at Antioch (Acts 14:26; 15:40). Again we read of Paul where he taught the disciples (the church) at Ephesus, "—by the space of two years; so that all they

which dwelt in Asia heard the word of the Lord Jesus, both Jews and Greeks" (Acts 20:20). At a later date he said of his teaching there, "Wherefore I take you to record this day that I am pure from the blood of all men. For I have not shunned to declare unto you all the counsel of God." (Acts 20:27). Could he have done more if he had been a member of the church?

These two examples show that Paul served as pastor of churches of which he was not a member. This should show us that it is not unscriptural for one man to pastor more than one church.

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Please read I Peter 5:1-4.

While I can think of no particular Scripture that specifically forbids one man from pastoring more than one church, I believe that the teachings, examples, and implications of the New Testament concerning pastors is toward one pastor over one flock, or local church. I feel that there are several reasons for our consideration concerning the spiritual health and well being of an assembly that necessitates a God called, God placed, pastor to use fully his time and faculties upon the assembly in which God has placed him.

I believe that the office of pastor is, of course, a church office. Consequently, the pastor's area, or sphere of service is restricted to the local church that he pastors. His authority and service are there. I Timothy 3:5, tells us that a pastor is called to "take care of the church of God." The church we are speaking of here is a local church; not a universal, invisible, invention of man. He is to be a member of the local church that he pastors, for he can only be subordinate to the church of which he is a member. He can be a member of only one church at a time. I have known of cases where men wearing the name "Baptist" were members of more than one church at a time, but that is unnatural and irregular.

The New Testament never encourages a plurality of churches under one pastor. Indeed, before the end of the second century of Christian history closed, some pastors had begun to assume, usurp if you will, authority not given to them in claiming power and rule over more than one church. The large churches had several preachers, as the examples of Acts 20:28 and Philippians 1:1 point out; but no where was one man to have charge of several churches. I believe that the danger of that error is evident in the present day examples of church hierarchy surrounding

us. The modern day connotation of "bishop" and "elder" are the results of this early error resulting in the irregularity of church government among many today.

Verse 2 of I Peter 5 instructs pastors to "feed," or literally "shepherd" the flock, or assembly put into their care. They are to have the spiritual oversight of the flock to which they belong. They, as Hebrews 13:17 reminds us, watch for the souls of their charge, for which they will give account. The pastor, with great concern, cares for, reproves, corrects, exhorts, gives example, preaches, and prays for his flock. Beloved, I believe that in all these respects a man can only give his best to one assembly. The time alone that he must give to preparing, preaching, and teaching toward spiritual maturity to both the weak and the strong in his charge should limit his efforts to one charge.

We must add that a pastor certainly is not prohibited from assisting sister churches and helping them as he is able. He should have a concern for them, but never to the hurt, or forsaking of his own church. Always, his primary concern is to be for his own church and his responsibility to it. There have been and are denominations and others who practice plural pastorates. This is true even in Baptist ranks. We do not judge them, nor do we know the individual situations; but we believe that God's plan is for a called man to pastor one assembly with all the strength, faculty, and facility that God gives him.

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This question has only recently become a problem with some. In years past there have been many cases where one man has pastored more than one church at the same time, and nobody has questioned it.

Naturally there are problems when one man has to serve two or three churches, but nothing that can't and hasn't been taken care of.

There is no Scripture that says a man can or cannot pastor more than one church at a time. The only thing we can do is consider each case as it arises. It is the duty of a preacher to preach the gospel. "And He said unto them, go ye into all the world, and preach the gospel to every creature" (Mark 16:15). It is the duty of every preacher to edify the church. "And He gave some, apostles; and some, prophets; and some, evangelists; and some, pastors and teachers; for the perfecting of the saints, for the work of the ministry, for the edifying of the body of Christ" (Eph. 5:11, 12).

Let me ask a question. What

is a man to do, if he is pastoring a church and there is another church close by who is without a pastor and cannot find someone to assist them? When they ask him to be their spiritual leader, and his church is in agreement; he would have to work with them. He would most certainly be wrong if he refused to do so. (Let me caution you that I am talking about a man pastoring another church if they do not have a pastor. No pastor should interfere with or attempt to pastor another church if that church has a pastor.)

Now, if a man pastors two or more churches, he obviously can only be a member of one of them. This means that if someone is saved or the church observes the ordinance of the Lord's supper he must act according to the wishes of the body. If he is not a member and someone is saved, and the church authorizes him to baptize that person, he does so in the name of that church. When they observe the Lord's supper he presents the ingredients to them, but he does not partake of the eating and drinking.

Now, brethren I have read books and articles that say this can't be done, but I have yet to read anything that proves it because there are no arguments or Scripture that says it can't be done. The brethren that wrote them are honest in their opinion but wrong nevertheless. The authority is in the church and not the man.

Is it unscriptural? It definitely would be better for a man to pastor only one church; but wrong, certainly not.

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I. Timothy 3:1: "This is a true saying, If a man desire the office of a bishop, he desireth a good work."

Let me state from the beginning that I thank God for calling me to be a preacher of His Word. I also thank God for calling me as pastor of the Grace Baptist Church in Gladwin, Michigan. As far as I am concerned, there is no greater position on the face of God's earth than to pastor one of His true churches. I state that separate from my answer and for free.

The hardest questions to answer are questions such as this one that do not have a clear Biblical answer. I can not ask you to turn to any certain book, chapter and verse and give you an answer to this question. I will mention that, in the light of the "new" doctrine relative to baptism, this becomes a very important question. (The doctrine I refer to is that you must be a member of a church to baptize anyone into that church.) I know of no Scripture that deals directly with this question and am not sure of any that deal indirectly with this question.

The key word here is "pastor." If the question only concerned itself with preaching at more than one church, it could be more simply answered. There is much more to pastoring a church than just preaching to it. The job of pastor can be carried on in a better fashion by one man pastoring one church. This is not to say it cannot be carried on in any other way. Since the

Bible does not condemn the practice of a man pastoring more than one church, then neither can I. Certainly we recognize that these two churches would have to make some concessions relative to starting times, etc. We recognize that these two churches would have to be somewhat close together. I ask a question for thought. Is this a lot different than a church having a mission somewhere, of which the founding church's pastor is also the mission pastor?

The second question asks about the many cases where this has happened. I recognize that in the past and even in some places today this is a common practice. Does this mean they are not churches? Does this mean this man is not a pastor of either church? Does this mean the people who are baptized by this man have never received Scriptural baptism? I think the answer is no to all the above questions.

I do want you to understand that I do not believe this man could be a member of both churches. I do not recommend this as a good practice. I do think many have felt and do feel that it is a necessary practice. I will mention that if two churches are close enough that one man could pastor both of them, perhaps they should consider finding a common ground and becoming one church.

I close by again stating that the work of a pastor involves much more than just preaching. You will never know the work involved in pastoring even a small church. You will never understand the problems that face a pastor. To pastor two churches would prove to be very difficult, but from the silence of God's Word, I can not declare it unscriptural. May God bless you all.

THREE

(Continued from Page 3)

so, there is no other who can be our mediator. We read as follows: "for there is one God, and one mediator between God and men, the man Christ Jesus;" (I Tim. 2:5).

We may also, in confirmation of this thought, read in Jesus' great intercessory prayer, while He was here in the incarnation, even before His crucifixion, as follows: "I have manifested thy name unto the men which thou gavest me out of the world: ...I pray for them: I pray not for the world, but for them which thou hast given me; for they are thine." (John 17:6-9).

We previously mentioned, that in Jesus' first appearing, as we find in our text, Hebrews 9:26, He was considered as our good shepherd, but in His second appearing in Heaven, Hebrews 9:24, we think of Him as our great Shepherd, as we read in Hebrews 13:12-21.

However, after Jesus appears in the air for His people, He is called our chief shepherd, as recorded in I Peter 5:4 "And when the chief Shepherd shall appear, ye shall receive a crown of glory that fadeth not away."

So at the present we, by faith, anxiously await His appearing in the air where we (with all His saints) in glorified bodies will be caught up to meet Him in the air. (I Thess. 4:17). In reality this appearing in the air is the first phase of His second coming, and some seven years later

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The Baptist Examiner Forum II

SUBMIT QUESTIONS ON ANY BIBLE SUBJECT

THE BAPTIST EXAMINER — P.O. Box 60 — ASHLAND, KENTUCKY 41105-0060

Please explain "resisting the Spirit" (Acts 7:51).

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"Ye stiffnecked and uncircumcised in heart and ear, ye do always resist the Holy Ghost: as your fathers did, so do ye" (Acts. 7:51).

I believe Stephen, in his defense before the Sanhedrin typifies the natural reaction of the unregenerate man. He will always resist the Holy Spirit. Christ reveals the will of the unbeliever in John 5:39, 40, "Search the scriptures; for in them ye think ye have eternal life: and they are they which testify of me. And ye will not come to me, that ye might have life." Not only does the unregenerate man resist the Spirit, but Scripture reveals that he does not have the ability within himself to comply with the Spirit. "No man can come to me, except the Father which hath sent me draw him: and I will raise him up at the last day" (Jn. 6:44). The things of the Spirit are foolishness to the unbeliever, therefore they resist, or even resent them. The natural man, when left to himself will continue at enmity with God. Even though man may resist the Holy Spirit, he in no wise can overcome the Spirit. The mercy and grace of God toward the sinner, in granting repentance and faith, is irresistible. I'm not saying God saves a man against his will, but that He makes him willing. Once a man comes to see his lost condition before God and is truly convicted of his sins he gladly listens to the Spirit of God through the Word. Once he resisted but now is overpowered by the irresistible grace of God!

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There is a sense in which we do resist the Holy Spirit. As did those of the past, and those that Stephen was now addressing, we today resist the Holy Spirit in opposing the gospel message that is sent forth by the Holy Spirit. Stephen goes on to say in the 52nd verse, "Which of the prophets have not your fathers persecuted? And they have slain them which showed before of the coming of the Just One; of whom ye have been now the betrayers and murderers."

Genesis 6:3 says, "And the Lord said, my spirit shall not always strive with man, for that he also is flesh: yet his days shall be an hundred and twenty years." Many try to take Acts 7:51 and Genesis 6:3

to disprove irresistible grace, however, this shows their ignorance and lack of study of the Word of God.

I have just answered Acts 7:51 to some extent, but let us go farther. Genesis 6:3 has been fulfilled. At the end of the one hundred and twenty years God destroyed all of them, saving Noah and his family. This has no reference to this age in which we live. There is a sense in which God the Spirit strives with us, but not in the sense that He is trying to save us and we have the power of resistance.

That doctrine which teaches that when grace is offered we may refuse it if we will, and if we will we may receive it is to be looked upon as contrary to the Scripture. Let us look at a verse of Scripture found in Daniel 4:35, "And all the inhabitants of the earth are reputed as nothing: and 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? Now let us look at a verse of Scripture in the New Testament. Ephesians 1:11, "In whom also we have obtained an inheritance, being predestinated according to the purpose of him who worketh all things after the counsel of his own will. Now let us look at one more verse of Scripture. Philippians 1:6, "Being confident of this very thing, that he which hath begun a good work in you will perform it until the day of Jesus Christ."

Beloved, if these Scriptures teach anything, they teach that God is sovereign, and not the helpless little god that is being preached and taught today. There is no such thing as a person being under conviction and rejecting the Holy Spirit to be left alone to be lost forever. When God the Spirit sets out to draw one to the Lord Jesus Christ, He does not give up, but rather continues to work on him until the work is finished. In other words, God works when He wants to, where He wants to, how He wants to, and none can stay His hand, (resist His working).

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Stephen speaks of these people as being "stiff necked," which means "hard necked" as in Proverbs 29:1, "He that being often reproved hardeneth his neck..."; such as one who is reproved by the law of God, who stiffens his neck against the reproofs of God's Word, will not hear it, will not bend or turn from his wicked ways.

When a person will not hear God's Word he is resisting God's Word. When a man will not hear the preaching of God's Word, then he is resisting the preaching of the man of God.

The true preacher of God's Word preaches irresistible grace. he preaches the effectual work of the Spirit of God. When God begins a good work in person that person will sooner or later come to the knowledge of the truth as it is in Christ Jesus. Paul said in Philippians 1:6, "Being confident of this very thing, that he which hath begun a good work in you will perform it until the day of Jesus Christ." A person cannot successfully resist the power of the Holy Spirit. He may resist for a while, but God will, in His time bring him to Christ.

The resisting the Spirit, spoken of in Acts 7:51, does not mean that these men resisted the Holy Spirit of God, and that God could not overcome their resistance. They did not resist the Holy Spirit's power working in their souls, but they resisted the preaching of Stephen. In resisting his preaching they resisted the Holy Spirit and resisted God and His work.

We can see that resisting the Holy Spirit in person is not meant here from the statement in the last part of the verse which said, "As your fathers did, so do ye." They refused God's command, they disobeyed statutes, they broke the law of God, they would not yield to the yoke of correction, they were stiff necked, and so these people in Stephen's day did the same thing. The people who were listening to Stephen resisted the law of God, His commandments, His statutes, and would not obey the preaching of the gospel, so they did as their fathers did.

Let us notice still further that if there were any of God's elect there they would be drawn to Christ as was Saul of Tarsus. Saul was converted in the middle of the road to Damascus. How many others of God's elect were there that day we do not know, but whosoever and how many, they were brought to Christ, as was Saul whose name was changed to Paul. Paul could not and did not resist successfully, neither can anyone else. All the Father has given to Christ will come to Him. John 6:37, "All the Father giveth me shall come to me; and him that cometh to me I will in no wise cast out."

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There is no man alive that has ever had the power to resist the Holy Ghost. Every being is subject unto the power of God. "Let every soul be subject unto the higher powers. For there is no power but of God: the powers that be are ordained of God. Whosoever therefore resisteth the power, resisteth the ordinance of God: and they that resist shall receive to themselves damnation" (Rom. 13: 1-2). The

words "resist" and "resisteth" have reference to striving against the Holy Ghost - acting in a contrary manner and setting oneself against authority.

Stephen brought this indictment against the Jews that were encased in the law even, though the gospel had been preached to them. They were as their fathers were; stiffnecked and uncircumcised in their heart and ears. They had not heard outwardly or inwardly. They always (perpetually) strove against the things of God. Their fathers resisted the Holy Ghost by following after the things of the heathen (2 Chron. 36:14-17).

There are those today that strive against the Holy Ghost. They act in a manner that is contrary to Scriptural teaching. There are those that are in rebellion to that which they know they ought to do. God will allow resistance to exist for only a time, then He takes steps of correction.

THREE

(Continued from Page 4)

after the great tribulation, the second phase of His second coming to earth will take place. That is when He will come to this earth with His people (Jude 14) and will reign here on earth for one thousand years (Rev. 20:1-5).

It is in the beginning of this one thousand year reign that Satan is bound, and this one thousand year reign will be a reign of perfect righteousness; the first since Adam was cast out of Eden. In this period Jesus will reign with a rod of iron. This reign is in fulfillment of many Old Testament prophecies.

We have many types and prophecies in the Old Testament which foreshadow these three appearances of Jesus, as given in our text, Hebrews 9:24-28. Here we wish to call your attention to only one series of these types. It is found in Psalms, chapters 22, 23, and 24. In Psalm 22, we have a clear picture of Jesus' sufferings, death, burial and resurrection, which was the climax of His first appearing, paying the penalty of sin for all for whom He died. In this chapter we think of Jesus as our good shepherd, "the good shepherd giveth his life for the sheep" (John 10:11). In Psalm 23, we have Jesus as the great shepherd. (Heb. 13:20). Jesus, as the great shepherd, not only intercedes for His own, He also supplies our needs, leading, restoring and renewing us in the inner man. Of course, this is in the present tense.

Then in Psalm 24, we see Jesus as our chief shepherd, He being set forth in this chapter as king of glory, "who is this king of glory? The Lord strong and mighty, the Lord mighty in battle... the Lord of hosts, he is the king of glory. Selah." (Psa. 24:7-10).

Now that we have tried to give a general picture in considering Jesus in His three appearances, as found in our text, Hebrews 9:24-28, we will close this writing with a brief summary, emphasizing in a more specific way, some of the points we have dealt with in general. God being sovereign, knowing the end from eternity past, has a set time for everything that has ever, or will ever take place.

"But when the fulness of time was come, God sent forth his son, made of a woman, made under the law, to redeem them that were under the law, that we (his

people) might receive the adoption of sons" (Gal. 4:4, 5).

In this first appearing, we recognize Jesus in His incarnation, made of a woman, we see Him as our good shepherd, giving His life for the sin of His people (John 10:11), and being resurrected for our justification. We read "who was delivered for our offenses, and was raised again for our justification" (Rom. 4:25).

While giving His life's blood for the sins of His people, we hear him say "It is finished." There on the cross He completed the plan of redemption, and God the Father was satisfied with His atoning death. We read in Isaiah 53:10, 11: "Yet it pleased the Lord to bruise him; he hath put him to grief: when thou shalt make his soul an offering for sin, He shall see his seed, he shall prolong his days, and the pleasure of the Lord shall prosper in his hand. He shall see of the travail of his soul, and shall be satisfied: by his knowledge shall my righteous servant justify many: for he shall bear their iniquities." Jesus giving His blood did atone for the sin penalty of all His people.

Jesus' second appearing, as given in Hebrews 9:24, took place forty days after His resurrection, and in contrast to His first appearing: coming from Heaven to earth; this second appearing in heaven was His ascension from earth to heaven. This two thousand year period will last until "the fulness of the Gentiles be come in." We read in Romans 11:25: "For I would not, brethren, that ye should be ignorant of this mystery, lest ye should be wise in your own conceits; that blindness in part is happened to Israel, until the fulness of the Gentiles be come in."

So during this present age His people are blessed beyond comprehension to have Jesus, our great high priest, there in Heaven, seated at the right hand of God to make intercession for us. No, Jesus is not interceding for the devil's children. We read: "My little children, these things write I unto you, that ye sin not. And if any man sin, we have an advocate with the father, Jesus Christ the righteous" (1 John 2:1). "wherefore he is able also to save them to the uttermost that come unto God by him, seeing he ever liveth to make intercession for them. For such an high priest became us, who is holy, harmless, undefiled, separate from sinners, and made higher than the heavens;" (Heb. 7:25-26). "Who is he that condemneth? It is Christ that died, yea rather, that is risen again, who is even at the right hand of God, who also maketh intercession for us." (Rom. 8:34). If you question who the "us" in this verse includes, please reread Romans 8:28-30.

It is a wonderful thought for us to know that we do have a great high priest at God's right hand to make intercession for us. We read in I Timothy 2:5 as follows: "For there is on God, and one mediator between God and men, the man Christ Jesus."

As we need daily cleansing from the defilement of this

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QUESTION: — What dressmaker was raised from the dead?

ANSWER: — Dorcas, Acts 9:37-40. "And it came to pass in those days, that she (Dorcas) was sick, and died:... and all the widows stood by... weeping, and shewing the coats and garments which Dorcas made while she was with them. But Peter put them all forth, and.. said, Tabitha, arise. And she opened her eyes: and when she saw Peter, she sat up."

THREE

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world, and as we confess our sins to God we have this mediator to intercede for us. Read I John 1:6-10.

It is marvelous to meditate on Jesus' first appearing, coming from heaven's glory to this sin-cursed earth. We, receiving His righteousness, having the penalty of our sin paid for in full, should continually praise Him for this. However, it is shouting ground to know that we have this great high priest in heaven to make intercession for us. So now we are looking for Him to come in the air for His people.

This third appearing in the air to take away His people both dead and living is a most glorious truth, and we should be watching and praying for this day to come. It should cause very serious thinking, and we should comfort others with this glorious thought. It may be soon. It won't be long. Listen to the following Scripture: "For the Lord himself shall descend from heaven with a shout... and the dead in Christ shall rise first; then we which are alive and remain shall be caught up together with them in the clouds, to meet the Lord in the air: and so shall we ever be with the Lord. Wherefore comfort one another with these words." (I Thes. 4:16-18).

We realize that this third appearing is the first phase of His second coming, and we understand there will be a seven year period between the first and second phase of His second coming. This period is known as the great tribulation, which will be a horrible time for those left here on earth. Jesus foretold this: "for then shall be great tribulation, such as was not since the beginning of the world to this time, no, nor ever shall be. And except those days should be shortened, there should no flesh be saved: but for the elect's sake those days shall be shortened (Matt. 24:21-22).

For a vivid picture of this great tribulation, read Revelation, chapters 6 through 19. So great will be their punishment that they will seek death, but in vain. We here quote a few of the verses which give this: "and the kings of the earth, and the great men, and the rich men, and the chief captains, and

the mighty men, and every bondman, and every free man, hid themselves in the dens and in the rocks of the mountains; and said to the mountains and rocks, fall on us, and hide us from the face of him that sitteth on the throne, and from the wrath of the lamb: for the great day of his wrath is come; and who shall be able to stand?" (Rev. 6:15-17). "And in those days shall men seek death, and shall not find it; and shall desire to die, and death shall flee from them" (Rev. 9:6).

But in contrast, God's people have been caught up to meet the Lord in the air with their glorified bodies to ever be with their Lord. This will be glory inexpressible. "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 now. Beloved, now are we the sons of God, and it doth not yet appear what we shall be; but we know that, when he shall appear, we shall be like him; for we shall see him as he is" (I John 3:1-2).

There are two very important events which will take place in this seven-year period while the great tribulation runs its course on earth. First, God's people are to stand before the judgment seat of Christ. We read in Romans 14:10, "but why dost thou judge thy brother? or why dost thou set at nought thy brother? for we shall all stand before the judgment seat of Christ."

We have a vivid picture of this judgment in I Corinthians 3:9-15. This judgment is primarily for the giving or withholding of rewards. In Jesus' earthly ministry, He had much to say about rewards: "Blessed are ye, when men shall revile you, and persecute you, and shall say all manner of evil against you falsely, for my sake. Rejoice, and be exceeding glad: for great is your reward in heaven: for so persecuted they the prophets which were before you" (Matt. 5:11-12).

"He that receiveth a prophet in the name of a prophet shall receive a prophet's reward; and he that receiveth a righteous man in the name of a righteous man shall receive a righteous man's reward. And whosoever shall give to drink unto one of these little ones a cup of cold water only in the name of a disciple, verily I say unto you, He shall in no wise lose his reward" (Matt. 10:41-42).

There are those of God's people who will be ashamed at Jesus' coming and judgment. We read in I John 2:28, as follows, "And now, little children, abide in him; that, when he shall appear, we may have confidence, and not be ashamed before him at his coming."

This judgment seat of Christ must not be confused with "the great white throne" judgment, as found in Rev. 20:11-15, as this judgment will take place at least one thousand years later. That judgment will be only for the lost, and we believe it will be for the purpose of setting the degree of punishment. All will be there whose names are not written in the Book of life.

This judgment then is in contrast to the judgment seat of Christ, which is for God's people only, and will have taken

place at least one thousand years before, and will be for the giving or withholding of rewards.

The second event to take place in this seven-year period, will be the marriage of the Lamb, and for those who will be the bride, this marriage will be the apex of all other events. We further believe that all Scriptural churches in this present age are espoused to be Christ's future bride. We read as follows: "For I am jealous over you with godly jealousy: for I have espoused you to one husband, that I may present you as a chaste virgin to Christ" (II Cor. 11:2).

We believe this marriage will take place sometime within this seven-year period, between the first and second phase of Christ's second coming. So: "let us be glad and rejoice, and give honour to him: for the marriage of the lamb is come, and his wife hath made herself ready" (Rev. 19:7).

There are a few comments we wish to make as to the bride of Christ, setting forth some of the various views of different faiths, as there is much confusion on this important subject. There are those who flatly deny that Christ will have a bride to reign with Him for one thousand years here on earth. Others who do believe that Christ will have a bride, but think all of God's people of all ages will make up the bride. Others believe that all of God's people in this present age will be the bride. The majority of Baptists believe that only Christ's Scriptural churches will compose the bride. We believe and hold to the last teaching.

The Scriptures clearly teach that there will be a marriage of the Lamb, therefore of necessity Jesus will have a bride, and this would eliminate the first theory, as given above. The second and universal bride theory held by some is eliminated by the fact that there will be guests at this marriage.

The third group mentioned above (the majority holding to the universal or invisible church) teach that all the people of God in this present age will make the bride of Christ. There are numerous Scriptures which will eliminate this theory. We will give some of these Scriptures as we state what we understand the Bible teaches on this subject.

We believe the fourth and last position as given above: that all Scriptural Baptist churches will compose the bride is based solely on what the Scriptures teach. 1st, that Jesus did start a church while here. We believe this was a Baptist church, as all the apostles were baptized by John the Baptist.

And just as there is one body (His Body — His church) therefore He has only one church (one kind of church). "There is one body, and one spirit, even as ye are called in one hope of your calling; one Lord, one faith, one baptism, one God and father of all, who is above all, and through all, and in you all" (Eph. 4:4-6).

2nd, Jesus gave this first church the great commission and promised her perpetuity as we read in Matthew 28:18-20. "And Jesus came and spake unto them, saying, All power is given unto me in heaven and in earth... and lo I am with you alway, even unto the end of the world." So, if we believe that Jesus spoke the truth, and we surely all do agree that He did as He is the very embodiment of truth, then we

know that He has His churches in the world today, and these churches are easily identified by their teaching and practice. Paul says that God will get glory through His churches. We read, "Unto him be glory in the church by Christ Jesus throughout all ages, world without end. Amen" (Eph. 3:21).

3rd, Paul, in writing to the church at Ephesus compares the love and relationship of Jesus to this church to that of husband and wife. "Wives, submit yourselves unto your own husbands, as unto the Lord. For the husband is the head of the wife, even as Christ is the head of the church.

Therefore, as the church is subject unto Christ, so let the wives be to their own husbands in every thing husbands, love your wives, even as Christ also loved the church, and gave himself for it; that he might sanctify and cleanse it with the washing of water by the word. That he might present it to himself a glorious church, not having spot, or wrinkle, or any such thing; but that it should be holy and without blemish" (Eph. 5:22-28).

We believe a brief note here is essential, especially to all those who cling to the invisible or universal church theory. The Greek manuscript uses the word "ecclesia," which the King James and most others translated church. This has caused untold confusion.

From this first assembly which Jesus started, thousands of other such have come into existence, and should always be used in the plural unless writing or speaking of assemblies at a specific location.

There is a sense where the word is used in the singular, or abstract, as an institution; just as we speak of the American home, (singular) even knowing there are many American homes. Many other examples could be given.

The only exception to the above is where the church is spoken of as being yet future, where all His Scriptural churches will make up His Bride (singular). We believe one such Scripture is found in Hebrews 12:22-23. "But ye are come unto Mount Zion, and unto the city of the living God, the heavenly Jerusalem, and to an innumerable company of angels, to the general assembly and church of the firstborn, which are written in heaven, and to God the judge of all, and to the spirits of just men made perfect, and to Jesus the mediator of the new covenant, and to the blood of sprinkling, that speaketh better things than that of Abel."

There are numerous other Scriptures with reference to Jesus' three appearances as given in our text, (Heb. 9:24-28) and especially relating to His churches, His return for His people, the judgment seat of Christ, the marriage of the Lamb to His future Bride, and His reigning with her for one thousand years.

We do not profess to know all the particulars, such as the time and the order of these future events. However, in this mere birds' eye view we have tried to set forth what we believe to be the teaching of the Scriptures which we will fully know as they take place.

May all who are privileged to read this article have their pure minds stirred to search the

Scriptures to learn more of what lies ahead for all who are looking for His second coming, and may we be able to say with Paul, "I have fought a good fight, I have finished my course, I have kept the faith: henceforth there is laid up for me a crown of righteousness, which the Lord, the righteous judge, shall give me at that day: and not to me only, but unto all them also that love his appearing." (II Tim. 4:7-8).

PROPHET

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phet of God is one that speaks for God. Moses was God's spokesman for nearly forty years.

Thirdly, why were these words written in Deuteronomy 18? Three reasons become apparent, at a glance, as this passage is first read. (1). To reveal God's attitude concerning the evil spirits in the promised land. (2). To reveal God's one and only true prophet, the Lord Jesus Christ, the promised Messiah. (3). To reveal God's work for His true prophet.

1. The warning God gave concerning these false spirits. Deuteronomy 18:9-14.

The Rule is given in verses 9-11. God simply told the children of Israel that they were not to get involved with the wicked abominations of the heathens that lived in the promised land, and that He wanted them to destroy them completely. My friends, God would have us to understand the same basic principle today. Because we are His dear children who have been washed in the blood of the Lamb, we should not get involved with the wicked abominations that are present in today's world.

Often God does not explain in His Word why we are not to do certain things. Generally, it could be said that the "Law" was given for our good. Nevertheless, in our present text God has made it very clear as to why the children of Israel were not to get involved in these evil practices.

1. The reason given for this divine order - Deuteronomy 18:12-14. All of these practices were an abomination unto the Lord God of heaven - vs. 12. The heathen nations had hearkened unto these evil things, and God did not want His people to get involved in such rotten practices - vs. 14.

The rule given - Deuteronomy 18:9-11. Because

2. The rule given - Deuteronomy 18:9-11. Because of the worship of Molech - vs. 10. The Ammonites would heat up the image of their heathen god and place in its arms the slain child in order to appease their heathen god and place in its arms the slain child in order their heathen deity. Here in our text we see that this practice is strictly forbidden by God and called an abomination. In fact, Leviticus 20:6 had very harsh words for those that turned to such practices. For a number of years that was not a problem for the children of Israel as they obeyed the voice of the Lord. King Solomon was the first to allow this evil practice in the promised land in order to please his numerous wives - I Kings 11:7. A few more years passed, King Ahaz appeared on the scene and he made his own son to pass through the fire. He was the first King of Judah to practice this form of religious belief.

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STUDIES IN EZEKIEL

Willard Willis, Monroe, Ohio

"Afterward he brought me again unto the door of the house; and, behold, waters issued out from under the threshold of the house eastward: for the forefront of the house stood toward the east, and the waters came down from under from the right side of the house, at the south side of the altar" (Ezek. 47:1).

The prophet is brought again to the "door of the house," or to the holy of holies. He is brought again, or back to this place. He, according to the last chapter, had been viewing the kitchen area, but he is now brought back to the inner court, even to the door that led into the holiest of all. Ezekiel, on returning to the door of the holiest of all, observes that "waters issued out from under the threshold of the house eastward." The waters also "came down from under from the right side of the house." He identifies the location further by stating that it was at the south side of the altar.

I believe these waters to be literal. They, however, have a great spiritual message for us too. This message will manifest itself as we learn from the passages before us regarding the benefits of this water. The "dry bones" have been given life, that is, Israel will be restored from dry bones to a very green tree. Green trees, however, need to be maintained. They need to be watered. God, of course, will send forth waters from His throne, waters to heal and waters to maintain the renewed land. The Shepherd will dwell with His sheep and His sheep will want for no good thing.

The waters will not only be literal, but they will also represent the abundant work of God the Spirit in His work among God's people. It will be as stated in the following passage: "And I will put my Spirit within you, and cause you to walk in my statutes, and ye shall keep my judgments, and do them. And I will multiply the fruit of the tree, and the increase of the field, that ye shall receive no more reproach of famine among the heathen" (Ezek. 36:27,30).

We all know that all living things need water. We can cultivate a field, plant corn and weed the field, but our work will be vain if there is not sufficient water. The water, however, that will flow from the new temple, yea, from the holy of holies, will be a means of maintaining and a declaration that all will be well maintained.

The believer today is in constant need of God the Spirit to maintain knowledge and wisdom and good works in us. He, in other words, waters the garden which God has planted. The Spirit, in like manner, will water the works of God during the Millennium. "Then brought he me out of the way of the gate northward, and led me about the way without unto the utter gate by the way that looketh eastward; and, behold, there ran out waters on the right side. And when the man that had the line in his hand went forth eastward, he measured a thousand cubits, and he brought me through the waters; the waters were to the ankles" (Ezek. 47:2, 3).

We, when first becoming ac-

quainted with our Lord Jesus Christ, walk only ankle deep in knowledge, wisdom, experience, etc. We, however, as time continues, wade farther and farther into the depths of God's Word. We also enter into deeper and deeper experiences. We become more and more involved.

The rivers of earth are fed by more than one stream. They, in fact, become large by way of



Willard Willis

many streams emptying into them. There, however, is to be only one stream which will flow into the river that flows from the throne of God. It will be a stream that is small at first, but the farther it goes, the deeper it becomes. The water, in fact, will be similar to that which flowed from the smitten rock as is recorded in Numbers 20:11. Our bodies grow as we progress from children to adults. The waters will also increase or grow as they go forth and will, by their nature, teach relative to the growth of those who will be taught at God's temple. People, in fact, from all over the world, will go to the temple to learn. "Again he measured a thousand, and brought me through he waters; the waters were to the knees. Again he measured a thousand, and brought me through: the waters were to the loins. Afterward he measured a thousand; and it was a river that I could not pass over: for the waters were risen, waters to swim in, a river that could not be passed over" (Ezek. 47:4,5).

The keys which unlock these passages for me are the words "live" and "very great multitude" in verse nine. I see, in the growing waters, an abundant life during the Millennium. I see great knowledge and wisdom being possessed by God's people during this period. I see an abundance of gifts being bestowed upon God's people during the temple age. There will, no doubt, be physical gifts and, of course, spiritual gifts. God's people will be given joy, love, peace, faith, etc. beyond our comprehension. These gifts, in fact, will be like the mighty river which is to flow from the throne of the Lord Jesus. We are all aware how that the Nile is to Egypt as blood is to our bodies. The river before us will also be used in a similar manner during the Millennium. It will provide healing even as our blood is a means in healing our bodies. The river will also be a means of teaching. It, in fact, will exalt God and manifest His gifts to His people. All who observe the river will be made to acknowledge that God is great and that God is love. You and I acknowledge God's mercy and greatness when we observe a sunset or a sunrise. The mighty river from the throne room will also perform the same function.

"And he said unto me, Son of man, hast thou seen this? Then he brought me, and caused me to return to the

brink of the river. Now when I had returned, behold, at the bank of the river were very many trees on the one side and on the other. Then said he unto me, These waters issue out toward the east country, and go down into the desert, and go into the sea: which being brought forth into the sea, the waters shall be healed. And it shall come to pass, that every thing that liveth, which moveth, whithersoever the rivers shall come, shall live: and there shall be a very great multitude of fish, because these waters shall come thither: for they shall be healed; and every thing shall live whither the river cometh" (Ezek. 47:6-9).

Let us keep in mind that the prophecy before us is to continue for one thousand years. Let us also keep in mind from Isaiah 35:1 that the desert is to blossom as a rose. Let us also keep in mind from Isaiah 35:7 relative to the fact that the parched ground shall become a pool. Keep in mind too from Ezekiel 47:10 that the fishers shall stand upon its banks from En-ge-di even unto En-eglaim. En-ge-di is located at about the middle of the west shore of the Dead Sea. En-eglaim however, has not been positively identified. Some think it is Ein Feshkh near which are the caves where the Dead Sea Scrolls were located. If such is true, then En-ge-di and En-eglaim represent the two extremities of the Dead Sea. This means that the entire Dead Sea will be changed to that of life sustaining waters.

We have seen the dry bones in the valley come to life, or Israel restored as a nation. We are now observing as Israel is revitalized so that even the Dead Sea becomes a fisherman's paradise. The record before us also shows that the banks of the Dead Sea will produce numerous trees. The water, in fact, will cause life to manifest itself in every area in which it flows. The water will heal the land, the land which was dead because of the lack of water. There will be flowers, grass and trees every where. It will be an area similar to the Garden of Eden.

The life sustaining waters from the holy of holies and its benefits will also be God's message to the people. It will be a message of love and hope, a message which states, "I will never leave thee nor forsake thee." The people, in turn, will say, "the Lord is my helper. I will not fear what man shall do unto me."

God, in days of old, gave His people water from the rock. Here He will give them waters from the holy of holies. It will be water which will flow for one thousand years, water which shall sustain, refresh and encourage His people, water which will remind the people that every good and perfect gift is from above. The water will say all of these things because it will flow from the holy of holies, or the throne of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ.

"But the miry places thereof and the marshes thereof shall not be healed; they shall be given to salt" (Ezek. 47:11).

Salted land usually speaks of judgment. We know however, that the period before us is a time of blessing and not judg-

ment. The salted area therefore will be valuable. It will be valuable in that the salt will be used even as we use salt today. Salt, in fact, from the Dead Sea area, according to the Talmud, is preferred above all other kinds. This is because it hastens the burning of the sacrifices and minimizes the unpleasant odors of burning flesh. We are to see then that the salt will also be used in the temple services.

"And by the river upon the bank thereof, on this side and on that side, shall grow all trees for meat, whose leaf shall not fade, neither shall the fruit thereof be consumed: it shall bring forth new fruit according to his months, because their waters they issued out of the sanctuary: and the fruit thereof shall be for meat, and the leaf thereof for medicine" (Ezek. 47:12).

This passage bears out the following passages:

"For I will take you from among the heathen, and gather you out of all countries, and will bring you into your own land. And I will multiply the fruit of the tree, and the increase of the field, that ye shall receive no more reproach of famine among the heathen. And the desolate land shall be tilled, whereas it lay desolate in the sight of all that passed by. And they shall say, this land that was desolate is become like the garden of Eden; and the waste and desolate and ruined cities are become fenced, and are inhabited" (Ezek. 36:24, 30, 34, 35).

The need during the Millennium will be greater than ours today in that there will not be "an infant of days, nor an old man that hath not filled his days" (Isaiah 65:20). The greater need, however, will be more than supplied. This fact is evident from the passage before us (Ezek. 47:12). Leaves of the fruitful trees, in fact, will be available for medicine for all who may have need of the same. There will be no need for hospitals or doctors offices. It also appears that there will be no need for stores such as the Kroger stores. The people, in fact, will find that the "land that was desolate is become like the Garden of Eden."

"Thus saith the LORD God; This shall be the border, whereby ye shall inherit the land according to the twelve tribes of Israel: Joseph shall have two portions. And ye shall inherit it, one as well as another: concerning the which I lifted up mine hands to give it unto you fathers: and this land shall fall unto you for inheritance. And this shall be the border of the land toward the north side, from the great sea, the way of Hethlon, as men go to Zedad; Hamath, Berothah, Sibraim, which is between the border of Damascus and the border of Hamath; Hazar-hatticon, which is by the coast of Hauran. And the border from the sea shall be Hazarenan, the border of Damascus, and the north northward, and the border of Hamath. And this is the north side. And the east side ye shall measure from Hauran, and from Damascus, and from Gilead, and from the land of Israel by Jordan, from the border unto the east sea. And this is the east side.

And the south side southward, from Tamar even to the waters of strife in Kadesh, the river to the great sea. And this is the south side southward. The west side also shall be the great sea from the border, till a man come over against Hamath. This is the west side. So shall ye divide this land unto you according to the tribes of Israel. And it shall come to pass, that ye shall divide it by lot for an inheritance unto you, and to the strangers that sojourn among you, which shall beget children among you: and they shall be unto you as born in the country among the children of Israel; they shall have inheritance with you among the tribes of Israel. And it shall come to pass, that in what tribe the stranger sojourneth, there shall ye give him his inheritance, saith the LORD God" (Ezek. 47:13-23).

You and I as believers, look forward to our inheritance with great anticipation. We look forward to streets of gold and walls of jasper. We look forward to a city where we will never grow old. The Jews down through the centuries, in like manner, have rested their heads upon the promises which are before them during the period of the Millennium. They, while in prisons in foreign lands, have clung to God's promises relative to the restoration of their ancient borders and themselves being restored to a land which flows with milk and honey. They, in fact, look forward to evergreen trees whose fruit will supply them with food and whose leaves will supply medicine to cure their ills. These promises, as found here in the book of Ezekiel, have quickened their steps and brightened their eyes.

Perhaps the key which unlocks the passages before us is found in verse fourteen where God states: "...I lifted up mine hand to give it unto your fathers."

God, to this day, has not forgotten the oath He took relative to the restoration of the land and the people of Israel. It, no doubt, appears at times, due to God's providences, that He has forgotten His oath, but let me assure you that such only appears to be so.

God, according to the passages before us, has already appointed the bounds of His people Israel during the Millennium. These boundaries will be laid even as they have been promised.

You will observe from verse thirteen that Joseph is to have two portions, or the portions of two tribes. This fact means that one tribe must give up their portion. That tribe, of course, will be Levi, the priestly tribe who was consigned to the attendance of the sanctuary.

We read in verse fourteen that "...Ye shall inherit it, one as well as another"; that is, each tribe shall have an equal share, one as much as the other.

The stranger, according to verse twenty-two, shall also be one with the tribe in which they reside. This fact will cause those who are not Jews to migrate to the hills of Palestine where they can be under the wings of the divine majesty.

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His grandson, King Manasseh continued in the evil footsteps of his wicked grandfather. During the early reign of Manasseh the worship of Molech was allowed to flourish.

This rule was given, furthermore, because of the practices of a whole host of evil things. The children of Israel were not to have anything to do with a charmer, a familiar spirit, a wizard and or a witch. These things were definitely forbidden to the children of Israel. It was thought that such were able to reveal the future - I Samuel 28:7. This practice was so serious that those who consulted a familiar spirit would be put to death - Leviticus 20:6. Saul, King of Israel, enforced this rule in his earlier years of his reign, but at the end consulted the Witch of Endor - I Samuel 28:7-12. Manasseh also had dealt with familiar spirits, II Kings 21:6. Josiah, the grandson of Manasseh carried out the letter of the law and enacted requirements of the Mosaic Law, and had all such practices destroyed - II Kings 23:24.

II. The manifesto God gave concerning the true prophet. Deuteronomy 18:15-19. Here in our text, we can see the Declaration of the True One, The Lord Jesus Christ. "The Lord thy God will raise up unto thee a Prophet from the midst of thee, of thy brethren, like unto me; unto him ye shall hearken;"

We know from our text that the Scripture foretold that Christ would appear in the character of a Prophet. For that very reason the Jew expected the Messiah to be a Prophet. John 6:14. Furthermore, we know that the Old Testament Jew recognized that this passage was not speaking of some other prophet such as Joshua, David, Samuel or Jeremiah; rather the One and Only - the promised Messiah.

The Scripture is clear, the Lord Jesus Christ was raised up of God as a Prophet - "For Moses truly said unto the fathers, A prophet shall the Lord your God raise up unto you of your brethren, like unto me; him shall ye hear in all things whatsoever he shall say unto you" (Acts 3:22).

Beloved, our Saviour was raised up among His brethren - for the Holy Scriptures declares unto us that He was the Son of Abraham, the Son of David. He was born of the tribe of Judah - Genesis 49:10. His place of birth was the town of Bethlehem - Matthew 2:1; Micah 5:2. Thus He was an Israelite according to the flesh, and for that reason we could say He was like unto Moses. But it did not stop there for He not only was like Moses. He was much greater. How? The law came by Moses, and thus revealed our sin and short comings; but grace and truth came by Jesus Christ. Moses was raised up to be the deliverer of the children of Israel out of the bondage of Egypt, whereas our Lord delivered us from a far worse bondage - sin. Furthermore, the Bible is plain that the Words of God were put into the mouth of our Lord Jesus Christ. His doctrine was not His own - for He spoke the message of His

Father.

The qualifications of this Prophet of God are many. Time or space would not permit us to consider them all, but these few are given as sufficient evidences. (1). The Spirit of the Lord God was upon Him because He was anointed by God to preach the glad tidings - Isaiah 61:1; Luke 4:18. (2). The miracles that He performed attested to His Person - John 6:14. (3). The sinless life of our Lord made it possible for Him to pay the price of our sin - II Corinthians 5:21. (4). His resurrection from the dead produced our guarantee of everlasting life.

The one reason that the children of Israel did not need to depend on these diviners is that the Holy One of Israel would take care of all their personal needs. Such an evil practice would take away from and mar the beautiful picture of the True Prophet of God. Therefore, this manifesto was given to introduce and identify the children of Israel with their Messiah. There should be no question then to the Jew as to who this Prophet was when He appeared on the scene. This one, the true Prophet of Israel (Jesus Christ) was not a fake. He was the one that was proclaimed to be the Son of God with Power. Thus He was properly examined and found to be the one He claimed to be.

III. The Mandate God Gave Concerning This True Prophet of God. Deuteronomy 18:20-22.

Even though this subject has been briefly discussed, these few verses make it clear that the true prophet of God must meet the mandate of Jehovah God. The first thing is that HE comes not in His own name. This one will come in the name of the Father. The Lord Jesus Christ said, "For I came down from heaven, not to do mine own will, but the will of him that sent me" (John 6:38). Again in another place, the Lord said, "My meat is to do the will of him that sent me, and to finish his work" (John 4:34).

The Holy Scriptures are indeed clear. Jesus had a job to do and that He did. One might ask the question, what was His work? Immediately one who knows the Word of God would be forced to say, "To bring eternal salvation unto the elect." That would be the primary purpose of this Prophet that Moses spoke of so many years ago. Nevertheless, that did not stop so far as the Word of Jesus Christ. The Work of Jesus Christ could and has produced volumes of books and sermons. (1). Our eternal salvation was His main job - John 1:29. (2). Our eternal security was one of His major concerns - John 6:37. (3). His church, though it was a mystery to the Old Testament saints, was one of His projects. The Scriptures reveal to us that "He loved it (the church) and gave Himself for it."

Thus, we could properly say that His Work proved beyond a shadow of a doubt who He really was - the promised One. John the Baptist asked this question, "Art thou he that should come? or look we for another?" (Luke 7:19). The answer Jesus sent back proved to John that He was indeed who He claimed to be. "Tell John what things ye have seen and heard; how that the blind see, the lame walk, the lepers are cleansed, the deaf hear, the dead are raised, to the poor the gospel is preached. And

blessed is he, whosoever shall not be offended in me" (Luke 7:22, 23).

CONCLUSION:

Jesus Christ is the true son of God. His death, burial and resurrection prove that to us. For that very reason, you and I do not need to consider other ways. He has proved that He is the One that can provide our every need. Moses was a faithful prophet, one that had earned the respect and honor of his fellow man. But Jesus Christ was the TRUE and ONLY Prophet of God that Saves. Moses pointed Israel to this one, the Lord of Glory. It is our mandate to point men and women to this One. We do not know who the Elect are, but we are commanded to preach the Gospel because it pleases God to save His own by this means. I do not wish to do the work of the Holy Spirit as only He can bring a dead sinner to a saving knowledge. But at the same time, I must recognize that the Holy Spirit uses the preaching of the Word of God to convict the heart and bring the sinner unto Himself. May God bless you.

SOLDIER

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help those women which laboured with me in the gospel... whose names are in the book of life." We can see here the fact that these women laboured for the Lord, not in order to be written in the Book of Life, or rather to be enlisted, but, labored because they are already enlisted.

"Not withstanding in this rejoice not, that the spirits are subject unto you; but rather rejoice, because your names are written in heaven" (Luke 10:20).

A person could rejoice in the Lord, in His service no matter how hard Christian life is, because he is secured. His name is written down. "And whosoever was not found written in the book of life was cast into the lake of fire" (Rev. 20:15).

During the great white throne judgment, the books will be opened and one of those books that will be opened is the Book of Life. You must remember that this judgment is only for all the wicked. This kind of person will be cast into the lake of fire, because his name is not in the Book of Life. I challenge the reader today to forsake his sin and trust Christ as his Saviour in order that his name will be listed in the Book of Life. A good soldier is enlisted in the Book of Life.

2. A good soldier should be in uniform. A person who is in the military will be identified through his uniform. In our country we have variations of the military. We have the Navy, Army, Philippine constabulary, Marines, Air Force and police. All of these mentioned are military. But, they can be identified through their uniform.

The same with a soldier of Jesus Christ. We can only be identified that we are His good soldiers through our Bible baptism. This is our uniform. A person who truly trusts Christ as his Saviour should identify himself through water baptism. You cannot be called a real Baptist if you don't have a Baptist uniform which is Bible baptism. What is Bible baptism? Bible baptism is a Christian baptism. It is an identification of the gospel through the death, burial and resurrection of Jesus Christ.

(I Cor. 15:1-4).

"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" (Rom. 6:4).

In Acts 2:41 three thousand Christian soldiers identified themselves through water baptism. In Acts 8:36 the eunuch who wanted to be Christ's good soldier put on his uniform through Bible baptism. If you are saved, you should put on your uniform so you'll be identified as a good soldier of Christ.

3. A good soldier should undergo training. "Thou therefore endure hardness as a good soldier of Jesus Christ" (II Tim. 2:3). I would rather say training to the word hardness. If a soldier prepares himself for the battle, he should undergo a proper training. Just like our military here in our country, before he will be assigned in the battle field, he should undergo probably six to twelve months training in how to combat the enemies. He should know how to use the weapons. The same with every soldier of Jesus Christ. He should undergo training. He should be trained to be an effective, energetic, enthusiastic soldier of Jesus Christ.

Hardships are one way that we can be effective in the service of the Lord. This is one way of disciplining ourselves. "Yea, and all that will live godly in Christ shall suffer persecution" (II Tim. 3:12). "Beloved, think it not strange concerning the fiery trial which is to try you, as though some strange thing happened unto you. But rejoice, inasmuch as ye are partakers of Christ's sufferings: that, when his glory shall be revealed, ye may be glad also with exceeding joy. Yet if any man suffer as a Christian, let him not be ashamed; but let him glorify God on this behalf" (I Peter 12, 13, 16). "If we suffer, we shall also reign with him: if we deny him, he also will deny us" (II Tim. 2:12).

I remember when Dr. Bob Hughes said, "The more you sweat in training, the less you bleed in battle." And that is exactly true. As good soldiers of Christ, the more training we have, the less discouragement we experience in doing God's work. The more training we have, the more we are fruitful and effective soldiers. Sufferings and hardships are designed for our own good.

4. A good soldier should try to please the one who enlisted him. "No man that warreth entangleth himself with the affairs of this life; that he may please him who hath chosen him to be a soldier" (II Tim. 2:4).

We didn't choose ourselves to be His soldiers, but, He Himself, Jesus Christ chose us to be His soldiers. "Ye have not chosen me, but I have chosen you, and ordained you, that ye should go and bring forth fruit, and that your fruit should remain:" (John 15:16). "But the Lord said unto him, Go thy way for he is a chosen vessel unto me, to bear my name before Gentiles and kings, and the children of Israel:" (Acts 9:15). "Elect according to the foreknowledge of God the Father..." (I Peter 1:2). We can see here that God chose us, elected us to become His soldiers. And because He was the one who chose us, we

ought to do things which are pleasing in His sight.

"Let your light so shine before men, that they may see your good works, and glorify your Father which is in heaven" (Matt. 5:16) (a.) Good testimony - please or glorify the Father. (b.) Faith - pleases the Father. "But without faith it is impossible to please him." (Heb. 11:6). (c.) Preaching the gospel pleases God. "For I am not ashamed of the gospel of Christ; for it is the power of God unto salvation..." (Rom. 1:16).

"But as we were allowed of God to be put in trust with the gospel, even so we speak; not as pleasing men, but God, which trieth our hearts" (I Thess. 2:4). "And whatsoever we ask, we receive of him, because we keep his commandments, and do those things that are pleasing in his sight." (I John 3:22).

5. A good soldier should always carry on his warfare. "Finally, my brethren, be strong in the Lord, and in the power of his might. Put on the whole armour of God, that ye may be able to stand against the wiles of the devil. For we wrestle not against flesh and blood, but against principalities, against powers, against the rulers of the darkness of this world, against spiritual wickedness in high places. Wherefore take unto you the whole armour of God, that ye may be able to withstand in the evil day, and having done all, to stand." (Eph. 6:10-13).

In Ephesians 6:14-18, the apostle specifies the particulars of this armour, both offensive and defensive, as we observe that all these armours mentioned are all for the front, and not for the back.

1. We can see first of all that truth is our girdle in verse fourteen. This is the strength of our loins; and it girds on all other pieces of armour and therefore is first mentioned.

2. Righteousness must be on our breastplate. This secures the vitals, shelters the heart. The righteousness of Christ implanted in us is our breastplate to fortify the heart against the attacks which Satan makes against us.

3. Verse fifteen - feet shod with the preparation of the gospel of peace. This armour was used formerly to defend the feet against the traps and sharp sticks, which were wont to be laid to obstruct the marching of the enemy of those who fell upon them being unfit to march.

4. Shield of faith - verse sixteen. This is more necessary than any of them. Faith is all in all to us in an hour of temptation. Faith is like a shield, a sort of universal defense. It's our defense against the wicked one, the devil.

5. Helmet of salvation - verse seventeen. That is our hope which has salvation for its object. He would tempt us to despair. But, good hope keeps us trusting in God, and rejoicing in Him.

6. Sword of the Spirit - God's Word. It is called the Word of God because He renders it efficacious and powerful. This being hid in the heart, will preserve us from sin.

7. Prayer - verse eighteen. We must pray upon all occasions. "Pray without ceasing" (I Thess. 5:17). "...men ought always to pray, and not to faint;" (Luke 18:1). As good soldiers of Christ, we must carry

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always the whole armour of God.

6. A good soldier should fight for the cause of Christ. A soldier of a certain nation should fight for the cause of his homeland and for its citizens. But Christ's soldier should fight for the cause of Christ and His gospel. The Apostle Paul, in Philippians 2:17, was set for the defense of the gospel. He was set to defend the gospel against false teachers, against heresies, and false doctrines. We as Christians should not only fight, but, also to defend the gospel from heresies.

Our history tells us that many Christian soldiers died to defend the gospel. They died fighting for the sake of Christ and the gospel. The same with the apostles and early Christians. They also died fighting for the cause of Christ and the gospel.

We are living in days where there are so many false teachers and various religions arise. We should be ready to stand fighting and defending the cause of Christ, that someday we will be like Apostle Paul who said in II Timothy 4:7, "I have fought a good fight, I have finished my course, I have kept the faith." Good soldiers fight for the sake of Christ and the gospel.

We have just finished the qualifications, now let us proceed to the promotions.

II. The soldiers promotions. "Brethren, I count not myself to have apprehended: but this one thing I do, forgetting those things which are behind, and reaching forth unto those things which are before, I press toward the mark for the prize of the high calling of God in Christ Jesus" (Phil. 3:13-14).

After so many years of fighting for the cause of Christ and the gospel; after so many years of enduring hardships in the battlefield, Apostle Paul had the courage to say, "I press toward the mark. I have fought a good fight." Because he knew that after those long hard years of being faithful to the task, he was sure enough to acquire promotion from our Lord.

"I have fought a good fight, I have finished my course, I have kept the faith: Henceforth there is laid up for me a crown of righteousness, which the Lord, the righteous judge, shall give me at that day: and not to me only, but unto all them also that love his appearing" (II Tim. 4:7-8).

Yes, it is true that every soldier of Christ is going to appear at the judgment seat of Christ after battling on this earth for so long. Some of the soldiers now battling in this world full of sin are sorrowful, and they are discouraged as if they are going to quit because of hardships. But, let us always remember that crowning day which is our promotion day. God has something for us up there in heaven which one of these days will erase our pains, our sorrows, discouragements, and hardships. When He appears in the twinkling of an eye, we will be with Him to receive the things that He prepared for us who have been faithful in the battle.

What are the things He prepared for us? I remember the chorus of the song which says, "And when the battle is over, we shall wear a crown, we shall wear a crown. And when the

battle is over, we shall wear a crown in the new Jerusalem." Yes, God has something for the faithful soldiers.

1. Crown of righteousness (II Tim. 4:8). To be given to the faithful Christian who loved His appearing.

2. Soul winner's crown or crown of rejoicing (I Thess. 2:19). To be given to the faithful soldiers who are faithful in witnessing for Christ.

3. Crown of glory (I Peter 5:4). To be given to the faithful soldiers who are faithful in preaching the gospel and taking care of the flock.

4. Victorious crown or incorruptible crown (I Cor. 9:25). To be given to the faithful soldiers who have been faithful, who have lived godly and separated from the world and did not indulge themselves in worldliness.

5. Crown of life (James 1:12, Rev. 2:10). To be given to the soldiers who died for the cause of Christ.

"Onward Christian soldiers marching as to war, with the cross of Jesus going on before. Christ our royal Master leads against the foe onward into battle, see His banner go. Onward Christian soldiers marching as to war with the cross of Jesus going on before." Are you a good soldier of Christ? Will you be faithful to Him? Remember your promotion day.

FELLOWSHIP

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ture is so close to the events in our Savior's life. In all of these things, we never find Joseph committing a sin. We know that he did, for the Bible clearly tells us all have sinned and come short of the glory of God. We know that Joseph was not an exception to this, but we must notice that we do not actually have a record of it in Genesis. This only makes this picture more perfect and clear.

Now to our text, Genesis 45:24 "So he sent his brethren away, and they departed: and he said unto them, See that ye fall not out by the way." Joseph knew his brethren! He had been involved in some dealings with them. Now they are leaving Egypt and going up to Canaan to get their father, Jacob. Joseph is telling them now to be careful and not fall out by the way. Let us review for a few moments and see why Joseph would say this. When Joseph grew up with these boys, they came to hate him. Some of them wanted to kill him. The others wanted to be rid of him. That is what they finally did. They got rid of him by selling him into slavery to a merchant, an Ishmaelite who was traveling to Egypt. When they did this, they thought they would be through with Joseph. They thought that they would never see him again. They thought that their deeds would soon be forgotten, and they would never be reminded of them again. But how true the Bible is; and how sure are the words that say: be sure your sins will find you out. This act of hatred, as we read our text had come back to remind them of their treachery. Because they have now come face to face with the one they did this to; and even worse, he has the power to do with them as it pleases him. Now, knowing how his brethren had acted towards him for what they had expected to be of some gain for themselves; Joseph warns them not to do this again. He is saying in other words, do not have a falling out and try to do wrong

to one another because you think it will benefit yourself. Do not leave the duties to another. Let's work together and get this job done.

We can receive some great lessons from this text. We have many brethren who are falling out by the way. Our fellowship grows smaller and smaller. I think there are two reasons why men break fellowship. The first is one which in some cases causes us to break fellowship, and it is right that we do so. It is a matter of doctrine, and whether we will compromise so that we will be able to fellowship. I heard a preacher say one time that if we both agreed on everything, we would both be wrong about something. I believe when there is a major difference in what we believe, we should not compromise and fellowship with those with whom we have strong differences. How can two walk together except they are in agreement? But unfortunately our little group of men are splitting and refusing to fellowship over some very, very small issues. I know that when it comes to doctrinal issues that deal with our salvation, the church, and many other things such as the millennium or baptism; we need to take a position on these things that does not permit compromise. But even in some of these areas, the Lord could use us to teach others if we go with the proper spirit and teach what we believe to others. I have found that I can fellowship with some with whom I am not in agreement on smaller issues if they do not force these issues down my throat. There are some things that I disagree with the editor of this paper on, but I can say without hesitation that we write each other on a very regular basis and discuss these things from time to time, but we do not make some of these smaller matters a test of fellowship. For example, I believe that Jesus loved John more than He did some of the other disciples. Other than Judas, whom we agree Jesus did not love, I find myself in opposition to the editor on this issue: but we go on loving each other anyway.

This leads me to the second reason why many men have fallen out, and are falling away. We have a natural desire that comes from our own human nature, which leads us to think more highly of ourselves and our opinions than we should. This is called pride. We think we have come to understand something in the Bible, and we naturally want everyone to see it just like we do. Sometimes, as the old saying goes, we put our foot into it. We make a statement that we will not have anything to do with someone unless he also comes to this position. This is wrong because everyone is not going to dot their "i's" and cross their "t's" exactly as we do. Now the only thing that causes us to break fellowship with someone when this happens is pride. Where is our humble and forgiving spirit? It was pride that caused Joseph's brethren to sell him into slavery. They had grown jealous of his relationship with their father Jacob, and Joseph had those dreams that indicated that they were going to show respect to their younger brother. They were too proud to let these things come to pass, so they planned a way to stop it. I have heard some men preach that made me almost feel ashamed I was called to preach. It did make me jealous at the time. Then the Lord began to

deal with me. He taught me that the Lord is the one bringing the message, and He could use a donkey if it pleased Him. He has given each of us preachers the talents and abilities needed to accomplish His purposes. Different preachers, using different expressions and mannerisms, reach out to different people. The Lord made us all different; if everyone were the same, how boring things would be. The Lord uses us, not His angels or some other means, but us, to present His glorious gospel to a lost and dying world. We are the means that He has chosen, and He has chosen us to be different and to use our various talents for Him. We should not be proud of our talent, but be thankful He has given us what He has that we might present the unsearchable riches of His grace. I will confess a sin to you. I still get a little bit jealous when I see someone play the piano and sing a solo at the same time. I thank the Lord that He has allowed me to sing a little and to be a blessing to some with music; but I do confess I have always wanted to play and sing but do not seem to have the talent needed for that particular way of presenting music. Our pride should not allow us to become so jealous that we cannot fellowship with other preachers because we cannot appreciate the talent the Lord has given them, and not ourselves. I have always wondered about a preacher who can come to a fellowship meeting to preach, but does not have time to attend more than the service in which he has been asked to preach. I frankly love to hear other men that have been blessed of the Lord. I believe God put them at that meeting to teach me some things, and I most certainly need to take advantage of it. I think some will stand in the judgment to give an account for the way that they have shown disrespect for other men of God.

Another thing I have noticed is that we are finding a falling away over new doctrines. There are men presenting new issues, claiming that they are not new, but yet presenting them as if all who do not soon follow after them are in some error. In the past ten years, we have seen several doctrines arise that have caused great hurt, and have split our fellowship. Those that have fallen by the way, I do not have much advice for you. I would be happy to fellowship with you if you will come back to where you were, and we are. I believe I speak for a great number of the preachers when I say that. To you that are interested in these new doctrines, let me say something to you. First of all, think and remember how long you have studied to come to where you are now. Should you change on something that will drastically change your doctrine after considering it a very short time. I know a dear brother and friend that changed his entire view on the Church after a discussion with a couple of preachers that lasted about one week. If it has taken us ten years to learn what we know about the Church, how can we change this in one week? We also should consider that if something is new and sounds exciting, there is probably something wrong with it.

When I come up with something that I have never heard anyone else say anything about, I really wonder about it and question my thinking for a long time. I will either find

others that have also thought of it, or know something about it; and I can therefore assume that there is something to it; or I find myself alone and realize that I had better leave it alone. Watch out for anything new, and watch out for anyone who is trying to prove that something new is not really new at all.

I have noticed, as many others I am sure, that those who believe that they have found something new are quite proud of the discovery and will want to find a band of followers who will help them to develop this doctrine to the greatest possible extent. Be careful of these bands. Many times the followers will develop an even more dangerous doctrine than was originally conceived. It seems very interesting to me that with each new doctrine there is a new book teaching that doctrine. Sometimes there is a new publication to propagate that new doctrine and to help all the interested parties to keep up with that which is produced from this new teaching. Joseph is warning his brethren that they should not find some new thing out there in the desert, but stay with the old paths and keep to that which they had already learned. Do not fall out by the way over something that is new and exciting. It has not stood the test of time and may cause you great hurt. We must remember the old paths. The true way has been well marked, and we should continue to protect the way we have known. Let us not be fooled by something that is new, no matter how many times we are told that it is not new. Give these things time. If they be of God, they will succeed; but if they be of man, they will fail.

I think that the thing that was bothersome to Joseph the most was that these men were all sons of the sneaky, tricky and cunning Jacob and had inherited that talent. He was very much afraid they would yet try to pull something out of line as soon as they were left to themselves. How well he knew them and knew there was nothing that was beneath them. They would pull anything if they felt it would benefit themselves. We all have a little of Jacob in us. Let us be careful that we do not outdo him and try something so we can gain a position that we feel we must have. As the wolves will fight for the position of being the leader of the pack, so if we are not careful, we will do likewise. Let us again hear the words of Joseph, "See that you fall not out by the way." Brethren, I stand here as no man's judge, and I do not want you to fellowship with me if you have no desire to do so. I am reminded of the time a few years back when as I was traveling to a Bible conference with my dear pastor of that time, E.G. Cook. He said something to this effect, as we were discussing the problems and splitting of our fellowship, "I wonder how we will all be able to get along in heaven when we do such a poor job of it down here." I trust we will make a greater effort to fellowship down here as we ought. How much help we can be to each other if we will just make the effort to get along a little more. If nothing else, let us determine that we will do it for Christ's sake and not fall out by the way. Pray for us.

TAKING CARE

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true and Scriptural position of the pastor, along with what this proper relationship should be with the church. The first thing I want you to consider is:

I. The office of pastor is a God-called position. Men do not set themselves up as pastors of the Lord's churches, but rather God selects those whom He will have to pastor His churches. "He that descended is the same also that ascended up far above all heavens, that he might fill all things. And he gave some apostles; and some, evangelists; and some, pastors and teachers..." (Eph. 4:10-11). The "He" referred to in this verse is, of course, the Lord Jesus Christ. Jesus is the head of the church and He is directing and calling those whom He will have to pastor His churches. So you see, the pastor has a God-called position. I believe that God will lay on the hearts of the members of the church who is seeking a pastor, the man He would have for the job. This eliminates man's inability to call the right man for their pastor and leaves it in the hands of God.

Seeing, then, that the pastor has a God-called position, the church should honor that position and respect it for what it is. Notice some Scripture concerning the respect for the pastor. "Rebuke not an elder, but in-treat him as a father..." (I Tim. 5:1). The pastor is to receive the kind of respect you give your earthly father. The pastor is one whom God has sent to guide that church in spiritual matters, and one who is an example to the flock; and God has placed him there for your benefit. The pastor who faithfully serves the Lord should have the respect of the church. He is God's man doing His work, and his position should be respected. I am not saying pastors are more holy than any other Christian or that they never fail as do other Christians, but I am saying they have a high position in the Lord's work and their position should be respected.

The office of pastor is to be held in such high esteem that we would not take the word of one man against him. Notice, "Against an elder receive not an accusation, but before two or three witnesses" (I Tim. 5:19). Any time one comes with accusations against an elder, we are to give the elder the benefit of the doubt. We are not to accept what has been said about him and believe what has been said without investigation. To do so is not Scriptural. The preacher, as long as he preaches the truth of the Word of God, will offend people with his sermons. The preacher who swings the sword of the Lord will cut many and leave himself open to false accusations. Therefore God's people should be careful not to condemn one of the Lord's pastors without a thorough investigation.

II. The pastor's relationship to the church. The pastor has been given the authority and the commission to oversee the church. Each pastor must one day stand before God and give an account of how he has taken care of the House of God. The pastor must stand firm for what he believes the Bible teaches and should try to lead his church to

follow the Biblical way of doing things. If the pastor leads in this manner, the church should have no problems with their pastor. The church and pastor can have a good relationship if both strive to do things God's way and work together.

Many times the pastor will take the position that he can do anything he wants to do and how he wants to do it, just because he is pastor. This is where the pastor makes his mistake and misuses his position. Notice, "Feed the flock of God which is among you, taking the oversight thereof, not by constraint, but willingly; not for filthy lucre, but of a ready mind; Neither as being lords over God's heritage, but being examples to the flock" (I Pet. 5:2-3). The pastor is not to lord it over God's heritage. He has no right or authority to force a church to do everything his way. Let me give you an example. Say the church is going to paint their meeting house, and they need to decide what color it should be painted. The church wants to paint it white with black trim and the pastor thinks it should be red with white trim. The pastor says we will paint the church red and the church knows that if they don't paint it his color he will get mad and throw a fit. Now beloved, the pastor has no right or authority to act as such. To do so would be more of a dictator than a pastor. While the pastor is to have the respect of the church, the pastor must never lose sight of the fact that he is to respect church authority. Let me give you another example. One is brought up before the church for exclusion and the pastor says, "We will exclude him or I will resign." Again this is way out of line and no way for a pastor to conduct himself. The pastor has no right to threaten the Lord's church. He is to take the oversight and lead the church in spiritual things but never use the church to set up his own little kingdom.

The relationship between the pastor and the church can be a wonderful and rewarding one if both will respect the other. Brother Wilson may not want me to say this, but I believe if all pastors treated their members the way he does, there would be a lot less tension in the Lord's churches today. The pastor-church relationship in our church is a very good one, and mainly due to the fact of respect. May God grant His people respect for their pastors, and may pastors strive to earn that respect. I believe that the results of the pastor's preaching depends a lot on his attitude and how he treats the members of the church. If the pastor comes in mad or upset and goes to the pulpit where he proceeds to chew everyone out for no reason, it will greatly effect his sermon. So, a good relationship and a respect for one another will have a great effect on the church. I urge pastors to think of this and ask yourselves, "How do I treat the children of God?"

III. Support of the pastor. The church can help their pastor and themselves in this matter of support. If all of God's pastors could devote themselves fully to the ministry, the blessings God's people would receive would be manifold. If the pastor had all day to study the Word of God, visit people, and witness of the Saviour; it would be a wonderful thing for the churches of God. But alas, in most cases this can't be. Most pastors must work for

a living and put in long hours; and it leaves little time for the ministry. Thus, it should be the desire of every church to support the pastor as much as possible so that they might free him more to the ministry. You have heard the saying "you get what you pay for". That's about the case where the pastor is concerned. If your church can afford to pay a pastor and you are not doing so, you are missing a great blessing.

The church is responsible for supporting their pastor. If God calls a man to be your pastor and he travels a long distance to that work, it is the responsibility of the church to see that he is maintained and taken care of. It is interesting to note that the pastor is to be paid according to his labor. "Let the elders that rule well be counted worthy of double honour, especially they who labour in the word and doctrine" (I Tim. 5:17). Some pastors will preach on this and say they should be paid double what they are getting just because they show up to preach three times a week. I don't believe this verse teaches that. I believe it's teaching that when a man gives much of his time and expense to visiting church members or visiting the sick, or lost souls, the church should help him more in support. There is more to pastoring a church than just showing up for the services to preach. Any preacher in the church could handle that position without any trouble at all. So you see, if the pastor and the church have the proper kind of relationship and respect for one another, the work of the Lord will be carried out in a more God honoring way and the church will be blessed beyond her imagination.

IV. The pastor's responsibility to the church. As previously mentioned, the pastor of one of the Lord's churches holds an important and responsible position in the world. The pastor should shudder as he thinks of the position in which God has placed him. The office of pastor should never be taken lightly or misused, for to do so is to fall into the hands of the living God. The pastor's first and most important responsibility is the preaching of God's Word. I Peter 5:2 says, "Feed the flock of God...". The pastor has been given the responsibility of feeding the sheep of God. He has the responsibility of going to the Shepherd of our souls and seeking the food the church needs for each particular service. The pastor stands between the church and God, and delivers God's message to her. He is to preach the truth of God's Word; and to search the Scriptures that he leads not the church into error. My, what an awesome responsibility this is! The pastor will answer for what he has preached to the church and what he has led the church to do.

The pastor must be apt to teach, for it is his responsibility to teach the church concerning the things of God. He certainly is to teach such things as the doctrines of grace, church truths, things to come or prophecy, and many like doctrines, but this is not all. He is to preach and teach against sin. He should teach the church how to live godly, holy lives for the glory of God. He is to be an example to the rest of the church. His life is to be such that people can see that he lives what he preaches. While the pastor has this responsibility, he cannot

make the church obey the Word of God; but the church has the duty of obeying the commandments the pastor lays before them. Hebrews 13:17 says, "Obey them that have the rule over you, and submit yourselves; for they watch for your souls, as they that must give account, that they may do it with joy, and not with grief: for that is unprofitable for you." The pastor who loves God and loves His people will teach them things that are profitable to them. Never think that your pastor doesn't love you when he preaches against sin, for that is a sign that he does care for you.

The pastor is responsible for leading the church in witnessing. I suppose this is the greatest failure of pastors today. The pastor is an example to the flock and if he doesn't visit lost people how can he effectively preach to others to witness for Christ? I am going to make a hard statement, but I believe it is true. If you are a pastor of one of the Lord's churches and you don't go around knocking on peoples' doors and visiting people, and telling them about Jesus, you are leading your church into hardshellism. By example, you are telling your church there is no need of witnessing about Christ. Now, you might not have liked that statement, but you have to admit that it is true; and one of these days you will have to face God and explain why the church you pastored was not an evangelistic church.

The pastor is to encourage the church and not discourage it. By this I mean the pastor is not to continually put the church down and always find fault, but rather encourage the church and build the church up. Notice how Paul addressed the Corinthian church. Now remember this church had a lot of problems and were in need of some good sound instruction, but notice how Paul addressed them. I Corinthians 1:3,4, "Grace be unto you, and peace, from God our Father, and from the Lord Jesus Christ. I thank my God always on your behalf, for the grace of God which is given you by Jesus Christ." It's a shame to say but there are people who read this that will never hear such words from their pastor. Look what Paul said, he was wishing the best for this church, and was expressing his love for them. Pastors, when was the last time you told the church how much they meant to you, or have you ever? Paul says, I thank God for you. Have you ever told your church that? Read the opening statements the writers of the New Testament made and you will find them expressing their love for those they were writing to and their hoping the best for them.

In closing, I hope this will cause us to study this subject more. I, in no way, nearly covered the subject; and if I were not late in getting my article in, I would run a series on it. The church and her pastor can have such a wonderful relationship if they will put some effort into it. Any kind of relationship requires work and effort! You don't have a good marriage just because you are married, but because you love one another and respect one another. So it will be with the pastor and the church. I wish the Lord's churches the best in these last days. If you are guilty of not being what you should be, may God give you the proper attitude. Grace be unto you and peace.

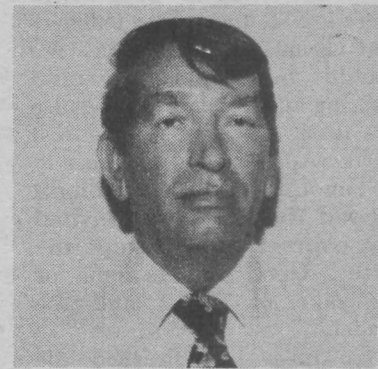
DEFINITIONS

by Ray Hiatt

I have no interest in the word "succession," since some folks deplore it, but I have a vital interest in life processes. Word games can be amusing if they don't touch vital things. "Succession" as a word is not important but the truth it typifies is important. "Succession" is defined as item following item in an unbridged order of chronology. Does this definition apply to Baptist churches? It must.

A Baptist church is a vital, living body of Christ. It is a functioning organism. Though it is organized, it is not an organization. It contains all the elements of a "body", save the head, for Christ is the head.

A Baptist church comes into being by a life giving process just as all organisms are born from parent stock. All organisms are not born the same way but life proceeds from life



as kind reproduces its own kind. Biology concurs with the Bible.

I Corinthians 12 is a rather full study of the body. Every church of Christ is an extant organism which received life from God through another body. This life is propagated by the process we call "mission work."

Imprecise phrasings do much harm. We fall into flawed modes of speech and seldom realize it. "Mission work" is a misnomer which is commonly accepted and commonly false. This expression, among others, came to us from conventionism. "Mission work" has come to mean giving an offering to foreign or domestic evangelism. Biblical evangelism is an ongoing life process. Biblical evangelism is nothing less than a church having a child; a living organism like unto the parent body. It is wrought after this fashion.

A church feels burdened to reproduce itself and build another church. The church designates an agent to act on its behalf... call him a missionary if you like, but the Biblical term is "evangelist". This evangelist goes forth preaching the gospel. Souls are saved through this ministry. Spiritual life has thus been implanted into individuals. Alone and apart they do not constitute a body of Christ. The evangelist assembles them together in organized form. (Every living body is constructed of individual cells. Cells die and are replaced; all cells may be replaced save brain cells. The church of Christ has no brain cells for its head is Christ). A church is initially constructed of cells (or parts) from the parent body, under the preaching of the Word and the work of the Spirit.

When the newly saved people are assembled together by the evangelist, it is thus a child of the parent church. It is an immature body, just as our children are, while young and

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If prayer does not drive sin out of your life, sin will drive prayer out.

DEFINITIONS

(Continued from Page 10)

not capable of governing their own lives. This new body matures in judgment and strength in the process of time. At a time felt appropriate by the church and the young body it is constituted into a church of Christ. It is severed from any responsibility to and control of the parent church, just as children mature and make their own life decisions and stand responsible for their own actions. This is a "body" of Christ built. There is no other legitimate way.

There is only one legitimate evangelism and that is an evangelism which has as its intended end the construction of a Baptist church. False evangelisms are many. An alleged evangelist flies over a native village and drops some tracts, but has no intention of building a church. I won't discuss whether a tract can be used to convert sinners, but the mere dropping of a tract is not Biblical evangelism. The Commission has three inseparable parts and all must be performed for the full work to be wrought. Some missionaries make long treks to desolate places and preach to scattered folks but make no attempt to build a church. This is not Biblical evangelism.

I don't especially like the word "succession" but I shall use it. Can I prove a succession of Baptist churches? I can prove it by Biology and the Bible. Please attend. I am a living body. I did not born myself. I have a "succession" of parents back to Adam. I don't have portrait lined hallways in my home which picture my ancestors. I knew my grandparents, but beyond this my knowledge of my life line ceases.

Does my inability to show documented evidence of my ancestors back to Adam nullify my being alive?

Today is March 2, 1986. On this date every true Baptist church in the world has a lineage of birth processed dating back to the personal ministry of our Lord. Every true Baptist church extant has a parent church, which had a parent church, which had a parent church back to the first church in Jerusalem. If you sever the life process at any point then life ceases. A Baptist church organism which is alive today has an unbroken line to Jerusalem. Is this a documented line written in history for 2,000 years? Of course not. We see evidence of Baptist churches in history, but there is no chronological record that I am aware of. There need not be. The Word of Christ is sufficient to establish the case. He promised that His churches would be, therefore they are. The existence of living churches today demands a life chain unto the originator of the initial life. This is true of all living organisms.

Living Baptist bodies today have the baptism of John the Baptist. It is the only true kind. Can I prove this from history? Of course not. I never attempt to prove anything from history except that history is fallible. I have a dog and two cats. They are living organisms to the point that they scratch my furniture and chew on my books. I see them daily. I don't have to trace their ancestry to prove they are alive; being alive proves their ancestry. A life the IS, comes from a life that WAS. I have

never seen my dog's grandfather, but I have confidence that he had one. If we say that Baptist churches are the only true churches (as we surely do) then the churches of this day sprang from parent churches for these ages past. There is no other way. A church begun without proper authority is not a living organism for it traduces the necessary life processes which are required in living organisms. Free lance evangelism is false evangelism on Biblical and Biological grounds.

Birth is not wrought by a committee. A single mother has a single child. Expectant mothers are aided by gifts from their friends but only the single mother gives birth. Only a Baptist church may build another Baptist church and when this takes place it is an act of a living organism giving birth. It is for this reason that conventions and mission boards are so unspeakably evil. Their existence and operations cloud the proper concept of the life processes of the churches of Christ. At their worst they are competitors and at their best (if such be granted) they breed confusion. They formulate a "committee mind" as opposed to the mind of Christ.

If men deplore the word "succession" I don't insist on it. But, I do insist that there is a birth process whereby a single church builds another church and that this process has gone forward since the first church was built by Christ our Lord. I don't scramble through the murky pages of history to try to trace the church's life line. It exists because it must exist. The fact that the church life line is hidden from view just as my own life line is hidden does not nullify its existence. A church must have a legitimate parent church to be regarded as a legitimate body of Christ.

Some folks like word games and behave like undergraduates in a logic class. Some alleged wit once asked, "If a tree falls in the forest and no one is there does it make a sound?" Undergraduates giggle and grin at such propositions. Of course the tree makes a sound, though perhaps unheard. This is natural law and lack of observation does not negate it. It is natural law that life begets life. Baptist churches have such a life chain. I cannot see it for many years for it is covered in blood, but it is there because living bodies exist today. Does an unobserved falling tree make a sound? Do Baptist churches today have a succession of life processes? Need my eye observe before my mind can know? I have the assurance of Christ. I need nothing else.

SOMEONE'S OUT TO GET YOU

from the
Assistant Editor

"And the Lord said, Simon, Simon, behold, Satan hath desired to have you, that he may sift you as wheat" (Luke 22:31).

There is a disease known as paranoia which leaves its victim with the idea that everyone is out to get them. They are suspicious and distrustful of others and are always on their guard to protect themselves. Well beloved, I am not advocating that we become paranoid in our Christian life but I will say that there is one out there who is out to get us.

I'm talking about Satan, the old devil, that great enemy of our God and us. It would be a very wise thing for the child of God to be aware of this foe, and give him some consideration. Jesus told Simon that Satan desired to have him that he may sift him as wheat. Now, Satan wanted Simon very badly, as I am convinced he would love to have every Christian. Satan would love to get his hands on every blood-bought child of God and utterly destroy them if he could; but praise be to our God, the old Devil cannot have us. Notice what Jesus said in the next verse, "But I have prayed for thee, that thy faith fail not; and when thou art converted, strengthen thy brethren". Satan cannot have us because of the Lord Jesus Christ, our great intercessor. Jesus prayed for Simon just as He prays for us, and in light of this fact Satan cannot have us, though he so desperately would love to. Though Satan cannot have us, this does not exclude the fact that he is out to get from us all that he can get. He knows that he cannot have our lives or possess us, but he will try to take all that he can away from us. Satan is out to get you, and you had better be aware of him. Peter said under inspiration, "Be sober, be vigilant; because your adversary the devil, as a roaring lion, walketh about, seeking whom he may devour" (I Peter 5:8). Yes my friends, there is one out to get you; and you had better be careful!

One might ask "why does Satan want to bother me, I haven't done anything to him"? Well, that is an easy question to answer. Satan is the number one God hater in the universe. He despises and detests the very name of God, and you are his way of getting at God. If he can make you fail he feels like he is getting even with God. Yes Satan is out to get you and he wants your testimony. Satan doesn't want your job, your home, or anything of material value; for he is a spiritual being, and has no need of such things. Satan wants your testimony, which is your most valuable possession. Satan wants to ruin your credibility with the world mainly because this brings reproach to Christ's name. He will try everything in the book to take your testimony away from you, and you are going to have to fight him for it. Don't you think for a moment because you are saved that the devil is through with you. He will be at every turn, at every corner waiting to tempt you, in an attempt to take your testimony. Satan is also after your rewards. Your reward in heaven will be to the glory of God. All of the crowns that are won in this life will be cast at the feet of Jesus, and all glory and praise will be given to Him. Therefore Satan is out to take your reward, to take some of God's glory from Him. II John 8 says, "Look to yourselves, that we lose not those things which we have wrought, but that we receive a full reward". Satan is after our rewards because as we gain them we are glorifying God, and he cannot stand that. Because of Jesus, the King of glory, the devil hates us. Because we are the objects of the love of Jesus, and what marvellous love, we are the objects of the hatred of the devil. No beloved, Satan cannot have our lives and possess us; but he can do great damage to us. If you noticed I have written to saved people,

and this is for the simple reason that if you are lost, Satan already has you. You are under the power and the influence of Satan, and you are already in his possession. If you are lost don't be worrying that the Devil might get you, he's already got you; and your only escape from him is through faith in Jesus Christ. Christian brothers and sisters be careful. Someone is out to get you.

GOD'S IRRESISTIBLE GRACE

by Raymond Waugh

With your permission, I am going to ask a most crucial question. It is a question that has caused a great deal of consternation among some of the people of God, and it is a question that has divided theologians across the centuries. The question is, "What do you think of Irresistible Grace?"

Because it has some Calvinistic connotations in the minds of some, does it seem to be a bad word or an unwanted one to you? I trust that it will



Raymond Waugh

not! For long before there ever was a man by the name of Calvin, long before there ever was a man by the name of Armenius to take issue with Calvin, long before there ever was anything such as the so-called "Reformation," long before the rage of "denominationalism" plagued our nation and the world, and long before there ever was anything such as Romanism or Roman Catholicism or Protestantism, God shows us in His Holy Word that He saves whom He will. Very simply, God saves whom He will, He saves them when He will, and He saves them where He will; whom He will, when He will!

Some years ago, when I was pastoring in the city of San Antonio, I had the happy occasion to have several members of one family profess their faith in the Lord Jesus Christ. They indicated by their profession and in their profession that they believed that Jesus had been crucified, and buried, and that He had been resurrected from the dead. They indicated that they believed that on the basis of their belief in the Savior that they were saved.

That was a happy moment in time. One of the deacons documented it with a photograph. Six beautiful people in the baptism together! I had the happy privilege and pleasure and the joy of asking each one in turn, "Do you believe that Jesus is the Christ?" Do you believe that He has saved you from your sins by His grace through faith?" All of them, in his or her turn, indicated that they did. So, I immersed each one in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit.

What joy was in my heart! What evident joy was in their heart. Too, I would imagine that even the angels in heaven rejoiced on that happy occasion.

Here were six beautiful people who had made a profession of faith in the Lord Jesus Christ, the one of whom John said, "Behold the Lamb of God who takes away the sin of the world." This is the one of whom John speaks in another place as being "The Lamb slain from the foundation of the world."

They "joyously believed"! They were happily saved! Sadly, however, because of some background traditional religious input and affiliation in their lives, after they had made their profession of faith, they wandered back into the religion from which they had come. Then, some months later, this dear brother — saved by the grace of God through faith, they wandered back into the religion from which they had come. Then, some months later, this dear brother — saved by the grace of God through faith, I believe — put out a tract entitled, "Your Part and God's Part," as the Galatians in another day, this dear man had turned to "another gospel," which "was not the gospel."

My dearly beloved friends, salvation is something that God accomplishes. Salvation is something in which you and I have absolutely no part! Salvation by grace through faith in the Lord Jesus Christ is something that God does for us, if we are saved! From everlasting, He has His elect ones. And e're time is no more, every one of His elect will believe the gospel. This is what makes our responsibility in the preaching and the teaching of the gospel — the declaring of the gospel — so very, very important. You and I and others need then, to be faithful in sending forth the gospel or in the preaching of the gospel. This is God's command to us. We do not know who the elect are! We do not know who will be saved! We do know, however, that the elect of God will hear, and that they will be saved! The Apostle explains this truth wonderfully! "Yea, woe is me, if I preach not the gospel!"

We have documented evidence in the Word of God that His grace is irresistible! When we look at the man Noah, we find that he was living in the midst of a world that God had determined to be worthy of destruction. The whole of the world of the time apparently had turned to Satan's "Yea, hath God said?" philosophy. And despite what the so-called scientists, skeptics, pessimists, and unbelievers may suppose, I believe that there was a flood, and that all that had breath died, apart from Noah, his family, and the chosen creatures of earth! In the midst of that world men were "eating, drinking, and marrying and giving in marriage" — having a great worldly time, if you will — "Noah found grace in the eyes of the Lord"; that is, God saved Noah! He believed! And God used him for His eternal purposes right here in time. He does the same for those of us whom He has elected from everlasting and for whom He has provided the Gospel or for whom He will provide the Gospel.

There are many other such evidences of God's irresistible grace in the lives of those of whom we learn in the Word of

(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

GRACE

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God. Beyond Abel, we find Abram, you may remember, in the land of Haran, and it was there that God found him and called him. He was chosen of God to take his place in the galaxy, shall we say, of the elect. Yes, and Abram — a man of faith to whom God imputed righteousness — "believed God and it was counted unto him for righteousness... that he might be the father of all that believe... that righteousness might be imputed to them also." Are you one of those faithful this morning? Have you, the elect of God, truly believed?

Perhaps one of the most dramatic evidences of "God's irresistible grace" in all of the Word of God and in all of history is that which we find concerning the man Saul. There he was, an enemy of the churches of the Lord Jesus Christ, and an enemy of every believer who was alive at that time! With his violence and with his hatred for the things of God, for the Word of God, and for the Lord Jesus Christ, the Nazarene, Saul went everywhere persecuting Christians, putting some in prison, and being responsible for the deaths of others.

It is no wonder that the man Saul whom we know today as Paul, the Apostle, called himself, "the chief of sinners" because he "persecuted the churches of the Lord Jesus Christ." As we read, this man on his way to Damascus to persecute a few more, to imprison a few more, and to kill a few more was met by the Lord Jesus. Wonderfully, Paul later tells us that he "was as one born out of due time"; that is, before that eternally beautiful moment which "all Israel" shall experience. As God explains, "And so all Israel shall be saved; as it is written, there shall come out of Zion the Deliverer, and shall turn away ungodliness from Jacob." Certainly, herein, we see the absolute evidence of "God's irresistible Grace!"

We hear the Apostle Paul recounting and detailing his experience with Jesus several times. He was struck by a bright light. It was a light "above the brightness of the sun." When we read the 22nd chapter of the book of Revelation or the Apocalypse, we see that one day we will have no need for the "sun" because we shall have the "son"!

We read that Saul said to Jesus, "Who art thou, Lord?" Then, Jesus said to him, "I am Jesus whom thou persecutest." At that eternal moment in time, this elect one, Saul, believed, and he was saved — ETERNALLY SAVED! Then for the next 30 years or so, this man Saul, whom we know as Paul, gave his life preaching the death, the burial, and the resurrection of the Lord Jesus Christ. Certainly, the man Saul had no intention of being saved! He had no intention of doing anything for God through The

Lord Jesus Christ or in the name of the Lord Jesus Christ! Here we see "God's irresistible grace," my beloved friend!

If you are saved today, if you are ever saved, it will be because of God's goodness and His grace. Let it be proclaimed "from the housetops"! Let it be sung from the deep reaches of space! Let it be uttered from the depths of the earth! Let everything that has breath declare the greatness of God as He exercises His irresistible grace to the eternal salvation of His elect whose existence, whose lives, and whose eternity has been predestined from everlasting! Hear it — and never forget it! The Elect are saved by grace!

When I was saved, I was not looking for God! The lost have never looked for God! The lost have never sought God! God explains most explicitly His implicit truth, "There is none that understandeth, there is none that seeketh after God." Anyone who may speak to the contrary is a liar, and the truth is not in him!

Therefore, all who would have us suppose that the lost are "out there somewhere" crying to hear the Gospel, crying to be saved, or crying to get into Heaven do lie, and the truth they never have known! God saves us by His grace — His irresistible grace — apart from any effort on the part of any man or woman. The Word is absolute and eternally final, "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."

I trust that you can see this today! I trust that you will see this today! I trust that you will believe this today. I trust that you, as the elect of God, will believe today and be saved! God's Word is simple, and it is clear! "He that heareth my word, and believeth on him who sent me, hath everlasting life, and shall not come into condemnation, but is passed from death unto life!"

God is most specific regarding this reality! "The gospel of Christ is the power of God unto salvation to everyone who believes; to the Jew first and also to the Greek." That Gospel is laid out, as it were, in eternal display in, "Moreover brethren, I declare unto you the gospel which I preached unto you, which also ye have received, and wherein ye stand; by which also ye are saved, if ye keep in memory what I preached unto you, unless ye have believed in vain. For I delivered unto you first of all that which I also received, how that Christ died for our sins according to the Scriptures; and that He was buried, and that He rose again the third day according to the Scriptures." If you will, hear it and believe it! This is God's message to His elect!

MEETING IN APPALACHIAN, VIRGINIA

by The Editor

It was my privilege and honor to preach for the Temple Baptist Church of Appalachia, Va. May

2-4. I pastored this church from late '56 until early '59. My oldest son went to be with the Lord while I was pastor there, and is buried in nearby Big Stone Gap. I greatly enjoyed my ministry there. Appalachia is nestled in beautiful mountains, and I am partial to mountain scenery.

God has kept some strong ties between this church and me during the intervening years. I have preached many, many times for them since I left there as pastor. It has been a great joy to me, every now and then, to be allowed to return and preach to this church.

Appalachia is in the coal fields. Business and population has greatly declined in this area. The Temple Baptist Church has weathered some difficult storms. It has at times seemed that the church would go under. But God has kept this church going. I have often thought, and said, that God has a purpose for this church. I believe that God is going to bless this church and use it greatly to His glory in that area.

Brother Reggie Moore has recently been called to pastor this church. He is doing a fine work there. The people love him. God is blessing the church, and there seems to be a, "...sound of a going in the tops of the mulberry trees..." I look to hear good things from Appalachia in the days ahead.

As I said, I have been honored to return and preach there on several occasions. It seemed to me that this last time was one of the most blessed I have ever had in doing this. I preached Friday night, Saturday night, and Sunday morning. Friday was a blessed service as I preached on Psalms 110:3. I preached the doctrine of God's sovereign, saving, effectual, and predestinated grace. I preached that God has an elect people, that those people are the same by nature as others, that they are saved by the irresistible power of the Holy Spirit, and that this saving power is put forth on each one of the elect at a predestinated time. These people believe these wonderful truths and rejoiced greatly in my preaching them. Oh, it was easy to preach. When the audience is in harmony with what is being preached, when they seem to drink it in and rejoice therein; it is a blessing to preach.

I preached Saturday night on "Jonah, the Backslider." It was a good service. It was not as blessed as the Friday night service, but the message is a needed one, and hearts seemed to be touched thereby.

Sunday morning — oh, that Sunday morning! "Heaven came down, and glory filled my soul." Only a few times have I felt the Lord with me in power as I felt Him that morning. I preached on "Two Cries For Mercy." One was the cry of the publican in Luke 18 which was answered by God. The other was the cry of the rich man in hell in Luke 16. I gave reasons why God answered one cry, but not the other. God was with me, especially as I showed how the publican's cry for mercy was based on the blood on the mercy seat. I pointed out that there is a mercy seat in heaven, and the blood of Jesus is on that mercy seat; and all who depend upon that blood are saved forever.

God broke me down and melted my heart as I was singing, "Jesus Signed My Pardon" just before preaching. I had planned to make some remarks

as to my joy at being there and other things. I could not. My heart was stirred. I went immediately into the sermon. Oh, I can't describe it, but it was one of the most blessed times I have ever had in preaching God's Word.

I felt that I knew how Peter felt when he was on the mount of transfiguration; when he said it was good to be there, and he wanted to stay there. I felt almost as if I were in the other world. I could have gladly stepped from that pulpit into God's heaven. Rarely, if ever, have I felt just that way in preaching. Oh, I would give all I own if I could feel the presence and power of God every time I preach as I felt it then.

Brethren, I wonder what the secret of that was. Help me if you can. Was it just an act of God's sovereignty which He seldom sees fit to bestow? Was there some connecting causes? When I returned home, a lady in my church told me that she prayed more for me in this meeting than she ever had. Maybe that was part of it. Maybe the folk had prayed more and more and were more spiritually prepared for the service. I don't know. Sadly must I confess that I had not prepared or prayed any more. I know it was nothing in me. I was pleasantly surprised by all this. But, oh that I could have more of the same.

Since returning home, before writing this, I have preached two "blah" sermons. It saddened me to come back down to earth after such a glorious time. I was sorely disappointed by what I felt to be the very mediocre preaching since this experience. This has tried me sorely. I have been, and am searching my heart as to the difference between that service and the next two — especially as to my preaching. I was so grateful to God for His blessings on me at the time to which I refer. I love that church. I desire to be a blessing to any church in which I preach. I am humbly grateful to God that He blessed that meeting.

However, I will say that, if I had a choice in the matter, I would prefer to preach like that at home. Oh, dear God, let it be true. Oh, if God would let me preach like that a few times, I would be willing to lie down and die, if it took that. I know that I am rambling. I feel utterly inadequate to tell what I am wanting to tell. Still, I do want to praise God and testify to His glory concerning this matter.

I have thought of this. Maybe it was mainly me. Maybe others did not feel exactly the same as I did at that time. But, I detract some of that, for I witnessed in the congregation evidences that many were being greatly blessed. Still, I do not know that they felt the difference between this time and other times as I did. I leave that with the Lord.

Preacher brethren, I suspect that many of you know what I am talking about. You have had similar experiences. Brother, are not such times times of great joy? Preacher brothers, let us think on this matter. What is this experience I am talking about? What brings it about? Why does it occur so infrequently in our ministry: why, oh why? How much more wonderful and effective would our ministries be if we had more such experiences! Brethren, are these times totally and only due to the mere sovereignty of God? Is it our failure that we do not have

more of them? Is there a connection between our lives, our faithfulness in service, and our prayers; and such experiences. (I am aware of no such connection in the above mentioned instance) Could we have more experiences like these? If so, how? Help me brethren in this matter. I know that you would, as I do, greatly rejoice to have more of the felt and manifested presence and power of God in your preaching. I would be happy to print articles any of the brethren might write relative to this matter.

I shall long (likely eternally) remember this glorious experience. I am honest enough to have some doubts whether any others were as impressed thereby as I was; but I do know many felt a measure of God's presence, power, and blessing at this time, but I doubt that anyone felt as I did. I hope God will allow me to visit and preach for this church again. She is very close to my heart. I pray earnestly that God will bless this church. I pray that God will greatly bless Elder Reggie Moore in his ministry there. I believe this will come to pass. Please pray for this man and for this church. I have seen it experience times of blessing. I have seen it almost go under. I have witnessed as God kept it going. I have believed that He had a purpose and a glorious future for this church. I have seen it begin to prosper again. I pray that God will continue His blessings upon this church, and greatly increase them. Please join me in prayer for these things.

Thank you, Temple Baptist Church of Appalachia, Va. for giving me one more time the honor of preaching in your pulpit. I humbly hope you will do so again someday.

ANNOUNCEMENT



Brother Larry Crawford is available to preach especially to pastor, wherever the Lord might open the door. Brother Crawford is a member of the Portland Baptist Church in Plumerville, Ark. This church is pastored by Elder Earl Smith. Brother Smith is a very able preacher. Brother Smith uses Brother Crawford in his pulpit, and recommends him to our readers. Brother Larry Crawford can be contacted at 407 S. Division, Morrilton, Ark. 72110 or you can call him at 501-354-2486. I do not know this Brother, but I pass on to the recommendation of Brother Earl Smith. I have asked brother Crawford to write some articles for The Baptist Examiner. Hopefully, such will appear in a soon issue.