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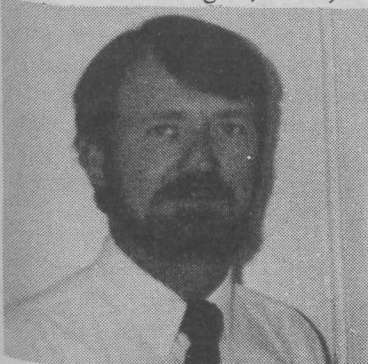
WHEN GOD PONDERERS

by Bob Belanger

Goose Creek, S.C. 29408

Proverbs 21:2, "Every way of a man is right in his own eyes: but the Lord pondereth the hearts." Men who consider themselves intellectuals are often perceived as such by others because they are ponderers, men of weighty minds, who carefully consider matters by meditation and reflection.

(Continued on Page 8, Col. 5)



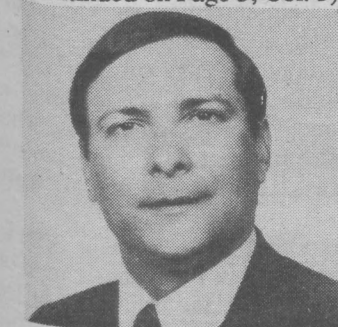
Bob Belanger

THE WAY OF CAIN

by Doug Newell

Jude 11, "Woe unto them! for they have gone in the way of Cain, and ran greedily after the error of Balaam for reward, and perished in the gainsaying"

(Continued on Page 5, Col. 5)



Doug Newell

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BY THEIR FRUITS SHALL YE KNOW THEM

by Ralph Latham,

Burnside, Kentucky

Christian friend, what kind of fruit are you bringing forth? The Lord requires His servants to bring forth fruit.

Mark 13:34 says, "For the Son of man is as a man taking a far journey, who left his house, and gave authority to his servants;

and to every man his work." Please notice, Christian friend, the Lord has given to every individual, His work. Each man, each woman, each boy, and each girl that has been redeemed by the blood of Jesus, has been given the blessed opportunity to have a part in the Saviour's blessed work.

We should keep in mind that it

is not our work, but Jesus' work. We are not going to be judged according to our zeal or our running to and fro in our feeble efforts. It is easy to have zeal without having the knowledge of what the blessed Lord has for you or me concerning our place in His work. As an illustration, Jesus passed out some talents as

(Continued on Page 3, Col. 2)

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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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ASHLAND, KENTUCKY, APRIL 29, 1989

WHOLE NUMBER 2559

THE HUMAN NECESSITY FOR A DIVINE REVELATION

by C.D. Cole

Psalm 119:99, "I have more understanding than all my teachers: for thy testimonies are my meditation." Psalm 119:130, "The entrance of thy words giveth light; it giveth understanding unto the simple."

Christianity is the religion of a Book. And this Book is God's written revelation to men. Such a revelation as we have in the Bible is one of humanity's deepest needs. "Bring me the Book!" exclaimed Sir Walter Scott on his deathbed.

Suppose that God had not given a written revelation of Himself; every soul of us would

be left like a rudderless ship on the stormy sea -- at the mercy of every wind that blows. Without a written revelation, man would be without any standard of authority as to matters of faith and practice; he would be, in spite of all the worldly wisdom to which he might attain, forever ignorant about things of vital and eternal moment. The soul's sad condition where there is no written revelation, or where this revelation is ignored or rejected, is strikingly illustrated in an article by Bruce Barton, that popular infidel writer, entitled, "What Can I Believe?"

Satan knows, if many church members do not, the importance of an inspired revelation from

God. Here it was he made his first attack. In Eden he asked, "Yea, hath God said?" and today he is pursuing the same tactics. Every available weapon in his arsenal has been employed against the citadel of truth. In the first days of the Christian era the attack was made openly -- the bonfire being the chief instrument of destruction -- but, in these last days the assault is made in a more subtle manner and comes from an unexpected source. The Divine origin of the Scriptures is now disputed in the name of "scholarship" and "Science," and that, too, by men who eat the bread of the church

(Continued on Page 8, Col. 3)

The Baptist Examiner Pulpit

A Sermon by Pastor Joseph M. Wilson

A HEART TO KNOW THE LORD

"Yet the LORD hath not given you an heart to perceive, and eyes to see, and ears to hear, unto this day" (Deut. 29:4).

"And I will give them an heart to know me, that I am the LORD and they shall be my people, and I will be their God..." (Jere. 24:7).

"Thus saith the LORD, Let not the wise man glory in his wisdom, neither let the mighty man glory in his might, let not the rich man glory in his riches:

But let him that glorieth glory in this, that he understandeth and knoweth me, that I am the LORD..." (Jere. 9:23,24).

Surely, of all the things a man might have or know, the chief thing is to know the Lord. A man might have all the wealth of the world, but is inconceivably poor if he know not the Lord. A man might know all there is to know of earthly wisdom, but he is as a child and knows nothing if he does not know the Lord. When all that is of this world has passed into nothingness, those

who know the Lord will shine as the stars forever and forever. Let us look for awhile at this matter of "a heart to know the Lord."

1. The heart of man as it is by nature, the natural heart, does not--cannot--does not want to know the Lord. This knowledge is high as the heavens above mere natural learning. Here is a science that is not learned in any earthly school. No school of human learning offers a course in "knowing the Lord." Here is a heavenly learning that must be

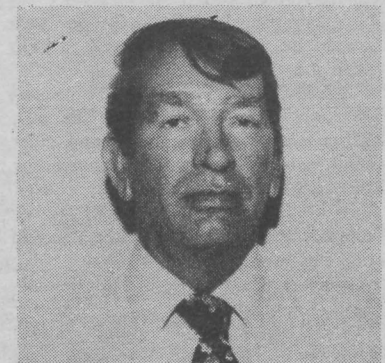
(Continued on Page 2, Col. 1)

STRANGERS

by Ray Hiatt

"Moreover concerning the strangers, which is not of thy people Israel, but is come from a far country for thy great name's sake, and thy mighty hand, and thy stretched out arm: if they come and pray in this house; then hear thou from the heavens, even from thy

(Continued on Page 6, Col. 4)



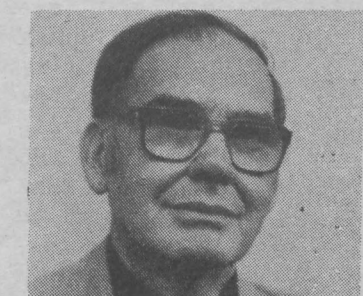
Ray Hiatt

Studies in I Peter 2:1-11

by Clyde Everman

"WHEREFORE laying aside all malice, and all guile, and hypocrisies, and envies, and all evil speakings. As newborn babes, desire the sincere milk of the word, that ye may grow thereby: If so be ye have tasted that the Lord is gracious" (I Peter 2:1-3).

"WHEREFORE laying



Clyde Everman

aside" implies that we have been guilty of these sins, but now that we are children of God we are to turn from these, malice, guile, hypocrisies, envies, evil speakings, which the apostle Paul said are of the old man (Eph. 4:22). Now that we have a new nature we are not to let the habits of the old nature rule our lives. Again Paul said, "Let not sin therefore reign in your mortal body, that ye should obey it in the lusts thereof" (Rom. 6:12).

"As newborn babes," those "born again -- by the word of God" (I Peter 1:23), are like the new-born baby who desires its mother's milk as soon as it be born, desire the "sincere" (pure, nothing added, nothing taken away) "milk of the word." The Word is not only used to produce spiritual life, but it also produces growth

(Continued on Page 3, Col. 5)

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HEART

(Continued from Page 1)

taught in a heavenly school with a heavenly instructor.

"The heart is deceitful above all things, and desperately (incurably) wicked: who can know it?" (Jere. 17:9).

"For from within, out of the heart of men, proceed evil thoughts, adulteries, fornications, murders, Thefts, covetousness, wickedness, deceit, lasciviousness, an evil eye, blasphemy, pride, foolishness: All these evil things come from within, and defile the man" (Mark 7:21-23).

The natural heart is a vile, filthy, evil, and depraved thing. Oh, how we need to preach this truth. There is nothing good in man except it be a work of the Holy Spirit, in and through, that man. Man by nature is depraved, lawfully and totally depraved. How can the fair, beautiful and God glorifying flower of "knowing the Lord" grow in such wicked soil as the heart of man? It cannot. The natural heart is a heart that has no understanding of the things of the Lord.

"But the natural man receiveth not the things of the Spirit of God: for they are foolishness unto him: neither can he know them, because they are spiritually discerned" (I. Cor. 2:14). Not only is the heart of man vile and wicked, it is blind--utterly blind to Spiritual things. The natural man might understand physical truth. He might know geography, history, and other sciences. He might understand

much that the world calls moral and religious. But he is completely unable to understand and receive the most simple of Spiritual truths. I tell you again, a man must have a B.A. degree to understand the things of the Word of God (Born Again).

Not only is the natural heart wicked and blind, it further has no desire to know the Lord. The natural heart desires the way of rebellion, the way of sin, the way of the world, but has no desire for the Lord. A preacher recently said in my presence, "The world is hungry for the gospel." I told him that the gospel is the last thing the world is hungry for. There is nothing that the world is less hungry for than the glorious gospel of the blessed God. If the



Joe Wilson

world is hungry for that which a man is preaching, you can put it down that he is not preaching the gospel. There is nothing in the heart of man by nature that responds in the least to the gospel. Any response to gospel preaching that is genuine must be wrought in man by the irresistible work of the Holy Spirit.

Now, let us apply these three things--the heart by nature is wicked, it is blind, it has no desire for the Lord--to Arminian evangelism. Now, the language of Arminianism is: give Jesus your heart, Jesus is knocking at your heart's door, let Jesus come into your heart, etc., etc. Beloved, I make bold to say that Arminian evangelism is based upon and demands for its very existence, an absolute denial of the Scriptural teaching as to the condition of man's heart by nature. No man can believe--really believe, what the Bible teaches about the natural heart and use the phraseology of Arminian evangelism. The Arminian may talk long and loud about his believing the Word of God, but his doctrine reveals that he does not believe in the depravity of the heart. He cannot believe this or he would cease to be an Arminian and become a believer in the doctrines of grace.

"A new heart also will I give you, and a new spirit will I put within you: and I will take away the stony heart out of your flesh, and I will give you an heart of flesh. 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" (Ez. 36:26,27).

Here we learn from the fountain of all truth that salvation does not consist in what one does with the old heart. Salvation is not letting Jesus in or giving Him the old heart. Salvation is a work of sovereign and almighty grace wherein God gives new heart. Salvation is not a seeking to cure or repair the old heart, but the giving of a new heart, one freshly created by the sovereign God.

How this truth does lay the axe to human pride and human thinking in the realm of salvation. How this truth does make salvation to reside in the sovereign will of God. How this truth does leave man in the hands of God to do with as He sees fit. How this truth does drive man to despair as to ever being able to save himself. You see man cannot give himself a new heart. If salvation depended upon what man did with the old heart, then man might have some hope of self-salvation. But since salvation is the creating within of a new heart, then this work is completely and eternally beyond the power of man.

II. If you will look at the first text which heads this article, you will see that there are some to whom God does not give this new heart. If you will honestly observe the history of men around you, you will likewise see that there are some of fallen mankind who live, die, and go into eternity without God ever giving them this heart to know the Lord. God is not obligated to give this heart to any. It is His sovereign prerogative to do as He will in this matter. The giving of this heart is a matter of grace and not of justice. No man has any claim upon God in this respect. All men, by nature, have the depraved heart described before. They do not desire this new heart. God, in the high and awful exercise of His sovereignty, passes by a number of mankind, leaves them in their natural condition, and to the eternal results of such a condition, and does not give them this "heart to know the Lord." God could easily give them such a heart as He does to His elect. They are no more unworthy and hell-deserving than those to whom God does give "an heart to know the Lord." It is in the mere exercise of sovereignty that God leaves some to the just consequences of their depraved condition.

III. But, praise God, I am not through with my message. There is more to tell. There is another chapter to write before the book is finished. There are some from among fallen mankind to whom God does give "a heart to know the Lord."

Look again at the second text that heads this article. "I will give them a heart to know me." Now these to whom He gives the new heart are by nature the same as those left in their sins. There is absolutely no difference by nature. There is no reason in them why God should give them this new heart rather than others. The giving of this new heart is an act of sovereign grace. It is not based upon anything the favored ones have ever done or will ever do. These blessed ones are known in Scripture as the elect of God. They are those who were chosen from among fallen mankind from before the foundation of the world, and given to the Lord Jesus Christ as His sheep whom He would save.

Oh, this glorious doctrine of election! Surely it is full of sweet comfort to those whose eyes are opened by the Holy Spirit. What melody there is in the song of electing grace to bless the hearts of the regenerated children of God. This doctrine, surely is a Baptist doctrine. It is the doctrine taught by sound churches from the times of Christ their founder, till the present day.

(Continued on Page 3, Col. 1)

FROM THE EDITOR

"...but I give myself unto prayer" (Psa.109:4) Since coming here, it seems like I have had one trouble after another - except when there were two at the same time. I have sat here today (interspersed with trying to get some work done) giving much thought to this matter.

Earlier in the day a dear sister called me. She said something like this, "Brother Wilson I know you are hurt and hurting, I want you to know that I sympathize with you, and am praying for you." She cannot know what a help and blessing that was to me. While I am on this, let me suggest that all of us do much of this. If you know that a brother or sister is hurting; call, write, or visit and seek to give help and encouragement. You don't know how much help you might be. Of course, pray for the person also. When you know that another is suffering, let that be a call from God to you for you to pray a little extra for that one. Then, folk are suffering, and we do not know it. Well, we can still pray for one another, and try to say a kind, helpful, encouraging word when we can.

What to do? What to do? What should one do about this matter of troubles coming? I have been thinking about this today. Let me put a few thoughts in this editorial. First, let me examine myself, thoroughly, intensely, asking God to show me, to see if I am at fault in the trouble; to see what part and how much of the trouble is my own fault. We really need to sincerely face this matter. Let us do a thorough job of this. Let us pray for God's help in this. I need to know if some or all of the trouble is my fault before I can do anything to correct my part of the trouble. Be as honest as you can be in doing this.

Think about the one with whom you are having trouble. Think of your relationship in the past. Examine carefully to see if you can tell how this problem came up. This may help you to see where the fault lies, and it may help you to guard against such in the future.

Take a little time to pray for the one (or more) with whom you are now having trouble. Oh, it will not hurt me to pray for another person. No matter what one has done to me, that does not remove him from my responsibility to love him and pray for him.

I am to pray for my enemies. Pray for the one who has hurt you. It may help that one. It will certainly help you. Examine your heart as to whether or not you can at the very moment love and pray for that one who has hurt you.

Pray about the trouble that has come up. Pray much about it. Read my text again. Oh, if I will but give myself to prayer, what good will be done! Prayer is never useless. Many great things have been wrought in answer to prayer. I have found this so. I have been completely beaten by a problem. I did not see any way out. I was all but certain that there was no way out. I just gave up. And then, I have seen God; easily, speedily, amazingly, completely solve the problem. I have stood there simply amazed at what God had done - and that, after I had given up. God is able. God is able. Let me pray much about the trouble.

Let me pray about and for the one who has troubled me. Let me pray that God will give a proper spirit toward that one and about the trouble. Let me pray that God will give me wisdom so as to conduct myself properly in this trouble. Much depends, as to the settling of the problem, to my spiritual condition during the problem, and as to my testimony before others - much depends upon my conducting myself properly in times of trouble. It would be so easy to become angry, to strike out, to seek to hurt others. But we need to manifest the fruit of the Spirit as best He will enable us to. I am sure that one should not react differently at different times, and in different troubles and problems. I am not for the sissy, mealy-mouthed, easy going approach all the time. There are times to stand boldly, to tell it like it is, and to war valiantly. But we need the wisdom and power of God to know what we should do in each situation. Let me pray that God will give me peace and joy and especially, love. Yes, let me "give myself unto prayer."

The dear sister who called me this morning said, "Romans 8:28 is still in the Bible." Bless her heart. I knew that, but I had not thought of it nor applied it yet today. God has a purpose in the troubles that He allows to come our way. A person may mean to hurt us and cause us trouble by what he does; but God is on the throne, and He allows that to come for our good. Oh, let me remember this. I may be totally innocent of any wrong. Yet God may allow some trouble to come into my life for His own purpose and for my good. So, no matter what others do to me, no matter what they mean by so doing; let me remember that God is in sovereign control of all things; and He means them, and will work them for my good. Praise the Lord!

Now, I have been knocked down; but I am going to get up. I have been knocked down before, and God lifted me up. He will do it this time also. I know I am going to get up.

After I get up? Well, I will probably get knocked down again, but I am not going to worry about that while I am up. I am going to enjoy being up. Many preachers have told me, "Things are going so good that I am scared to death." I know what they mean. I always tell them, "Don't do that. Don't worry about what might happen after while. Just enjoy it while things are going good."

Let me pray much in this trouble. God will give me peace. It will soon be over. Now, let me think about these troubles. Let me examine them. Let me see if I can behave differently, do something that will lessen them in the future. Maybe it has been partly my fault. Let me seek to correct anything in my life that has contributed to these things. Let me do all I can to see that it will be a good while until the next trouble or problem comes.

These are just some things I have been thinking. I know they are very rambling. They may not make any sense at all, but I just thought I would jot them down. If you can use any of these thoughts in your troubles, do so. Pray much for me. God is able. I hope these troubles will put me on my knees more and more. Maybe that is one reason God allows them. If we will but give ourselves to prayer, we will be greatly blessed thereby. If it takes trouble to put us on our knees, then, thank God for the trouble. I hope next time, I will pray more without it taking trouble to get me to do it. God bless you all.

HEART

(Continued from Page 2)

No man may lawfully and honestly wear the name of "Baptist" unless he be a firm believer in the electing grace of God.

This "heart to know the Lord" is given by the effectual working of the Holy Spirit. It is not the result of man's freewill(?) decision, nor of good works, nor of an emotional experience down at the mourner's bench. It is a miracle of the grace and power of God. The giving of the new heart is a work of sovereignty and irresistible power. To those who are chosen by the Father and redeemed by the Son, the Holy Spirit, at the appointed time, using the Word of God will give this new heart. This new heart is not the result of the preacher's personality, physiological tricks, long drawn out invitations, sob stories, but is of the Holy Spirit.

IV. Now, there are some sure and certain results that will inevitably follow upon the giving of this "heart to know the Lord," and by which it evidences itself and may be known. Those who have this new heart will repent. Their attitude toward sin and God will be a new and different attitude. Where there is no repentance, there is no new heart. Those who have this new heart will believe savingly in the Lord Jesus Christ. Seeing themselves to be what they are by nature, they will trust for time and eternity on the Lord Jesus Christ as their very own personal Saviour. They will turn from works and ritual and turn the matter of salvation over to the Lord Jesus Christ, leaving it entirely in His hands, being fully persuaded that He is able to keep that which they commit into His hands against that day.

Those who have been given a "heart to know the Lord" will come to Jesus Christ. Now, this is simply a synonym for the above two things. Coming to Christ is repenting and believing. This coming, which the world speaks of as so simple and easy that anyone can do it, is described in the Word of God as being absolutely impossible to the natural man, but when one is given the new heart, right gladly and speedily will he come to Jesus Christ. One who has been given this new heart would climb a mountain, swim an ocean, wade through hell to get to Jesus. He is done with excuses. He comes to Christ.

Those who are given this "heart to know the Lord" persevere in grace. They hold on their way. They continue with us. They are preserved by the love and power of the Lord Jesus Christ. It is absolutely impossible that they should ever fall away and return to their previous condition. They are in the hand of the Father, in the hand of the Son, and sealed by the Holy Spirit. They are as safe and secure as God can make them. They travel to heaven on the train of free grace, precious blood has paid their complete fare, the Holy Spirit is their engineer and conductor, and as they travel they sing "to God be the glory, great things He has done."

Those who are given this "heart to know the Lord" will finally be glorified. They were predestinated in eternity past to be "conformed to the image of His Son," and they will in eternity be like Him, for they shall see Him as He is. Oh, the

glory of the wonderful consummation of this predestinated salvation!

V. In this salvation herein described, we see that all the glory goes to the God of all grace. He is the one who has done it all. He elected those who were to be the recipients of this new heart. He gave them this new heart. He did it all, and those who are the objects of such an amazing salvation are quite willing, and glad to give Him all glory and praise.

Let me now sum up. You do not have a "heart to know the Lord" by nature. You cannot produce a heart by self-effort. If you do not get such a heart you will go to hell. You are in the hands of a sovereign God who will give you such a heart, or not give it as it pleases Him. If He does give you such a heart you will believe on the Lord Jesus Christ and you should live the remainder of your days to the glory of this sovereign and gracious God. God bless you all.

FRUITS

(Continued from Page 1)

explained in Matthew 25:14-30. He gave one five talents, gave one two talents, and gave one one talent. Then, at the reckoning day the servants were called to give an account of how they had used their talents. The Lord has given to you and to me, as individuals, a certain amount of talents. Men are not going to be judged according to what brother so and so thinks you should do, or what kind of path I think you or you, ought to walk. But, brother, each man will have to give an account of the work or the place the Lord has seen fit to put him in.

Now you may not really know in your heart what place the Lord has put you in. The devil doesn't want you to know. If he can get us sidetracked from the study of the Word, which alone reveals His will and work for our lives, he's won a great victory. He has us bringing forth the wrong kind of fruit, the kind that, I'm afraid, will be wood, hay and stubble at the judgment seat of Christ.

Let's examine several different places and kinds of work the Lord has in His ministry, each designed to bring forth its particular kind of fruit. I'm not going into detail, but what I have in mind is for you to seek what the Lord has for you, that in the life to come you may receive a full reward.

First of all, I can't judge your life. I can only see what it does, and then decide if it is the kind of fruit He requires of you as pastors, deacons, teachers, husbands, wives, parents, children, widows, aged women, young women, masters, or servants. It is very, very important that each individual be submitted to his or her ministry.

The pastor's ministry is extremely important. He has to seek the Lord and give us food for our souls, that we may grow in grace and the knowledge of God and thus become of full age in the faith. I Peter 5:1-3 says, "THE elders which are among you I exhort, who am also an elder, and a witness of the sufferings of Christ, and also a partaker of the glory that shall be revealed: 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 ensamples to the flock." A pastor needs some faithful deacons, not for taking the oversight, but to take the loads off the pastor so that he may give his time to continual prayer and to the ministry of the Word. Most people, including church members, seem to think that the pastor is family doctor, chauffeur, errand boy, and social leader. That is not his ministry. God says feed the flock and at His return he'll get a crown that fadeth not away. Pastor, are you bringing forth fruit by feeding that flock the Lord has put you over?

Deacons, are you taking the little things of daily ministration away from your pastor and presenting yourselves servants to him and the church? Are you bringing forth that fruit? Acts 6:2,3 says, "Then the twelve called the multitude of the disciples unto them, and said, It is not reason that we should leave the word of God, and serve tables. Wherefore, brethren, look ye out among you seven men of honest report, full of the Holy Ghost and wisdom, whom we may appoint over this business." I Timothy 3:13 says, "For they that have used the office of a deacon well purchase to themselves a good degree, and great boldness in the faith which is in Christ Jesus." Yes, it is a blessed ministry.

Teachers, have you brought forth your fruit as a teacher? Along with the pastors, the Lord has given the church teachers, for the edifying of His body, the church. I'm afraid most churches have called teachers the Lord hasn't called. II Timothy 2:2 says, "And the things that thou hast heard of me among many witnesses, the same commit thou to faithful men, who shall be able to teach others also." God says faithful men, not just any man, not just to fill a place. It would be far better for a church to have empty places concerning teachers than just fill a place because it is empty. We need to wait on the Lord and let Him fill places. Lots of churches today have women in teaching positions. The Lord never gave women an office as teacher in any assembly to voice in public or edify the body of Christ. Nowhere in the Word does He tell young women to teach, but to be taught. Some may say that because they don't have a place in the teaching of the church that God has left them out and has no blessing for them. This is not true. They can have one of the highest rewards if they obey the Word for Christ's sake. They have their ministry and a very important one as we will see later.

Editor's Note: I believe women can Scripturally teach children and women in Sunday School classes. I don't only believe it; I highly recommend it.

Husbands, are you bringing forth fruit of a husband? Ephesians 5:23 says; "For the husband is the head of the wife, even as Christ is the head of the church; and he is the saviour of the body." Verse 25 of the same chapter says, "Husbands, love your wives, even as Christ also loved the church, and

gave himself for it." Verse 28 says, "So ought men to love their wives as their own bodies. He that loveth his wife loveth himself." I Peter 3:7 says, "Likewise, ye husbands, dwell with them according to knowledge, giving honour unto the wife, as unto the weaker vessel, and as being heirs together of the grace of life; that your prayers be not hindered."

Husbands, the Lord has given you the headship of the home. You will have to give an account of your house to God at the judgment seat of Christ. Are you bringing your children up in the training and discipline of the Lord?

Wives, are you submitting to your ministry and bringing forth its fruit, the kind that will count when the Lord reckons with you as a wife and mother? I Peter 3:1 says, "Likewise, ye wives, be in subjection to your own husbands; that, if any obey not the words, they also may without the word be won by the conversation of the wives." Wives, it is very pleasing to your Christ to obey your head, your husband, in all things. When you rebel against your husband you rebel against your Christ. No wife can be in harmony with His blessed Word and not be in subjection to her husband. Are you bringing forth fruit that will stand the test?

Paul told Titus to teach the aged women to be sober minded, grave, temperate, sound in charity, and in patience, that they be in behaviour as becometh holiness, or "holy women," not false accusers, not given to much wine, and teachers of good things. Dorcas was a good example as shown in Acts 9:36-42. Also, Titus 2:4-5 says, "That they may teach the young women to be sober, to love their husbands, to love their children, To be discreet, chaste, keepers at home, good, obedient to their own husbands, that the word of God be not blasphemed." One may say this teaches it is right for aged women to teach in the church. No, it does not. Paul says in I Corinthians 14:34, "Let your women keep silence in the churches: for it is not permitted unto them to speak..." Then where do we teach these young married women these things if we can't do it in the church assembly, you may question. All I can say is look to the Lord, keep His Word, and He'll open up the way to fulfill your ministry. I Timothy 2:11-12 says, "Let the woman learn in silence with all subjection. But I suffer not a woman to teach, nor to usurp authority over the man, but to be in silence." You may wonder about asking a question in the meeting if you don't understand something. The Word instructs married women to ask their husbands at home. Yes, you have a part and it's a blessed part. The Lord wasn't obligated to give us any part. But, He did, thanks to Him. For His sake and your sake submit to your place with gladness of heart.

Ephesians 6:1-3 says, "Children obey your parents in the Lord: for this is right. Honor thy father and mother; which is the first commandment with promise; That it may be well with thee, and thou

mayest live long on the earth."

Ephesians 6:5-7 says, "Servants, be obedient to them that are your masters according to the flesh, with fear and trembling, in singleness of your heart, as unto Christ; Not with eyeservice, as men pleasers; but as the servants of Christ, doing the will of God from the heart; With good will doing service, as to the Lord, and not to men." You mean we have to give our boss in the flesh a good honest days work, whether he is around or not? Yes, that is what pleases your Lord.

Widows, there is a message for you and also for widows indeed in I Timothy 5:3-16. Please look this up if you're in this place as Christ's servant.

Masters, there's some warnings for you in Ephesians 6:9. It says, "And ye masters, do the same things unto them, forbearing threatening: knowing that your Master also is in heaven; neither is there respect of persons with him."

Christian friend, I have only scratched the surface. There's a message for each servant of His in His Word. Search the Bible and find your place. There's fruit for your life to bring forth. If an apple tree bare cherries, it would not be the right kind of fruit for the apple tree. Jesus said that by their fruits ye shall know them. Now there's nothing wrong with cherries, but God has a certain kind of tree to bring them forth. So it is with His work. He has certain kinds of servants to bring forth his particular kind of work or fruit. I Corinthians 12:15-16 says, "If the foot shall say, Because I am not the hand, I am not of the body, is it therefore not of the body? And if the ear shall say, Because I am not the eye, I am not of the body; it is therefore not of the body?" The 18th verse says, "But now hath God set the members every one of them in the body, as it hath pleased him." God says in the 27th verse, "Now ye are the body of Christ, and members in particular." He is talking to the local church at Corinth and saying they're the body of our Lord at that specific place and each one a very special member of that body.

We could keep going on with these blessed truths. The Word is running over with warnings to unfaithful servants and promises of blessings for faithful servants. There are rewards for each one that has submitted to his or her place in this present life.

So, brethren, make your calling and election sure because by your fruit will God's people know you and that you know and stand for the truth.

STUDIES

(Continued from Page 1)

of that spiritual life, "If so" or the meaning is "since ye have tasted." We eat food not only because it is good for our health, but because it is pleasing to the taste. The apostle Peter is saying here the new born one has tasted of the grace of God, and finding it (Continued on Page 4, Col. 5)

The Baptist Examiner Forum I

SUBMIT QUESTIONS ON ANY BIBLE SUBJECT
THE BAPTIST EXAMINER--P.O. BOX 60--ASHLAND, KENTUCKY 41105-0060

Explain "because of the angels" in I Corinthians 11:10.

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I. Corinthians 11:10: "For this cause ought the woman to have power on her head because of the angels."

Let me begin this answer by saying that I am a strong believer in the head covering. I believe it is the Scriptural and Christian obligation of women to have their heads covered in the church assembly. I will not spend much time on this because that is not the question. I will say that a person who can read this chapter and not believe in a head covering is reading it with blinders on, or else has a pre-conceived prejudice. I know all of the arguments against the head covering. None of them stand up to the teachings of Scripture. The hair is not the covering here mentioned. It would be foolish to say women should have hair because of the angels. This did not just involve the custom of that day and time. What would the reference to angels have to do with such a custom? The question in this chapter is not custom, but authority. The woman is told that man is her head, and she is to wear a head covering to honor him. If you try to substitute the word hair for covering in this chapter, you will sound most foolish. You would make it necessary for all men in the assembly to be bald. A most ridiculous theology! It is a shame that people will go to such great extremes just to get out of wearing a hat. Beloved, I believe it is going to be the little things (supposedly little things.) that distinguish the faithful ones of God's people.

Now, let me deal with the question of what does "because of the angels" mean in our text. I believe the apostle is here giving another reason for women to wear a head covering. This is, not just because of the man; but also "because of the angels". I believe that because of the angels has some reference to the fact that they are watching in our church services. If you do not have proper respect for the men in the church, then you, perhaps, will have respect for the angels watching. This also is a reason for unmarried women in the church to wear a head covering. The head covering is not just for the husband in particular, but because of man's position in particular. Paul here adds the angels as a reason for wearing a head covering. I am not satisfied whether or not this verse has reference to the angels simply be-

cause they are watching at our services, or if it has a broader reference to them because of their position in creation. I do know that women ought to have their heads covered in church. If you will not do it to honor man, then do it to honor the angels. Doing it will certainly honor God, whereas not doing it will bring Him dishonor as well as the church. May God bless you all.

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"For the man is not of the woman: but the woman of the man. Neither was the man created for the woman; but the woman for the man. For this cause ought the woman to have power on her head because of the angels." I Corinthians 11:8-10

Let me begin by saying that I do not believe that the angels spoken of here refer to elders, that is human beings and in this case pastors. I do not believe that the word "angels" here refers to evil, or fallen angels; but the reference is to the good angels who in this case attend worship services in the Lord's churches. Angels are spectators and witnesses of the things of earth. The Bible tells that angels were present at the creation, at the giving of the law, at the birth of Christ, through His life, death, and ascension, and that they indeed execute the will of God on the earth now and will continue to do so right through the end of time. In fact they are very instrumental in the administration of God's physical judgment on this earth. We are told that the angels, "Are they not all ministering spirits, sent forth to minister for them who shall be heirs of salvation?" Hebrews 1:14 In fact, they are constant and effective ministers of good to all of God's elect. They have seen, do know, and have had a part in God's economy and subordinate order of things since and before creation. I Corinthians 11:10 affirms that they are in the worship services observing and looking into the proceedings there.

Paul has been teaching in I Corinthians 11 about the subordinate order of God's creation concerning man and his helpmate. God teaches us that Christ is the Head of man, and man the head, or authority over woman, as has been the order of God's economy since the beginning. In the assembly, the sign of a woman's subordination to that order and her husband's authority is a head covering. The good angels know no insubordination and I believe that the refusal to acknowledge that authority offends the angels. A woman who be-

lieves in and acknowledges God's order of subordination should wear a covering, if for no other reason (even if nobody would notice, or care) than the presence of the angels. I believe we take for granted, at best neglect, the angels and I am sure that we often forget about their presence. Would to God that the angels might not only see proper attire and subordination to God's ways, but that everything they would see and hear in the assembly would be pleasing to the Lord whom we both serve.

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"For this cause ought the women to have power on her head because of the angels" (I Cor. 11:10).

In Hebrews 1:14 it is said that the angels are, "all ministering spirits, sent forth to minister for them who shall be heirs of salvation?" While they are constantly with God's elect, guarding and protecting them; yet it seems there are things they do not understand concerning God's dealings with His elect, but they desire to learn, for in I Peter 1:11,12 it is said, "the angels desire to look into" the manner and the time of the suffering of Christ. The apostle Paul declared that the apostles were "made a spectacle unto the world, and to angels, and to men" (I Cor. 4:9). In Ephesians 3:10 it is said that the church is to make known, "the manifold wisdom of God unto principalities and powers (angels) in heavenly places."

The phrase, "because of the angels" means that due to the interest the angels have and their desire to learn, is given as a reason for the woman to have power on her head, showing the angels that she is in subjection to her husband. As to how she can have that power, there is a difference of opinion. Some maintain that it is by wearing an external covering on her head such as a hat, cap, scarf, veil, or such, while others believe that verse 15 answers the question where it is written, "her hair is given her for a covering." Regardless of who is right in this, the Holy Spirit has said that, "which is in the sight of God of great price," is the wife who shows her subjection to her husband not by the clothes she wears, or the way she fixes her hair, or the kind of rings and bracelets she wears, but it is by "a meek and quiet spirit" (I Peter 3:1-6).

A proud, haughty, domineering woman may wear a veil that completely covers her head or wear her hair down to her waist

in order to show her subjection, may deceive men, yet I doubt she will deceive the angels, and certainly she will not deceive God.

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The ministry of angels is not a subject that I have devoted much time to, I must admit. Therefore, my answer may be somewhat lacking. I invite the questioner, and the reader's response if this answer does not suffice.

The Scripture actually has much to say about angels. In the New Testament as well as the Old Testament era they have played a very important part in the operation of God. And I believe also in contemporary times as well. I have learned that angels are mentioned in as many as 34 books of the Bible, (108 times in the Old Testament and 165 times in the New Testament). (See Wilmington's Guide To The Bible, Pg. 775)

Angels have many and varied responsibilities, ranging from ministering in the very presence of the Holy Throne to ministering to those of God's elect, saved and unsaved upon the earth. However, their main responsibility seems to be to glorify the Lord Jesus Christ. There are several references in the New Testament that would indicate that they are in many ways either directly or indirectly involved with Christ's work in His churches.

The subject being dealt with in I Corinthians 11 has to do with the headship of God in its proper order in the churches. Very briefly, the man represents Christ in headship, and the woman represents the Lord's church in subjection to Christ as the head. The symbolism which is ordained of God, and which should be used in every assembly is called a "covering." "I would have you know that the head of every man is Christ: and the head of every woman is the man; and the head of Christ is God" (I Corinthians 11:3) Here Paul places the headship in its proper order. God, Christ, man, woman. This is Scriptural order and should be carried out in order that God be honored and Christ be glorified. The man is to be uncovered in the assembly, and the woman is to be covered in the assembly with a veil. As the angels assemble in the midst of God's people in the worship service they observe our conduct, and are taught concerning the work and will of God through this earthly institution. "To the intent that now unto the principalities and powers in heavenly places might be known by the church the manifold wisdom of God..." (Ephesians 3:10). As Brother Doyal Thomas has so amply put it in his book, "God Has Ordained Headship". "Woman is to be covered (veiled) in the assembly to demonstrate that she is under the power (authority) of her husband, in order that the angels who meet with the saints may be taught that the church is subject to Christ in all things. The angels are actually met in body with the saints. What kind of teaching does the church provide for them? Do they see a submissive

church?" Do they see an unfaithful, rebellious church? Angels, though probably individually created beings, are not all knowing, nor all-wise. They are finite as we are, and evidently subject to error and learning as we are. Thank you for your question.

STUDIES

(Continued from Page 3)

to his liking is a reason to forsake the evil habits listed in verse 1. The more we taste of the Word, the more pleasant it is to the spiritual taste. David wrote, "O, how love I thy law!". He said it had made him "wiser than mine enemies, -- more understanding than all my teachers: -- I understand more than the ancients--" (Psa. 119:97, 99 & 100). After saying this he is made to exclaim, "How sweet are thy words unto my taste! yea, sweeter than honey to my mouth" (Psa. 119:103). The thought of "If ye have tasted the Lord is gracious", then ye will "desire the sincere milk of the word" Have we tasted of the grace (goodness) of the Lord? Do we desire the sincere milk of the Word? Can we say with David, "How sweet are thy words unto my taste!"

To whom coming as unto a living stone, disallowed indeed of men, but chosen of God and precious. Wherefore also it is contained in the scripture. Behold, I lay in Sion a chief corner stone, elect, precious: and he that believeth on him shall not be confounded" (I Peter 2:4-6).

Those who have been born again "by the word of God" (I Peter 1:23) can approach that Living Stone in fellowship and worship, that One who was "disallowed indeed of men." He is refused of men, "He came unto his own, and his own received him not" (John 1:11). "Chosen of God," the elect One, the Living Stone, God's only begotten Son, who came to earth and redeemed His people by His death on the cross. The word "precious" means one who is held in high honor, one who is dear to another. Christ, our Lord, may be "despised and rejected of men" (Isa. 53:3), yet in the sight of the Father He is "precious" "Unto you therefore which believe he is precious" (I Peter 2:7).

Ye also, as lively stones, are built up a spiritual house, an holy priesthood, to offer up spiritual sacrifices, acceptable to God by Jesus Christ." (I Peter 2:5). Not only is Christ that Living Stone, but He is the foundation Stone; for verse 6 tells us, "Wherefore also it is contained in the scripture. Behold, I lay in Sion a chief corner stone, elect, precious." Jesus Christ our Lord is the foundation of our faith. What would the Bible be without Christ? What hope would we have without Christ? He is all in all. While Christ is the chief corner stone, those who believe on Him are lively (living) stones, "Ye also, as lively stones, are built up a spiritual house, an holy priesthood, to offer up spiritual sacrifices," (Continued on Page 5, Col. 2)

The Baptist Examiner Forum II

SUBMIT QUESTIONS ON ANY BIBLE SUBJECT
THE BAPTIST EXAMINER--P.O. BOX 60--ASHLAND, KENTUCKY 41105-0060

Based on Exodus 20:16, should Oliver North be pardoned?

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I was not aware that Oliver North bore false witness against his neighbor. He did admit to lying and perhaps some other wrong doing. I believe Oliver North did what he did because he loved his country and wanted to get our American prisoners released and to help a people who did not have a voice in their government.

I believe Oliver North is a brilliant man, and one who loves his country, one who would not think of selling his country, or secrets to another country. However it seems that our top leaders have turned against him. I am sure that this man has repented of his wrong doing and perhaps if he had all this to do over he would do it another way. None of our leaders are above reproach, yet we trust them to run our country. Yes, I think Oliver North should be pardoned and be forgiven. I think we, as Christians, should pray for him in this matter.

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It is certainly true that a person should not bear false witness. If a person bears false witness against his neighbor which would cause harm to come to his neighbor, and if such an one is found guilty, then he should bear the blame. Whatever penalty the law calls for in such a crime, then the guilty party should pay accordingly for the injury or harm he might have caused his neighbor.

If Oliver North bore false witness, or misused monies, or more money than he was allowed, then he should pay for his crime against his country. On the other hand, he could have been following instructions. But then, he should have been able to discern if he was given instructions that could very well be harmful to himself or to the U. S. Government, or harmful to some other country not intended.

Oliver North was assigned a job to do, and had this job assigned to him by his superiors. I do not know if he went beyond his authority or not. Who knows? He might have been doing, to the best of his judgment, what he thought was right and believe he did good for his country and for the good of others. In my opinion, I believe he did what he thought was best at the time. I

cannot say that he bore false witness. I do not know enough about what he did or did not do to form an opinion as to him.

At the time of this writing Oliver North's trial is underway. Since he, at this time, has not been proven guilty of any crime, I cannot pass any judgment on him. If he is guilty he should pay accordingly. If he is not guilty, he should be set free. It is my conviction that he did not act alone in whatever he did. I am sure that he was following instructions. If he went beyond his instructions and used funds over and above what he was supposed to, then he stands alone in that.

If Mr. North is guilty of false witness, then he should suffer the penalty. If he is not guilty, he should be cleared of all charges.

STUDIES

(Continued from Page 4)

acceptable to God by Jesus Christ." (I Peter 2:5). The new birth places the believer into a special family, the priesthood family. He has become a priest who can offer spiritual sacrifices which are acceptable unto God through Jesus Christ. Under the law of Moses only the members of the family of Levi could become priests who offered up sacrifices for the people, but now the believer, as a priest, can offer up spiritual sacrifices that are "acceptable to God by Jesus Christ."

"Unto you therefore which believe he is precious: but unto them which be disobedient, the stone which the builders disallowed, the same is made the head of the corner" (Verse 7). To those who have their trust in the Living Stone, the One who is the Chief Corner Stone, the elect One, He is precious, "Unto you therefore which believe he is precious." He is held in high honor. But on the other hand, "unto them which be disobedient," those who have rejected Him as fit to be the foundation, the unbelievers, He is "a stone of stumbling, and a rock of offence, even to them which stumble at the word, being disobedient: whereunto also they were appointed" (Verse 8). The apostle Paul said much the same thing, for he said the preaching of Christ crucified was to the Jews a stumbling block and to the Greeks foolishness (I Cor. 1:22). The phrase, "whereunto also they were appointed" means that the stumbling and falling was not a matter of chance, but in the plan and purpose of God, those who refuse to believe on His Son will stumble and He would become a rock of offence. The apostle Paul wrote, "And for this cause God shall send them strong delusion,

that they should believe a lie: That they all might be damned who believe not the truth, but had pleasure in unrighteousness" (II Thes. 2:11, 12).

"But ye are a chosen generation, a royal priesthood, an holy nation, a peculiar people: that ye should shew forth the praises of him who hath called you out of darkness into his marvelous light" (I Peter 2:9).

"But ye are..." in contrast to the unbelievers' standing before God, Peter now tells the children of God what they are as Christians. This should be of the greatest comfort to every Christian. It is well worth our time to notice each of the things of which Peter tells us what we are. First, we are "a chosen generation."

Throughout the Bible, the people of God are often referred to as His chosen or elected people. Christ told His apostles, "Ye have not chosen me, but I have chosen you, and ordained you, that ye should go and bring forth fruit..." (John 15:16). What He said to His disciples is true of every one who has or ever will put his trust in the shed blood of Christ. Before God spoke this universe into existence He chose a people for His own. If your faith is in that one who gave His life for His people you can be sure you are one of that "chosen generation."

Next, we are told, "ye are a royal priesthood." Unlike the children of Israel, under the law of Moses where only ones of a certain tribe could be a priest and only members of the king's family were considered royal, Christians are in a family of royal priests. The word "royal" means we are kings. The believer is not only a priest but he is a king-priest. Then it is said, "an holy nation." The word "nation" in the Greek means "a multitude of people of the same nature." The word "holy" means "set apart for service of God." Not only are we "a chosen people, king-priests, a holy people, but we are "a peculiar people." We think of the word "peculiar" as meaning odd or strange, but that is not the meaning here. The meaning of the Greek is "a purchased people." They had been bought or redeemed. It means "a people for a possession," a people that belong to God and no other. In this sense they are peculiar as being His, and we show that we are peculiar in the sense of being unlike the world in the manner of our lives, "--ye shall be a peculiar treasure unto me above all people:" (Ex. 19:5).

Now we are given one reason why we were redeemed, "that ye should shew forth the praises of him who hath called you out of darkness into his marvelous light: (Verse 9). God the Father did not send His Son to redeem His peo-

ple just to keep them out of hell, but that they might honor and glorify Him. How can we do this? By living lives that show forth the praise of the Father and the Son. Lives that show that we are His children. It is said that those whom God chose "in him before the foundation of the world" was "that we should be holy and without blame before him in love:" (Eph. 1:4).

All who are born into God's family have been "called out of darkness into his marvelous light." All the unsaved walk in darkness, this was the state which even the chosen ones were in before God, through the Holy Spirit called them. This call is not the general call of the gospel that goes to all men, but it is the effectual call that goes to those whom God foreknew, predestinated, called, justified, and will glorify. Called "into his marvelous light." In I John 1:5-7 we are told that "God is light, and in him is no darkness at all. If we say that we have fellowship with him, and walk in darkness, we lie, and do not the truth: But if we walk in the light, as he is in the light, we have fellowship one with another, and the blood of Jesus Christ his Son cleanseth us from all sin". Therefore being brought from darkness into light we are to walk in that light if we expect to have fellowship with God.

"Which in time past were not a people, but are now the people of God: which had not obtained mercy, but now have obtained mercy" (verse 10).

In verse 9 we are told that He called us out of darkness. In this verse that darkness is more fully explained. This passage was taken from Hosea 2:23, Where God said, "--and I will have mercy upon her that had not obtained mercy: and I will say to them which were not my people. Thou art my people: and they shall say, Thou art my God" Those who are in darkness have no claim on God. It is only through His love and mercy that He calls them from that darkness into the light. Those who are not His people He calls to become His people. We note that in Hosea 2:23 it is God that said, "Thou art my people, and they shall say, Thou art my God." It is God who first says, "My people," He calls them so and makes them so, then they say, "My God." This is a relationship that can not be broken, because it is based upon His choice, "My people" - can we realize the meaning of these words? He is their God. All His power and wisdom are used for their good. Their enemies may be great but He is ever there to defend and protect for He is their God! Happy is that people, whose God is the Lord" (Psa. 144:15).

"Dearly beloved, I beseech you as strangers and pilgrims, abstain from fleshly lusts, which war against the soul;" (Verse 11).

After showing God's mercy and love for us and the position we have in Christ, as His children we are now urged to live lives that will show to the world that we are children of God. The first demand is that we abstain from the evil things of the world. We

are reminded that, as citizens of heaven, we are strangers and pilgrims while here on earth and as such we are to abstain from the lusts of the flesh. While we live in this world there will be a warfare between the old man and the new man in the Christian. Peter calls it the fleshly lusts which war against the soul. The apostle Paul told of the same thing for he said, "I find then a law, that, when I would do good, evil is present with me. For I delight in the law of God after the inward man: But I see another law in my members, warring against the law of my mind, and bringing me into captivity to the law of sin which is in my members." The apostle Peter is telling us that we must be on guard against the lusts of the flesh and live as the children of God. The apostle John also warns against this, "Love not the world, neither the things that are in the world. If any man love the world, the love of the Father is not in him" (I John 2:15).

CAIN

(Continued from Page 1)

of Core."

Jude, in writing this portion of God's Word, describes the way of Cain as a frightful way to follow after. Jude had been speaking of the fallen angels and their standing before God. He has, in the letter, told of the judgment of God on all of those who refuse to bow before Him, but rather seek after the unrighteous lusts of their own flesh. Thus, we see the context which verse 11 comes from, is one of God judging sinners. This is of great importance, in that those who follow after the way of Cain will face the judgment of God. Let's look at the life of Cain and see what it is that Jude is warning us about.

In the book of Genesis, we learn somewhat of the life of Cain. The fourth chapter tells us pretty much all we need to know about him, and why he died in the miserable condition that he did. The first thing I want you to see about Cain was his birth. "And Adam knew Eve his wife; and she conceived, and bare Cain, and said, I have gotten a man from the LORD." The first problem with Cain was that he was born into this world a sinner. Not only did Eve bare a son, but she bare a sinner. Adam had sinned against God and had fallen from a sinless state. This not only affected Adam and Eve, but it affected all of mankind from Cain right on down. Romans 5:12 says, "Wherefore, as by one man sin entered into the world, and death by sin; and so death passed upon all men, for that all have sinned." Cain was born a dead, depraved sinner because of the disobedience of his father. Cain was not born innocent and guiltless, but he was born a rebel against God. This was his nature as it is the nature of all men. "Among whom also we all had our

(Continued on Page 6, Col. 1)

CAIN

(Continued from Page 5)

conversation in times past in the lusts of our flesh, fulfilling the desires of the flesh and of the mind; and were by nature the children of wrath, even as others." Oh beloved, Cain had a great problem at birth. He was a sinner. At birth his way was established. He was a rebel against the holiness of God.

Now, even though Cain was hopelessly lost in his day; the sovereign, electing, and irresistible salvation of our Lord had already been introduced and put into action in the lives of the parents of Cain. After their fall Adam and Eve had been given faith and enabled to trust in Christ as their Saviour. When God slew the animal and made for them the coats of skin, He was showing them a type of the Lord Jesus Christ. He showed them that one day Christ would come and would be slain of God in His redemptive work on Calvary. By this type in the shedding of the blood of the animal, and then being clothed with it, it was shown to them that Christ would shed His blood and that blood would cover their sins. Romans 4:7, "Blessed are they whose iniquities are forgiven, and whose sins are covered." Yes, Adam and Eve knew about the saving grace of our Lord Jesus Christ. They did not trust in the coats of skin for their salvation, but they trusted Christ.

Adam being a godly father and Eve being a godly woman, taught their sons of God's saving grace. They taught them of the significance of types in regards to the Lord Jesus Christ. This is seen in Genesis 4:3, "And in the process of time it came to pass, that Cain brought of the fruit of the ground an offering unto the Lord." Cain knew that he was to bring an offering unto the Lord, as he was taught this by his parents. Abel knew also that he was to bring an offering, but notice the contrast in the offerings as we read verse four, "And Abel, he also brought of the firstlings of his flock and of the fat thereof. And the LORD had respect unto Abel and to his offering." Here are two brothers who were reared by the same parents, yet look at the difference in their offerings. Abel's was one of type, picturing the shed blood of Christ, while Cain's was an offering which portrayed no type of Christ, but only of the work of his own labours.

Let's now look at some of the ways of Cain in his offering to the Lord and see if we can learn some lessons thereby. Notice that the way of Cain came by inspiration of human intellect. Cain, like Abel, had been taught the truth, yet to him that way of offering did not seem to be the best way to do things. Cain thought that his offering would be better since farming was his life and enjoyment. Cain, I'm sure, went out and picked out the very best that he had and offered it to the Lord. I'm sure that whatever it was, it was without blemish and he was very proud of what he had to offer. Of course, when it comes to human reasoning this all sounds very well in-

deed. It sounds like the very best thing to do. In human reasoning, it seems that if we do and give the best we can that God surely will be pleased with our offering. Now, doesn't this sound like the modern preaching of our day? Can you not hear preachers on the T.V. and radio preaching a doctrine like this? Why sure you can. You hear it all the time. You hear them say, "Just straighten up your life and clean yourself up a bit and you will be all right." I have heard people say of others who have passed from this life, "oh he was a good man, if anyone gets to heaven he will for he gave his best." Well, while people think that these things sound good, they are not; for they can be traced back to the way of Cain. Cain had been taught about Christ and His atonement that was to come; but he had no faith in that, but foolishly thought to please God himself.

Cain, by not coming with a blood offering, was in fact refusing to come to God as a sinner. This was what it was all about. Adam, Eve, and Abel came to God as sinners. They came with the offering which typified they were sinners and that it was going to take the blood of Christ to do something about that sin. Cain, on the other hand, brought an offering that he was proud of. He brought that which had been wrought by the labors of his hands. He was saying through his offering that the blood may be needful for Mom and Dad and brother, but not for me. He refused to be classified in the same category as they. Is this not what many will tell you in this day? They will look you in the eye and tell you that they do not need the blood of Christ, but others such as murders and rapists do. They have gone in the way of Cain in thinking that they don't need Christ. Cain wilfully ignored God's way. You say "I don't believe that man has a free will", yes he does have a free will. Cain had a free will and look what he did with that will. He did with his will what every person will do with their will apart from the effectual working power of the Holy Spirit of God. Cain ignored God's way and came up with his own plan to satisfy God. The way of Cain is to try and satisfy God apart from the blood sacrifice of Jesus Christ; and my beloved friend, that has never been done nor shall it ever be. Matthew 3:17 says, "And lo a voice from heaven, saying, This is my beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased." God is pleased in His Son and Him alone. No fleshly creature can satisfy the justice of God as we read in Romans 3:20, "Therefore by the deeds of the law there shall no flesh be justified in his sight: for by the law is the knowledge of sin." Cain's attempt to satisfy God with his offering rather than the one which was required did not succeed. Notice in Genesis 4:5, "But unto Cain and to his offering he had not respect. And Cain was very wroth, and his countenance fell." God had no respect whatsoever for Cain's offering. It did not do anything for the justice of God. All the heavenly Father saw was a wicked man offering him a wicked offering in the attempt to override his sin debt. Not only did God not respect the works of his hands, but God had no respect for Cain. This doesn't sound like the God who is being preached in

the land today. The modern preacher only preaches of a God of love. He or she preaches of a God who respects everyone and is obligated to accept such offerings. They are liars, my friends, and they have a message from the depths of a fiery hell in their unregenerate lips.

Another way of Cain was that of hatred and pride. Yes, Cain was a proud man. He was proud of what he had done. He was proud of his offering. Surely, in religion today you can see pride and hatred. Did you ever wonder why there was so much hatred in religion? Listen, people will kill you over religion about as quick as they will anything. Why is this? Let's look at the way of Cain. "But unto Cain and to his offering he had not respect. And Cain was very wroth, and his countenance fell." When God would not accept Cain's offering and do things Cain's way, hatred built up inside of Cain toward God and his brother. Cain wanted to have his own kind of religion and his own way of coming to God, and when God would not concede to Cain's wishes, hatred overwhelmed him. Now, is it not easier to see why the Catholics and Protestants have so much hatred for the Baptists? Baptists do things God's way. Baptists believe the Bible and use the Bible as their only rule and practice and of faith. Catholics and Protestants do not do this. They have come up with their own ideas of how God should be served and the result is wrath toward Baptists. Why were Baptists put to death in years gone by? Was it for any other reason than they were doing things the way God said to do them? Yes, the way of Cain is one of hatred.

Instead of Cain repenting for his wickedness, he became angry. The way of Cain is very prevalent today in that men do not repent at the hearing of the gospel, but rather they become very upset. The gospel is just not for them. Oh, how Cain had erred and sinned against God. How sinful it was to become angry with God, but this was merely the depraved flesh rising up in opposition towards the truth of God's salvation. Cain did not look up to heaven, but his countenance fell. His eyes did not go up to the heavenly Father pleading for mercy and grace. No, the eyes of this sinner fell to the ground, as is the case of all depraved mankind.

He hated God and he hated those who trusted in God. He did not hate his brother Abel for any other reason but that God had accepted his sacrifice. Cain hated Abel because of Jesus Christ. John 15:18-19 says, "If the world hate you, ye know that it hated me before it hated you. If ye were of the world, the world would love its own: but because ye are not of the world but I have chosen you out of the world, therefore the world hateth you." Cain had a hatred of the substitutionary death of Jesus Christ, and because his hatred was so great for that it led him to slay his brother. Men by nature are haters of the death of Christ, just as Cain was. How many Baptists died a martyr's death for not giving in to Catholic doctrine? Men, by their very nature, hate the doctrine of Christ and Him alone for salvation.

The way of Cain was also one of condemnation. God says in

verse 11, "thou are cursed." Cain stood as one condemned. Yes, beloved, the soul of Cain this very hour is in hell suffering the torments there, awaiting the day that his body shall be raised from the dust to stand before Christ at the White Throne Judgment. The very Christ whom he hated and despised will be his judge in that horrible hour. Thus it will be with all of those who follow in the way of Cain. There is but one way of salvation, and that is by faith in Jesus Christ. No other way will work. It has been tried and tested. Salvation shall be through the person of Christ or it shall not be.

STRANGERS

(Continued from Page 1)

cording to all that the stranger calleth to thee for: that all people of the earth may know thy name, and fear thee, as doth thy people Israel, and may know that this house which I have built is called by thy name (II Chron. 6:32-33).

Strangers are by definition "strange." In our text God made provision for strangers to come before Him at His appointed place, make oblations, and receive succor. This also is a ministry incorporated into the church's mandated charge of the commission we bear. We have a primary interest in strangers for we, ourselves, were once strangers in a waste howling wilderness. We take into our midst those strangers upon which God has evidently worked His grace. We baptize them and then instruct them for their good in the oracles of God. Yet, there are among us those who think themselves supremely knowing in the ways and works of God who have an unfortunate penchant to demand that our new found strangers immediately take on our coloring, our expanded knowledge, and our intense understanding of godly things. These supremely knowing folks have little patience with, or recognition of, the necessary growth process of new babes. They seem loath to companion with those who seem to know less than they imagine they have gained from the Lord. This is sad, but I see evidence of this displaced arrogance widely scattered.

A stranger is strange... hence the name. A babe in Christ looks more like the world than like Christ. We are predestinated to be conformed to the image of Christ, but this conforming is worked piece by piece, step by step... in time. None of us sprang full grown and mature like an overnight garden growth. It takes time, time, and still more time to remove the rough edges of strangeness from new penitents and this is a process which we Sovereign Grace Baptists do not do well. We do many things well, but here we are inept.

I have the impression from personal observation that there exists in many of our churches an almost institutionalized impatience and ignoring of the special needs of new converts. We force them and pressure them beyond their ability to grow. We must never modify nor abridge the Word of God, but effectiveness must be considered as well as truth itself. Christ's churches address effectiveness in every issue before them. Whether we speak of support for a particular mis-

sionary, building a new building, or keeping or discarding an old piano, effectiveness in the rearing of new converts should find a place in our church occupations and in the challenges we meet concerning them.

Does anyone in our churches make it their business to inquire as to the growth, problems, doubts, fears, and confusions of our new converts? Is any special emphasis given to the special needs of these new strangers among us? Does anyone ever attempt to inquire as to their pangs and difficulties? It is the young and inexperienced whom the predator assaults first. The pastor, as the overseer of Christ's church, surely should exercise this function; but pastors are busy about many things and have many claims upon their time. Do any members of the church take the new babes to their hearts and guide them slowly, ever slowly, toward the light?

When I teach Sunday School classes I like to give periodic tests. After all Sunday School is a "school" and if it isn't we should change the designation to "Sunday Lecture." A school is designed to impart knowledge and you cannot know if the knowledge has found productive lodging in the hearer unless you hear in some form from the hearer. Teaching is not a one lane, one way path, but there should be reciprocity so that we may know if our hearers truly learn. With new babes in Christ this is especially important. If people do not learn, you do not teach... no matter how eloquently your pedantic efforts are phrased. If people do not learn, you do not teach. Does anyone in our churches ever inquire as to whether the new converts are actually hearing and growing or whether they are merely running in place?

New converts should take a good deal of our time because they are yet "strange." Uncomely and weak members are those who require the most attention, because their newness and their weakness are merely evidences of the strangeness which they have not yet outgrown. It is the church's responsibility to instruct these members in such an effective way that they become more and more like Christ, and in doing this we insure that they adapt more and more to the norm of maturity within the church. Ah, but we are far from being as effective in this as we should be.

I recall from my own experience as a new convert that I had no one to go to with my questions, my doubts and my confusions... which were many. I was baptized, enrolled in Sunday School, and mostly forgotten. I once saw a film of a hospital where someone was misidentified and placed in an out of the way nook and not treated. It was said that he was "forgotten to death." A new convert may not be "forgotten to death," but he may well be so badly and inappropriately handled that he wallows in confusion and despair. You might say that he should ask for help, but this is not so easy for a stranger in a strange place. The new convert is in a strange place where he never imagined he would ever find himself. New converts lack even the knowledge of how to cry forth their needs. All babes can do is cry - they cannot well articulate their needs. Neither can babes in Christ.

We forget that a new convert has undergone a convulsion in (Continued on Page 8, Col. 1)

INTERCOMMUNION: INCONSISTENT & UNSCRIPTURAL:

ECCLESIA, WHAT IS IT?

Part II, Chapter 5b

by J. R. Graves

The Supper: A Church Ordinance

"But now I have written unto you not to keep company, if any man that is called a brother be a fornicator, or covetous, or an idolator, or a railer, or a drunkard, or an extortioner; with such an one, no, not to eat." (I Cor. 5:11).

The apostolic churches were peremptorily commanded to prohibit the table to all these, and such like characters--to allow no leaven to be mingled in the feast. For this purpose, each church is made the sole guardian of the Supper. It cannot alienate the responsibility. It cannot, under any plea, contravene the law. To execute it with fidelity, it must keep the feast within its jurisdiction; its permission to partake cannot be extended beyond the limits of the Supper, since all who can be entitled to the Supper must be subject to its discipline.

It is conceded by all that members of other communities have no Scriptural or any other right to eat the Supper in any church save their own. No one claims that it is the duty of any local church to offer the Supper to any but its own members. What, then, do I conclude?

1. That Christ has not given me the right to commune in any church save the one which has the watch and care over me, and that my privileges are limited to my church.

2. That Christ has not made it the duty of any church to open the doors to this ordinance to any not subject to its discipline; but, by making it a church ordinance He has manifestly forbidden the practice, since, by the act, the participant declares he is a member of the church with which he communes--"we are one loaf," i.e., one church.

3. And it may be safely affirmed that those churches that stately offer and invite to their tables all the members of sister churches who may chance to be present in the congregation, openly violate the command of Paul--to allow no disqualified persons to participate in this ordinance--since it is morally certain that such are often, if not ever, present, and are the most certain to accept.

But the Lord's Supper is unquestionably a church ordinance, because--

3. It symbolizes church relations, i.e., that all who jointly partake are members of the one and self-same church.

I only assert this fact here, and submit an eminent authority, that of Professor Curtis, who has treated this subject with unsurpassed ability, and reserve the discussion and proof of it when I treat of the symbolism of the elements in the next part. That the Supper is a church ordinance in the sense that it can be worthily celebrated by only one church and participated in by the members of only one church, Professor Curtis argues most conclusively from the symbolism of the Supper, as well as from the fact that it is under the sole guardianship of the churches.

He says, in "Communion," page 85: "We desire to show that this is the true view of the Lord's Supper, [i.e., that it is a church

ordinance, and a symbol of church relationship]. "When ye come together therefore into one place," says the apostle, "this is not to eat the Lord's supper. For in eating every one taketh before other,"

"...Wherefore, my brethren, when ye come together to eat, tarry one for another" (I Cor. 11:20-23, 33). The apostle here clearly alludes to it as the universally



current opinion that the Lord's Supper was a church ordinance, so far as this, that it was completely celebrated in one place, by one church...When he bids them, "tarry one for another" he clearly intimates that the regulation of the Supper, as far as time and place are concerned, is lodged in each particular church; that it expresses the relations of the members of the church to each other, as such."

"That the Lord's Supper is a symbol of church relationship, subsisting between those who unite together in the participation of it, can be shown in various ways."

"Admission to the Lord's table, therefore, implies admission to it by a particular church, and this in fact settles the questions that the Lord's Supper is a church ordinance."

The Lord's Supper, then, being a church ordinance, indicates church relations as subsisting between the parties who unite together in its celebration.

"It must be conceded that the Lord's Supper is ever the symbol of particular, visible church relations" (page 138).

"It expresses the relations of the members of that church to each other, as such."

"A fellowship in church relations, professed with those Christians with whom we visibly celebrate."

If the Lord's Supper is a church ordinance, as must be admitted, and a symbol, among other things, of our visible church relations in the same particular church with which we celebrate it, then it is a violation of the truth symbolized to invite members of other Baptist churches to participate in it.

When Baptists, in reasoning with affusionists, urge the symbolism of baptism, i.e., that it represents a burial--as conclusive that the act must be an immersion--they think candid Pedobaptists should see and admit so evident an argument. Will not all candid Baptists admit this?

4. It was instituted by Christ to be observed as a church ordinance. I claim it as an Axiom: that a church ordinance must be instituted by Christ, and that the symbolism of the ordinances was instituted by Christ.

Should we observe ordinances originated by man, our worship would be unacceptable to Christ, and as vain as it would be sinful.

Christ has said: "...in vain they do worship me teaching for doctrines the commandments of men." (I Cor. 15:9).

Should we change the symbol of an ordinance by the slightest modification, we would vitiate it; and to vitiate the symbolism of an ordinance in the least, is to vitiate the ordinance. "Ye made the commandment of God of none effect by your tradition" (Christ) (I Cor. 15:6).

That Christ did institute the Supper to be rigidly observed as a church ordinance, Professor Curtis declares: "So when our blessed Savior instituted the Supper, as He did, upon one of those Paschal occasions, it was, we say, as a church ordinance that He ordained it."

And he justly says, to claim the right to change it in the least, is to claim the right to legislate. If it is ever a symbol of particular church relations professed with those Christians with whom we visibly celebrate, as he declares, then to celebrate it with those not members of the same church, is to vitiate the symbol and change what Christ hath appointed.

5. The Lord's Supper was observed by the apostolic churches (A.D. 100) as a church ordinance; i.e., as a symbol of church relations.

Paul, we have seen, could not have delivered this ordinance unto the churches as he had received it from Christ, unless he had delivered it unto them as a church ordinance for it is admitted that Christ ordained it as a church ordinance [Curtis and others].

The apostolic churches could not have observed this ordinance as Paul delivered it unto them unless they had observed it as a church ordinance, i.e., by one church only, and with the members of one church only.

But the churches did observe this, as well as the other ordinances, as Paul delivered them, because he praised them for so doing.

To the church at Corinth he wrote: "...I praise you, brethren, and that ye remember me in all things, keep the ordinances as I delivered them to you" (I Cor. 11:2).

To the church at Colosse he could say: "I rejoice, beholding your order and the stability of your faith."

The churches at Thessalonica he only exhorts: "So, then, brethren, stand firm and hold fast the ordinances you were taught, whether by our word or letter."

Which clearly implies they had been, and still were, faithful in their observance. The church at Corinth for a season perverted the design of the Supper, and Paul promptly rebuked it [not its pastor or elders], and again set it in order, and we must believe that he corrected every departure from his instructions.

But suppose I grant that he did not deliver it to the churches as symbolizing the relations of all the participants to one and the same church, still I claim that the positive instructions Paul gave to the churches forbade them from inviting to their tables the members of all existing churches, without personal knowledge of their faith or character, as is the practice of this age. He placed the Supper under the sole custody

of each church, and commanded it to purge away from its table all leaven of malice or wickedness. He taught them that false doctrine, of all description, and all ungodly conduct (I Cor. 5), and all works of the flesh (Gal. 5), was leaven that must not be allowed to defile the feast.

"Now we command you, brethren, in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ, to withdraw from every brother yourselves that walketh disorderly, and not after to the tradition which you have received of us" (II Thess 3:6).

If it is said "that this was spoken to the church with reference to her own members," I will grant it, and demand if it does not equally teach that it should equally withdraw from those not members walking disorderly? That there might be no doubt, read the fourteenth verse: "And if any man obey not our word, by this epistle, note that man and have no company with him, that he may be ashamed." All will admit that this command forbade them to invite all false teachers, as well as unsound and disorderly brethren, to the Lord's Supper.

Now, false teachers and heretical brethren abounded in Paul's day, all members of sister churches in good standing, and thousands of these belonged to the church at Jerusalem; and had it been the custom of the church at Corinth to invite all members of sister churches to its table, would it not have violated the instructions of Paul? But this feature will be more fully developed in a future chapter. But finally:

For centuries after the Ascension of Christ, the Lord's Supper was rigidly observed as a church ordinance.

I care little for the argument from post-apostolic history. It is enough for my purpose--and it must be quite enough for every conscientious Bible Christian--to learn that Christ appointed the Supper to be observed as a church ordinance, and that the apostles so delivered it to the churches, and the churches all observed it as such while they had the personal instructions of the apostles. Suppose, from the day the last apostle died, every church ceased to observe it as a church ordinance; how should that fact affect our present practice? Would it warrant a church to observe it, even once, in some other way, that would vitiate its symbolism? The fact granted would in no way vitiate the claim that there have been Baptist churches from the day of the defection. The Church at Corinth had for years utterly perverted the Supper, and yet Paul addressed it as a church of Christ. It was disorderly in this respect, but a perversion of the supper did not forfeit its existence.

My space does not allow me to treat this question historically. Let the statements of so cautious and eminent a scholar as Professor Curtis suffice in support of my proposition. He says: "There is sufficient proof to convince any close student of church history of the first three centuries, that in the very earliest ages, the Lord's Supper was regarded as strictly a church ordinance, as we have defined the phrase" (Communion, p.88).

"The records of church history

plainly show that originally the Lord's Supper was everywhere regarded as a church ordinance" (Communion, p.137).

I will add the remarks of Dr. D. Spencer, in his treatise on "Invitations to the Supper," after showing that no invitations were given by the first churches, nor yet in the days of Justin Martyr, in the second century: "How, then, did invitations originate? The answer is plain. They originated with the perversion of the ordinance. When the ordinance came to take the place of Christ, the churches began to invite to it, as they had formerly invited to Christ. Hence in Romish churches today you hear plenty of invitations to ordinances, but none to Christ."

I have not granted, in this discussion, that the unapostate churches, whom we account our ancestors, deflected at an early day into denominational communion. It is my impression that this laxity is a late practice.

Conclusions from this argument: I think I have conclusively shown,--

1. That Christ appointed His Supper to be a church ordinance.

2. That any rational definition of church ordinance or privilege limits the enjoyment of it to the membership of, or to those approved for membership by a local church.

3. That when an ordinance or act symbolizes or implies church relations, it is pre-eminently a church ordinance, and must be confined to the members of a particular church only.

4. That the Lord's Supper, among other things, specially symbolizes church relations, as all standard writers admit, and, therefore, it can be scripturally observed by the members of one church only.

5. That for the members of various churches to participate in its joint observance, even though upon the invitation of a local church, as associations and conventions are wont in places to do, would be to vitiate the symbolism, and consequently to render the ordinance null.

The only issue now before Baptists is fairly stated by Dr. A. P. Williams: "If he [a member of one church] ever has a right anywhere else, it must be either by a transfer of membership or by courtesy," etc. (Lord's Supper, p.94)

In his "Tract on Communion," as though he would correct, in part, at least, the admission made in his book on communion, he says: "But this courtesy cannot be exercised in violation of church discipline or of divine authority."

It is demonstrable that it is in palpable violation of both:

1. It is always done at the expense of good discipline; for when a church invites to her table the members of all other Baptist churches present, she inevitably will invite those she would feel herself bound to exclude, if her own members; and she would often invite those whom she considers unbaptized, and would refuse their application for membership; and oftentimes she would invite back to her communion persons she herself excluded, who are now members of other churches, in good standing. Can this be called good discipline?

2. Such a courtesy can never

(Continued on Page 8, Col. 1)

THE BAPTIST EXAMINER

APRIL 29, 1989

PAGE SEVEN

INTERCOMMUNION

(Continued from Page 7)

be extended and accepted, except in violation of divine authority, since Christ appointed the Supper to symbolize the organic unity of the body partaking--i.e., particular church relations of all the participants with that one church.

It is claimed that the churches have the right to extend such invitations through courtesy. I answer that such a claim is not even supposable; for--

1. It cannot be supposed that Christ would allow His churches to adopt any practice that would contravene anyone of His own appointments--even if we can suppose He sometimes allows it to exercise legislative powers--by adding to, or modifying, the form of one of His ordinances.

2. But invitations to all Baptists present to partake of the Supper with the local church celebrating it, does manifestly contravene Christ's appointment of the Supper as a church ordinance.

3. Therefore it cannot be supposed that Christ has allowed His churches to extend invitations to all Baptists present to partake of the Supper with them.

From the considerations submitted in this chapter, the reader will see that I have done what I have been called upon to do--proved that all those brethren who admit that the Supper is a church ordinance, do yield the question at issue between us, and, to be consistent, they must admit that intercommunion of Baptists of different churches is unscriptural and inconsistent.

STRANGERS

(Continued from Page 6)

his life. He finds himself among a strange people, speaking a strange language. His scant knowledge of the Bible does not aid him in living among those well grown in the Lord. If those well grown and spiritual souls shunt him off and care nothing for his immature efforts to communicate, his growth shall be retarded; and he shall be grievously harmed.

My favorite poet has said in his biography, "When a soul conceives itself to be born again it goes through many changes both unregulated and unscientific." By this he means that a new-born child of God goes through many strange and curious things, and things which he is ill prepared to meet without loving aid from God and man.

We all agree that God is sovereign. Yet, have you ever wondered why the Lord has not chosen to add more and more members to our bodies. I believe I have a partial answer. Is it possible that God does not add more new converts to our churches because we aren't doing too good a job with the ones He's already granted to us? Is this possible?

We must understand that the new convert has entered a new world which does not have full meaning to him. He's a babe. Babes are easily frightened and quite easily confused. Special interests require special applications and energies. A babe in Christ is a special entity in our house with special requirements. Usually we sit the new convert down after his baptism, count him among the number, and preach and teach as though he had been there all

along. We make no special address to him nor do we examine whether he is growing or whether he is foundering. We merely sit him down and preach to him in generality not in specificity.

You do not feed a new babe on the hard coated sinews of meat, nor do you douse him with meat chopped up fine, for he has neither the teeth to masticate it nor the digestive system to ingest it. You feed a babe very carefully on carefully prepared increments of easily consumed food. Baby food is no less food because it is designed for the young.

The papists say that if you give them a child through its seventh year that he will be a Catholic for life. Apart from the application of grace which can alter all natural factors, this is surely true. This is a testimony to the early forming and shaping power which can be worked on a child. This is also true of the child of God. The early days of his life in Christ and his life in the church (if such be granted) is dreadfully and vitally important. The way you start him off will have profound effects on his latter days. If you nurture him, are gentle with him, take time and yet more time with him, encourage him, gently teach him and love him with an obvious and discernible love, he shall grow and thrive. If you fail in this you shall form in his mind and heart impressions and directions which he shall, in the absence of grace, carry with him for his life term on earth.

I realize that physical factors do not always translate into the spiritual, but a babe is a babe in any language. I once majored in the studies of Child Psychology and Personality Development until I tired of it. I learned from this and from Biblical studies that babes are fragile items. If you drop a babe on his head the damage may be slight or severe. All babes are resilient and a bit tougher than they seem. But, if you drop the babe too often you can do permanent and irreversible damage. If you terrify a babe too often, retardation can occur. If you advance him too quickly, you shall regress him in the opposite of what you intend. Babes need wisdom in their rearing. Babes in Christ should draw empathy and compassion from Christ's church. They are not as the philosopher has said, "just men and women of a smaller growth." They are babes and they have a different physiology, a different digestive system, and a different emotional makeup than do adults. So also do babes in Christ. It isn't sufficient to just set them down in the congregation and treat them as other members are treated. This is generally what is done and it lacks in understanding of the commission mandate and in simple pragmatism. This is not an obtuse subject. Nature tells us that babes need special handling and the Word ratifies this testimony.

I offer two thoughts for you to consider. Why should our churches not designate a special class for new converts which have been just baptized and accepted into the church? Also, may not the church designate a member or members to act as a special friend to the new convert in his or her early days and so teach and guide and comfort them? Why can this not be done? A stranger usually feels displaced and uncomfortable in a new locale. A new convert (and I remember my own experiences so

well) also feels often lonely and uncomfortable and is very ignorant of what is happening about him.

This special friend could act as a translator for the new convert, for Sovereign Grace Baptists speak a strange tongue to the uninitiated. In my early days as a Baptist, I recall that everyone spoke scathingly of the Armenians or so I thought. I knew that the Turks hated the Armenians but I couldn't imagine what the Baptists had against them. The word of course was "Arminian" but no one bothered to tell me its meaning for many long days so I thought that the church I had been added to was somehow in league with an ancient Balkan feud. This is not as amusing as it sounds. I was confused because I had met with an unknown tongue and had no one to translate for me. If this seems a minor thing then compound it by many other things which a new convert must face, and you will see that he is easily staggered.

Whatever device the churches of Christ might adopt to bless new converts, I do insist that some emphasis must be given to their specialized needs of growth. The pastor has quite enough to do. Is it not possible for men and women of good will in the church to take this burden upon themselves? They shall glean great blessings from it and honor Christ's commission.

I must speak of myself once again. I still cringe when I think of some of my early blunders as a Baptist. The fault is mine, but I do plead mitigation. I had no one to guide me, and we must remember that God uses men to bless while the Spirit teaches. If I had had a wise mind to guide me over the early rough places I would have been spared much embarrassment and not a little trouble. Strangers are strange, and I was the strangest of the lot. I therefore cry for a special love for our babes. They are our special treasures.

Why does God not give us more new converts? Why does He not overflow our churches? Perhaps it is because we are not doing too well with those few whom He has added to us. Ponder these things.

HUMAN

(Continued from Page 1)

and profess to be friends and champions of the Bible. Let us differentiate between three terms that are often confused in the thinking of the people: Atheism, Agnosticism, and Infidelity. II Corinthians 6:15, "And what concord hath Christ with Belial? or what part hath he that believeth with an infidel?" I Timothy 5:8, "But if any provide not for his own, and specially for those of his own house, he hath denied the faith, and is worse than an infidel." So, an infidel is one who rejects the Christian revelation. Men need a written revelation:

I. To tell them what God is; not that God is, but what God is. Without the Bible, men, by a pure process of human reasoning may conclude there is a god, but their conceptions of God will be erroneous, for the world by wisdom cannot know God. The Bible makes no effort to prove the existence of God, but rather assumes His existence. Genesis 1:1, "In the beginning God created the heaven and the

earth." But the Bible goes to great lengths in telling us who God is. He is revealed as a trinity of persons, yet one in essence of being. Self existent; eternal, infinite in all His attributes, power, love, holiness, etc.

Nature is not a sufficient revelation of God, for the very simple reason that nature is imperfect, and under the curse, and an imperfect creation cannot be a perfect medium for revealing God. Romans 8:19-22, "For the earnest expectation of the creature waiteth for the manifestation of the sons of God. For the creature was made subject to vanity, not willingly, but by reason of him who hath subjected the same in hope, Because the creature itself also shall be delivered from the bondage of corruption into the glorious liberty of the children of God. For we know that the whole creation groaneth and travaileth in pain together until now."

II. To tell us about man -- whence he came, what he is and whither he is going. Without a written revelation from God, man scarcely knows himself any better than he knows God, for he has even been prone to think more highly of himself than he ought to think. The teachings of the Bible about man are unique. Unlike all other books, the Bible condemns man and all his doing. It never eulogizes his wisdom, nor praises his achievements. On the contrary, it declares that "...every man at his best state is altogether vanity." (Psalm 39:5). Instead of teaching that man is a noble character, evolving heavenward, it tells him that all his righteousness as are as filthy rags, that he is a lost sinner, incapable of bettering his condition; that he is deserving only of hell. Without a written revelation men have ever been prone to worship one another and the hero worship that is so amazingly on the increase, in this day of departure from the Word of God, only adumbrates that day when a man shall exalt himself above all that is called God or that is worshipped; so that he as God sitteth in the temple of God, showing himself that he is God. II Thessalonians 2:4, "Who opposeth and exalteth himself above all that is called God, or that is worshipped; so that he as God sitteth in the temple of God, shew himself that he is God. And all that dwell upon the earth shall worship him, whose names are not written in the book of life of the Lamb slain from the foundation of the world," Revelation 13:8.

III. To tell us what is right and wrong. Can it be thought that the great Creator and moral Governor of this world would leave His subjects without a law governing their behavior. Such folly would not be attributed to an earthly ruler. Where is that law to be found? The modernist answers in the conscience. But, no, that would make every man a law unto himself, and lead to confusion and anarchy. There must be a standard of authority; a last court of appeal. Our conscience is not sufficient. The Bible gives more commands than conscience. Let it be remembered that man, by nature, is a fallen creature, and therefore his conscience cannot be perfect. If human governments cannot afford to commit moral

issues to the human conscience, how much less can it be thought that a thrice holy God would do so.

IV. To tell us how to be saved. A voice that speaks with certainty is desperately needed here. How to be saved is the greatest question that can possibly engage the attention of man. This question can only find an answer in a divinely written revelation. To be left to human wisdom or experience is to be left without any real hope. "I have no light to guide my feet except the lamp of experience," Patrick Henry. What a need is revealed in these sad words. The teaching of the Bible about salvation from sin is unique. Man's thoughts about salvation are defective and deficient. In the first place, left to himself, he fails to realize his need of salvation. In the pride of his heart he imagines he is sufficient in himself, and does not comprehend his ruined and lost condition. Like the self-righteous Pharisee, he thanks God he is not like other men. In the second place, he is ignorant of the way of salvation. Even when brought to the place where he recognizes that he is not prepared to meet God, he has no right conception of the remedy for sin, and applies many worthless remedies to his sinsick soul. Being ignorant of God's righteousness, to him salvation is a wage to be earned, a crown to be coveted, a prize to be won.

The condition of salvation is a satisfied law. The law is satisfied when the penalty is inflicted. The only danger is from violated law. The only safety is from a satisfied law. Jesus satisfied the law by bearing its penalty.

WHEN

(Continued from Page 1)

tion. Such men are often held in high esteem and reverence as judges in the courts of the land or great men of science. Such ponderers conclude matters based on theories which form from actions of men or elements. These ponderers, for example, give us new laws based either on psychology or theory which in turn is based upon certain actions by which man or nature is governed. In other words, conclusions or judgments are based upon the outer appearance of a matter. All is external with man. If such were not so, cosmetic manufacturers and clothing designers would not exist. Body language is often a major key of discernment among men as to what one may be feeling or thinking. It is the face of man and his manner of movement that expresses the thoughts of his heart. His heart effects his manner. Since all is external with the creature man, he therefore by nature gives little concern to the internal man.

Proverbs 21:2, "Every way of a man is right in his own eyes." Man by his own nature is a self-justifying creature. By his very nature he will always seek to justify his wrong doing. It was Adam who sought to excuse himself from his own sin by means of self-justification with such words as, "...The woman whom thou gavest to be with me, she gave me of the tree, and I did eat." (Gen. 3:12). He blamed his own cowardice and sin on God and Eve as the causes for his

(Continued on Page 10, Col. 2)

STUDIES IN THE LIFE OF ELIJAH, 8

A PREPARATION FOR MOUNT CARMEL

by Joe Wilson

This is the first time I have ever really studied the life of Elijah, and it has been a blessing to me. I hope it is such to you. "Now therefore send, and gather to me all Israel unto mount Carmel, and the prophets of Baal four hundred and fifty, and the prophets of the groves four hundred...." (I Ki.18:19). I remind you that everywhere in the Old Testament except Genesis 21:33, where the word "grove" appears, it is the translation of the name of a female goddess that was worshipped by the heathen. This goddess was usually worshipped in a grove, but the word "grove" is a translation of the name for that idol goddess. So, these prophets of the groves, or of Asherah, often the same as Ashteroth, were prophets of these idol goddesses. Asherah, the female goddess, and Baal, the male god, were the idol gods worshipped in Tyre and Sidon, the homeland of Jezebel. She had introduced the worship of these idol gods into the land of Israel after her marriage to Ahab. Actually, Baal is connected with the worship of the sun, and Asherah is connected with the worship of the moon. Thus, Baal is connected with xmas, and Asherah with Easter.

I do not think that all eight hundred and fifty prophets were those of whom Elijah said they, "eat at Jezebel's table", but only the four hundred prophets of the grove. "So Ahab sent unto all the children of Israel, and gathered the prophets together unto mount Carmel. And Elijah came unto all the people, and said, How long halt ye between two opinions? if the LORD be God, follow him; but if Baal, then follow him. And the people answered him not a word. Then said Elijah unto the people, I even I, only, remain a prophet of the LORD; but Baal's prophets are four hundred and fifty men" (I Ki.18:20-22). It seems that the four hundred prophets of Asherah did not come to his meeting on mount Carmel.

Mount Carmel is just on the edge of the western coast of Israel on a part that juts out into the sea. "Let them therefore give us two bullocks; and let them choose one bullock for themselves, and cut it in pieces, and lay it on wood, and put no fire under: and I will dress the other bullock, and lay it on wood and put no fire under. And call ye on the name of your gods, and I will call on the name of the LORD: and the God that answereth by fire, let him be God. And all the people answered and said, It is well spoken" (18:23-24). I am speaking to you on the subject, "Preparation for Mount Carmel."

Now, you can be pretty knowledgeable of the Life of Elijah thus far if you will remember the words: Gilead, Ahab, Cherith, Zarephath, and Carmel. Elijah was reared in the hills of Gilead. His first public appearance was before Ahab when he told Ahab it would not rain again until he (Elijah) said so. God then sent

Elijah to the brook, Cherith, where He fed him twice daily by ravens bringing him bread and flesh, and he drank of the brook. Then God sent Elijah to Zarephath, where he was sustained by a widow for a season of time (really God sustained them both, and the widow's son). Now, we face the great scene, probably the greatest of his life, of Elijah on mount Carmel.

I believe that the event on mount Carmel was the climax of Elijah's life and ministry. It seems almost as if everything previous to that was a preparation for that great day when God sent fire down from heaven in answer to Elijah's prayer. It seems that, following that event, Elijah's life and ministry sort of wound down; at least there were no more outstanding events in his life until his rapture to heaven. When we think of Elijah, I suspect that most of us think of mount Carmel and the events there.

"Now therefore send, and gather to me all Israel unto mount Carmel, and the prophets of Baal four hundred and fifty, and the prophets of the groves four hundred" (I Ki.18:19). Here is Elijah's command to Ahab. So far as I know, he did not tell Ahab what was going to take place on mount Carmel. I am sure that he already knew this, for he said in I Kings 18:36,37, "...LORD God of Abraham, Isaac, and of Israel, let it be known this day that thou art God in Israel, and that I am thy servant, and that I have done all these things at thy word. Hear me, O LORD, hear me, that this people may know that thou art the LORD God...." God had then, already revealed to Elijah some of what was going to take place on mount Carmel. It may have been at the widow's house, or it may have been on the way back to Israel, or it may have been after arriving there; but Elijah knew.

Notice the overwhelming majority of the number of the enemy. There were eight hundred and fifty false prophets, and Elijah said in v.22, "...I only, remain a prophet of the Lord..." He was wrong in this, for we know that Obadiah had hidden one hundred prophets, fifty in a cave, providing them with bread and water, and saving them from death at the hand of Jezebel. But, as to standing out in the open, facing the enemy, boldly declaring the Word of God; here were eight hundred and fifty false prophets against one prophet of the Lord.

Some years ago in North Carolina, I was talking to a man at work and telling him from the Word of God some of the things we believed. He pointed out to me that the vast majority of people did not agree with our doctrinal position. From that conversation, I prepared and preached a sermon on the radio, "Being in the Minority is no Proof you are wrong." Thank God for this, for we Sovereign Grace, Landmark, Missionary Baptists are surely in the minority today. The things you and I believe, things taught in The Baptist Examiner, are criticized and ridiculed by a vast multitude. This does not prove we are wrong. Elijah was in the minority, but he had the Word of God

and the God of the Word with him.

Notice the state supported religion of that day. The four hundred prophets of the groves, we are told, ate at Jezebel's table. When preachers depend for their livelihood on the government (or any men) they will be very careful about preaching against the government, no matter how rotten and corrupt it is. It is no wonder that these prophets did what Jezebel wanted them to, when she provided their living.

"So Ahab sent unto all the children of Israel, and gathered the prophets together unto mount Carmel" (v.20). Why did the king of Israel, the power on the throne, with the power of life and death in his hand, with eight hundred and fifty false prophets to back him up, meekly do what Elijah told him to? Is not this rather amazing? Proverbs 21:1 is the answer to this question, "THE king's heart is in the hand of the LORD, as the rivers of water: he turneth it whithersoever he will." It was not the eloquent or persuasive preaching of Elijah that brought this about. It was the sovereign power of God over the heart of the king, as over all men, that turned the heart of Ahab to do as Elijah had commanded. Friends, my only hope in preaching the Word of God, and in hoping that somebody somewhere will do what I preach to them to do, is that the Holy Spirit might be pleased to move on their heart, to do so. Is it not a glorious truth to know that the king's heart (and I believe that this is just a specific example of a general truth) is in the hand of the Lord? God is able to turn the hearts of men as it pleases Him. He is able to turn the hearts of our lost loved ones to saving faith in Jesus Christ. He is able to turn men's hearts to serve him, and turn them for our good and His glory.

Let us now go to mount Carmel. It is very early in the morning. Elijah is already there. You could see from every direction, except the east, for the Mediterranean Sea was there, people coming to mount Carmel. The messengers had gone forth from Ahab for Israel to gather there. I wonder what they were thinking. It had not rained, you remember, for three and one half years. I suppose the people hoped that this gathering was to have something to do with alleviating that condition, and to help the economic and physical condition of the country. Elijah was there. The people were there. Ahab was there. The four hundred and fifty prophets of Baal were there. Jezebel and the four hundred prophets of the groves were not there.

This crowd desires rain. But there was something that must be dealt with before the rains came. What was it that had brought this terrible judgment on the land? It was the sins of Israel. It was their serving Baal instead of the Lord. Elijah had told Ahab this in v.18, "thou, and thy father's house (have troubled Israel) in that ye have forsaken the commandments of the LORD, and thou hast followed Baalim." This matter of sin must be dealt with. This matter of idolatry must be dealt with before the rains will come.

Elijah is going to deal with this. Jeremiah rebuked the sins of Judah with the words, "Therefore the showers have been withholden...." (3:3). Joshua must deal with the sin in the camp before victory over Ai would be given. If we would have showers of blessings, we must deal with the sins that have held them back.

Notice that Elijah speaks to the people, but he has no message for the false prophets. He does not even offer them the opportunity to decide who the true God is. He ignores them completely and preaches to Israel. Beloved friends, there is a reprobation. There are those who are not the elect of God, and who will never be saved. Sometimes there comes the time to cease preaching to the reprobate, but that is in the hands of the Lord. You and I should earnestly desire the salvation of any man, and pray for him, and witness to him; unless God should make known to us by some special means, (I do not know that it would ever be done in this age, but I don't know that it will not be done) that we are to cease bothering with that situation. God did tell Samuel to quit praying for Saul. I do not know that this happens today. I do not know that it does not. Let us pray and witness until and unless God makes us to know that we are no longer to cast our pearls before the swine. These prophets were leaders in idolatry, and their leading in this may have been a sign of their reprobation: At least, Elijah had no message for them.

"And Elijah came unto all the people, and said, How long halt ye between two opinions? if the LORD be God, follow him: but if Baal, then follow him...." (I Ki.18:21). There are two opinions presented in Elijah's message. The people halted between these two. One opinion is that Baal is god. The other is that the Lord is God. There is not a third option. It is impossible that they are both Gods. It is impossible that they are equal Gods. It is impossible even that one is a lesser and one a greater God. One is God. The other is not God. It is time for Israel to make up her mind which is the true and only God. Note the word "halt." It does not mean, as we would first think, that the people were standing still, trying to decide which was God. They were going from one to the other. They were trying to serve them both - now one, then the other. They were wavering between the two as to which one they should serve completely.

Nothing could be more important than the proper answer to this question. Which one is the true and living God? Nothing can ever be more important to your life than, "who is the true God, and what are you going to do about this?" What is your relationship to the one and true God? Of all the opinions that men need to decide thoroughly upon, the opinion of which god is God, and which one is going to be my God, is the most important of all.

I wonder why they were halting. Why did it seem hard for them to decide this question? Did they not remember the days gone by; how that the Lord had deliv-

ered Israel from Egyptian bondage? Did they not remember the many great and glorious things the Lord had done for Israel? Maybe they also thought about the present; how that Ahab and Jezebel were on the throne, and they were ordered to worship Baal and Asherah, and they might be killed, as others had been, if they refused. So they waver back and forth.

Now, Elijah says this question must be settled before the rains will come. Before we can get the "rain" question settled, we must get the "God" question settled. Who is going to be the God of Israel? That is the question. Not only must this question of who is God be settled, but appropriate action must follow. It is not enough to adopt this creed, the Lord is our God; but we must prove this by our actions. We must prove the reality of our creed by our conduct. We must prove the reality of our profession by our practice. If we say that the Lord is our God, we must follow Him in our lives and service. Friends, few things are more important than to realize that it is not enough to have a correct creed, to have our articles of faith all in order, unless these things influence for good and for God the way we live. If we do not live what we say we believe, what good does such belief do us?

I want you to notice what is involved in this matter that Elijah is preaching to them about. Jesus Christ preached the same thing when He said, "No man can serve two masters" (Matt.6:24). You just cannot do it. You may try it, but one or the other is going to be the master of your life. You cannot have two masters of your life and service. Jesus said in the same verse, "for either he will hate the one, and love the other; or else he will hold to the one, and despise the other." We must determine whether or not Jesus Christ is the master of our lives, and if He is, we must prove it by our obedience to Him.

Notice that, when Elijah preached this to the people, they answered him not a word. I think that this may sometimes be good. I think that we sometimes need preaching that will just shut people up. So long as people are making excuses, and so long as they are trying to justify their failure to follow God, we need to do some Holy Spirit empowered preaching that will shut them up. Sometimes men need to shut up, and listen.

Elijah proposes a contest to settle who is the true god. It is an uneven contest, for on one side are the four hundred and fifty prophets of Baal, and on the other side is the one prophet of God, Elijah. But really, it is an uneven contest the other way around. For God is with Elijah, and God plus one is more than any number you can imagine. In fact, God alone makes a majority. So there are four hundred and fifty prophets of Baal. But, who is Baal? He is an idol god. He is totally helpless to do anything for himself or for his worshippers, and they soon found that out. Here is Elijah. just one

(Continued on Page 10, Col. 1)

ELIJAH

(Continued from Page 9)

man? No, not just one man, for God is with him. Elijah knew this, and oh, the courage of Elijah on that day.

What was it that enabled one man to lay his life on the line and stand up against the king and queen, the four hundred and fifty false prophets, and the whole nation? What was it? It was Elijah's faith in God. He believed that God had sent him and that God was with him. He had learned some things on the hills of Gilead, by the brook Cherith, and at the widow's house. He had learned that the power of God could stop the rain, send the ravens with bread and flesh, provide miraculously in the widow's house, and even raise the dead. Elijah had witnessed the power of God in his life. He had seen God at work. Now, believing that God had sent him, that God was with him, that God had told him what to do; he could stand tall and brave and strong on Mount Carmel that notable day.

Elijah proposes the test. "We will get two bullocks. The prophets of Baal will take one, dress it, put it on the altar, and put no fire under it. I will do the same with the other. We will pray. The God that answers by fire will be God". That is a good and fair test. The people answered, "It is well spoken." It was an appropriate test. Baal was the sun god. He was the god of fire. His worshippers could not afford to refuse to accept this test, lest they show their lack of confidence in the god they worshipped.

However, the God of Israel is really the God of fire. He appeared to Moses in a burning, fiery bush. When the children of Israel travelled through the wilderness, God's presence with them was manifested in a pillar of fire. When God came down on mount Sinai, there was fire on the mountain. When Aaron began his ministry as high priest and put the sacrifice on the altar, fire came out from the Lord and devoured the sacrifice. When Nadab and Abihu offered strange fire unto the Lord, fire went out from the Lord and destroyed them. At other times God has sent fire of judgment upon the wicked. So, not Baal, but the Lord is truly the God of fire.

Beloved friends, there is a deeper meaning in this matter of the God that answers by fire. Fire represents the judgment of God's holiness upon sin. The sacrifice represents God's provided substitute for sinners. The fire of God's judgment must fall upon the substitute for sinners before the rain of God's blessings will come upon guilty sinners. Dear friends, yonder on Calvary there was God's provided Lamb as a substitute for sinners. Upon that Lamb there fell the fire of the hell of God's wrath against sin. The Lord laid on Christ the guilt of all the sins of all the elect. God poured out His wrath against those sins on His own dear Son. As a result of this, the showers of God's blessings of saving and keeping grace do and will come upon all those for whom Christ died.

The people give their assent to this test. They say "it is well spoken." Baal claims to be the

god of fire. The Lord God of Israel has answered by fire in days gone by. We will just put it to the test and see who is the true God that is able to answer by fire. The stage is now set for one of the outstanding scenes in Old Testament history. May the Lord bless our study of the life of Elijah to our spiritual good and His glory.

WHEN

(Continued from Page 8)

eating of the forbidden fruit, as if to say, "If you, Lord, had not given me this woman, this wouldn't have happened." Likewise it is recorded of Eve that she stated, "The serpent beguiled me, and I did eat." (Gen. 3:12-13). She sought to justify her wrong with "the devil made me do it." Yes, beloved, to this very hour, the lump in the throat of self-pride causes few to admit, "I was wrong, I shouldn't have done it. It was my fault." Because, "Every way of man is right in his own eyes."

Further fuel is added to the fires of man's indignant nature in Proverbs 16:2 wherein we read, "All the ways of man are clean in his own eyes," and again in Proverbs 16:25 it states: "There is a way that seemeth right unto a man, but the end thereof are the ways of death." Thus coupled, we are clearly taught that what is right and clean in the eyes of men is none other but the broad way of destruction and death. Man then self-serves to self destruction. Jeremiah 17:9 solemnly warns: "The heart is deceitful above all things, and desperately wicked: who can know it?" Proverbs 28:26 adds, "He that trusteth in his own heart is a fool." Such verses as these openly refute the idea of "Let your conscience be your guide." Conscience can only guide according to learned standards or forms of what is considered. Many in our present day are taught that murder of the unborn is justifiable since one's body becomes invaded by an "unwanted substance." They consider abortion merely as a form of surgery to remove an inconvenience. Lying is simply called a half truth. Sodomy is merely an alternate lifestyle. Being deceitful is "not making waves." Relationships outside the bond of marriage is necessary to see if you are compatible. Adulterous relationships are necessary to fulfill ones so called needs. Man soon finds a way to excuse all his ways of iniquity with high sounding words and vain reasonings. We are told that Hell does not exist because God loves everyone too much to send them there. We are told that Christ did His part, and we must do ours. We are told that mere belief in any god, whatsoever he be called, is right and acceptable to the true God.

In the business world one of the most important factors in selling goods is advertisement by display and packaging. Man has long realized that outer appearance, or that which appeals to the senses, is that which sells. In the so-called religious field, it is grand buildings and handsome preachers. A display of wealth is necessary to appeal to the masses and nature of man. But once inside these monuments to the glory of men, we usually find false doctrine, and what little

Bible is heard is usually perverted by the social gospel of humanism. To the false religionist of His day our Lord declared in Matthew 23:27, "Woe unto you scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites! for you are like unto whited sepulchres, which indeed appear beautiful outward, but are within full of dead men's bones, and of all uncleanness." With man it is always the external that matters but with God it is that which is within man that matters; for He looks upon the heart. It is He that declares the heart of man to be deceitful and wicked. Certainly beloved, we need to guard against uncomely outward appearances. James 3:6 tells us, "And the tongue is a fire, a world of iniquity: so is the tongue among our members, that it defileth the whole body." Why? In Matthew 12:34 our Lord warns, "For out of the abundance of the heart the mouth speaketh." What lies within the heart of man is that which is revealed by his speech. We speak that which is right in our own eyes more often than that which is right in the eyes of God. "Keep thy heart with all diligence; for out of it are the issues of life." The keeping is in the knowing. The issues are what we sow and what we reap from our sowing. We have often heard the expression, "bite your tongue." What is really meant is, if that which we feel in our heart is not right or is offensive, we should not let it flow to our mouth and spill out. If our hearts be declared deceitful, we can well rest assured that we ourselves are deceived by self.

We are told that Moses was more meek than any man of his day; yet this meekness was not natural to his behavior as a man. He went from living in a palace and attending the best schools to living in a tent in the desert tending sheep. His own heart, at earlier years had deceived him into believing that it was by his own youthful strength and stature that God would use him to deliver Israel from bondage. The end result was that he fled Egypt and the face of Pharaoh. At about the age of eighty, while he was yet being prepared of God, he was called into service. It was before the burning bush he learned more about himself than he had learned in forty years as a shepherd and forty years in the schools of Egypt. Why? Simply because Wisdom spoke to him out of the bush; even the Word of God! For the "fear of the Lord is the beginning of wisdom." Readers, please observe Exodus 4:1-8. Note in verses 1-5. Here beloved, was the first of the miracles Moses was to show before the people of Israel and Pharaoh. However, here we must recognize that those who would lead must first learn, and thus we understand that this first of the miracles was also a message to Moses himself. The Lord had asked Moses in response to his remark of v: 1 ("they will not believe me nor hearken unto my voice") "What is that in thine hand?" Moses responded with "A rod." The point is quite clear, beloved! The shepherd's rod or staff was that upon which the shepherd would lean for support. God's message then to Moses, was that he should be rid of self. Yea, rid of those things in which he trusted to be his help and strength. The

rod, you see, was but an object of the earth. Therefore the Lord told him in v: 3, "Cast it on the ground." That is, lean not upon the inventions of men to do my work! See the value of it, Moses? V. 3, "and it became a serpent; and Moses fled from before it." Yea, beloved, those things upon which men lean and trust, those ways that "seemeth right" often end in the ways of death. The message of the rod of Moses is found in Proverbs 3:5, "Trust in the Lord with all thine heart; and lean not unto thine own understanding." Moses would indeed not be believed nor heard while leaning on his rod. But the Lord had yet further to declare unto him. (Read Exodus 4:6-8). This again was a sign for the people of Israel, but also a sign for Moses. "Put now thine hand into thy bosom." The hand speaks to us of man's energy, his labors, his works. His hand he was to put inside this coat or shirt as it were. When he did so we read: "And when he took it out, behold, his hand was leprous as snow." Leprosy was indeed the worst kind of affliction man could have, and this particular kind of leprosy not only rendered Moses as unclean, but was of the most difficult kind to cure. We note that Moses's hand was whole until he pulled it out from his bosom. What meaning should this have to him? What meaning should this have to us? Was it not the hand of Eve that stretched forth "and took of the fruit thereof, and did eat"? Was it not the hand of Eve that "gave also unto her husband"?

Was it not the hand of Adam that consented thereto by taking and eating? Was it not the hand of Cain that brought a false offering before the Lord? Was it not the hand of Cain that "rose up against Abel his brother and slew him"? These beloved were the first works performed by the hand of man. The hand is set in motion by the heart of man. Thus, when Moses pulled his hand from his bosom, it was fully leprous. Yea, the very symbol of the bosom is representative of the heart of man, or within the bosom lay the heart of man. What else may come forth from the bosom but leprosy, since man is declared of God to possess a wicked and deceitful heart? Christ plainly declared; "But those things which proceed out of the mouth come forth from the heart; and they defile the man. For out of the heart proceed evil thoughts, murders, adulteries, fornications, thefts, false witness, blasphemies: These are the things which defile a man." (Matt. 15:18-20). By the miracle of the leprous hand it was revealed that Moses of himself would not be believed. He of himself would not be heard. He could not perform the labor neither by his own strength or authority. He could not put forth his hand to the work of God with success because his heart was corrupted by sin. Though a man put his hand in his bosom and hide it; though a man's bosom or heart be hidden from men, the Lord reveals the truth, when they bring forth their hand. All men

(Continued on Page 11, Col. 1)

ABSOLUTE PREDESTINATION

by Jerome Zanchius

Without a due sense of predestination, we shall want the surest and the most powerful inducement to patience, resignation and dependence on God under every spiritual and temporal affliction.

How sweet must the following considerations be to a distressed believer! (1) There most certainly exists an almighty, all-wise and infinitely gracious God. (2) He has given me in times past, and is giving me at present (if I had but eyes to see it), many and signal intimations of His love to me, both in a way of providence and grace. (3) This love of His is immutable; He never repents of it nor withdraws it. (4) Whatever comes to pass in time is the result of His will from everlasting, consequently (5) my afflictions were a part of His original plan, and are all ordered in number, weight and measure. (6) The very hairs of my head are (every one) counted by Him, nor can a single hair fall to the ground but in consequence of His determination. Hence (7) my distresses are not the result of chance, accident or a fortuitous combination of circumstances, but (8) the providential accomplishment of God's purpose, and (9) designed to answer some wise and gracious ends, nor (10) shall my affliction continue a moment longer than God sees meet. (11) He who brought me to it has promised to support me under it and to carry me through it. (12) All shall, most assuredly, work together for His glory and my good, therefore (13) "The cup which my heavenly Father hath given me to drink, shall I not drink it?" Yes, I will, in the strength He imparts,

even rejoice in tribulation; and using the means of possible redress, which He hath or may hereafter put into my hands, I will commit myself and the event to Him, whose purpose cannot be overthrown, whose plan cannot be disconcerted, and who, whether I am resigned or not, will still go on to work all things after the counsel of His own will.

Above all, when the suffering Christian takes his election into the account, and knows that he was by an eternal and immutable act of God appointed to obtain salvation through our Lord Jesus Christ; that, of course, he hath a city prepared for him above, a building of God, a house not made with hands, but eternal in the heavens; and that the heaviest sufferings of the present life are not worthy to be compared with the glory which shall be revealed in the saints, what adversity can possibly befall us which the assured hope of blessings like these will not infinitely overbalance?

"A comfort so divine,
May trials well endure."

However keenly afflictions might wound us on their first access, yet, under the impression of such animating views, we should quickly come to ourselves again, and the arrows of tribulation would, in great measure, become pointless. Christians want nothing but absolute resignation to render them perfectly happy in every possible circumstance, and absolute resignation can only flow from an absolute belief of, and an absolute acquiescence in, God's absolute providence, founded on absolute predestination.

-Jerome Zanchius
(1516-1590)

WHEN

(Continued from Page 10)

seek to justify self by condemnation of others while not seeing the labors of their own hands. We note that in Exodus 4:6-8, it was but a sovereign God who had the power to either destroy or heal. When Moses put his leprous hand back into his bosom and again removed it, "it was turned again as his other flesh." How could such be done so speedily and with such a full cure? Our text of Proverbs 21:2 tells us, "But the Lord pondereth the hearts." Jeremiah asked concerning the heart, "who can know it?" Christ, we are told, pondereth! That is, He weighs by law, truth, and trial; the heart of man. The same Hebrew is again used in Proverbs 16:2 wherein we read, "The Lord weigheth (pondereth) the spirits." There are no fingers on His scale beloved, either for or against it. There is no deception before Him for He cannot be deceived by men. No opinion may persuade Him, nor may a mere profession persuade Him, he weighs by the strictness and exactness of His truth. He weighs the action, the purposes, the thoughts, the words, the deeds of all men. He has already weighed the natural heart and found it full of iniquity. He has weighed the double heart and found it unstable in all its ways. He has weighed the heartless and hardened heart and condemned it as stony. Yea beloved, He weighs the proud heart for a fall. He weighs them and declares: "Thou art weighed in the balances, and art found wanting." (Dan. 5:27). Beloved, do not these things weigh heavily upon us? Such ought to be so for all men, but alas it is but common only to the saved. The lost may give ear and bear the burden but momentarily, for self-deceptiveness wins where the Spirit does not convict. Beloved, hear what saith the poor despised Publican who looked upon his own leprous heart. (Luke 18:13). "And the publican,

standing afar off, would not lift up so much as his heaven, but smote his breast saying, God be eyes unto heaven, but smote upon his breast saying, God be merciful to me a sinner." There were none among men to whom he might make petition, and if there were, where would he find the mercy he sought? What said David when his great sin was revealed? (Ps. 51:5-10). Weighed indeed he was, weighted down by sin, and the awesome truth of it. Judged of God and self as having a false heart; as being a fool, as being filthy and black within. Judged of God as having a leprous heart. Yea, for God had pondered him; had weighed him. But like David, all the children of God must weigh self by the standards of God.

Modern medicine boasts itself in achieving much in heart transplants; but beloved, God was doing this long before the idea ever entered the mind of man. Listen: Ezekiel 11:19-20. "And I will give them one heart, and I will put a new spirit within you; and I will take the stony heart out of their flesh, and I will give them a heart of flesh: That they may walk in my statutes, and keep mine ordinances, and do them: an they shall be my people, and I will be their God." How is and was this to be done? To the Pharisees our Lord declared in Luke 16:15, "Ye are they which justify yourselves before men; but God knoweth your hearts: for that which is highly esteemed among men is abomination in the sight of God." Christ had pondered the hearts of His own and found them alienated and at enmity with God; yea, none righteous, none seeking after God! Even so beloved, He entered a loveless world because of love for His own. His heart was pondered of the Father and found right in His eyes; yea, well pleasing. In Him was the refuge of David. In Him

was mercy for the Publican. He came to give a heart of flesh; a heart that would tremble at His Word; a heart that is pure in longing for holiness; a heart that is upright, walking in truth and sincerity. Our ways, beloved, can never be right in our own eyes unless they are His ways. It is often a grievous and burdensome thing to search ourselves; search out our own motives for doing, and finding we yet possess vanity by seeking the glory of men. Would we be so honest with ourselves and ponder our own hearts by His Word? Or would we be more pleased to await the scales of God? None of us are exempt from failure or sin. It is always time for inventory.

BOOK REVIEW

We also have a reprint in our book store of a "Commentary on Ezekiel" by Patrick Fairbairn. It is a large paper back of over 500 pages. Now, Ezekiel is a prophetic book, and I am a strong proponent of the theory that only a Premillennialist can write a good commentary on a prophetic book. Of course, no Post or A-Millennialist can expound the last nine chapters of Ezekiel. Their attempts show the poverty and perversion of their prophetic positions. Fairbairn's spiritualizing (A poor word for such mystical interpretations) detracts greatly from the book. Of course, any other than a Premillennialist will do much of this in seeking to expound a prophetic portion of the Word of God. I would never recommend buying a commentary on a prophetic Bible book by other than a Premillennialist; but if one desires such, I feel sure that Fairbairn will be the best such book on Ezekiel. The book sells for \$15.95 which is not a bad price on today's book market. Order from our book store. The profit stays in the book ministry.

TIPS ON HOW TO GET ALONG WITH PEOPLE

1. Keep chains on your tongue; always say less than you think. Cultivate a pleasant, persuasive voice. How you say it often counts more than what you say.
2. Make promises sparingly and keep them faithfully.
3. Never let an opportunity pass to say a kind word to somebody. Praise good work done, regardless of who did it. If correction is needed, criticize helpfully, never in a destructive manner.
4. Be genuinely interested in others. Let everyone you meet feel that you regard him or her as a person of importance.
5. Be cheerful. Keep the corners of your mouth turned up. Hide your pains, worries, and disappointments under a smile.
6. Keep an open mind on all controversial questions. Discuss without arguing. It is possible to disagree and yet be friendly.
7. Never engage in gossip. Make it a rule to say nothing about another unless it is something good.
8. Be careful of other people's feelings. A laugh at another's expense is rarely worth the effort, and it may hurt where least expected.
9. Pay no attention to cutting remarks that others may make about you. Learn to live above such comments.
10. Don't be too anxious about your rights and having favors repaid. Let the satisfaction of helping others serve as its own reward.

I have always considered, with Luther and Calvin, that the sum and substance of the gospel lies in that word substitution -- Christ standing in the stead of man. If I understand the gospel, it is this: I deserve to be lost for ever; the only reason why I should not be damned is that Christ was punished in my stead, and there is no need to execute a sentence twice for sin. On the other hand, I know I cannot enter heaven unless I have a perfect righteousness; I am absolutely certain I shall never have one of my own, for I find I sin every day but then Christ had a perfect righteousness, and He said, "There, poor sinner, take My

garment and put it on; you shall stand before God as if you were Christ, and I will stand before God as if I had been the sinner; I will suffer in the sinner's stead, and you shall be rewarded for works which you did not do, but which I did for you." I find it very convenient every day to come to Christ as a sinner, as I came at the first. "You are no saint," says the devil. Well, if I am not, I am a sinner; and Jesus Christ came into the world to save sinners. Sink or swim, I go to Him; other hope I have none. By looking to Him, I received all the faith which inspired me with confidence in His grace; and the word that first drew my soul -- "Look unto Me," -- still rings its clarion note in my ears. There I once found conversion, and there I shall ever find refreshing and renewal.

Let me bear my personal testimony of what I have seen, what my own ears have heard, and what my own heart has tasted. First, Christ is the only-begotten of the Father. He is Divine to me, if He be human to all the world besides. He has done that for me which none but a God could do. He has subdued my stubborn will, melted a heart of adamant, broken a chain of steel, opened the gates of brass, and snapped the bars of iron. He hath turned for me my mourning into laughter, and my desolation into joy; He hath led my captivity captive, and made my heart rejoice with joy unspeakable and full of glory. Let others think as they will of Him, to me He must ever be the only - begotten of the Father; blessed be His holy name!

--C.H. Spurgeon

"Beloved, let us love, for love is of God. In God alone love has its true abode. Beloved, let us love, for those who love are truly His sons born from above. Beloved, let us love, for love is rest, and he who loveth not remains unblest!" Religion without love is like a body without life;

THE BAPTIST EXAMINER
APRIL 29, 1989
PAGE ELEVEN

SENTIMENTALISM, A VICIOUS ENEMY OF THE CHURCH AND PASTOR

Sentimental: "Marked or governed by feeling." (Webster).

THE PASTOR:

1. CANNOT PREACH ELECTION, because the daughter of Brother and Sister Elite, is in attendance with her family, and belongs to an Arminian church. And we do not want to offend them.

2. CANNOT PREACH ON BAPTISM, because some of the church members have loved ones who have been sprinkled, and they would surely believe the Pastor's remarks were directed toward them.

3. CANNOT PREACH ON CLOSED COMMUNION, for some will feel left out, and nobody likes that left-out feeling.

4. CANNOT PREACH ON MISSIONS, because we do not want to offend our members or visitors who have some Primitive Baptist kinfolks.

5. CANNOT PREACH CHURCH TRUTH, for there are some good people in the invisible church, and many of them are friends to some members of our church.

6. CANNOT PREACH ON HOLY LIVING, for we everyone

sin. Therefore, we are not qualified to rebuke our brother or sister for sinning. Who is it that is so sin-free that he can cast the first stone? It was rank and God defying hypocrites to whom Christ put this question, it was not addressed to the church. The Lord's church is not only qualified to officially rebuke sin, but is commanded of the Lord to do so (John 8:1-10; I Cor. 5:12, 13, 6:2, 3; Rom. 6:14, 15; I John 2:1).

7. CANNOT PREACH STEWARDSHIP, because Brother Hardship is in debt way over his head, and to preach tithing would be like rubbing salt in his wounds.

8. Etc.

The shameful result of the above sentimental restrictions is a church and pastor that simply, cannot preach.

Nevertheless, the Word of God admonishes every N.T. church and Pastor, saying: "Preach the word; be instant in season, out of season; reprove, rebuke, exhort with all long suffering and doctrine" (II Tim. 4:2).

Pastor O.B. Mink

THE FINE LINE

We have so many virtues
We have our money and our brains
Is self respect our interest
Or has pride taken wings?

Does anger pose a problem?
Does sun go down on your wrath?
A righteous anger is no sin
And there's no aftermath.

Should we always teach election?
There are other truths so dear
'Tis true we "choose this day to serve Him"
And we "seek Him, while He's near."

There's a point when love stops loving
And selfishness takes control
Beware my friend, that lust and passion
Does not conquer and ruin the soul.

Concerned, we pray for unsaved loved ones
But worry we must not,
His holy will He's able to do
And miracles He has wrought.

Oh glory be to God the Father
Soon extremes will be no more!
I'll be right on all occasions
On that happy Golden Shore.

Mrs. J.P. Morgan

A FATHER'S LOVING LETTER

Dear Son,
My feelings would not allow me to speak to you as I would have liked at our parting on Friday last. And what I now say I hope you will never forget.

You are about to leave your Native Land for a foreign Country, where you will most likely find the manners and customs, the scenes and scenery as different as the two climes are.

It may also be that temptations to sin and forgetfulness of God may appear in a different form, as I believe that every country has its besetting sins and temptations. I hope that by the Grace of God you will endeavor to resist all evil in whatever shape or whatever circumstances it may present itself in your path, for the more righteously you live, the more happiness you will enjoy, the health of your body be established and the life of your soul be preserved.

Be very careful with whom you associate and be no stranger to the House of God. Be faithful to your employers, whoever they may be, and be respectful to all your fellowmen, and ever manifest a truly dignified deportment in all your transactions in life.

Be careful in everything conducive to the health of your body, but, Oh Charles! be exceedingly careful to your spiritual and eternal interests. Remember the shortness and uncertainty of human life.

Make Christ your friend and never be ashamed of Him and His cause on Earth, for rest assured that if you honour God He will honour you, but if you despise Him you will be lightly esteemed.

I need not say more, but I fondly trust you will ever bear us in your heart at the Throne of Grace, and, although we should never meet more on earth, yet if we meet habitually and sincerely there, we shall be more than mere

earthly friends, even heirs of Eternal Life.
And now, dear Charles, I bid thee farewell, and may the mighty God of Jacob be thy guide through life, thy stay in death, and thy portion through all eternity.

Your father

Copied

ANNOUNCEMENT

The Sovereign Grace Baptist Church of Coal Grove, Ohio is in need of a pastor, Interested persons are asked to send a resume to 507 Marion Pike, Coal Grove, Oh. 45638.

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BOOK REVIEW

We have a reprinted book in our book store. It is a "Commentary on Romans" by Robert Haldane. It is a large paper back of over 650 pages. This is probably the best commentary on Romans that one can buy today. Frankly, I am very fond of Hodge's commentary on Romans; but if I could only have one book on Romans, it would have to be this book by Haldane. It is a very thorough commentary. It enters into the totality of the book. Many times I have been disappointed in commentaries as the author seemed to have trouble at the same places I did, and often just passed these places by, or commented very briefly on them. I have found this book to be very satisfying on every part of Romans. I would recommend this as the book on Romans. In fact, I have often told people to buy a good Bible, a good concordance, T.P. Simmons book, and then Haldane on Romans. The book sells for \$21.95. That is entirely too high for a paper back book, but we don't set the prices. It can be purchased in hard back for probably \$5. more. Too high, too high, but if you are going to purchase a book on Romans, you need to get this one. Order from our book store. The profit goes back into the book store.

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PAGE TWELVE