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SAMSON PART 2

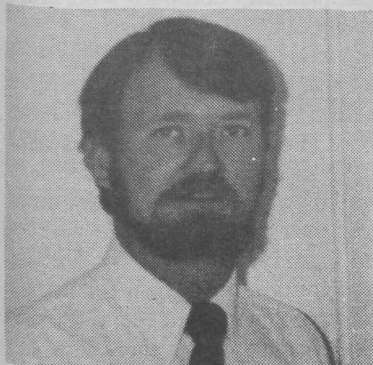
by Bob Belanger

Reading: Judges 16:15-22

Text: Judges 16:21, "But the Philistines took him and put out his eyes, and brought him down to Gaza, and bound him with fetters of brass; and he did grind in the prison house."

The downfall of Samson.

Samson had slain a lion bare-handed. He had destroyed the prosperity of the Philistines by fire. He had avenged himself and his people Israel, killing many before the thousand he had slain with the jawbone of an ass. Yet, unlike the Lord Jesus Christ, Samson was a man subject to the failure of sin. He had been a man separated unto God, but his major failure was eye trouble. This led to his inevitable downfall. His eyes hindered his mission so that



BOB BELANGER

he could never fully complete it. Observe Judges 14:1 & 2. "And Samson went down to Timnath and saw a woman (Continued on Page 11, Col. 1)

SIN PART I

by Marion Lawson

This series of messages is dealing with the subject of "Sin". The title of our first message is, "Nature of Sin". Please turn to Romans 5:12 for our text verse: "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".

Sin is a patent and awful fact. We have no need to argue its existence. Sin entered into the universe in the distant past. In God's original creation, sin was not present. Sin entered into the earth that fateful day in the beautiful garden of Eden. Mankind succumbed to temptation and sinned against God.

Sin is something that is present and you can feel it in your heart. We see it in others: policemen pursue it; the Bible reveals it. Our God controls and punishes it, and one day all men who know not the Lord Jesus, will be cast into a lake of fire and brimstone.

Sin may be defined, but it cannot be explained. Even our babies come into this world sinning. David, by the inspiration of God, reveals to us in Psalm 51:5 "Behold, I was shapen in iniquity: and in sin did my mother conceive me".

There is none without sin upon this earth. Sin is a cheater, a deceiver, and a destroyer. It promises pleasure, but pays off in pain. It promises life, and pays off in death. It promises profit, and pays off in poverty---the loss of all good.

Every sin is committed for (Continued on Page 10, Col. 1)

The proud man is an "I" specialist.

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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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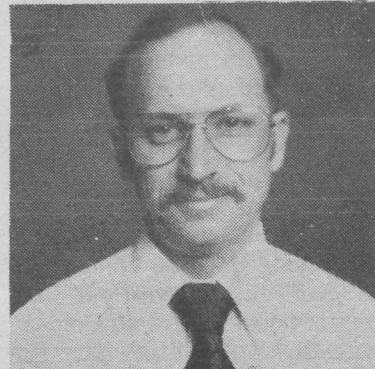
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GOALS FOR OUR CHURCH

by John Pruitt

Philippians 3:8-16 says "Ye doubtless, and I count all things but loss for the excellency of the knowledge of Christ Jesus my Lord: for whom I have suffered the loss of all things, and do count them but dung, that I may win Christ, And be found in him, not having mine own righteousness, which is the law, but that which is through the faith of Christ, the righteousness which is of God by faith: That I may know him, and the power of his resurrection, and the fellowship of his sufferings, being made conformable unto his death; If by any means I might attain unto the resurrection of the dead. Not as though I had already attained, either were already perfect: but I follow after, if that I may apprehend that for which also I am apprehended of

Christ Jesus. Brethren, I count not myself to have apprehended: but this one thing I do, forgetting those things which are behind, and reaching forth unto those things which are before, I press toward



JOHN PRUITT

the mark for the prize of the high calling of God in Christ Jesus. Let us therefore, as many as be perfect, be thus minded: and if in any thing ye be otherwise minded, God shall reveal even this unto

you. Nevertheless, whereto we have already attained, let us walk by the same rule, let us mind the same thing."

We have 17 members, counting the family members who are sanctified by our membership, we have 23. We have at least 17-19 regular visitors. Our average attendance for the past six months has been around 35. Many Sundays our visitors have exceeded our membership. God has blessed this church in many ways this past year.

Most have prospered materially. We've been blessed with good health. Some of you have gained some very important personal victories.

A good number of visitors. Seen three souls saved. Baptized two. Two added by letter. Started a printed ministry. Our printed ministry in T.B.E. expanded.

(Continued on Page 10, Col. 4)

MY TRIP TO THE HOLY LAND PART II

by T.B. Freeman

We arrived at Jericho just in time for lunch. We ate in an open air restaurant surrounded with orange and grapefruit trees, and lots of beautiful flowers. I had the privilege there of talking with some people from Scotland, and witnessing the gospel of Christ to them briefly. We then went to the excavated walls that were fallen down. While standing on these walls, I was privileged to lead in a public prayer at this wonderful scene of one of our Lord's wonderful miracles. Then we came to the fountain of Elisha where he put the salt in the water and the waters were healed by another miracle of our great God.

We drank from this spring, and the water was delicious. This fountain is not only good for drinking, but it is now used for irrigation, and there are here all



T.B. FREEMAN

sorts of fruits growing. We saw the sycamore trees there, probably not the one Zaccheus was in when Jesus called him. We also saw the mustard trees there. You remember it was near Jericho that our Lord healed two blind men. Jericho has been called the cradle of human civilization, and is considered the oldest city in the world to have been discovered so far.

The thing, however, that made this city famous above all things is that our Lord and Saviour left His sacred foot prints there.

From Jericho we ascended to Bethany, the home of Lazarus, Martha and Mary. My eyes (Continued on Page 11, Col. 4)

The Baptist Examiner Pulpit

A Sermon by Pastor Joseph M. Wilson

JOSEPH, A REMARKABLE CHARACTER

"Joseph is a fruitful bough, even a fruitful bough by a well; whose branches run over the wall: The archers have sorely grieved him, and shot at him, and hated him: But his bow abode in strength, and the arms of his hands were made strong by the hands of the mighty God of Jacob...The blessings of thy father have prevailed above the blessings of my progenitors unto the utmost bound of the everlasting hills: they

shall be on the head of Joseph, and on the crown of the head of him that was separate from his brethren" (Gen.49: 22-26). "He sent a man before them, even Joseph, who was sold for a servant: Whose feet they hurt with fetters: he was laid in iron: Until the time that his word came: the word of the LORD tried him. The king sent and loosed him; even the ruler of the people, and let him go free. He made him lord of his

house, and ruler of all his substance" (Psa.105:17-21). "But by the grace of God I am what I am...." (I Cor.15:10). Let us notice several things about this man Joseph, one of the most remarkable men in the Bible.

SUBMISSIVE IN SONSHIP. We can see this in Genesis 37:1-17 and other places. In v.2, "Joseph brought unto his father their evil report." Joseph was not just being a tattler in this. He was showing

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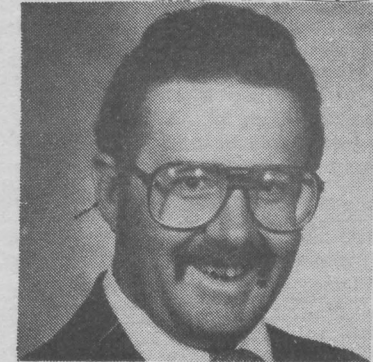
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WHERE HAS OUR LOVE GONE?

by Sam Wilson

I Corinthians 13:1: "THOUGH I speak with the tongues of men and of angels, and have not charity, I am become as sounding brass, or a tinkling cymbal."

Please read the rest of chapter 13. We have here a whole chapter of God's Word dedicated to the subject of love. I know you are well aware of the fact that this is not the only place this subject is dealt with. Please read the following verses. I write them out because I know most of you



SAM WILSON

will not read them otherwise. I want to stress the importance of this subject in this article. There is no better way to stress something than to refer to what God has to say on the matter. John 13:35, "By this shall all men know that ye are my disciples, if ye have love one to another." John 15:12: (Continued on Page 8, Col. 5)

THREE IMPORTANT EXAMS

by H.C. McSwain

"Examine yourselves, whether ye be in the faith; prove your own selves. Know ye not your own selves, how that Jesus Christ is in you, except ye be reprobates?" (II Cor. 13:5). "For what have I to do to judge them also that are without? do not ye judge them that are within? But them that are without God judgeth. Therefore put away from among yourselves that wicked person" (I Cor. 5:12-13). "For we must all appear before the judgment seat of Christ; that every one may receive the things done in his body, according to that he hath done, whether it be good or bad" (II Cor. 5:10).

Even though all may be familiar with the meaning of the word "exam", I will still give a dictionary definition. The meaning of the word "exam," is: To inspect or observe carefully, to look into all aspects of something to find out the facts, to investigate, to enquire, to ascertain the qualifications, skills, abilities, etc. of someone. Some synonyms are: to weigh, to scrutinize, to search, to try, to explore, to observe, or study.

We all have experienced exams of some sort at various times in our lives. Not all exams are exactly alike, but all seem to be for the same purpose: to expose us

(Continued on Page 5, Col. 5)

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JOSEPH

(Continued from Page 1)

proper respect for his father's authority and honor. There are things that need to be told. If a mother knows her daughter is committing great sin, and both are members of the church, the mother should tell the church as to this. There are surely times and situations when one child should report to the parents as to the misconduct of a brother or sister. Joseph did no wrong in this.

We have the matter of Jacob's partiality to Joseph. I feel sure that this was wrong on Jacob's part, but we have no indication that Joseph did any wrong to bring this about. Of course, it may well have been Joseph's better character and behavior that, in part, brought this about. It seems to me that Joseph received this favoritism well. He does not seem to have paraded it before his brethren.

Then we have the matter of Joseph's dreams while at home. God had some great plans for Joseph. God had, from eternity, decreed that Joseph would occupy some day a place of rule over his brethren. God revealed this to Joseph in two dreams. You see, God has predestinated all things that will ever come to pass. Prophecy is that part of eternal predestination that God would have us to know. Joseph very frankly and innocently told his brethren what he had dreamed. I see no indication that Joseph was proud and boastful in the telling thereof. I rather suspect that he was surprised at the enmity this

aroused in his brothers.

In 37:12-18, we see Joseph's obedience to his father. His father sent him on a long and dangerous journey to find his brethren and their flocks. Joseph did not argue. He did not defy his father's authority. He did not grumble or complain. He immediately set out on the journey commanded him by his father. This matter of obedience is a very important matter in sonship. The chief virtue of sonship is obedience. Oh, that this generation of those who are disobedient to parents would learn this truth! The trip was long and difficult. There were likely to be many dangers along the way, though Joseph never suspected the chief danger he would face. Still, Joseph immediately set out on his journey without murmuring or dispute. An obedient son is a joy to his parents. And Joseph persisted in his journey until he had accomplished that which his father had sent him to do. They were not where he expected them to be,



Joe Wilson

but he kept looking until he found them. He did not take advantage of the opportunity to give it up and go back home without completing what his father had sent him to do.

What kind of boy one is, is very important. Usually, the man is but the boy grown up. The man is not, apart from God's intervening grace, going to be totally different from the boy. The way to have good men is to raise good boys, and usually there is no other way. A boy like Joseph is likely to become the man Joseph did. We don't pay enough attention to our boys, and we reap a bitter harvest in the kind of men they become.

PATIENT IN PERSECUTION. Persecution reveals the man. Persecution makes the man. Both of these statements are true. Joseph was most cruelly persecuted by his brethren. I am sure that this kind of persecution is the hardest to take. His brethren hated him because of Jacob's favoritism. They hated him even more because of his dreams. They were determined that those dreams would never come true. They saw Joseph coming. They said, "Behold, this dreamer cometh." They said, "Come now therefore, and let us slay him...and we shall see what will become of his dreams." Well, they saw, all right; but they were greatly surprised when they did. God had some plans for Joseph. He revealed these to Joseph. Joseph told them to his brethren. His brethren were determined to keep them from coming to pass. When men set themselves to defeat the purposes of the sovereign God of the Bible, they set themselves to an impossible task. It cannot be done.

Joseph's brethren are going to kill him. Then they decide to just leave him to die in a pit without food or water. Then they decide to sell him to a caravan headed for

Egypt. They do the latter. They watch him march off with the caravan. They are done with him. He will be sold into a life of slavery in Egypt. They will never see him again. They have turned his dreams of glory into a nightmare. They have defeated the purposes of God. Have they really? We shall see. Oh, the heartless and cruel behavior of these toward their brother, Joseph. How sad it was for Joseph, a seventeen year old boy, evidently headed for lifelong slavery. But the greatest hurt of all for poor Joseph was that this had been done by his brethren.

Seventeen years old, and sold into slavery with no prospects for any deliverance - ever. But God is on the throne. He watcheth over His own. Joseph was sold to Potiphar. Joseph behaved himself well, so much so that Potiphar made him steward of his house and all that he had. Joseph, the slave boy, had a place of responsibility and great honor in the house of one of the high officers of Pharaoh. For a slave, he likely had as comfortable and pleasant life as one could wish for. Still, he was a slave, away from his father and his home.

Next, through no fault of his own, rather because of his high principles and strong convictions of obeying God and doing right to man, Joseph was put into prison. I do not know how old he was by now. His time in Potiphar's house and in prison was thirteen years, but we do not know how that time was divided. Still a young man, Joseph was now in prison. He had done nothing wrong. He did not know how long he would be there, or if he would ever get out. The crime with which he was charged was very serious, and usually brought the death penalty. How many men in prison claim to be innocent, but this one really was. Surely, his innocence could have added to his sorrow and grief over being there.

But God was with Joseph. He gave Joseph favor with the jailer who put Joseph in charge of the prison. His life in prison was likely as pleasant and easy as such a life could be. Still, it was a time of sorrow. We know that Joseph longed to be delivered from his unjust imprisonment.

Notice Joseph's patient behaviour under all his persecutions. He was patient and submissive under his brother's cruel and heartless treatment. He wept before them, but we read of no harsh invectives and no fierce struggle. He behaved himself most admirably and properly in Potiphar's house. You can depend upon it that had it been otherwise, Potiphar would never have placed Joseph in such a responsible position. He was a model prisoner; so much so that he was given charge of the other prisoners. Notice his kindness in his treatment of the other prisoners. Notice his kind concern for the butler and the baker. Joseph was certainly an example of how God's children should behave under the mistreatment of the world. Only Joseph's Saviour, the Lord Jesus Christ, ever set a higher and more noble example of patience under persecution. Surely, it was the Spirit of Christ indwelling Joseph that produced such remarkable fruit in his life.

TRIUMPHANT IN TEMPTATION. There were many temptations set before Joseph. Doubtless he was tempted to hate his brethren. Note his gracious treatment of them when they

came totally under his power. Do we not all marvel at this. If a man ever had a right to hate his brothers, Joseph did. He would not succumb to such temptation. Likely he was tempted to be a rebellious slave. Why should he be another man's slave? Why not rebel? Why not be a troublemaker? Why not pilfer from his master? He was in a position in which he could have stolen much from Potiphar, but he dealt honestly in all things. Surely, being innocent, he was tempted to be a surly, uncooperative, rebellious prisoner. Why should he behave properly? He was innocent. He did not deserve to be there. Why

not cause all the trouble he could in prison? In all these things, Joseph proved the victor over temptation. He was a shining light in a dark place, showing forth the virtues of his Saviour.

Then his greatest temptation came. Joseph was a normal young man with normal desires. He was shut away from the possibility of fulfilling those desires in a proper way. Potiphar's wife doubtless was a beautiful woman. She was wise in the ways of seduction. She was in authority over Joseph. She could do much for him; or if denied her sinful desires, she could cause him

(Continued on Page 4, Col. 5)

FROM THE EDITOR

What to do? What to do? What to do? I have been struggling for some time now as to what to do relative to churches not showing respect for the authority of sister churches. Let me illustrate. A church excludes a member. Another church takes this excluded member by statement. Another church uses this excluded member. Other preachers flock to these two churches to preach for them, treating them as if they had done nothing wrong. As I said, I have been struggling with what to do in such situations. Well, I have come up with two answers. They are not Scriptural answers, but why should men and churches who don't show respect for church authority worry about that?

One answer is for all churches to stop excluding members. This will settle this whole problem. If we will all rescind all exclusions we have already made, and exclude no one else from this day forth; we will have no more problems as to what to do about churches and preachers who disregard our authority in doing so. So, let us all agree to do this.

We will let our members live any way they please. We will let them drink, fornicate, lie, steal, or whatever they want to do. We will let them attend church regularly, now and then, or not at all. We will let them do anything they desire, and we will not rebuke them for it; and most certainly we will not exclude them for it. For, you see, if we exclude them some other church will take them in or use them in some way, and we will want to break fellowship with that church. Then that will get us into trouble as to all the preachers who desire to ignore church authority and treat those churches as if nothing ever happened. So, let us all just let our members do as they please, and never exclude one. You might say that this would not be Scriptural. Well, maybe not, but I have an answer for that also.

My second answer is, let us tear out of our Bibles all Scriptures that teach church authority and church discipline. I know there are several of them, and this will somewhat deface our Bibles; but think of all the trouble it will save us between churches. Then, with all these verses torn out of our Bibles (maybe we could come out with a version that leaves them all out) (After all the NIV, NASB, and nearly all versions leave out many verses that are in the KJV). Yes that is a good idea: a new version. We will call it "The Anything Goes" version. With a Bible with all these verses out, we will not have to worry about all the trouble I spoke about at the beginning of this editorial.

Yes, let us do these two things. Let us rescind all previous exclusions. We can then restore fellowship with all those who have shown disregard for our authority. Let us never, never exclude anyone else. Let us either tear out all the verses in the KJV that teach church authority and church discipline, or make us a new version leaving those out. I urge you my brethren, let us do these two things. I am so weary of battling over church authority. Men use it when it pleases them and ignore it whenever they desire. Let us just all forget the whole matter. I am weary with broken, or lessened fellowship. I am weary with trying to decide what to do relative to churches and men who blatantly and totally disregard church authority. I am weary with all the trouble I have had over this matter. I am weary and sick, oh so sick, over all the trouble I have had with churches and preachers over this matter.

Brethren, if my church and I will rescind all exclusions we have made and apologize for them, if we will promise to never do it again, if we will promise to never preach or print anything on church authority, if we will restore fellowships we have broken over this matter and apologize for this, if we will apologize for everything we have said or written about such matters and promise to never do it again; please, dear brethren; please, would you forgive us for our past actions?

I have grieved, hurt, and wept over this matter long enough. I have tried to get the brethren to do what I thought was right, even what most of them said they thought was right (until it affected them) long enough. I capitulate. I surrender. I give up. I don't want to fight any longer. I don't want to lose any more friends. I want peace and unity.

What do you think of my two suggestions? 1. Rescind and apologize for all past exclusions and never, never exclude another member no matter what he or she does. 2. Tear out of our Bibles all verses that deal with church discipline and church authority, or get a new version that leaves them all out. I know these would work. I know they would solve our problems, and we would never, never have to worry any more about having trouble with other churches and preachers over this matter. Brethren, what do you think of my ideas?

Maybe you will say that my ideas are dishonoring to Scripture. Maybe so, but they would be no more dishonoring than our present actions relative to church discipline and church authority. After all, which is worse, to say we believe something and not practice it, or just get rid of it altogether? Well, if you don't like my two ideas, maybe you can come up with something as good or better. Anything, dear brothers and sisters, anything to get rid of all the problems and troubles we have had about such things.

I do hope that the reader will understand and take this in the spirit with which it has been written. Comments welcomed.

STUDIES IN THE LIFE OF ELIJAH -11 THE RAINS CAME

"And Elijah said unto Ahab, Get thee up, eat and drink; for there is a sound of abundance of rain. So Ahab went up to eat and to drink. And Elijah went up to the top of Carmel; and he cast himself down upon the earth, and put his face between his knees, And said to his servant, Go up now, look toward the sea. And he went up, and looked, and said, There is nothing. And he said, Go again seven times. And it came to pass at the seventh time, that he said, Behold, there ariseth a little cloud out of the sea, like a man's hand. And he said, Go up, say unto Ahab, Prepare thy chariot, and get thee down, that the rain stop thee not. And it came to pass in the mean while, that the heaven was black with clouds and wind, and there was a great rain. And Ahab rode, and went to Jezreel. And the hand of the LORD was on Elijah; and he girded up his loins, and ran before Ahab to the entrance of Jezreel" (I Ki.18:41-16).

When I started this study, I thought I would be through long before now. I have enjoyed my studies about Elijah so very much. I know the man much better. This has been a great blessing to me. I hope these studies will bless your soul. Remember five words and that which is connected with each one, and you will have a good knowledge of the life of Elijah thus far: Gilead, Ahab, Cherith, Zarephath, and Carmel. I speak to you on "The Rains Came." "there was a great rain." Remember that it had not rained for three and one half years.

There had been a great contest on mount Carmel between Baal and the Lord. Baal had been thoroughly and totally defeated. His prophets had prayed long and with fervency. They had exhausted their strength. Baal was utterly unable to prove himself to be a god who could answer by fire. The God of Israel had won a great victory. We knew He would before the bell rang for round one, didn't we? We stood outside the ring. As soon as the contestants were announced, we knew who the winner would be, for no one can engage in successful battle with the Lord. That victory is described in these words, "The fire of the LORD fell, and consumed the burnt sacrifice, and the wood, and the stones, and the dust, and licked up the water that was in the trench."

As a result of this, the people being convinced by the power of God (and I believe those who were true, who meant what they were saying, were convinced by an inward work of the Holy Spirit), said, "The LORD, he is the God; the LORD, he is the God." The false prophets of Baal were taken down to the foot of the mountain to the brook, Kishon, and slain. At the close of this battle on mount Carmel we observe three things: 1. God's people blessed, 2. God's enemies destroyed, and 3. God glorified. That is how all battles with God will end. That is how the total history of the world will end. The final chapter of world

history will end with God's people blessed for ever, God's enemies in a burning and eternal hell, and God getting eternal glory.

"...it rained not on the earth by the space of three years and six months" (Jms.5:17). "...As the LORD God of Israel liveth, before whom I stand, there shall not be dew nor rain these years, but according to my word" (I Ki.17:1). One could hardly imagine the condition of the land after such a long and terrible drought. We gardeners (you who know me know what an avid gardener I am) know that just a little time without rain, and the garden is gone. Can you imagine three and a half years without dew or rain? Animals dead by the thousands, crops a total disaster, people dying throughout the land; one can just begin to imagine the condition of Israel at this time. What did Israel need now? Did they need the government to institute a new program? Did they need a change in the government? Did they need a new welfare program started? No, they needed rain. They needed that God Almighty, and sovereign over all things including the weather, would open up the windows of heaven and pour rain upon the land.

Let us apply this in a spiritual sense. Our kind of churches need showers of spiritual blessings. In the main, our kind of churches, most of us, have undergone a long dry spell. We read of the days gone by. We read of great revivals in churches that were preaching the truths of God's Word. The power of God was present with them. Our beloved church has been undergoing a long dry spell. I am acquainted with a large number of pastors of our kind of churches. God help us. God have mercy on us. We have a few mercy drops falling around us. We have a little shower now and then. We have not had the total drought that Israel had. But, oh for showers of God's blessings. Oh, for days of heaven on earth. We are thankful for any blessing God gives, and He does give us many; but we have not known the showers of revival blessings that we need, desire, and that our forefathers have told us about. Beloved friends, we need to search our hearts and examine our lives and see if we can find out why the showers have been withholden. When we learn this; we need to repent, confess, and forsake any and all hindrances in our lives to God's blessings upon us. Then we need to pray - oh, we need to beg and plead fervently for God's blessings.

Now, you understand that only God can give the rain. Indians may dance all the rain dances they want to, but only God can give rain. We can go through little rituals, we can shoot cannons into the sky, we can dust the clouds; but only God can give rain. Job 28:26 says, "he made a decree for the rain." Psalms 147:8 says, "who prepareth rain for the earth." Genesis 7:4 says, "I will cause it to rain." It is my position that it had not rained for sixteen hundred and forty eight years since creation - that it had never rained before; but when God was ready, He caused it to rain.

Leviticus 26:4 says that the Lord sends rain "in due season." Amos 4:7 says, "I caused it to rain upon one city, and caused it not to rain upon another city." Have you ever been driving along and be in the rain, then out of it, then in it again? Well, that is where God's eternal decree had marked out for it to rain and to not rain at that time.

Zechariah 10:1 says, "ASK ye of the LORD rain." I wish this world would realize that we are all totally dependent upon the Lord as to the weather. And, my brothers and sisters, we are all dependent upon the weather. God controls the weather. He could turn the thermostat up a little more and longer in the summer or down a little more and longer in the winter and wipe us all off the face of the earth. He could withhold the rain until we would all be dead and gone. He could send the rain until we were all dead and gone, but He won't do this because of His promise in Genesis 9:11. We totally depend upon the weather, we can't do a thing about the weather, God controls the weather; and yet men will not realize that their very lives are in the hands of God; and will not obey, honor, and glorify God. "...the God in whose hand thy breath is, and whose are all thy ways, hast thou not glorified" (Dan.5:23).

Israel had to be brought to her knees before a sovereign God. Israel had to be brought to near ruin before she would realize that her all was in the hands of God. Only God can give rain, but let us remember that He can do it. Let us pray. Let us pray about the weather. But more than that, let us pray about our churches. Only God can revive us, only God can stir us up, lift us up, make us more spiritually minded, make us more dedicated to and acting in His service, bring people into our services, and save souls through our ministry - but God can do these things. Let us "ASK ye of the LORD rain." He can do it, He can do it, He can. God is able.

Let us notice some contrasts between Ahab and Elijah. "So Ahab went up to eat and drink. And Elijah went up to the top of Carmel; and he cast himself down upon the earth, and put his face between his knees" (I Ki.18:42). We see here a great difference between an unsaved man and a born again child of God. What did Ahab do? He went up to eat and drink. How like Ahab, that was all he was interested in. Ahab had witnessed marvellous workings of God that day. He had seen the fire of God come down from heaven. He had witnessed the death of four hundred and fifty prophets of Baal. He had heard the people say, "the LORD, he is the God." But all he was interested in was his big, fat b ---. Look at 18:5, "And Ahab said unto Obadiah, Go into the land, unto all fountains of water, and unto all brooks: peradventure we may find grass to save the horses and mules alive, that we lose not all the beasts." The land was parched. The people were hungry and thirsty. Things were in a terrible shape.

And all Ahab could think of

was saving the animals alive. Instead of being concerned about the people over whom he was king, instead of being interested in spiritual things, he was concerned only about the animals - because he was an animal himself. And following the great and mighty things done on mount Carmel, Ahab went up to eat and drink.

What did Elijah do? He went up to the top of mount Carmel, cast himself upon the ground and prayed fervently, earnestly, and repeatedly for the coming of rain. Ahab and Elijah had witnessed mighty things that day. They had both seen the mighty power of God in action. What did they do? Ahab went up to eat and drink; Elijah went up to pray. What a difference! Elijah likely praised the Lord for what He had already done on that memorable day. Surely, he went up there to pray for rain. He interceded with God. Oh, we need intercessors today! Mere prayers pray for themselves, while intercessors pray for others. Brothers, none but God knows how much a nation owes to its intercessors. Israel owed its physical salvation from the drought that day to the man of God praying on the top of mount Carmel. We look to the politicians, but what can they do? The politicians of Israel had brought the land to the very edge of destruction. And I might ask, what have our politicians done for us, and where have they brought us? We look to Washington, but what can Washington do? Not until time is over and history is a finished book will men and nations realize what is owed to the men and women who fall upon their knees before God and pray. I tell you that victory on the battle field has to be won, not simply by brave soldiers and superior equipment, but by the prayers of mothers and fathers and others back home who cry out to God in behalf of loved ones and country. Nations build statues to its heroes and statesmen, but where in all the world is there a statue to a praying man or woman because of their prayers? Where in Israel is the statue, or plaque dedicated to Elijah telling how he saved (under and through God) his nation by his prayers. What prayer has wrought, only God knows!

The rains came. Well, let us notice some prerequisites for showers. There were things which preceded the rain. First, there was the fire that consumed the sacrifice. I say again that the fire burning the sacrifice is a picture of Calvary. It is a picture, I believe so designed by the Holy Spirit, of our substitute dying on the old rugged cross as the wrath of God against our sins consumed Him. Before we can have and know spiritual showers of blessings, we must trust Jesus Christ as Lord and Saviour. Only those who have been saved by faith in the God-provided sacrifice are on the ground where they can pray for showers of blessings. Are there members in our churches who have not trusted the fire-consumed, God-provided sacrifice for sins? If so, they cannot help us have revival. They cannot pray acceptably and effectively for the showers. Before the rains come there must be faith in the sacrifice, even the Lord Jesus Christ.

A second thing that took place before the rains came was the putting away of evil. The prophets of Baal were slain. There must be the putting away of idol gods, there must be the slaying of sin in the life of the

church and in the lives of God's children before the Lord will send us showers of blessings. In my Bible I have a circle around the word "slew" in 18:40 and the word "rain" in v.41, for I verily believe there is a necessary connection between dealing with sin and the coming of the showers. Friends, there is nothing that will keep the showers of blessings from your church or from your lives like sin will. Sin is the great hinderer. Sin blocks the channel and dams up the river of God's blessings and keeps them from coming on the individual and the church.

Do you remember the sad and awful story of Achan in Joshua chapter eight? Israel had defeated mighty Jericho easily, as God fought for them. Ai was a little city. No need to send out the whole army, it would only take a small company to defeat this city. But, it was not like that at all, for Ai defeated Israel. Israel is fearful. Joshua is perplexed. He falls on his face and cries out to God. God tells Joshua in so many words, "stop praying." There is something that comes before prayer. Sin must be dealt with before God will answer prayer and fight again for His people. Joshua must discover and deal with the sin in the camp of Israel. Achan had disobeyed God and taken some Babylonish garments, some shekels of silver, and a wedge of gold from the spoils and hidden them in his tent. This sin must be dealt with. Joshua obeys God, discovers and deals with this sin by the death of Achan; and then God fights again for Israel and Ai is easily defeated. Joshua led in a seven year war in Canaan. He defeated thirty one kings. The only battle he lost was because of this sin of Achan. Beloved friends, if there is unconfessed sin in your life, something displeasing to God - I may not know what it is, the church may not know about it - but you know and God knows, this will effectively stop your prayer life and keep from you the showers of blessings you need, and worse than this, it can block the showers of blessings for the whole church. We must deal with sin before we can pray effectively.

The third thing that preceded the rain was the prayer of Elijah. Let us notice several things about Elijah's prayer for rain. In vss 37,38 Elijah was engaged in public prayer. In v.42 he was engaged in private prayer. We need to have public prayer before others, but our most needed and most effective praying will be done in secret with God. "there is a sound of abundance of rain" Elijah had said to Ahab in v.41. I do not know what you believe about that "sound", but I do not believe it was thunder or some physical evidence that it was about to rain. When Elijah was praying on the top of the mountain and sent his servant to look, there was nothing. I believe this sound was a sound to the ear of faith. I believe Elijah was hearing what other men could not hear. It was the sound to faith in the promise of God that those who are tuned in to heaven can hear. There is a whistle that you cannot hear, but dogs can hear it because they are tuned in to that frequency. The man who believes the Word of God can hear sounds

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The Baptist Examiner Forum I

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

If Jesus did observe the Passover at its regular time, explain John 13:1; 18:28; 19:14.

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John 19:14: "And it was the preparation of the passover, and about the sixth hour: and he saith unto the Jews, Behold your King."

If you will remember, I told you in the last article that I do believe that Jesus took the Passover on the regular day of Nisan 14. I hope you also remember me saying that this question would be tough to answer. Indeed the Bible is a deep Book that our human minds have trouble comprehending. There are not always crystal clear answers to every Bible question. We must use good hermeneutics in answering some questions. The first thing I know is that there are not discrepancies in God's Word. I know the Bible does not teach in one place that Jesus took the Passover a day early, and in another place teach He took it at the regular time. It may appear that it teaches these things, but I assure you it doesn't. I will be brief again with this answer as I have very little to say. I will not give an exegesis of each verse but will answer the verses as a whole. The querist desires an explanation of these verses as they relate to Jesus and the time He took the Passover. They seem to imply that He took the Passover early. I think the majority of evidence is on the side of teaching that Jesus took the Passover at the regular time. Read the verses mentioned in the last question. Matthew 26:17; Mark 14:12; Luke 22:7.

Let me make a feeble attempt to answer the question concerning the verse I have used at the beginning of this article. This answer will be sufficient to answer the other two verses in question. I think that the word Passover was often used to refer to the whole Passover festival and all the things that went with it. Remember, the feast of unleavened bread immediately followed the Passover. The day following the Passover was always a high Sabbath. A Sabbath day always required a day of preparation. The preparation referred to in our text is for the coming sabbath and all the other things involved in the Passover feast. Again, I believe the term Passover does not always refer to just that one day, but sometimes to all the events that go along with the Passover. I know this may not be the best of answers, but I think it is sufficient. I again remind you that this is a very difficult ques-

tion. I do not claim to have all the answers, but I do believe the Bible teaches Jesus took the Passover at the regular time. Next issue I will try to sum up my position on when Christ died. I will be glad, for that is the last question on this subject. May God bless you all.

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First of all, we must rule out any possibility that John's account of the sequence of events is inconsistent with the accounts of Matthew, Mark or Luke. Therefore, there are several possibilities to consider. First, that the term "Passover" did not necessarily always refer to just the Paschal, or Passover Supper where the unleavened bread, wine, and the sop were used. This was to take place on the fourteenth day of Nisan. It could, in fact, refer to another feast within the seven day Feast of Unleavened Bread. Secondly, according to Edersheim, Milligon, and Hovey, a person could observe the Passover Supper having been defiled by simply washing or bathing with water. (Leviticus 22:5-7), "Or whosoever toucheth any creeping thing, whereby he may be made unclean, or a man of whom he may take uncleanness he hath; the soul which hath touched any such shall be unclean until even, and shall not eat of the holy things, unless he wash his flesh with water. And when the sun is down, he shall be clean, and shall afterward eat of the holy things; because it is his food." This would explain the reluctance by the accusing Jews to enter the court of Pilate lest "they should be defiled." (John 18:28). The second feast called "Chogigah" or festival of offering, could not be observed by the simple washing by water. Therefore it seems reasonable that they were not concerned with defilement because of the Paschal Supper, but because of Chogigah which was yet to be observed. Thirdly, there was no specified time in the evening that the Paschal Supper had to be observed.

The Lambs would continue to be killed and offered until the going down of the sun. After this the Paschal Supper could be observed until daybreak the next morning, (study Exodus 12:6-8). (My deepest apologies if I did not make this point clear in the last forum question.) The fourth possibility is that the Jews observed the Paschal Supper a day later rather than Jesus and His disciples observing it a day early. It

seems in Deuteronomy 16:1-8 that this might have been legal since the Feast of Unleavened Bread lasted a full seven days.

These are hard questions to answer and I must admit that I can only offer possibilities and not clear cut answers. However, this also seems to be the case with the several commentators with whom I have consulted. Thank you for your question.

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"Now before the feast of the passover, when Jesus knew that his hour was come that he should depart out of this world unto the Father, having loved his own which were in the world, he loved them unto the end." (John 13:1), "Then led they Jesus from Caiaphas unto the hall of judgment: and it was early; and they themselves went not into the judgment hall, lest they should be defiled; but that they might eat the passover" (John 18:28), "And it was the preparation of the passover, and about the sixth hour: and he saith unto the Jews, Behold your King!" (John 19:14).

The "Passover" spoken of in these three Scripture references does not refer to the eating of the paschal lamb which was ritually killed and eaten as commanded in Exodus 12:3-11. The Lord Jesus Christ and His disciples had already eaten the paschal lamb and observed the memorial just after 6:00 PM (night-the beginning of Wednesday Nisan 14). I presented the Jewish method of reckoning time in the last question; question 17 pertaining to the eating of the Passover. I am aware that these verses are interpreted by men in several different ways by saying that Jesus ate the supper a day early and various other theories. The "Passover Sabbath", the "Feast of Unleavened Bread", and the "Passover" are all expressions used to refer to Nisan 15 and indeed, "Passover" has often been used to refer to the entire week including the added Feast of Unleavened Bread. Both feasts, both memorials are included when referring to either one since the Feast of Unleavened Bread was given. The Passover referred to in these verses is the "Chagigah" which was the feast on Nisan 15. The preparation day for that feast was Nisan 14. Having eaten the Passover (paschal lamb) after 6:00 PM Nisan 13 which was the beginning of Nisan 14, Jesus was later that night taken captive in the garden and the rest of the night He underwent the Jewish

trial and those things accompanying it. The Jews could perform these things and other work as well, because from 6:00 PM Nisan 13 until 6:00 PM Nisan 14. It was the preparation day for the Holy Sabbath, the Feast of Unleavened Bread, also called the Passover. John 18:28 calls attention to the fact that the Jews took Jesus finally to the hall of judgment because they themselves had no authority, or power under Roman law to kill Him. They did not enter the hall of judgment because it was a Gentile house and they would have become unclean ceremonially and not fit to eat the Feast of Unleavened Bread the next day, Nisan 15. They were worried about the outward ceremonial law, yet they had been and were then, plotting murder with malice. The words of Isaiah 29:13,14 should have smitten them with reverential awe. They had come to Pilate in the daylight hours early (6th hour, 6:00 AM) according to Roman time. John uses Roman reckoning of time, while the other gospel writers use the Jewish. The Jews stayed out of the judgment hall and yet by 9:00 AM Nisan 14 they had taken Him to be crucified. Our precious Lord, who knew no sin, became sin for all the elect. The Jews no doubt kept the feast on Nisan 15 believing themselves ceremonially clean, but in God's sight they were black with the leaven of sin.

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"Now before the feast of the passover" (John 13:1). "Then led they Jesus from Caiaphas unto the hall of judgment; -- they themselves went not into the judgment hall, lest they should be defiled; but that they might eat the passover" (John 18:28). "And it was the preparation of the passover, and about the sixth hour:--" (John 19:14).

In answer to the question in the last issue of T.B.E., passages of Scripture quoted showed clearly that Christ did eat the Passover supper at the time appointed by God, on Nisan 14th. While these passages in John may seem to contradict the other passages, this is not true. There are no contradictions in the Word of God. The confusion is in misunderstanding the use of the word "passover" as used here.

In Leviticus 23:3-8 we find that God gave the order of events for observance of the passover and the week of the feast of unleavened bread that the Jews were to follow each year. The Passover Supper as a memorial of their deliverance from Egypt was to be observed on the 14th day of the first month, the month of Nisan. Following this was to be the Feast of Unleavened Bread which was to last for seven days. The first day and the last day of the feast were to be observed as sabbath days. In the time of Christ this week was called both the "Passover" and "The Feast of Unleavened Bread" and when one was mentioned the other was included. The two events go together.

Keeping this in mind, "Now before the feast of the passover" (John 13:1), refers to the time just before the beginning of the observance of the Passover Supper and the Feast of Unleavened Bread, for the supper which followed this was that of the Passover. In John 18:28 we are told that the Pharisees went not into the judgment hall lest they should be defiled and could not eat the passover. This passover refers to the feast of unleavened bread beginning the next day, lasting for seven days. If these Pharisees had followed the order as laid down by God, they had eaten the passover lamb in the evening before, the beginning of the 14th day. "And it was the preparation of the passover" (John 19:14). The passover referred to here is referring to the Feast of Unleavened Bread, the first day, the next day was to be observed as a Sabbath. The day before a sabbath was a day of preparation in which they were to remove all leaven from the house.

JOSEPH

(Continued from Page 2)

much trouble - and she did. What a great temptation Joseph faced. David was defeated by such. Samson went down before such. How many men have fallen before this temptation. But Joseph, young Joseph, what a giant for God, Joseph won the victory. His whole life of spiritual commitment stood him in good stead here. Like Daniel, he had purposed that he would not defile himself. He was determined to treat Potiphar right. He did not covet Potiphar's wife. He would not take her when she pressed sore upon him. He was determined that he would not sin against God. When she grabbed him by his garment to force him to sin with her, he fled from the house. He fled fornication. See Joseph running out of the house. Never was there a greater champion, a greater victor, than fleeing Joseph. When David ran toward Goliath, he was no greater victor than was Joseph when he fled from Potiphar's wife. Oh, that our young men and women would learn to flee fornication. Joseph suffered for it, but he did the right thing. I can assure you that even in prison, Joseph never regretted fleeing from Potiphar's wife. Being in prison is better than being in the bed of sin. Prison cannot hurt a child of God, but sin can. Behold Joseph in prison, the victor over temptation.

ROYAL IN RULERSHIP. Joseph is on the throne. What is this? A fairy tale. From a prison cell to a throne. These things never happen in real life. Wait a minute. Don't leave God out. God can do anything. Yes, Joseph is on the throne, "And Pharaoh took off his ring from his hand, and put it upon Joseph's hand, and arrayed him in vestures of fine linen, and put a gold chain about his neck; And he made him to ride in the second chariot which he had: and they cried before him, Bow the knee: and he made him ruler over all the land of Egypt" (Gen. 41:42-43). As Joseph moves from the prison to the throne by way of interpreting Pharaoh's dream, notice his humility and giving (Continued on Page 5, Col. 3)

The Baptist Examiner Forum II

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

What should you do if you believe strongly in election and predestination, but the pastor and church where you are do not?

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First of all, I would make it known that the pastor is not rightly dividing the Word of God. I do not understand how anyone can sit back and listen to a pastor who is ignorant of the Word of God or is too lazy to study the Word of God, or knows the truth and is afraid to preach it. I would start looking for another church and if I couldn't find one I would quit supporting this church and seek membership either in Calvary Baptist Church of Ashland, Kentucky or some other church that believed these great doctrines.

II Corinthians 6:14 says, "Be ye not unequally yoked together with unbelievers for what fellowship hath righteousness with unrighteousness? and what communion hath light with darkness?"

Some have said that rules were made to be broken. This is not true. Rules were made to be obeyed. The Word of God was written to be preached and taught. One who does not preach or teach all the Bible is not fit to be a pastor of one of the Lord's churches. Paul said in Acts 20:27, "For I have not shunned to declare unto you all the counsel of God." One who will not preach the whole counsel of God is unskillful and should never be called or permitted to be pastor of a sound Baptist church. Look, Paul had something to say about these unskillful preachers. Hebrews 5:12 says, "For when for the time ye ought to be teachers, ye have need that one teach you again which be the first principles of the oracles of God; and are become such as have need of milk, and not of strong meat." Again in V-13, he says, "For every one that useth milk is unskillful in the word of righteousness: for he is a babe." Strong meat belongs to those that are of full age or those who have matured in the Word of God.

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"But sanctify the Lord God in your hearts: and be ready always to give an answer to every man that asketh you a reason of the

hope that is in you with meekness and fear:" (I Pe. 3:15). It is essential that every believer have a knowledge of what he believes and be able to prove it from the Word of God. It is inevitable that someone will ask you what you believe relative to some portion of the Word of God. It makes no difference whether it be a major or minor doctrine. The word "answer" carries with it an implication of accuracy.

There is only one way to believe the doctrines of predestination and election; that is strongly. They are so closely interwoven, one cannot be believed without believing the other. These doctrines are probably the most hated in the Word of God for they take away from man and glorify God. Many men try to explain them away because they will cause division when they are preached.

The question indicates that a personal reply is desired. It is my intention therefore, to answer this question from a personal position. Shortly after I was saved and was baptized into a New Testament Baptist Church, my first pastor, Brother Eugene Clark, preached and taught on these doctrines. He did this on a regular basis. It was the foundation for my belief in these doctrines. The basis for a strong belief had been created. These doctrines have continually been taught to me down through the years by a number of sound men. I have had the great honor to teach them to my Sunday school class for a number of years. These men followed the principle given by Paul to Timothy. "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." (II Tim. 2:2).

I have attended Baptist churches where these doctrines were not preached. I specify Baptist because it is the only church to attend as far as I am concerned. I also use the word attended because I do not believe that a person should join or have his membership in a church where these doctrines are not expounded and believed.

Editor's Note: Should one even attend such?

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The Bible teaches the doctrine of election and predestination. The Scriptures are abundant with this teaching. It is the doctrine of the Word of God that God determined before time to call a peo-

ple whom He elected to be saved in time. God will, in His own time, save those whom He elected to be saved. They were predestinated to be saved before the world began. These people are called God's sheep, God's elect, His chosen ones, and His children.

God, before the world began, elected people to be saved, not from anything He saw in them, but because of His mercy and grace. It was because of the great love that God had for them, that He determined to save them.

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

Election is not based upon good works that God foresaw in His children, for the Scriptures say, "Not by works of righteousness which we have done, but according to his mercy he saved us, by the washing of regeneration, and renewing of the Holy Ghost" (Titus 3:5).

Since the doctrine of election and predestination are Bible doctrines, we ought to preach them and teach them. We should believe them and receive them into our hearts. Then we are to stand for them. We are to defend them along with other doctrines of the Bible. Then we are to support these doctrines with our time, our tithes, and our offerings.

A person ought not to support a church that does not teach these doctrines. A person should not be a member of such a church. I would suggest to a person that was a member of a church that does not teach the doctrine of election and predestination, to find one that does. If there is not one in that area, then to join one some other place. Then I would suggest for them to send their tithes, and offering to that church and then go when they could.

We ought not to support unsound churches or pastors that will not teach the truths of God's Word. I believe that we will be rewarded according to our faithfulness to God's Word and our faithfulness in service to Christ and God. The more faithful one is, then the greater the reward he will receive in that day when he stands before the judgment seat of Christ.

JOSEPH

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glory to God in 41:16. Notice his unselfish and concerned advice to Pharaoh in the same chapter, vss.33-36.

What kind of ruler was Joseph? Will success spoil Joseph? Many men have withstood trial, perse-

cution, and poverty only to fall before wealth and fame. Joseph was the same God-fearing, God-obeying man in prosperity that he had been in adversity. He will honor his God in the field, in slavery, in prison, or in a palace. It was his chief desire to glorify God wherever God placed him and however he could. His humble, wise, energetic, and beneficial rule made him the physical saviour of Egypt, of many others, and eventually of his own brethren. He did not use his high and lofty position to gain wealth for himself, but to be a blessing to others. Oh, I marvel at this man. I am humbled by him. I am also encouraged by him. I cry to God - his and mine - "Oh, God help me as thou didst help Joseph."

FAITHFUL IN THE FAMILY. How admirable is Joseph's behaviour with his father. How tender he was. He never forgot that he was Jacob's son before he was Egypt's ruler. He showed a great, tender, caring love for his father. What an example he was in this to after ages. Notice his dealings with his brethren. Oh, I marvel at this. Not one word of reproach for their cruel treatment of him crossed his lips. They could not but blame themselves, but he never did. Joseph's treatment of his brethren when they were wholly in his power is one of the most remarkable parts of this story to me. No vengeance would he exact. His kindness and his tears mark him as a man who manifested the fruits of the Spirit in a most wonderful way. We hold grudges. We are determined to get even. We embitter our lives by our attitude toward our sinning brothers and sisters, but Joseph sweetened his own life, that of his father, and that of his sinning brethren by his gracious kindness toward them.

We need to look for a moment at a deeper side of this story. Remember Genesis 3:15. That one shall come of the seed of woman, defeat the devil and regain for God's chosen people more than was lost in the Fall. Remember Genesis 12:3. That one in which all families of the earth shall be blessed was to come through Abraham. Remember Genesis 26:4. The promised Saviour will come through Isaac. Genesis 28:14 tells us that the Promised One will come through Jacob. Remember Genesis 49:10. The Saviour shall come of the tribe of Judah. But what if Joseph had been a vindictive man? What if Joseph had taken vengeance on his brethren? What if Joseph had destroyed his brethren? Sad, you say, sad for Israel. Yes, my friend, but much more than that; sad for all the earth; for the destruction of Joseph's brethren would have been the destruction of the channel of the promised Seed. The saving purpose of God in Jesus Christ would have been stopped. Praise God for Joseph's kindly treatment of his brethren, for his physical saving of them; for else, where would we all be?

Note some characteristics of Joseph. He was true blue in all of his relationships. He was pure and holy in all his actions. He was separate from his brethren. He was loving, kind, tender, and forgiving. Nine times we read of his tears. Men don't cry, you say. It depends upon the kind of man one is. Paul wept. Jesus wept. Good men often weep.

I would say that the grandest of all the virtues of Joseph was his faith in God. At home, he trusted

in God. In slavery, he lived by faith. In prison, he despaired not through faith in the promises of God. In the palace he maintained a godly life because of, and through faith. The grand characteristic of his faith was that it was faith in the sovereignty of God. He believed that God was on the throne ruling over all things. He believed that God had ruled in all that had come into his life. "For God did send me before you to preserve life...And God sent me before you to preserve you a posterity in the earth, and to save your lives by a great deliverance. So it was not you that sent me hither, but God" (Gen. 45:5-8). "But as for you, ye thought evil against me; but God meant it unto good" (50:20). Joseph knew that God was in control, working all things after the counsel of His own will, and for the good of His elect. It was this faith that carried him through, held him up, gave him the victory, and made him the remarkable man that he was. Joseph practiced the sovereignty he believed in. Oh, that God would bless this study of Joseph to our good and His glory. The God of Joseph lives today, and He who wrought so mightily in Joseph is able to work His will out in our lives and use us as He pleases for His glory. May it be so.

THREE

(Continued from Page 1)

in some manner to ourselves or others. I can remember some exams during my school years. One of my most recent was an exam I took at the end of an advanced Spanish course in SAU, in Magnolia, AR. The teacher told us more or less what to expect and I was very apprehensive as it had been many years since I had studied formally. Even though I could speak it reasonably well, still, I was not well versed in some points of grammar. It turned that all that sweat was for nothing. I passed with fairly good grades. Every time I stand up to speak, I am examined in some way or other. It is a little disconcerting but it is true and seems to go with the territory.

If you apply for a job, you are examined in some manner. This might even include a drug test. My youngest son is evaluated every year as to what his performance was for the year. If it is not good, he is instructed as to how to improve it. If it is good, he usually receives a raise.

I read a rather interesting story in this regard. The article was about the "Permanent Record." You can remember all through school, how we were constantly badgered with the threat that if we did not do well, we would have this entered on our permanent record. This seemed to help keep us straight to some degree. Today, I doubt it would have any kind of deterrent value. It might bring the threat of a law suit if someone thought they were being monitored.

I. Self Exam (I Cor. 13:5). 1. Paul was writing to the Corinthian church. Verse 3 of this 13th chapter seems to indicate that Paul was being examined (Continued on Page 6, Col. 4)

ELIJAH

(Continued from Page 3)

that the world cannot hear. The world is not tuned to the frequency of heaven, but the man of faith is.

There are also things that the eye of faith can see that the world cannot see, for the Bible says, "Thine eyes shall see the king in his beauty: they shall behold the land that is very far off" (Isa.33:17). Elijah heard what Ahab did not hear because Elijah was tuned to the frequency of heaven. God had told Elijah in 18:1, "I will send rain upon the earth." Believing the Word of God, Elijah heard, "a sound of abundance of rain."

Elijah withdrew from the crowd, leaving the turmoil and noise and excitement thereof. He slipped off with his servant to be alone with God. "...when thou prayest, enter into thy closet, and when thou hast shut thy door, pray to thy Father which is in secret; and thy Father which seeth in secret shall reward thee openly" (Matt.6:6). I believe in public prayer. I believe in praying with one another, but surely there are times when we need to be all alone with the Lord in prayer.

Notice the humility and posture of his prayer. I do not say that posture is essential in prayer. But I do wonder how anyone can have a good prayer life who never gets on his knees in prayer. Of course, I do not refer to those who are handicapped as to this matter. One can be on his knees and be proud, but I wonder if one can be humble who is never on his knees. Of course, attitude of heart is the major matter here. A few moments before, Elijah had been standing straight, tall, and brave before the multitude; but when He comes before the thrice holy God of the Bible he casts himself upon the ground with his face between his knees. Those who are truly humble before God will be able to stand strong, bold, and tall before a wicked and godless world. Elijah did not fall on his face before Ahab or before the prophets of Baal, but he humbled himself in the dust before his God. The posture of the body may be of little moment (it may not) before God, but the posture of the soul is of supreme importance.

Elijah's prayer was based on the Word of God. God had told him in 18:1 that He would send rain on the earth. Elijah's prayer is based on that Word from God. Someone will say, "What is the use of praying for rain? God said He would send rain. He will send it. There is no use for us to pray for what God has already determined to do and said He would do." Friend, that might be good logic, but it is poor spirituality. The promises of God are not given to deliver us from praying but to encourage our prayers. They direct us as to what to pray for, they encourage us to pray, and give us assurance that our prayers will be answered. Since God had told Elijah that He was going to send rain, Elijah could pray for rain in faith, knowing that God would do as He had promised. The promise of God

told him what to pray for. It encouraged his praying. It enabled him to persevere with assurance in his prayer, for rain. Daniel understood from the prophecies of Jeremiah that Judah would be in captivity seventy years. As the time drew near, Daniel prayed that God would fulfill His promise and allow the people to return to Canaan (Dan.9:2). The promises of God are not an excuse to not pray; but they are an encouragement to pray, a directory as to what to pray for, and an assurance that prayer will be answered.

How about praying about things when we do not have a promise from God concerning them? This is a good question. We have many general promises of God concerning prayer. We know God's love, wisdom, and power. He loves us enough, and has power enough to give us anything His wisdom directs Him to. We can pray in faith that God is able to do anything we can ask - and much more. We can pray with faith in His love for us. Then, in such cases, we pray in sweet and humble submission to the will of God. We know God can. We don't know if He will (I speak concerning things about which we have no definite and specific promise from God). So we pray, "If it be thy will."

Notice that the prayer of Elijah was a fervent prayer. "The effectual fervent prayer of a righteous man availeth much" (Jms.5:16). Elijah prayed "earnestly", and God answered his prayer in doing amazing things. Elijah's prayer may not have been a "pretty" prayer that he had studied carefully and phrased just right. It may not have been carefully prepared and uttered with just the right tone of voice. It was the cry of a burdened heart. It was the cry of a hungry and thirsty soul. Friends, many times our prayers are not answered because we are not fervent in our appeals to God. A burning heart is a necessary part of a successful prayer life.

Elijah's prayer was specific. He was not "window shopping." He knew what he wanted, he asked for what he wanted, and he got what he asked for. That is the way to pray. Many times we pray for everything in general and nothing in specific detail. God could not answer many of our prayers if He wanted to, for we have not really prayed for anything. We need to ask God for the very thing we desire. I believe we should pray more. I believe we should pray in general. I believe we can pray, "God bless this service. God save some souls in our service next Sunday. God bless us in a special way", but I also believe that we often need to spell out that which we are praying for, and name the very blessing we desire from the Lord. I believe we need to call names before God as to those we desire Him to save or to bless in some way. We need to be much more specific in our praying. We don't go to the restaurant and just order a meal. We say, "I want this and this and this, naming the very thing we want, and often telling how we want it cooked." We need to be just that specific in our prayer life.

Notice the perseverance of Elijah's prayer. He told his servant to, "Go up now, look toward the sea." The servant came back and said, "There is nothing." Well, let us just quit and go home. We have done our duty. We have said our prayers. No, not Elijah; he kept praying.

He said to his servant, "Go again seven times." The servant went six times, and there was nothing. Elijah kept praying. Oh, we need to keep on praying, keep on asking, knocking, and seeking. Just keep on praying. We often quit too soon. The seventh time, the servant came back and said, "Behold, there ariseth a little cloud out of the sea, like a man's hand." Elijah said, that is enough, we better head for shelter, the rain is on the way. How long should I pray for something? Until I get it, or God lets me know beyond a shadow of a doubt that He does not want me to pray about it any longer - that is, if it was a proper object of prayer to begin with. "There was a great rain" the Bible says. Oh, can you not see the scene. How the cattle upon the hills of Israel must have rejoiced! The trees of the field clapped their hands for joy. The ground is wet, the grass begins to grow green, there is water for the animals, and the people are saved with a great physical salvation. Katie says, "We sure do need rain". I say, "Not while I am out carrying mail." I do not tend the garden. I do not know how badly we need the rain. But, oh, when it does rain, the gardeners are happy, the farmers are glad, and the fields are so thankful that God has sent rain. What a difference had you travelled through Israel shortly before the rains came, and then passed the same way again a few days after the rain - you would have seen a wonderful change.

Oh, if God would only send showers of blessings upon our church. Our hearts would be so thankful, and we would soon be able to see a difference in our services - and others would see it, too. Somebody please help me to pray that God will send the showers upon our church. Our church would become like a fruitful garden that would bless men and glorify God.

Who was the first man to run a mile in under four minutes? For years men said no one will ever run a mile in under four minutes. I forget who did it, but some years ago a man broke the four minute mark for a mile. Now several others have done that. The sports page said that the first man had run a mile in under four minutes. But the writer did not know the Bible. The four minute mark for a mile was broken a long, long time ago. They say of some man that he is the world's fastest human. But they don't know their Bibles. No man living today is the world's fastest human. Elijah set the record a long time ago, and I don't think it will ever be broken. The Bible says, "And the hand of the LORD was on Elijah; and he girded up his loins, and ran before Ahab to the entrance of Jezreel" (I Ki.18:46). I believe that Ahab had his driver do his best, trying to beat the rain. I believe that Elijah ran faster than Ahab's chariot could go. I believe Elijah could do this because the hand of the Lord was upon him. It was a miracle of God's power that enabled Elijah to do this. Oh, my friend, if the hand of the Lord be upon us, we will be able to do great things in the service of the Lord.

Is it not wonderful to become acquainted with this man, Elijah? He could stop the rain with his prayer. He could bring the rain from heaven with his prayer. He could raise the dead with his

prayer. He could bring fire down from heaven with his prayer. He could outrun a king's chariot. Oh, what a great man, but, oh, if he had been living in Paul's day, he would say, "by the grace of God I am what I am" (I Cor.15:10). May the Lord bless you.

THREE

(Continued from Page 5)

ined by some members of the church. So, he replies, "after you are finished with me, you also need to examine yourselves". Not a bad thought, the preacher is always being examined, but the church members don't want the same treatment.

2. The next thing of importance is this is a command. He says "Examine yourselves..." Was he being a little vindictive or cruel? I don't think so. One of the best things we can do is to make sure of our spiritual welfare. We are not likely to be too strict with ourselves, but we are likely to be too lax. A self examination from time to time is a good thing.

3. For what were they to examine themselves? He plainly says "...whether ye be in the faith;" In other words, make sure you are genuine and not fakes. It is easy to be a fake of most any kind these days. Often times, we hear of fake doctors, fake lawyers, fake husbands, fake policemen, fake investors, and yes, even fake preachers. And I can't think of anything easier to fake than that of being a Christian. It has become customary to accept one at face value as we don't want to embarrass anyone or seem too inquisitive about one's personal life.

4. One might ask the question: How shall I, make this determination? For starters, let's suggest, with all honesty. After all, this is one of the most important exams you will ever subject yourself to. If, after the exam, you don't have the credentials, have the honesty to say so, and take the appropriate action. There is nothing to be gained, and everything to be lost, if we are less than candid in this matter. Though we might fool others, we cannot fool the Lord God. And it seems to me, the last person we would want to deceive is ourselves.

5. By what standard shall I judge myself? shall it be by some man's standard? some church's standard? some denominational standard? The only standard that can possibly meet the criteria is that of absolute truth. And none of the aforementioned can qualify. But where shall I find absolute truth? Jesus said "...I am the... truth." (John 14:6). He also said in John 17:6: "Sanctify them through thy truth, thy word is truth." I cannot conceive of a God that is not absolute, and so it follows He is the only one who has absolute truth. So, we need look no further. His Word has to be our judge. And what a judge!

6. In order to make the determination as to whether I am in the faith or not, I must needs understand what the term means. This is undoubtedly an idiomatic way of asking if one is a true believer in Jesus Christ as Saviour. There are many pertinent questions that could be asked in regards to this matter. However, is there one key question that would serve the purpose? Yes, I believe there is. In fact, Paul gives us the

key in the same verse we read at the top of the message. He says "...how that Jesus Christ is in you..." If He is not, then quite honestly you don't meet the criteria or standard. In fact, he uses a very disquieting term, reprobate or disapproved. But how shall I know if He is in me? In my opinion, if you have to ask such a question, you are on very doubtful ground. If you are trying to substitute something other than the experience of His taking up residence in you and saving your soul, you are being deceived. And if you are thinking this residence can be terminated at some point in the future, you are also on shaky ground. I once had a man tell me he "used to be a Christian" as he put it. After further conversation, he said he became a Christian by quitting drinking. He also stated he lost out on his salvation by again taking up the habit. I told him his saviour was not Christ but a bottle, as his whole experience of salvation seemed to be based on his relationship with a bottle, not with Christ. If He saves by His grace, there is no way He will terminate that grace. If we did not merit this great salvation, then how can we "unmerit" it?

7. Even though we understand this passage speaks primarily to the saved, we can make some application to the lost soul. It is wise for the lost one to also examine himself or herself in regards to his or her spiritual welfare. Surely, no thinking person wants to end up in eternal punishment, and without Christ, this is your destination. Jesus said "...if you believe not that I am he, you shall die in your sins" (John 8:24).

II Peer Exam (I Cor. 5:12-13).

1. This has to do with being judged by our fellow church members in church capacity. This has nothing to do with salvation or whether or not we are going to hell or heaven. No individual has the ability to make that kind of judgment. However, a church not only has the right to judge its membership, but it also has the obligation to do so. If we fail to do this, we are neglectful in our duties as Christians and as Baptists. Our text clearly teaches and commands this.

2. However, we should do this in a compassionate way. We are not to be vindictive in this judgment. Paul says in I Corinthians 5:1, there was gross immorality in the church at Corinth. He says they were to judge this man and put him out of the assembly. However, in chapter 2 of the second letter that he wrote them, he indicates the church is to forgive this same man and restore him to full fellowship. It is apparent he had repented of this sin and now needs their full support. Love and compassion are never out of order but must never impede the clear discharge of our Lord's command in regards to discipline. Of course, there are other reasons for judging the membership of a New Testament church but we don't have space to give all the details. What we are establishing is that a church has the Scriptural right to judge its membership.

III. The Final Exam (II Cor. 5:10). 1. During your school days, do you remember final exam time? I do. This was a day of apprehension for me. Your pulse races, your heart wants to get up and go, your hands are all sweaty and there is nothing you can seem to do to stop all of this

(Continued on Page 8, Col. 1)

INTERCOMMUNION: INCONSISTENT AND UNSCRIPTURAL

Part III, Chapter I - The Lord's Supper

by J. R. Graves

The inspired accounts of the institution of the Lord's Supper synchronized and harmonized, and the question of the connection of Judas with the Lord's Supper determined.

Before entering upon the discussion of the Lord's Supper, it will be proper to copy the inspired account of its institution.

1. Institution.
2. The circumstances attending it.
3. The directions concerning its observance.

It must be understood by the reader, that, under the especial guidance of the Holy Spirit, the evangelists wrote each a different narrative of the life, teachings, and actions of the Messiah. No one writer related all that was said or done by Christ, in consecutive order, as would seem to us most fitting to be done; but one evangelist records a part, while another adds other occurrences. It is noticeable that the account given by John, written some time after the rest, contains very little that is found in the other three, and was evidently written to supply what was lacking, so that their united records might make a full and rounded life of Christ.

Then the evangelists manifestly differ more or less in their attention to the order of events.

Says Dr. E. Robinson: "On the one hand, it appears that Mark and John, who have little in common, follow, with few exceptions, the regular and true order of events and transactions recorded by them; on the other hand, Matthew and Luke manifestly have sometimes not so much regard to chronological order, as they have been guided by the principle of association, so that in them transactions having certain relations to each other are not seldom grouped together, though they may have happened at different times, and in various places."

This being the case, it follows that, in order to obtain a full and consecutive account of any particular transaction, we should take the most extended account given by the evangelist who most strictly observes chronological order, and the relation of events to each other, and fill up, what it lacks in completeness, from the relations of the others. Without such a procedure, our knowledge of all the great events of the life of Christ will be but fragmentary and partial.

The vast importance of the subject under consideration demands that we pursue such a course in order to obtain a clear comprehension of all that Jesus said and did in connection with the institution of the sacred Supper; the observance of which, as He appointed it, is so solemnly enjoined upon His churches until He comes, and the misobservance of which He threatens with such fearful consequences. Surely we may not dare to add aught to this ordinance with impunity, nor can we modify in the least, with respect to its form or symbolism, without perverting and profaning it.

It is conceded by all scholars that John, "the disciple whom Jesus loved," paid more attention to the order of events which he relates than do the other evangelists. It is true, he does not relate the facts in

connection with the institution and administration of the Lord's Supper, because, perhaps, so minutely described by the other evangelists; yet, by describing the Paschal Supper, that preceded it, the washing of feet, and the exposure and expulsion of the traitor Judas, preparatory to the Supper, he furnishes the needed initial data to guide our investigations. I have, for this reason, adopted his narrative for



the order of the text; and shall supply what is wanting for the full history from the statements of the other writers.

History of the institution: The time - the eve of the fourteenth day of Nisan, introducing Friday, corresponding to our Thursday eve, A.D.30.

"Now, before the feast of the passover, (i.e., festival, which commenced the day after the Paschal Supper was eaten, and lasted seven days). when Jesus, knew that his hour was come that he should depart out of this world unto the Father, having loved his own which were in the world, he loved them unto the end. And supper [i.e., Paschal Supper] being ended, the devil having now put into the heart of Judas Iscariot, Simon's son, to betray him; Jesus knowing that the Father had given all things into his hands, and that he was come from God, and went to God;" (John 13:1-3).

"...he sat down, and the twelve apostles with him...And there was also a strife among them, which of them should be accounted the greatest. And he said unto them, The kings of the Gentiles exercise lordship over them; and they that exercise authority upon them are called benefactors. But ye shall not be so: but he that is greatest among you, let him be as the younger; and he that is chief, as he that doth serve. For whether is greater, he that sitteth at meat, or he that serveth? is not he that sitteth at meat? but I am among you as he that serveth. Ye are they which have continued with me in my temptations. And I appoint unto you a kingdom, as my Father hath appointed unto me; That ye may eat and drink at my table in my kingdom, and sit on thrones judging the twelve tribes of Israel" (Luke 22:14, 24-30).

"He riseth from supper (i.e., a table, not having yet eaten), and laid aside his garments; and took a towel, and girded himself.

After that he poureth water into a bason, and began to wash the disciples' feet, and to wipe them with the towel wherewith he was girded. Then cometh he to Simon Peter: and Peter saith unto him, Lord, dost thou wash my feet? Jesus answered and said unto him, What I do thou knowest not now; but thou shalt know hereafter. Peter said unto him, Thou shalt never wash my feet. Jesus answered him, if I wash thee not, thou hast no part with me. Simon Peter saith unto him, Lord, not my feet only, but also my hands and my head. Jesus saith to him, He that is washed needeth not save to wash his feet, but is clean, but not all. For he knew who should betray him; therefore said he, Ye are not all clean. So after he had washed their feet, and had taken his garments, and was set down again, he said unto them, Know ye what I have done to you? Ye call me Master and Lord: and ye say well; for so I am. If I then, your Lord and Master, have washed your feet; ye also ought to wash one another's feet. For I have given you an example, that ye should do as I have done to you. Verily, verily, I say unto you, The servant is not greater than his lord; neither he that is sent greater than he that sent him. If ye know these things, happy are ye if ye do them. I speak not of you all: I know whom I have chosen: but that the scripture may be fulfilled, He that eateth bread with me hath lifted up his heel against me. Now I tell you before it come, that, when it is come to pass, ye may believe that I am he. Verily, verily, I say unto you, He that receiveth whomsoever I send receiveth me; and he that receiveth me receiveth him that sent me. When Jesus had thus said, he was troubled in spirit, and testified, and said, Verily, verily, I say unto you, that one of you should betray me. Then the disciples looked one on another, doubting of whom he spake. Now there was leaning on Jesus' bosom one of his disciples, whom Jesus loved. Simon Peter therefore beckoned to him, that he should ask who it should be of whom he spake. He then lying on Jesus' breast saith unto him, Lord, who is it? Jesus answered, He it is, to whom I shall give a sop, when I have dipped it..." (John 13:4-26).

"The Son of man goeth as it is written of him: but woe unto that man by whom the Son of man is betrayed! it had been good for that man if he had not been born. Then Judas, which betrayed him, answered and said, Master, is it I? He said unto him, Thou hast said" (Matt. 26:24,

25). (Matthew does not mention the giving of the sop).

"...And when he had dipped the sop, he gave it to Judas Iscariot, the son of Simon. And after the sop Satan entered into him. Then said Jesus unto him, That thou doest, do quickly. Now no man at the table knew for what intent he spake this unto him. For some of them thought, because Judas had the bag, that Jesus had said unto him, Buy those things that we have need of against the feast; or, that he should give something to the poor. He then having received the sop went immediately out: and it was night. Therefore, when he was gone out, Jesus said, Now is the Son of man glorified, and God is glorified in him. If God be glorified in him, God shall also glorify him in himself, and shall straightway glorify him. Little children, yet a little while I am with you. Ye shall seek me: and as I said unto the Jews, Whither I go, ye cannot come; so now I say to you. A new commandment I give unto you, That ye love one another; as I have loved you, that ye also love one another. By this shall all men know that ye are my disciples, if ye have love one to another. Simon Peter said unto him, Lord, whither goest thou? Jesus answered him, Whither I go, thou canst not follow me now; but thou shalt follow me afterwards. Peter said unto him, Lord, why cannot I follow thee now? I will lay down my life for thy sake. Jesus answered him, Wilt thou lay down thy life for my sake? Verily, verily, I say unto thee, The cock shall not crow, till thou hast denied me thrice" (John 13:26-38).

"And he said unto them, When I sent you without purse, and scrip, and shoes, lacked ye any thing? And they said, Nothing. Then said he unto them, But now, he that hath a purse, let him take it, and likewise his scrip: and he that hath no sword, let him sell his garment, and buy one. For I say unto you, that this that is written must yet be accomplished in me, And he was reckoned among the transgressors: for the things concerning me have an end. And they said, Lord, behold, here are two swords. And he said unto them, It is enough" (Luke 22:35-38).

"And he took bread, [i.e., one of the loaves of unleavened bread used at the Paschal Supper] and gave thanks, and brake it, and gave unto them, saying, This is my body which is given for you: this do in remembrance of me. Likewise also the cup after supper, saying, This cup is the new testament in my blood, which is shed for you" (Luke 22:19,20).

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"And he took the cup, and gave thanks, and gave it to them, saying, Drink ye all of it; For this is my blood of the new testament, which is shed for many for the remission of sins. But I say unto you, I will not drink henceforth of this fruit of the vine, until that day when I drink it new with you in my Father's kingdom" (Matt. 26:27-29).

Let the reader here turn and read the whole of the fourteenth chapter of John. At the close, they all rose from the Supper, and, while standing, Jesus continued His discourse, as given by John in the 15th, 16th and 17th chapters, at the close of which they went out to the garden of Gethsemane, where He was arrested by a mob headed by Judas.

Conclusion from the foregoing narrative: From this harmony of the evangelists, we learn several important facts intimately connected with the institution of the Supper, about which there is no little difference of opinion.

First fact: That the Supper here referred to by John and the other evangelists was, without question, the Paschal Supper, and it was at the close of the Paschal Supper that Christ instituted the Supper we call the Lord's Supper. Not a few deny this, for the want of the correct harmony of the accounts. It is held by many that the Lord's Supper comes in place of the Passover, the antitype and fulfillment of it, but this is to mistake the Supper. This Passover was a type of the sacrifice of Christ for us, "...For even Christ our passover is sacrificed for us" (1 Cor. 5:7). The Lord's Supper is purely commemorative of His sufferings and death. The Passover was typical. The Lord's Supper emblematic and symbolical. There are points of striking likeness in the form and symbolism of the two, which Paul points out, but no physical rite in the old is ever employed as a type of a physical rite in the new dispensation. The Supper was a new ordinance, instituted at the close of the Passover Supper--"Because the Passover night immediately preceding His sufferings was the best and fittest time for its institution" (Dr. G. W. Clark, Notes on Mark).

Second fact: We learn that Christ ate the Paschal lamb with His disciples upon the very night it was appointed by the law to be eaten, namely, on the 14th day of the first month, Nisan, at even, i.e., Thursday evening, and that He was betrayed that night, and crucified on the day following, expiring at three o'clock in the afternoon, and that evening buried, and arose from the dead on the first day of the week, corresponding to the Monday of the Jews. He, therefore, rose on the third day, according to the Scriptures.

Third fact: That the Supper referred to by John chapter 13, Luke 22:14, was the Paschal Supper, and not the Lord's Supper.

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THREE

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running away of emotions. Sometime back, I took a computer course. The final exam was the most excruciating of my entire life. I boned up the entire day preceding this exam; I arose early the next morning and continued my intense study. After arriving at the school, I wished a million times I had not come. I literally sweated like you would not believe. I am not sure as to why I was so apprehensive but it all turned out for naught as I passed the exam. If most of us suffer this much apprehension over a mere exam at some school, what do you suppose it will be like when we stand before the God of all the universe? I can't say from experience, but I don't think fear will be as much of a factor as shame. As I think of my own situation at the judgment seat of Christ, I will not like to hear of all the wasted years and opportunities. This will have to be a time of great grief and shame. John says, "Look to yourselves, that we lose not those things which we have wrought, but that we receive a full reward" (II John 8). This seems to indicate if we are careless, we can receive less than a full reward. Paul indicated the same thing in Colossians 2:18 when he said, "Let no man beguile you of your reward..." In regards to this same subject, there are a total of seven different crowns mentioned in connection with rewards. We cannot name them but we are told in the book of Revelation that we will cast our crowns at the feet of Jesus. Can we imagine our shame, when we don't have a crown to cast at the Saviour's feet?

And a word to our unsaved friends. You will have to face a final exam also. It will not be this one we are speaking of for the saved. But it will be far worse. It will be one of eternal punishment. It is not necessary that you continue on in your sins. Christ offers you sonship upon your receiving Him as your Saviour. He says "But as many as received him, to them gave he power to become the sons of God, even to them that believe on his name: Which were born, not of blood, nor of the will of the flesh, nor of all the will of man, but of God" (John 1:12-13).

This is the time for correcting these things. We cannot change the past, but by the grace of God, we can see to it the future is better. I beg of you to do something about the matter. And to our unsaved friends, this is the time for you to repent of your sins and receive Christ as Saviour. Do so without delay!

INTERCOMMUNION

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per, which was instituted at the close of the former.

Fourth fact: We learn that the washing of the disciples' feet was in no sense whatever connected with the observance of the Lord's Supper, either as introducing or concluding it. That occurrence took place before the eating of

the Paschal Supper, and most clearly to my mind as a reproof to the apostles, who, having failed to provide a servant to wash their soiled feet as they came in from the street, were unwilling each to volunteer to perform this menial act for the other, or even for the Master, since it might be construed into a confession of inferiority, for "a strife having arisen among them who should be the greatest." Christ did not institute the washing of feet here nor while on earth. It had been observed as a necessary act of hospitality from the days of Abraham, and was of universal observance in all Eastern countries where sandals were worn instead of closed shoes and boots as now. The feet were soiled by traveling; and upon coming into a house, and especially reclining upon cushions to eat, it was not only cleanly, but needful, that the feet should be washed.

The apostles did not understand, as some of our brethren of this age do, that Christ intended footwashing to be observed as a church or religious ordinance in connection with His churches, for they never enjoined it upon any church; they never rebuked any church for not observing it; they never praised any church for having observed it; they nowhere intimate that any church ever did observe it; nor can we find in church history any account of its observance by a church or by Christians, as a religious exercise, for seventeen hundred years after Christ. The most that can be made of the words of our Saviour is that the apostles, who were ambitious for superiority, should wash each other's feet, or do what was equivalent to it--be the servants of each other--"in honor preferring one another." We have not the slightest intimation that they ever after that washed each other's feet; but, provided they did, we have nothing to do with it, since secret things belong to God, but things that are revealed alone belong to us and to our children. If the apostles did not wash each other's feet literally, they did what was equivalent to it--ministered to one another.

Fifth fact: That the Supper alluded to in John 13:1, being the Paschal and not the Lord's Supper, it should not read "ended" as in our version; for--

1. The context forbids this, for they continued to eat after this, and, indeed, had not eaten before this (see v. 26 and Mark 14:18-21), for it was contrary to established usage to eat any meal, much less the sacred feast, without a bath, and washing the feet after the bath.

It should read - Supper being "prepared" or "ready" - i.e., the Paschal Supper being prepared. All critics are agreed on this reading.

Sixth fact: That Judas went out at the command of Christ before the Paschal Supper was finished, even before the lamb was eaten.

This was the order of the Supper in the time of Christ: 1. A blessing; 2. Wine (first cup); 3. Washing of hands; 4. Eating bitter herbs; 5. Wine (second cup); 6. The Feast explained; 7. Singing Psalm 113,114; 8. Eating unleavened bread; 9. Eating the lamb; 10. Wine (third cup of blessing); 11. Singing Psalm 115,118; 12. Wine (fourth cup); 13. Singing Psalm 120,138.

They prepared a sauce of dates, figs, and seasoning, which was of brick color, representing the clay and brick of Egypt. Into this

they dipped their bread and bitter herbs. This was the sop referred to in John 13:26. The reader can see it was at the very first part of the Supper (no. 4). while eating the bitter herbs, that Christ sent Judas away. But it was not until the close of the Passover Supper that Jesus took one of the loaves of unleavened bread prepared for the Paschal Supper, and instituted the new ordinance, which we call the Lord's Supper. Judas was not for a moment therefore, at the Lord's Supper.

But had Judas remained and partaken of the Lord's Supper, the act would not have violated the letter of the laws governing the Supper; for, 1. Judas had been immersed; 2. He was in full fellowship with this family of Christ, this church of the apostles, as some call it, for he had committed no overt act of sin known to them. But Christ knew what was in his heart-knew him to be a thief-knew of his secret conference with the High Priests (Mark 14:10,11), and, therefore, knew him to be in heart a murderer, and so He purged him out as "leaven" for an example to His churches in all future time, to put all improper persons away for the sacred feast.

Other accounts of its institution: Matthew --"And as they were eating, [the Paschal Supper at its close], Jesus took bread, and blessed it [i.e., to God], and brake it, and gave it to the disciples, and said, Take, eat; this is my body. And he took the cup, and gave thanks, and gave it to them, saying, Drink ye all of it; For this is my blood of the new testament, which is shed for many for the remission of sins. But I say unto you, I will not drink henceforth of this fruit of the vine, until that day when I drink it new with you in my Father's kingdom" (26:26-29).

Mark "And as they did eat [i.e., of the Paschal Supper]. Jesus took bread, and blessed [i.e., God], and brake it, and gave to them, and said, Take, eat: this is my body. And he took the cup, and when he had given thanks [i.e., to God], he gave it to them: and they all drank of it. And he said unto them, This is my blood of the new testament, which is shed for many. Verily I say unto you, I will drink no more of the fruit of the vine, until that day that I drink it new in the kingdom of God" (14:22-25).

Luke "And he took bread, and gave thanks, and brake it, and gave unto them, saying, This is my body which is given for you: this do in remembrance of me. Likewise also the cup [i.e., after giving thanks] after supper, saying, This cup is the new testament in my blood, which is shed for you" (22:19, 20).

Paul's account "For I have received of the Lord that which also I delivered unto you, That the Lord Jesus the same night in which he was betrayed took bread: And when he had given thanks, he brake it, and said, Take, eat: this is my body, which is broken for you: this do in remembrance of me. After the same manner also he took

the cup, when he had supped [i.e., the Paschal Supper], saying, This cup is the new testament in my blood: this do ye, as oft as ye drink it, in remembrance of me" (I Cor. 11:23-25).

Conclusions from these narratives:

First fact - That Jesus took but one loaf, one wheaten loaf, with which to celebrate the Supper. His example is a command to His churches; they should use but one loaf.

Second fact - Christ took one loaf of unleavened bread for the observance of His Supper. There can be no doubt about this, for He took one of the loaves left from the Passover Supper, and no leavened bread, on pain of death, could be used in that Supper. Christ's example should be considered law unto us. It is a sad fact that a plurality of loaves and leavened bread is generally used by the churches on this continent. Why should the churches be so thoughtless and indifferent to the bread used at the Supper, while they are so particular to use water as the element in which to immerse? Has Christ anywhere commanded His churches to use water rather than any other liquid? What have we but the examples of John and of Christ to guide us in this?

Third fact - Christ did not transubstantiate, nor con-substantiate, nor consecrate, nor bless the bread or the wine, as Romanists and Protestants affect to do; but He simply gave thanks, and His example should govern us, not that of Ritualists.

Fourth fact - Christ used the fruit of the vine --i.e., "the blood of grapes"--pure wine. In these days of fanaticism and infidelity, it is boldly asserted by the professed friends, but actually the worst foes of temperance, that Christ never made, never drank, or warranted His disciples to drink the fermented juice of the grapes--i.e., wine--any thing that would intoxicate. I shall discuss this question when I treat of the symbolism of the Cup in a future chapter. Suffice it to say here, that the church at Corinth doubtless used the element that Paul taught them to use when he instituted the Supper, and that did intoxicate (See I Cor. 11:21). Paul did not tell them they used the wrong element, but that they drank too much.

Fifth fact - We learn that Christ did not institute His Supper to be observed as a sacrament of remission of sins, or of regeneration, or sanctification, or salvation, but simply as a feast in commemoration of Himself. His words are without the least ambiguity --"This do ye in remembrance of me." To use the Supper as a sacrament, as Catholics and all Protestants do, is to utterly pervert and profane it, to eat and drink unworthily, not discerning the Lord's body.

Sixth fact - We see that it was not designed that we should remember each other as friends or as Christians, when we partake of this feast, nor to extend it to our brethren through amity or courtesy, or as a mark of our Christian regard or fellowship for them. To use it for these selfish purposes is to disregard its grand design, and do violence to its whole spirit.

It is not a feast of communion with each other, but a feast in commemoration of Christ.

It is with Christ, His broken body and shed blood--as our Sin-

bearer and Redeemer--that we are to commune, and not with each other. The specific symbolism of the elements used, and what is implied in the joint act of participation of but one loaf, will be considered, but let it be kept in mind that the grand end for which Christ appointed this Supper was for an "Holy Ordinance of Commemoration."

WHERE

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"This is my commandment, That ye love one another, as I have loved you." Verse 17 says: "These things I command you, that ye love one another." I John 4: 7, 8: "Beloved, let us love one another: for love is of God; and every one that loveth is born of God, and knoweth God. He that loveth not knoweth not God; for God is love." Verse 11 says: "Beloved, if God so loved us, we ought also to love one another." Verse 20 says: "If a man say, I love God, and hateth his brother, he is a liar: for he that loveth not his brother whom he hath seen, how can he love God whom he hath not seen?" There are many other verses we could look at but these will suffice for now. I just want to begin this article with a firm realization of what the Scriptures have to say on this subject. We notice that they go so far as to say that if you do not love your brethren, then you are lost. Beloved, this is a statement that should cause us to sit up and take notice.

I write this article with a heavy heart. My heart is heavy because I know that we, as sovereign grace missionary Baptists, have greatly failed in this area. I honestly can only think of few people that I think have come close to the proper love for others they should have. I have reference to all types of people; to preachers, deacons, Sunday school teachers and the regular members. We have gotten ourselves into a mess that I am fearful we will never escape from. There is so much bitterness and hard feelings among us that we are a disgrace to our God of love. You can blame our problems on whatever you want to; I blame them on improper love for each other.

Not loving each other as we should is the root of all our problems. This is true in all relationships. It is true of the husband and wife, the parent and child, the pastor and church, the members and church, churches for other churches, preachers for other preachers; and worst of all, our love for Jesus.

I shudder at some of the things that have happened amongst our people. Immorality is accepted and even defended by some churches and pastors. Jealousy running rampant to the destruction of good men and churches. I could tell you some things about our churches that would truly shock you. I am past the state of shock anymore. Nothing should surprise us. Our lack of love is allowing our depravity to really show itself. I sometimes sit and wish we could just start over. Let by-gones, be by-gones. I know this will not happen, and am not sure it is even the right thing to

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do. I am not innocent of these charges. I have been angry many times in the past two or three years. I have had hard feelings against others. There are those for whom I do not have the deep love and great respect I once had. That is why I write this article. I know what these feelings have done to me.

Beloved, hate is killing us. Maybe (hopefully) "hate" is too strong a word. I will just say that a lack of proper love is killing us. I am sure that the way some have been treated in recent years has not been done in love. God help us. I feel so helpless as I write this article. I wish we had the fellowship we had when I first started preaching at conferences. I wish I still felt toward some churches and preachers as I once did. Why does there have to be so much hurt among God's people? Why do we argue and bicker so? I miss preaching in some places where I used to preach. I miss the sweet fellowship I used to have with some with whom I have little or no fellowship today. However, God helping me, I will not compromise what I believe as to right and wrong in order to have this.

I fight back the tears as I write this and think about all the hurt my Dad has been through the last few years. I have watched him shed tears. I have seen his pain. I ask one question, Why? I honestly do not know of an issue on which he has changed. He believes the same things now that he did years ago. He has stood hard and strong for these things. Is that any reason to hurt him? Some of his best friends of years past have turned terribly against him. Is it because of doctrinal issues? Is it because of his stand on practical and moral issues? Oh, beloved friends, may God help us. I know that he is not the only person who has been hurt, but he is the closest one to me. A few years ago, we were at a Bible Conference. A dear and long time friend had snubbed Daddy. As we rode away together, I saw Daddy crying. I told him they were not worth his getting upset over. He told me, "They are to me." I don't know if Daddy will print this or not. I just wanted people to know that he is not as tough as he sometimes talks. He does have feelings, and those feelings have been trampled on the last few years. I know that he now needs encouragement. Daddy, I want you to know that I love you. I want you to know that there are many people around the country who love and respect you. Do not be discouraged. I sit here, and I cannot remember the last time I told my Dad that I loved him.

I will never forget an experience with Brother Willard Willis. He came through here on the way to see his son. I did not know Brother Willis very well. I had respected him for many years from reading his articles in The Baptist Examiner, and hearing him preach a few times. I remember, as he was getting ready to leave, he turned to me and said, "I love you, Brother Wilson." That meant so much to me. It also shamed me. Why are we so hesitant about telling people that we love them? Is it because our love is not what it should be? Please God, give me the love for my brothers and

sisters in Christ that I should have, and help me to put away the hard feelings that I should not have.

I guess this is enough emotionalism. Let me get down to the article that I had intended on writing. May God use this article to help us. Pray with me to that end. We want to notice and study some things God has to say about love. May it change our lives!

First, we learn from this chapter that nothing is more important in our Christian life than proper love for one another, unless it be our love for God. Remember, this is the second greatest commandment. The Bible tells us that **without love we are nothing**. I am afraid we have a lot of "nothings" in our ranks. If we have doctrinal truth and have not love; we have nothing. If we are in a true church and faithful to that church, and have not love, we have nothing. If we have great abilities in the service of God and have not love we have nothing. This is especially true of us preachers. It seems as if we are sometimes the worst of the bunch. We are not a very good example to our people when it comes to loving others. Let us notice some virtues and characteristics of proper love. We can learn these from this chapter. May we be honest in our examination of self, to see if we have the virtues and characteristics.

"Charity suffereth long..." (vs. 4). Surely we will all admit that patience is a virtue. We live in a hurry-up world. Everything is fast-paced. This carries over often times into our Christian life. We need to learn to be patient and longsuffering with other people. Surely Christ has been and is longsuffering toward us. This patience is needed in many areas. It is needed in the homes. Parents need patience with their children and vice-versa. Spouses need to be patient with each other. This patience is needed in our individual churches. We are sometimes so quick to judge and ridicule. We need to be patient with people. We are a people who are too quick to anger. This patience is needed in church to church, preacher to preacher, and brother to brother relationships. Let us not be so quick to write off friends we have had for many years. Charity will be patient and longsuffering with them. This is not to say we should compromise right and wrong. This is just to say, be patient with them.

"...And is kind." This is something that every child of God can be. There is no reason that we cannot be kind to one another. There is so much bitterness among us that perhaps could be turned away with a kind word. Isn't that what the Book of Proverbs tells us. We need to be more willing to help others than to hurt them. Let me mention to you a commandment from God. **"Be ye kind one to another."** Beloved, that is not a request; that is a command. Not to be kind is to commit sin against your brother and God. Oh, that God might give us these attributes.

"Charity envieth not..." Like this next statement or not, it is a true statement. Deny it, and you are only deceiving yourself. A good portion of the problems in our churches spring from personal jealousies. To our disgrace, this is probably more true of preachers than anyone else. I know why some of our men have

turned against others. It is jealousy of the affection and attention some of these men receive. We are not enemies. We are not in competition one with other. We are co-fighters for the cause of Christ. We have the same problem they had at Corinth: jealousy! We refer to jealousy as that "green eyed monster." It is indeed a monster that has destroyed the relationship between many of us. So much church trouble comes from envy. One member will get mad because they feel the pastor is paying more attention to some one else. The pastor will get mad because someone did not compliment his message. It all stems from improper love that produces envy. It is nigh impossible to separate jealousy and covetousness. Let us realize that God made us all different. Let us accept that difference and be thankful for what God has given each of us. Let us also be thankful for what God has given our brethren.

"Charity vaunteth not itself, is not puffed up." Many think these two phrases are saying the same thing. I, personally, do not. I think they are related, but different. I think one has to do with how you feel, and the other with how you act. If you have proper love, you do not think of yourself as being better than other saints. You esteem others **"better than yourself."** There are far too many proud Christians today. We who know the truth about God's sovereignty and man's depravity surely have nothing to be proud about. Charity means you do not feel proud and that you do not act proud. We are not to present ourselves as being better than others. We are not to boast about our abilities. Let God judge them. How many saints of God do you know who truly seem to be humble people?

"Doth not behave itself unseemly..." Unseemly behavior has reference to bringing disgrace. Christian charity will help us avoid disgracing ourselves, our Saviour, and our brethren. We should not behave in a manner to bring attention to ourselves. We should not behave in a manner that would bring disgrace to our brethren.

"Seeketh not her own..." We are a greedy and selfish people. Charity is not just concerned with our own welfare, but also with the welfare of others. We are sometimes so busy worrying about ourselves that we forget about others. I am glad this was not true of Jesus. When He faced Calvary; His main concern was not Himself, but the elect of God. If we had the kind of love we should have for one another we would be more concerned about the feelings of others.

"Is not easily provoked..." For Christians, we sure do get angry easily. I know we are not supposed to do things that offend other people. I also believe that we should not be so easily offended. We are ready to fight at the drop of a hat, and sometimes we drop the hat. Is this what Christianity is all about? People angry with each other, fighting with one another, disliking one another! No wonder we have such a bad name! We need to get our feelings off our sleeves. We need to love each other enough that we can take criticism whether it is constructive or not. We need to be more willing to give people the benefit of the doubt and not be ready to be offended at everything they

say. Love will overlook a multitude of sins.

"Thinketh no evil." This does not have reference to just evil thoughts, but to evil thoughts about other people. There are people who always think the worst of others. They are quick to believe and spread a rumor. They will not wait to hear the other side of the story. They are ready to jump on the bandwagon of verbal persecution. This is evidence of improper love. We need to be more willing to give people the benefit of the doubt. Love them enough to think good of them, rather than evil.

"Rejoiceth not in iniquity." It is a disgrace to Christianity that there are times when we rejoice in seeing others fall. It is an anti-Christ feeling to ever rejoice in sin. We should always wish others well in the Lord. We should always be grieved by sin. God forbid that we have such a lack of love for one another that we rejoice in their downfalls. Love hates sin. Love hates to see the objects of God's love suffer. Where is your love? Why is it that you sometimes are happy at the failures of others? Why is it that we do not rejoice in their triumphs? God help us to love!

"Rejoiceth in the truth." I believe there are saved people who would rather hear a lie about somebody than the truth. It seems there are some who would rather tell a lie about someone than the truth. Love for truth and rejoicing there-in is a sign of proper love.

"Bearing all things." We have the adage, "grin and bear it." We are unwilling to bear burdens today. Our attitude is that we have our own problems without worrying about other peoples. Where is Christian charity that bears all things? We must help in bearing one another's burdens. We must sometimes bear with the things others do and not just ignore them or add to them.

"Charity believeth all things." This does not mean that love will cause you to believe a lie. It means that charity will seek out the truth. Charity will not be always of a suspicious mind. Charity will be more ready to believe the best than the worst. Charity does not doubt the fact that God's people do good and is ready to congratulate them for it.

"Hopeth all things." I think this has reference to a positive hope. Charity is always hoping the best for other people. How many of us can say in honesty that we hope the best for all of God's people, preachers, and churches? Is it not true that some of us will have to confess to hoping some fail. God have mercy on our cold and uncharitable hearts. We always hope the best for our children and family because we love them. We should love our brethren enough to feel the same hope for them.

"Endureth all things." Again this does not mean they endure and tolerate sin to the extent that their toleration become sin. Charity will enable us to put up with some things that we would not tolerate without. We certainly are more enduring with our children than we would be with the children of others. Our love for one another should cause us to endure things with them. We should not get upset at them so easily. We should go the last mile with them. May we love one another enough to endure one another's faults.

"Charity never fails." Think about that statement a moment. "Charity never fails". There are not many things that you can say that about. How many things can you name that never fail? No wonder we are such failures, for we have not proper Christian charity. If we could buy a car that would never fail, we would do it in a moment. If we could buy appliances that would never fail, we would do it. We can have charity that never fails, and we shun it. We let our old depravity and pride get in the way of God's love. What pitiful Christians we are when it comes to this subject of Christian charity. The sad thing is that we do not even care enough to do something about these feelings, or rather, these lack of feelings. God help us in this area.

The last thing I mention about this love is that it is supposed to grow, not diminish. Verse 11 says, **"When I was a child, I spake as a child, I understood as a child, I thought as a child; but when I became a man, I put away childish things."** I believe we have a lot of childish Christians when it comes to love. Many have not grown in love; but rather, their love has decreased. What about you? Has your love for others grown? I don't just mean a few select others, but others in general.

If our love for others does not grow, then it is evidence that we do not have the degree of Christian charity we should have. The Bible tells us in verse 13 that charity is the greatest of all gifts or possessions. **"And now abideth faith, hope, charity, these three; but the greatest of these is charity."** Let me now tell you why I believe that love is here

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It is a great blessing from the Lord when our speech is sweet to the ears of saints, when we have something to bring forth from the Word which our brethren in Christ can accept, and which comes to them in a peculiar preciousness and power so that they can receive it and feel that it is thoroughly acceptable to them. We do not wish to be acceptable to the worldly-wise nor to the error-hunters of the day; but we are very anxious to be pleasant to the Lord's own children, our brethren in Christ. They have a holy taste whereby they discern Spiritual meats, and we would bring forth for food that which they will account to be nourishing and savory. Every minister prays to be "acceptable to his brethren" (Deut. 33:24).

C.H. Spurgeon

When questions arise concerning preachers -- their conduct, conversation, attitude, attire, and message -- one scripture comes to my mind. "Now then we are ambassadors of Christ" (II Cor. 5:20). We are the "highest ranking representative appointed by our king to represent him to others." That is an ambassador! This grave responsibility and high office, when realized, will spell out for any man the answers to the above questions.

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called the greatest. We have all of three of these graces at present time; in eternity we will only have love. We will not need hope, for our hope will have been made complete. We will have seen the root of our faith. We will be perfect like Christ and will no longer need faith. Love we will have forever. Shall we not love Christ eternally? Will this not be the very foundation of our joy in heaven. Beloved, this is the greatest of all gifts. Let us crave this gift. Let us exercise this gift that God has given us. The more you love, the more you will be able to love. May our love be genuine and real! The first part of chapter 14 and verse one says "Follow after charity." This tells us that charity is active. If we want our love to grow then we must exercise it. Our love is fading like unused muscles. We are becoming weak. May we get help before we die.

I had planned on dealing with some of the things we, as saved people, should love, but space will not allow it. Maybe another article sometime. I feel that perhaps there is nothing more lacking in our Christian life and character than brotherly love. Let us all examine our hearts! Let us be honest in our feelings towards one another. If those feelings are wrong, then let us pray to God that He will help us to change them. May God restore us to full fellowship. This will require some apologizing from the heart and some forgiving from the heart. Is this not what would most please God? Then let us do it! If you have wronged someone, then make it right. This is what charity is all about. Are you honestly happy with the present state of things? Surely not! May God help us to have and cultivate this greatest of all Christian gifts and attributes; charity! May God bless you all.

SIN I

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profit. There is profit in sin, but it is temporary. Let Brother Luke speak to us from his Book, chapter 12, verses 19 and 20, "And I will say to my soul, Soul, thou hast much goods laid up for many years; take thine ease, eat, drink, and be merry. But God said unto him, Thou fool, this night thy soul shall be required of thee: then whose shall those things be, which thou hast provided?"

Sin certainly is a cheater. It cheated this man and blinded him to the fact that life is uncertain. James 4:14 reads thus, "Whereas ye know not what shall be on the morrow. For what is your life? It is even a vapor, that appeareth for a little time, and then vanisheth away."

Sin is a violation of God's law. Sin is against God, the Judge of all the earth, and must be accounted for before God. Our courts of justice sometimes fail to catch and punish crimes against society, but you can mark it down, no one will escape the judgment of God, except those

who claim Christ as their Lord and Saviour.

Every sinner will be punished in his or her own person, or in the person of a Substitute, even the Lord Jesus Christ. The only way a sinner can escape eternal punishment is to be in favour of God by Jesus Christ. I Peter 3:18 tells us, "For Christ also hath once suffered for sins, the Just for the unjust, that He might bring us to God, being put to death in the flesh, but quickened by the Spirit."

Praise God for the fact that He loved us enough to die the degrading and awful death of the tree. We know that Satan is very busy and he has led men to bring forth sin in different light to men. He presents false definitions to this hideous reality.

John Fiske said, "Sin is good in the making". He says the original sin is neither more nor less than the brute inheritance which every man carries with him and the process of evolution is an advance towards true salvation. According to him, the human race is on the way to salvation, but individuals have no hope. It is like breeding a razor-back to a razor-back to improve the breed. It has poor hope for the individual who cries out, "What must I do to be saved?" The increase is of sinful acts such as murder, rape, robbery, and other crimes too numerous to mention. Also, there are wars and rumors of wars that give the lie to the evolutionary process of salvation.

Another false definition from Christian Science: "Sin is a figment of a perverted imagination. An imaginary creation of abnormal minds". In other words, sin does not actually exist.

I wish it were possible to ask the founder of Christian Science, Mary Baker Eddy, what stand she takes now. I am sure she would have a story like unto the rich man as related to us in the Bible. Listen to Luke 16:24, "And he cried and said, Father Abraham, have mercy on me and send Lazarus, that he may dip the tip of his finger in water, and cool my tongue; for I am tormented in this flame."

The popular view today is that sin is only a crime against society. Young men and women sowing their wild oats, prostitute men and women, murderers, gangsters, and so forth. Every person is a sinner, but all are not vicious criminals. There are many virtuous women, but no sinless women, and certainly many law-abiding men, but there is none without sin.

David said in Psalm 51:5, "Behold, I was shapen in iniquity; and in sin did my mother conceive me." Even the tiny babies are sinners. Listen to Psalm 58:3, "The wicked are estranged from the womb: they go astray as soon as they be born, speaking lies."

Let us look at some true definitions of sin. A.H. Strong: "Sin is any lack of conformity to the Law of God, whether in act, disposition, or state." Sin is a condition of human nature. Sin resides in the heart.

The Apostle John: "sin is a transgression of the law" (I John 3:4b). A transgression against the Law-giver. If there is no law, then there is no breaking of the law. By the inspiration of God, John gave us these words.

Mankind believe that they can sin and not be called into account. But I believe the words of S.D. Gordon: "There are seven simple facts that everyone ought to know about sin. (1) Sin earns wages. (2) Sin pays wages. (3) Sin insists on paying. You may be willing to let the account go, but sin always insists on paying. (4) Sin pays its wages in kind. Sin against the body brings results in the body. Sin in the mental life brings results there. Sin contact with other people brings a chain of results affecting those others. No man sinneth unto himself. (5) Sin pays in installments. (6) Sin pays in full unless the blood of Jesus washes away the stain of sin. (7) Sin is self-executive, it pays its own bills."

Romans 6:23 reads thus, "For the wages of sin is death; but the gift of God is eternal life through Jesus Christ." Again, in Galatians 6:7, 8, we read, "Be not deceived; God is not mocked: for whatsoever a man soweth, that shall he also reap. For he that soweth to his flesh shall of the flesh reap corruption; but he that soweth to the Spirit shall of the Spirit reap life everlasting."

Sin means "to miss the mark". Man was created perfect, but sin entered in by disobedience and he has missed the mark since that time.

Sin may be defined as competition with God for sovereignty; competition in the realm of authority. Satan told Eve that if they would eat of the forbidden fruit, they would become like gods knowing good and evil. After Adam and Eve had disobeyed God, He said in Genesis 3:22a, "And the Lord God said, Behold, the man is become as one of us, to know good and evil."

In what sense did man become like God by sinning? Certainly it wasn't of character, because when man sinned, he became imperfect and died spiritually. Nor can it mean that man acquired the Divine attributes as Power, Holiness, and Wisdom.

In sinning, man lost his holiness and wisdom, and became altogether filthy and depraved. Sin brought death, depravity, and delusion. The only possible reason in which man became like God was in spirit and aim -- not in reality.

Adam and Eve rebelled against God's control and said by that they would determine their own way. They would do what was right in their own eyes. By believing the lies of Satan, they didn't believe what God told them; that they would die.

Every sin is in competition with God in the realm of authority. God has supreme authority by right of creation. He said in Isaiah 46:9, "For I am God, and there is none else; I am God, and there is none like me." He also said in Exodus 20:3, "Thou shalt have no other gods before me." If man doesn't worship the true God, then he worships false gods.

The sinner is waging a hopeless war against God, because He will not tolerate rivals or competitors. As I have said before, God is the only One in the universe who has the right to do as He pleases, and He does all things for His glory. All that God does, whether in mercy or justice, is to the praise of His glory.

We might ask the question, "Is sin a reality?" Ask Adam and hear him bemoan the loss of Eden.

Is sin real? Ask the rich man and hear him say in Luke 16:24, "...for I am tormented in this flame."

Is sin real? Ask the Apostle Peter and hear him say in Luke 5:8, "Depart from me; for I am a sinful man, O Lord."

Is sin real? Ask the Lord Jesus and hear Him say, "It is finished," after He paid my sin debt; after He had suffered and paid the sin debt for all the Father had chosen before the foundation of the world.

Is sin real? Ask Stephen and hear him say, "Lord, lay not this sin to their charge." (Acts 7:60).

1989 GOALS

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Started a regular hospital visitation.

Had two Home Bible Studies. Brother Shepherd coming back after nine months in bed.

Helped some folks in need. Set forth plans for an annual Bible Conference.

Had a great revival meeting.

All in all, it has been a good year for the West Griffin Baptist Church. However, we must take heed. When Paul said, "forgetting those things which are behind", he was not speaking of ignoring the past achievements and failures, but rather being careful not to allow these things to discourage us or make us too satisfied in what we have accomplished. Remembering the past will aid us in repentance of past sins, and thankfulness for the past graces and blessings.

The important thing is to allow the past to stimulate our ambitions for the future. We must realize that there is still much to do. We have not already attained. We have not yet come to perfection, (maturity). Our duties as God's servants are not yet complete. There is a world of work to be done in proclaiming the good news of the Kingdom to the lost sheep of God. We must endeavor to get more and more grace, and do even more for the cause of Christ and His kingdom. We must never come to the place where we feel we have done enough.

Beloved, there is much work to be done in this new year. Though we have been blessed with many visitors, and a record attendance of 43; we must be careful not to take pride in that, but give God all the glory. Neither should we be satisfied with it. Perhaps God would grant that that number be doubled in 1989. I believe that it can be done by His grace. But it will require much more work than in 1988. It will require much more determination, much more dedication, much more sacrifice, and a much greater vision. We must press on to higher ground.

Paul said that he did not consider himself to have even reached the plateau of service, much less the summit. Rather, he continued to reach forth unto those things which lay ahead.

We must endeavor to develop our visitation program into a truly effective way of ministering to the lost sheep in our community, and to those who stand in need of greater and deeper truth which will elevate them to a higher spiritual plain in their Christian lives.

We can rejoice in that through

the ministry of this church. We have seen souls rescued from the flames of hell. This is God's sovereign work of grace. But surely there are more than three souls to be saved through our ministry. Certainly God has more of His elect that He should be pleased to allow us to win. Oh, that God would grant us wisdom and tears.

We can rejoice that God has sent many sinners to this church in the past few months to hear the gospel, which is able to save their souls. (May I say that this church is thankful for sinners as well as saved. We love you and greatly desire to see you come to Christ that you might experience the inner peace, inner joy, and security that comes from being one of God's children.)

We can rejoice in having two added to our membership through scriptural baptism. What a thrill it was to go down into the water with these babes in Christ and perform this Baptist ordinance.

Notwithstanding, there remains others who stand in need of baptism. They have professed Christ as Saviour, but have not submitted to Him as their Lord and Master. Is this possible? Can one have the Saviour without obeying Him as Lord? Once a person has truly come to know the Lord Jesus Christ as Saviour, and has been shown and taught the truth concerning his or her responsibility to be baptized, and obey the Lord's command to walk worthy of his or her vocation in faithfulness and personal holiness, and he or she refuses to do those things, there must be serious questions raised as to the sincerity of their commitment and validity of their faith.

We can rejoice in having two members join us by letter from another Baptist church of like faith and order. But there are others seeking God's will for membership. Let us make this a matter of earnest prayer for them.

Beloved, I have, time and time again, expressed my desire and hope to be on this field of ministry on a full-time basis. I have been warned by a dear and wise friend that though I should determine to attain this goal, I should not allow myself to become obsessed with the idea. I am not obsessed. I realize that it is in God's hands and in His own time He will make a way. I feel sure that He would not put such a strong desire in my heart if He never intended to give me that blessing. My burden is not just to have a full-time ministry, but for the work of this church. However, I believe that God's means for bringing this about is manifested in the efforts and work of His people. I trust that you will never become satisfied with a part-time pastor. I trust that you will determine both individually and collectively to make this become a reality in 1989. I trust that you will share this burden with me. Of course, substantial church growth will be the key to meeting this goal. You have supported a full-time pastor in the past, you can do it again.

We must be constantly reaching forth unto those things which are before us. I have so many things that I desire to do to expand our evangelical effort and to enhance the spiritual growth of the membership and to expand our ministries that are virtually impossible with my present status. Let us endeavor to make this both a matter of prayer, and a

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1989 GOALS

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working goal for 1989!

There are so many things that we have to look forward to in this new year.

Having a great Bible Conference.

Expanding our newsletter.

Expansion of our Home Bible Studies.

Possibility of a radio ministry

Expansion of our hospital ministry.

I have even thought of a printed ministry with one of the local newspapers.

Expansion of our printed ministry in T.B.E.

Improving our song service.

Expanding our inner church teaching ministry.

Pray much that God would send us someone who would work with our youth. Oh, what a great field God has for us to work in! Oh, what great potential in the work of Christ! Oh, what opportunities lie ahead for us if we simply reach forth unto those things which are before us! Truly, the fields are white unto harvest!

It is not a matter of, "can we do all these things?" No, God forbid that we should question God's ability. The question is, will we forget those things which are behind, that is, move out and move ahead as a runner would pull away from the pack and reach forth toward those things which lie ahead?

The goal must always be the kingdom of heaven. This time allotted to us here is that we might better prepare ourselves and others for the kingdom to come.

We must constantly and diligently press toward the mark for the prize of the high calling of God in Christ Jesus. Verily, it is a high calling. It is the highest calling ever. It is a calling from heaven and the very throne. It is a call for all of God's people. It is a blessed calling.

The prize is heaven. It is a glorious prize. It is the greatest prize. It is an eternal prize.

Beloved, I have set some goals before you for 1989. I do not think they are unattainable goals. I do not think they are unreasonable goals. I do not think they are unscriptural goals. I do believe they are challenging goals that truly challenge your dedications, your determination, your energy, and your spirituality. You cannot stand back and watch and wish, you must make these things happen. Can I do it? No. Can you do it? No. Can we together with God do it? Yes. By becoming laborers together with God, we can do it! (Philippians 4:13). "I can do all things through Christ which strengtheneth me." Amen.

SAMSON

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in Timnath of the daughters of the Philistines." True, this was of the Lord to bring about his mission, but we must not ignore the fact that the law of God forbade interracial marriage among the Jews. Next in Judges 16:1, we read "Then went Samson to Gaza, and saw there an harlot, and went in unto her." Here he ignores his divine calling and sins against the Lord and his own body. This resulted in serious

jeopardy of his life; for while he lay with this harlot the people of Gaza surrounded the city and locked him in, hoping to kill him in the morning. But Samson, through merciful providence (16:3) "arose at midnight, and took the doors of the gates of the city, and the two posts, and went away with them, bar and all, and put them upon his shoulders, and carried them to the top of an hill that is before Hebron." The scholars tell us that these doors and posts were about sixty cubits wide which interprets to about ninety feet wide. They add that the distance they were carried was about twenty miles. Whether this be so or no it was no small feat and portrays an even greater work. Victory! Yea, the victory of the Lord Jesus Christ over death, hell and the grave. Though soldiers guarded His sealed tomb, they slept, the seal was broken, and the stone rolled away. This work of Samson represents the resurrection of the Lord Jesus Christ and His escape from all His enemies. This portrays His eternal victory which ever assures us of an eternally secured salvation which He alone was strong enough to accomplish.

The Philistines knew of a certainty that one of Samson's weaknesses was women, for we next read in Judges 16:4 "he loved a woman in the valley of Sorek, whose name was Delilah." It is interesting to notice that though Samson was not given to strong drink, being a Nazarite, he is often seen in the places where wine was produced. In the vineyards he had met with great danger. It was in the vineyard he had killed a lion, and here in v:4 we are told that Delilah lived in the valley of "Sorek" which means, a vineyard. It appears that Samson began to tempt himself in the places of sin. Delilah; it is believed, was a Philistine harlot with whom Samson began to live. Her name is well suited to her for it means, weakness or feebleness. She willingly betrayed Samson for pieces of silver, even as Judas betrayed our Lord Jesus. Samson, it appears, while living in sin and serving Satan, became overconfident. He began to trust in his own strength to deliver. While living in sin he became forgetful of his mission to his God and Israel, and of the wickedness of his enemies. He began to take refuge in the weak and beggerly element of this world. Delilah! He soon became like her, for we are told in 16:17 that "he told her all his heart." He betrayed his purpose to his enemies by loving the things of the world. Surely beloved, when one begins to serve this world rather than his Lord, it will soon follow that he will abide in darkness; having forsaken the Light of the Word of God. He no longer separated himself from sinners. His testimony was denied before his enemies by his very appearance. Yet God would get glory from Samson. Samson had been saved for service as a man of faith. God would not allow that Samson dishonor His name.

Our text of 16:21 first tells us, "But the Philistines took him." The enemy and the servants of Satan had gotten victory over him. Why? He had now become as the people of Israel. The very people he was intended to deliver. Judges 13:1 states; that "the children of

Israel did evil again in the sight of the Lord; and the Lord delivered them into the hands of the Philistines."

Samson had told Delilah "all his heart... and she made him sleep." She caused the hair of his head to be shaven while he slept. Here beloved, is a severe warning from the Word of God! Join hands with the world and we play with fire! Now the enemy, being assured of victory, knowing the weakness of Samson, came to take him. But wait! Samson is awakened and states; "I will go out as at other times before, and shake myself. And he wist not that the Lord was departed from him." Beloved when we turn from God, we can do naught but turn to sin.

When we turn to sin, we turn to deception and delusion. We begin to yet believe we are in God's favor and we turn to "self" assurance. Hence, "I will go out...and shake myself."

"But the Philistines took him, and put out his eyes." Those eyes of Samson had been his downfall. Hear what declared our Lord. (Matthew 6:22-23). "The light of the body is the eye: if therefore thine eye be single, thy whole body shall be full of light. But if thine eye be evil, thy whole body shall be full of darkness. If therefore the light that is in thee be darkness, how great is that darkness!" The law of the Nazarite called for sanctification. The child of God is called to sanctification. Not just at times, and not just in part, but the whole is to be sanctified or set apart for the Lord. Proverbs 15:30 tells us, "The light of the eyes rejoiceth the heart." What enters the eyes effects the heart, therefore must the eye be single or in one direction. Darkness and light cannot exist together, for one will diminish the other. A sinful eye is a dim eye. Samson had grieved the Holy Spirit of God by having "eyes full of adultery, and that cannot cease from sin; beguiling unstable souls: an heart they have exercised with covetous practices." (II Peter 2:14). Samson had betrayed his Lord, his office and his vows. Humility was now called for, yea, demanded of God. "For the ways of man are before the eyes of the Lord, and he pondereth all his goings." and "The way of a fool is right in his own eyes." (Proverbs 5:21, 12:15). Samson was now to abide in physical darkness that he might be spiritually enlightened. Our text adds: "put out his eyes and brought him down." Here Samson was to be humbled. He who was mighty before men was now as a helpless babe led about by mocking enemies who mocked not only him but his God; Samson, our text states, was "bound with fetters of brass" the very metal that symbolized the judgment of God. "And he did grind in the prison house". What is the lesson here beloved? Romans 6:16 tells us. "Know ye not, that to whom ye yield yourselves servants to obey, his servants ye are to whom ye obey; whether of sin unto death, or of obedience unto righteousness." He that is servant to sin is slave to sin, and who can deliver from such bondage?

The Philistines gave glory to

Dagon for the capture of Samson. They praised their god and "made sport" of God's elect. Would God allow this dishonor of His holy name and this abuse of His servant Samson? Is there any circumstance that takes place in the lives of His own that He knows nothing of? Did He not declare in Isaiah 65:24. "And it shall come to pass, that before they call, I will answer; and while they are yet speaking I will hear."

Does not Romans 8:28 remind us "that all things work together for good to them that love God"? For his sins Samson must grievously suffer. It was not for his defeat, but for the glory of His God!

Samson's hair began to grow again. The return of the backslider is here typed. The reminder was to patiently endure the suffering until God would give an answer. When a saint falls into the pit of sin, how hard will be the struggle to return from that place! How painful the wounds. God yet had a plan for Samson however, in which He would use the Philistines to set up their own defeat. While these made sport of Samson, they unwittingly fulfilled the will of God. Judges 16:25 tells us; "they set him between the pillars." The very place where blind Samson would get his greatest victory over them! Humbled Samson could no longer see, but the eyes of faith saw ever so clearly. Judges 16:28 is the first and only record of Samson resorting to prayer. Surely a sign of humility before God. He knew what he must do and he knew the cost, and by his mighty strength he brought down the house of Dagon, killing all within. Where now were the mockings? Where now was Dagon, the salvation of the Philistines? Samson died beginning to bring salvation to Israel. He died a man of faith. But he died not fully accomplishing a deliverance for Israel.

We hear not the cry of "It is finished" as he entered death's door, yet came such words from the Lord Jesus for our hearing, our consolation, our joy! He alone was able to deliver all, He alone completed the task. He alone excelled in strength. He alone finished alone. In men we cannot place such faith, but Samson, in his last hours, teaches us indeed that we walk by faith not by sight, for Paul reminds us that "faith is the substance of things hoped for, the evidence of things not seen." Victory awaits the faithful, even the victory of Jesus Christ. May some dear lost soul read of these feeble attempts to honor Christ and believe in Him, indeed.

MY TRIP

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feasted on this sight of the place where our blessed Lord raised Lazarus from the dead. Our Lord often visited this place. We entered the cave where Lazarus was buried, twenty two steps down to the tomb. Some think this is why Jesus cried with a loud voice saying "Lazarus, come forth." One thing we do know, when Christ calls with the effectual call, the dead come forth, "For he spake, and it was done, he commanded and it stood fast." (Psalms 33:9) He also calls dead sinners to repentance and saving faith through His glorious gospel of sovereign grace, preached through the messengers of His church,

"With the Holy Spirit sent down from heaven." (I Peter 1:12). As we looked over a rock wall on the other side of Lazarus' tomb, we saw five little white lambs which had just been slaughtered with their throats cut and a man with a water hose washing the blood from their throats, their eyes still open. I immediately thought of "The Lamb of God" (John 1:36), who was crucified so near that place in Jerusalem, for the sins of His people "Behold the Lamb of God, which taketh away the sin of the world" (John 1:29).

Leaving Bethany, we returned to the hotel in Jerusalem. After three nights in Jerusalem, we set out early Friday morning, February 9th, on our journey to Galilee by the way of Samaria. "And he must needs go through Samaria". (John 4:4). On our way we saw many wonderful sights. We saw Nob, where David got the hallowed bread from Ahimelech, the Priest. Next we saw the place where King Saul was born. We saw also a hospital for the blind built by Helen Keller. We saw Emmaus, where Jesus and the two men walked together on the day of His resurrection. We saw the place where Joseph and Mary turned back to Jerusalem, discovering that they had left our Lord in the Temple. We saw Ramah where Samuel was born, lived, and died. On our right side from the bus we saw Bethel, where Jacob saw his vision of the ladder. Then we saw the place where Abraham and Lot separated. Next we saw the home place the man lived who killed Robert Kennedy, that is Sirhan Sirhan. Next we came to Shiloh where the Tabernacle was in the days of Eli the Priest, when the Ark was taken by the Philistines; also the Valley of the Dancers where the men of Benjamin got their wives. On our way from Jerusalem to Samaria, we passed through thousands of acres of olive groves and lots of fig trees, also the almond trees were in full bloom, a beautiful sight to see.

We then came to Shechem, where we visited Jacob's well and drank some of the good water, drawn up with a rope and bucket. Here my soul feasted upon this wonderful sight and place where our blessed Lord preached to the woman of Samaria... (John 4:7-26). This visit was a special answer to prayer, for the night before, we were told in Jerusalem that we might not get to go through Samaria, as the week before two buses were stoned there, so we asked our Lord to please open the way for us to see Jacob's well and He answered our prayer. "Blessed be His name." There were Jews with machine guns standing on the top of the buildings round about, guarding this place. Best of all, our God was on guard for us. It was here that Jacob, on his way returning from Mesopotamia, came to the beautiful valley lying between the two mountains, Gerizim and Ebal, as did his grandfather, Abraham, before him. We passed through this valley between these two mountains which lay about a hundred yards apart, I would think. This place is now called Nablus. From these two mountains the blessings and curses were announced by Israel in the days of Joshua. Much Bible his-

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MY TRIP

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tory surrounds this place, but the most wonderful thing about it all is that our sovereign Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ, the Messiah, placed His sacred feet on this lovely place. This made Samaria famous above all her glory.

Leaving Nablus, we came to Sebastian, where the head of John the Baptist was found, and passing on we saw the place where Joseph was sold by his brothers to the Ishmaelites at Dothan. Next we came in view of the Plain of Jezreel where the historic battles have been fought, and where the great battle of Armageddon will be fought as it leads on to its consummation in Jerusalem, as we read of in Zechariah chapter fourteen, Revelation, chapter nineteen and other places in the Bible. Coming then to Megiddo, located on the southern edge of the Plain of Jezreel, we spent much time viewing the excavations of Solomon's stables, Jereboam's, silo, and the ingenious water system. We went down one hundred and eighty-five steps to this tunnel cut through the rocks, channeling the water into the city from a spring outside the city. This tunnel is still well preserved after three thousand years. It is said that when General Patton visited this place, he said, "All the armies of the world could fight here." It might be that he had read something in the Bible about the battle of Armageddon, perhaps in Revelation chapter sixteen, verses thirteen through sixteen.

Next, we came by Nain, where Jesus raised the widow's son from the dead, (Luke 7:11-17). This town is still small, and is five miles east of Nazareth and two miles south west of Endor. From here we were in plain view of Mt. Tabor. The beautiful circular top like the rainbow stands obvious to the eye. Some think this is the place of the Transfiguration of our Lord. I rather believe Mt. Hermon was the place. David sings his sweet Psalm about both. (Psalm 89:12). We read of the great battle fought near here by Barak and Deborah with Sisera, when Barak came down from Mt. Tabor with ten thousand men after him and conquered Sisera and his army, as the Lord ordered and gave victory.

Journeying on, we came to the Jordan river, and washed our hands in this majestic stream, the famous river our blessed Lord was baptized in by the great preacher, John the Baptist... (Matt. 3:13-17). I had often dreamed of visiting the Jordan river, now it was a reality, thank God. From here we came to Tiberias on the beautiful seashore of the Sea of Galilee, a city of fifty thousand population they tell us, today. Here we ate lunch at the Ron Beach Hotel where we spent that night sleeping on the shore of the Sea of Galilee. This was a great treat to our souls. We ate what they called St. Peter's fish from that sea. After arriving there, we took a boat tour from Tiberias to Capernaum, the city where our Lord dwelt early in His ministry after leaving Nazareth, it was called His own city... (Matt. 9:1). Here many of His mighty miracles and wonders were done. We had special

services here in the ruins of the synagogue where Jesus ministered. Brother Valley spoke here on the parable of the sower, and my brother, Wallace, led us in prayer.

While we were at Capernaum, I thought of the judgment our Lord pronounced upon this place, (Matt. 11:23) as I saw the ruins of this place which was once a large and prosperous city, perhaps, they say, one of the largest and richest cities along the shores of the Sea of Galilee, with a customs station and a residence for a high Roman officer, in the days of our Lord's ministry there. Christ's residence and ministry there had exalted this place unto heaven, but it was brought down to hell, for it repented not. It is for nations, cities, and individuals that sin against open light and do not repent of their great sins, to be brought down to judgment of almighty God.

From Capernaum, we ascended the hill to the Mount of Beatitudes where our Lord preached the great sermon on the mount. We saw also the traditional place where Christ fed the five thousand multitude with five loaves and two fishes... (Mark 6:30-44). We passed along the coast of the sea of Magdala, the birth place of Mary Magdalene, the woman of whom our Lord cast out seven demons. This place is located four miles north of Tiberias. Josephus tells us that this place once had four thousand inhabitants and a fleet of two hundred and thirty boats. Today it is a small village of fishermen. From here we returned to Tiberias and spent the night in the Ron Beach Hotel. I awoke early in the morning and had a great time of Spiritual blessing with my Lord, while reading His word about His wonderful works along and on this beautiful sea, and as I pulled back the curtain from the window and looked out over the waters He had walked upon, my heart and soul leaped with joy. From here we could see the mountain on the other side of the sea where our Lord cast the demons out of the maniac of Gadara. After breakfast, we took our leave for a long days journey. On our way we saw the fields where the disciples ate the wheat. We then came to Cana of Galilee, where our Lord performed His first miracle turning water to wine. This was a thrilling sight to behold, and my heart was glad to see the place where the most wonderful person in all the universe manifested forth His glory... (John 2:1-11).

Leaving Cana, we came to Nazareth, the home town of Jesus our Lord. My heart was enlarged as I gazed upon this scene of wonder where the foot steps of the Most High tread in human flesh as in His boyhood days. We drank water here from Mary's well. Think of drinking water from the fountain where our Lord Himself drank. Here I was privileged to bring a message, by God's grace, to our tour group and some others of the residents round about. I spoke from the Scripture found in I Tim. 3:16. Please read this text and think upon it. I praise God for this esteemed privilege to witness the truth of His Word on this sacred ground. At this place the holy angel visited Mary with the glorious announcement of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ. Here also He grew into manhood and preached in the synagogue the acceptable year of the Lord. (Luke 4:16-30).

Taking our leave from Nazareth, we came to the beautiful city Haifa, a little town of ten thousand population in nineteen and five. It is now the third largest city in Israel, with the population two hundred and twenty-five thousand. It possesses the country's main port and the nation's largest industries. It is situated in the most beautiful bay of the Mediterranean Coast, and at the slope of the most charming mountain in Israel, which is Mt. Carmel. This is the mountain on which Elijah confronted the priests of Baal, and prayed for the God of Israel to reveal to the people that He was the true and living God. The fire of God fell, and consumed the altar, water and all, even the stones, and the dust, and licked up the water that was in the trench. When the people saw it they fell on their faces and said, "...The LORD, he is the God..." (I Ki. 18:38-39). Then Elijah slew the false prophets, and went upon the top of the mountain and prayed for rain. You remember there had been no rain for three and a half years. God answered his prayer with a great rain. Elijah took off from the mountain in high speed, and outran Ahab in his chariot to Jezreel, for the hand of the Lord was on Elijah.

We ate lunch on the top of this mountain over looking the beautiful harbor, the haven of ships. This was indeed a thrilling scene for the eyes to behold, the handy work of the Divine Architect of the universe.

Descending from the mountain, we came down to the seashore, and journeyed south on the beautiful plane of Sharon. This plain is a fertile region, a pasture land for flocks, with its flowers and lilies, and the lily of the valley. We read in the Song of Solomon "...I am the rose of Sharon, the lily of the valleys." (Song of Sol. 2:1). We saw some of the finest hotel buildings high upon the mountain of Carmel as we journeyed to Caesarea.

Finally we came to Caesarea, a place of no small interest for me, as I had longed to see the place where the Apostle Paul spent two years as a prisoner, where he was tried before the Roman rulers such as Felix, Festus, and Agrippa. Here we saw the Roman Gods, where the Jews had chopped off their heads. This city was rebuilt in twenty B.C. by Herod the great. One of the most interesting remains of this place was the historic discovery of a stone with the name of Pontius Pilate inscribed in it. You remember, he was the procurator who condemned our Lord Jesus Christ to death. The ancient theater is quite a scene. My brother, Wallace, sang here the beautiful song "How Great Thou Art". As we sat on the stone pews, his voice was heard as clear as a bell, and our hearts were filled with praise to our Great Redeemer and sovereign Lord, to Him be glory and praise forever.

One of the most wonderful things that ever transpired at Caesarea was the ratification of God's purpose in carrying out His great commission that He gave to His Church, to give the gospel to the world, the Jew, and the Gentile. So it was here that Peter preached to the household of Cornelius, and as Peter was preaching Christ, "While Peter yet spake these words, the Holy Ghost fell on all them which heard the

word." (Acts 10:44). Here we see that God also, to the Gentiles granted repentance unto life. (Acts 11:18).

Leaving Caesarea, we came to the modern and beautiful city of Tel Aviv.

The name signifies (Hill Of Spring). This city was founded in 1901 on desolate sand-dunes. In 1948 there was said to be but fifteen houses here. Today this is one of the largest cities in Palestine, with a population of four hundred and thirty thousand Jews. It is said to be the first city in the world to be built, populated and administered entirely by Jews.

Spending the night in Tel Aviv, we stayed in the beautiful Tal Hotel, guarded by a Jew who sat in the front doorway with a machine gun. After breakfast next morning, we had another special worship service by the sea side. My brother, Wallace, spoke at this service. He brought this message on Jonah, a well fitted subject since we were near Joppa (Jaffa) where Jonah boarded the ship. This was indeed a heart moving message, and our eyes were again filled with tears, especially regarding the part about Jonah's three days and nights in the belly of the great fish, being a foreshadow of our Lord's death, burial, and resurrection, the Gospel sign. (Matt. 12:39). Remember our Lord said, "Behold a greater than Jonas is here." (Matt. 12:41).

Following this service, a number of us took a stroll through the streets of this lovely city. Needless to say, I began to feel tired from this long walk. My tiredness, however, was mitigated by the wondrous things my eyes had rested upon.

We took our leave from Tel Aviv Sunday, February 11, 1979. On the way to the airport, we passed through Old Jaffa where Jonah boarded the ship for Tarshish. Joppa has a recorded history of thirty six hundred years. The cedar wood of Lebanon for the building of Solomon's Temple and the rebuilding of the Temple under Zerubbabel, was unloaded at Joppa. It was also here that God raised Tabitha to life in answer to Peter's prayer. (Acts 9: 40). Here Peter had his vision on the house top for his mission to the Gentiles at Caesarea. I praise my God for this visit to old Joppa.

Arriving next at the Ben Gurion Airport, we boarded the jet

for our return flight to Brussels. The temperature was eighty degrees at the airport. As we flew over the beautiful waters of the great sea, I looked back for one more look at the Land of Promise. I said in my heart, "I go but I shall return." After five hours flight over Greece, Italy, Austria, France, Germany and Belgium, we spent another night at the Metropole Hotel in Brussels. Next morning we once more took to the skies on our transatlantic flight to Atlanta, which was nine hours time. We arrived at Atlanta about three o'clock in the afternoon. This was one day, and perhaps the only one, for me to see eighteen hours of daylight, until I reach my home sweet home in heaven, where no storms ever beat upon the glittering strand and there is no night. (Rev. 22:5).

We parted in the way at the station in Atlanta, to go our separate ways, Wallace and his wife Estelle, and the other tour members. This was Estelle's second trip to Palestine. They turned toward East Tennessee, and I started toward Florida. My wife and Jim, my son, met me at the airport in Orlando, around six o'clock in the evening, from which we arrived at home soon in Mims, Florida.

Once again I bowed my head and heart before my sovereign and merciful Lord, with a prayer of gratitude and praise for this long to be remembered and enjoyable trip to the land which our Lord God careth for, and His eyes are upon it, from the beginning of the year unto the end of the year. (Deut. 11:12). All praise and glory be unto Him, Who loved us and washed us from our sins in His own blood. (Rev. 1:5). Who rose from the dead for our justification, and is coming soon, to be glorified in all His saints.

Mrs. Mary M. Cannon of Bristol, Tennessee has written a booklet regarding this trip as she was one of our tour, the title of the booklet is "Sojourn in Israel". It is a splendid writing.

Let me say here, that I am deeply indebted to Brother Joseph M. Wilson, Editor of this great paper, The Baptist Examiner, for the space and labor he has invested in the publishing of this discourse I have written for the glory of my Lord. I recommend The Baptist Examiner as one of the best publications of the "truth" being sent forth to the many readers today.

ANNOUNCEMENTS

There will be a fellowship meeting at the Sovereign Grace Baptist Church of Cortland, Ohio Saturday, June 17th. The church meets at 3572 Wilson-Sharpville Road. The services will begin at 9:30 a.m. The church will serve lunch. There will be a further service after lunch. Speakers will be Danny Stepp, Jim Walters, Joe Wilson, and others. The church meets at 3572 Wilson-Sharpville Rd. For further information call the pastor, Chester Powell at (216) 772-5323 or Arvel Waddell at (216) 856-4945. You will be blessed by attending this meeting. I would like to meet you there.

A Sovereign Grace Landmark Missionary Baptist Mission has been started in Tucson, Arizona under the authority of the Calvary Baptist Church of Ashland, Ky. Elder Marion G. Lawson is the mission pastor. The name of the mission is New Commandment Baptist Mission. The Mission meets at 2227 E. Broadway, Tucson, Ariz. For further information contact Elder Marion G. Lawson at 1633 Cloverland Ave. S. Tucson, Arizona 85711, or call him at (602) 750-0053. Any readers in this area are invited to attend services. If you desire to help this work financially, contact Joseph M. Wilson at TBE address. Pray for this new work.

A Wine/Grape Juice Debate

There will be a formal debate at the Northside Baptist Church in Lexington, Kentucky at 257 Swigert Avenue on the evenings of July 20 and 21 at 7:30 each evening. The debate will last approximately 2 hours each evening. Pastor Ray Hiatt of Sovereign Grace Baptist Church, Hazard, Kentucky shall affirm that fermented wine is the proper Biblical element in the Lord's Supper. Pastor Gerald Smith of the Northside Baptist Church shall affirm that grape juice is the proper Biblical element in the Lord's Supper.

Everyone is encouraged to attend this debate. If you have any questions call Pastor Smith at 1-606-293-0402 or Pastor Hiatt at 1-606-436-3252.