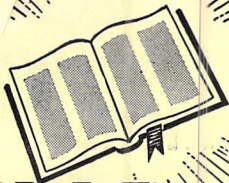
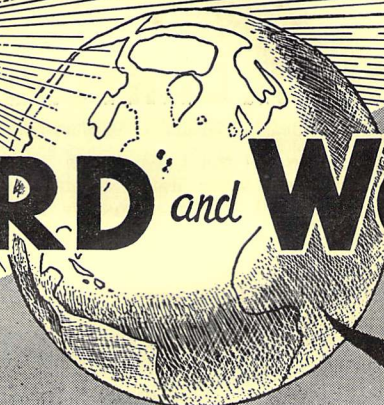


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MAY, 1981

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Robert Heid is a minister in Louisville, Kentucky.



## God's Family

W. R. H.

### A Pity-Party Update

It was a totally new expression to me yesterday, as I heard one of the kids say that the members of the losing ball team were engaged in a pity-party. But while the expression was a new one, the experience most certainly was not. Who among us has not, at times, indulged himself in the extravagance of self-pity? And we might follow with another question: What good was accomplished as we commiserated with ourselves? It may have been so legitimate a gripe as a parking meter citation, or an infraction with the stop signs; but what good did it do to linger on the subject after we had let off the first bit of steam? Even the humiliation of losing a game was not mitigated by reciting the unequal lineup of players on the opposing teams. Thankfully, the pity-party was ended in a moment—and both teams enjoyed the holiday to the end.

Psalm 73 touches on this theme in a grand way. The Psalmist says: "But as for me, my feet were almost gone; My steps had well nigh slipped. For I was envious of the arrogant, when I saw the prosperity of the wicked. For there are no pangs in their death; but their strength is firm. . . . They have more than heart could wish. Behold, these are the wicked, and being always at ease, they increase in riches." The Psalmist then further indulges himself as he says: "Surely in vain have I cleansed my heart, and washed my hands in innocency; for all the day long have I been plagued, and chastened every morning."

It is at this point in the psalm that the light of God breaks through, and so the writer says: "If I had said, I will speak thus; behold I had dealt treacherously with the generation of thy children. When I thought how I might know this, it was too painful for me: until I went into the sanctuary of God, and considered their latter end. Surely thou settest them in slippery places; Thou castest them down to destruction." Finally he climaxes all of the meditation with: "Nevertheless, I am continually with thee: Thou hast holden my right hand. Thou wilt guide me with thy counsel, and afterward receive me to glory."

We sometimes find that we have made a business contract that is less than we had expected. Perhaps the house painter or the auto mechanic did not carry out all that we thought was right. Can we



live with ourselves if we hold back on payment of his charges? One man, thinking he needed a greater supply of water, ordered the weller to drill at the point of the weller's best judgment. It turned out to be a practically dry and useless hole. How do we settle this one ethically? The driller reduced the price of his drilling to what he thought he must receive. The land owner paid it.

Psalms 15 begins with the question: "Jehovah, who shall sojourn in thy tabernacle; Who shall dwell in thy holy hill?" A list of chosen ones follows, and in verse four is included: "He that sweareth to his own hurt, and changeth not." Here we have advice from God's Holy Spirit, as to the value of holy integrity.

Ecclesiastes 5:4 further states: "When thou vowest a vow unto God, defer not to pay it; for he hath no pleasure in fools: pay that which thou vowest. Better is it that thou shouldst not vow, than that thou shouldst vow and not pay. Suffer not thy mouth to cause thy flesh to sin; neither say thou before the angel (messenger of God) that it was an error."

This brings to mind the countless cases of young people and even older people who have made vows before God and then find themselves tempted to renege. First, consider the good confession, when we vow to take the Lord Jesus Christ as our *Lord* and *Savior*. How many soon decide to re-take this authority unto themselves, and while hoping to continue along with a Savior, are not about to have Jesus as Lord of their lives and decisions. Can we believe that "it is better that thou shouldst not vow, than that thou shouldst vow and not pay"?

The vows most often under fire today are the marriage vows. Often, young marrieds get the feeling that they have vowed to their own hurt. Either they don't like the restrictions of marriage, or are unable to share in the financial expenses, or are confronted with some debilitating and expensive disease, or are generally "Fed up with the set-up." Small clashes of will, which could and should become stepping stones to a new and stronger commitment, rather become stumbling blocks and becloud the thinking as well as the apologizing and forgiving processes. Vows that gave joy and sanctity to a whole new realm of marital bliss are then quickly forgotten, and self-pity begins its insidious onslaught.

The Lord Jesus is the Father's example of how to deal with this self-pity problem. We can see Him, crying out forgiveness and bringing mercy to his crucifiers, even as He died on the cross. Our self-pity will flee as we properly commune with Him in His passion.

Jack Blaes preaches at the Antioch Church, Frankfort, Ky. and teaches at the Portland Christian School in Louisville.



## Viewing the News

Jack Blaes

THE TASK FORCE ON ISSUES OF BIBLICAL TRANSLATION, an ad hoc committee of the National Council of Churches Division of Education and Ministry, reports that they have voted to use "inclusive language" about sex to rewrite biblical passages where possible. "It is possible to minimize the use of 'he' for God and accept a distinct theological style where one refrains from pronouns," says the report. By way of example the Task Force sets forth the following rendition of Romans 8:28-29: "We know that in everything God works for good with those who love God, who are called according to God's purpose. For those whom God foreknew, God predestined to be conformed to the image of God's child, in order that it might be the firstborn among children." "God's child" in this mistranslation is Jesus. Then, you see, He is referred to as "it". I must say this is indeed a "distinct theological style." The report goes on to say: Words referring to God will include both masculine and feminine images." I suppose that is the meaning of "inclusive language."

\* \* \* \* \*

"MANY PEOPLE ARE DEEPLY OFFENDED BY MASCULINE-BIASED language and feel it cuts them off from full participation in the community of the church." Thus the N.C.C. explains the need for rewriting offensive parts of the Bible. Their Strategy/Implications Committee recommends "as a first step or as part of its educational strategy, a series of attitudinal tests among clergy and laity relative to inclusive language in the Bible and how to deal with this issue. Perhaps George Gallup might be requested to do a series of yearly polls

over a period of three to five years." Can you imagine what percent of the persons contacted by Mr. Gallup will be experts in the original languages of the Bible? As if that matters to the National Council of Churches.

\* \* \* \* \*

SEVENTY TO NINETY PERCENT OF THE PATENTS granted in the U.S. in such fields as TV, photography, photo-electronics, textile machinery, combustion engines and other advances in the auto industry are granted to Japanese, Germans, Russians and others in the Soviet bloc. Japan is rapidly advancing in the microelectronics field which is very crucial to computers and communications.

\* \* \* \* \*

MANY BIG GOVERNMENT AGENCIES HAVE THEIR OWN budgets for publishing information relative to their particular purpose for being. As a rule a mountain of government publications is pouring from such agencies. President Reagan wants this topped, scaled back, or brought under control. This costs the taxpayers millions of dollars while much of this published material piles up in government warehouses.

\* \* \* \* \*

WORD COMES OF A TV SERIES ON ABRAHAM LINCOLN which will attempt to "prove" that Mr. Lincoln was an unbeliever instead of a man of steadfast faith in the Providence of God. This shows how much importance the enemy places upon the Christian testimony of an individual.

\* \* \* \* \*

THE CHILEAN GOVERNMENT REMOVES ITSELF FROM THE SOCIAL SECURITY business. Let private enter-



prise do it, and let the workers foot the bill themselves, is the thinking of President Augusto Pinochet, who has restored Chile's economy until it is one of the healthiest in South America. He has been working to restore as much of the economy as possible to private hands and "not to interfere directly to solve such problems as unemployment." This is a splendid way to send communists and all other socialists packing—restort the economy to private enterprise from stem to stern.

COMMENTATOR DICK WEST NOTES THAT AMBASSADOR Jeane Kirkpatrick, America's Permanent Representative to the United Nations, has a serious speech impediment. Her problem? "She is unable to obfuscate." Mrs. Kirkpatrick admits that sometimes her sentences are too short and her meanings too clear. In consultation with James Boren, who has "devoted a lifetime to the spread of what he calls 'lateral communications,'" Mr. Boren agrees that "the United Nations is no place for verbal simplicity." The Ambassador will never reach "the optimum of her pursuits unless she learns to profundify the justifications of her options." In fact, Mr. Boren felt it a bad omen that Mrs. Kirkpatrick, a former university professor, got as far as she did in the academic world without mastering the art of obfuscation. But this expert in how to say what you mean so that no one could possibly understand, is certain that Mrs. Kirkpatrick "can quickly learn to fuzzify the supermotive of the upper" at the U.N. once she puts her mind to it.

INTERNAL REVENUE SERVICE WANTS TO TAKE AWAY the tax-exempt status of Bob Jones University because it has a policy against interracial dating. A panel of the Fourth Circuit Court of Appeals has stayed any I.R.S. action pending a decision of the Supreme Court.

IN 1970 THE AVERAGE SALES PRICE OF NEW AND EXISTING homes was \$23,100, according to a study by the Investors Mortgage Company of Boston. Mortgage interest rates averaged 8.5 percent, and average monthly payments were around \$127.

Ten years later, in those same categories, the figures were \$56,910; 12 percent; and \$621 per month. But not holding.

NATURALLY, FOLLOWING THE ASSASSINATION ATTEMPTS on both President Reagan and the Pope, we are hearing much talk about the need for "gun-control" legislation. I don't discount all of it, but I do take a dim view of much of it. Representative William L. Dickinson (R-Alabama) notes that our experiences with anti-gun laws which prevent law-abiding citizens from owning firearms "appear to be worthless in reducing violent crime against Americans." Washington, for example, "has one of the largest and best police forces in the Nation and also one of the most restrictive anti-gun laws in the nation. Handguns are literally outlawed in the District of Columbia, yet handgun-related crimes against helpless, unarmed citizens are increasing."

The Congressman has found that Americans overwhelmingly—by 88 percent—approve of the right to keep and bear arms. Some 47 percent of the households polled acknowledge gun ownership. What citizens really crave in this regard is strict penalties for the use of firearms in violent crimes. While most are opposed to gun controls for other reasons, law-abiding Americans are convinced that regulation will not keep guns out of the hands of criminals, and therefore, will not achieve the apparent reason for such controls. Any criminal knows that regardless of what the law says, to take a life is much more serious than having a gun. If the courts will not enforce the more serious law of murder, why should they be expected to enforce the law of having a handgun? Even criminals have testified that one reason for so much violence is that there is so little punishment for these crimes.

ACCORDING TO THE CENSUS BUREAU, 27,190,000 of the 79,108,000 American households in 1979 received benefits from at least one of the following federal programs: Medicare, Medicaid, Food Stamps, specially subsidized school lunch aid, and subsidized housing.



Carl Kitzmiller is minister of the Oakdale, Louisiana Church of Christ and writes the Sunday school lessons for Word and Work Lesson Quarterly.



## Questions Asked of Us

Carl Kitzmiller

*Believing that Jesus is the perfect fulfilment of the Passover lamb, even to the fine details, such as dying at the same prescribed time—14th Nisan, or the Preparation (Matt. 27:62); how could He have eaten the Passover Meal with the disciples which was to occur on 15th Nisan?*

My solution to this question makes no claim to being an inspired one, but it satisfies me. I hope it will satisfy the one asking the question and the rest of our readers.

It is evident that Jesus could not have eaten the Passover at the specified time and yet Himself have died as our Passover at the exact hour the lamb was to be slain. The Passover lamb that He and His disciples shared in the upper room had to die and be roasted before the meal began. This Passover meal took place the evening before His death on the cross, which came almost twenty-four hours later. The order is obvious—first, the death of the lamb, then the preparation and eating of the Passover. If, therefore, we insist that as a perfect keeper of the law He had to observe the meal at the proper hour, and as our Passover Lamb He had to die at the proper hour, we are faced with an impossibility. Either (1) He ate the meal early, or (2) He died later than was customary for the lamb and we have imposed a false requirement (tradition?) by insisting that the exact hour of each act be identified with the practice of the Jews of Jesus' day.

First, I do not believe that Jesus observed the passover early, that is that He used the evening preceding customary observance for His observance. He was careful to keep the law. Three of the gospel accounts report that on the first day of unleavened bread the disciples inquired about the observance and made ready for it (Matt. 26:17; Mark 14:12; Luke 22:7). There follows the account of the near-miraculous supply of the upper room and, of course, of the Passover supper. Thus it would appear that He observed the feast at the time all the rest of the Jews were observing it. The law made provision for a late observance (Num. 9:9-14), but no provision for early observance. Now, while Jesus was Lord of the Passover (as He was of the Sabbath) and could have made an exception, He does not seem to have done so. This might have clouded His perfect keeping of the law and would surely have brought a protest from the Jewish rulers. The records all point to His observance as being at the right time.



Did He therefore die a day late? Again, I do not believe so. He died later than the lambs used in that year's observance, but it was still the Passover (sometimes also called the first day of Unleavened Bread). Keep in mind the Jewish reckoning of days and you realize that both His observance and His death occurred on the same day. That day began at sundown and lasted until the next evening at sundown. Its events include the upper room messages, the Passover, the Lord's Supper, the garden of Gethsemane, the betrayal, the trials, the crucifixion, His death, and His burial. Perhaps we make an artificial requirement in insisting that His death fall at the very hour the Passover lamb was ordinarily slain. It is significant that He died on the day the Passover lamb died without requiring that an hourly limitation be imposed.

But it may be asked, did He die the same day? Were not the lambs of their observance slain about mid-afternoon, and therefore on the day preceding the feast? The O.T. instruction was that the lamb was to be slain on the fourteenth day of the month "at even" (Exod. 12:6; Lev. 23:5). According to a footnote in the Am. Std. version, this is literally "between the two evenings." In Deut. 16:6, we read, "Thou shalt sacrifice the passover at even, at the going down of the sun . . ." In an article on "Festivals," *Unger's Bible Dictionary* declares concerning this detail of the Passover: "According to the Karaite Jews, between actual sunset and complete darkness, but understood by the Pharisees and Rabbins as the time when the sun begins to descend to his real setting (from 3 to 6 P.M.)." In other words, among the Jews there is not universal agreement as to what time the lamb was to be slain. The Karaites are a Middle Eastern Jewish sect, whose members reject rabbinic interpretations in favor of literal acceptance of scripture. An examination of the requirement in the Bible seems to favor their interpretation. Now, if the lamb was killed from 3 to 6 P.M., it was killed one day (14th) and eaten the next day, which began at sunset (15th). If killed at the very beginning of the evening, it was killed and eaten the same day. We are faced with the possibility that the Jews of Jesus' day had corrupted the observance to some extent by tradition and that they may actually have been slaying the lamb a day (a few hours) early. There is no indication whether the lamb used by Jesus and His apostles was slain in mid-afternoon of the preceding day or at sunset. If the latter, then it was slain very early on Passover and Jesus died late on that same day. I know of no proof of this latter arrangement except that it seems to be the literal requirement of the O.T. law, and I shall not be at all surprised if the fuller knowledge of eternity reveals this to be the case.

Jesus apparently died around 3 P.M. That hour would fit the traditional time as understood by the Pharisees, except it was a day late (if Jesus' observance in the upper room coincided with that of the rest of the nation, which the accounts seem to support). It does not fit, as to hour, if the literal "going down of the sun" of Deut. 16:6 is used; for, while the burial was hasty, there nevertheless had to be time for getting Jesus' body released, wrapped and prepared for burial, and placed in the tomb before sunset. Hence, we have what appears



to be an impossible task if we try to make all the events fit perfectly by the hour. Now, what passage of scripture requires that they fit by the hour? Is not this an imposition of our own, a feature that would seem to make the comparison all the more fitting, but one of our own making nevertheless?

I am content with the declaration by the Holy Spirit that Christ is our Passover (1 Cor. 5:7-8) and with the several obvious parallels between the type and the fulfilment. The time element is certainly so close that His identity as our Passover is evident. As indicated, the Lord's observance of the feast and His death both came on the right *day*, per the most literal interpretation of the law. Of course the querists believes these things and the intention is only to rejoice in the beauty and perfection of God's requirement and fulfilment. Without a doubt Jesus is the perfect fulfilment, but this does not say that we must find an exact comparison in every detail.

"The Preparation" mentioned in Matt. 27:62 is not necessarily the Preparation of the Passover, but possibly refers to the Preparation for the Sabbath which fell between Jesus' death and resurrection.

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## **"EXCEPT YE REPENT"**

Tragic deaths always stir up talk. Some of it may be rumor. But the sad fact remains that there has been a sudden unexpected or unexplainable death. We sometimes think such persons must have been very bad sinners to have died so tragically. BUT JESUS SAYS, "I tell you, nay; but, except ye repent ye shall all likewise perish." (Luke 13:1-5) God's call to repentance is universal and woe unto the sinner who neglects or rejects it.

Human beings are more alike than many of us are willing to admit. Like the Pharisee, we may even thank God in our hearts, if not audibly, that we are "not like the rest of men". (Luke 18:11) Human comparison is a very deceptive and dangerous practice because of bias in our own favor, which prompts us to contrast our good points with our neighbor's bad ones. This is both unfair and dangerous for we never whiten ourselves by blackening others. The Bible warns us against this habit, "they themselves, measuring themselves by themselves are without understanding." (II Corinthians 12:12) Christ is the only perfect example by which to measure ourselves and/or one another. (I Corinthians 11:1) It may take us a while to "perceive that God is no respecter of persons;" (Acts 10:34). But once we realize that God is no respecter of persons it will help us to overcome race and religious prejudices.

The standing of no man before God outside of Christ is any better or any worse than others. Our relative differences do not impress God, or give us grounds for boasting. The Bible says, "there is no distinction; for all have sinned, and fall short of the glory of God;" (Romans 3:22, 23) Jesus says "except ye believe that I am he, ye shall die in your own sins." (John 8:24)

—Dr. J. Miller Forcade



Ernest Lyon is a professor of music at the University of Louisville, and an elder and minister of the Highland Church of Christ in Louisville.



## THOUGHTS FROM ROMANS

Ernest E. Lyon

### “BUT NOW” — THE GOSPEL

If you have been reading these thoughts inspired by and taken from the book of Romans over the past months, you know that from 1:18 through 3:20 the Apostle Paul has been showing the need of man for a Savior, painting a very dark picture of man's condition by nature—dwelling in sin, without God and without hope. “But now”—what a great change is forecast by those two wonderfully simple words. They remind me of that great passage in Ephesians 2, where Paul much more briefly but very effectively pictures all men as lost by nature and then shows the remedy starting with “But God.” These two words turn the entire picture around to one of great joy because of what God has done for us.

I would like to offer a translation of verse 21 of Romans 3 that I will call a “consensus translation”—culled from the writings of many men who know the Greek: “But now apart from law God's righteousness has been made visible, being borne witness to by the law and the prophets.” In Romans 1:17 Paul had pointed out that the Gospel was God's power unto salvation because “therein God's righteousness is revealed.” No righteousness less than God's can bring a man into the presence for eternity of the holy and righteous God. Paul starts off this presentation of the good news of how God provided salvation for us by stating that now we can now see God's righteousness, it has been made plain to us and is, therefore, available to us. It is not simply that we can see that God is righteous, but that He is our Righteousness, as Jeremiah 23:6 had stated long before.

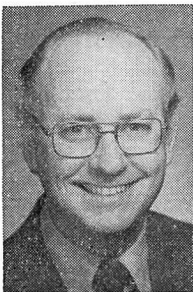
Paul tells us that this righteousness is “apart from law” (not just “the Law”—of God, but any kind of legal requirements) but that the Law bore witness to it. I presume that Paul was thinking of passages like Genesis 15:6—“And he believed in Jehovah; and He reckoned it to him for righteousness.” Paul is going to go on to show that it is by faith, and only by faith, that we can receive God's righteousness and thus be able to stand before Him. There are many other examples, especially in the sacrifices which covered the sins of the Israelites, such as those described in the opening chapters of Leviticus.

Paul also tells us here that the prophets bore witness to this righteousness that we so sorely need. He had already quoted Habakkuk 2:4 in Romans 1:17 (a passage that is not only taken as the basis

of Romans but also of Galatians (3:11) and Hebrews (10:38). To this he could add many other passages, such as Psalm 32:1, 2—"Blessed is he whose transgression is forgiven, Whose sin is covered. Blessed is the man unto whom Jehovah imputeth not iniquity, And in whose spirit there is no guile." Or he could have referred us to the great "suffering servant" passages in Isaiah—52:13-53:12. He could have then turned to many other passages in the Old Testament, from every section of it, but that is not Paul's aim here; he simply desires to show that what he is presenting is new to our age but predicted very thoroughly by the things God had spoken through "holy men of old." Having taken a fairly long passage to show our need of the sacrifice of Christ for us, he is now anxious to show how God has provided our needs in Christ and how we can lay hold of what God offers us in Christ.

Isn't it wonderful to think that, lowly sinners as we are, we can have God's righteousness? that we can have assurance of a place in Heaven? that we can spend eternity with God? We are here entering into a study of this, a study that will show that it is provided for us in a way that the human mind would never have conceived—by faith in Christ—by trusting Him to do for us what we can not do for ourselves. If you want to get the most out of these studies, read Romans 3:21-28 many, many times. Memorize the entire portion if you can in any translation that you like and let the meaning of the revolutionary message it brings sink into your consciousness.

If you are a Christian already, this passage should renew your thankfulness unto the Lord for what He has done, for what He is doing, and for what He will do for you. If you are not a fortunate one who has already drunk deeply of the living water that Christ has to offer (in other words, if you are not saved, not born again, not a Christian), then this passage taken deeply into your heart will lead you to the only source of salvation—the Lord Jesus Christ—and then make you thankful for the wonderful things He has done for you. Someone has well called this passage the "Heart of the Bible" and you will be well on your way to understanding the message of the Bible if you will grasp the meaning of these wonderful eight verses.



## **Is God Still Fulfilling Promises To The Jews**

Dr. David R. Reagan

The average Christian in the Campbell-Stone Restoration Heritage would answer that Question with an emphatic "No!"

And that is a tragedy, for God is performing some of His mightiest miracles in all of history in Israel today. What is particularly ironical



is that these miracles are ones that Barton W. Stone, Alexander Campbell, and Robert Milligan all looked forward to with great expectation. The repudiation of these miracles by modern day leaders within the Campbell-Stone Heritage is just one more example of how far they have strayed from their historical roots.

### STONE & CAMPBELL

Of course, what Stone, Campbell, or Milligan taught about anything is ultimately irrelevant. The crucial point is what the Bible teaches.

Nonetheless, I think it would be helpful to see what these men of God taught regarding modern Israel and Bible prophecy before we move on to consider what the Scriptures say.

Barton W. Stone was a premillennialist who fully expected the Lord to return to the earth and reign for a thousand years. Like all premillennialists, Stone expected the Lord to establish Israel as the prime nation of the world during the millennium.

Alexander Campbell was a postmillennialist. In other words Campbell believed in a literal millennium, but he believed it would constitute a reign of the church over the world. The Lord would appear at the end of the millennium to rapture the church.

Although Campbell differed with Stone over whether or not the Lord would be present on the earth during the millennium, Campbell agreed with Stone that God's promises to Israel would be fulfilled during the millennium. Campbell emphasized this point strongly in a series of 26 essays which he wrote in the early 1840's. These essays were directed against the Millerites, a group which had predicted that the Lord would return in 1844.

Campbell argued that the Lord could not return in 1844 because the world would come to an end at the Lord's return and the world could not come to an end until God had fulfilled all His promises to the Jews. Campbell then proceeded to outline those promises in detail, focusing on the promises of God to regather the Jews and re-establish Israel.

### MILLIGAN

Robert Milligan was the leading expositor of Bible prophecy for the Millennial Harbinger. In articles published in the Harbinger, as well as in his book, *The Scheme of Redemption* (1857), Milligan joined Campbell in asserting that God would fulfill His promises to the Jews before the end of history.

In fact, Milligan was very specific in his interpretations of Bible prophecy regarding the Jews. Based upon the prophecies in Daniel, Milligan predicted that the nation of Israel would be re-established in 1892, that the Jews would be converted to Jesus in 1922, and that the Jews would go forth to convert the world in 1967.

The point is that all the leading founders and shapers of the Restoration Movement believed that the promises to the Jews were still effectual and that they would someday be fulfilled by God during a literal millennium.

## THE VIEWPOINT REVERSED

When World War I destroyed the fundamental assumption of postmillennium, namely, the inevitable progress of mankind, the leaders of the Restoration Movement at that time opted for the amillennial view. Unfortunately the choice was made more on the basis of personality clashes than scripture study.

The adoption of amillennialism at the turn of the century necessitated the abandonment of the belief that God will fulfill His promises to the Jews. How could He fulfill them if there is to be no millennial period? So all the Old Testament passages containing unfulfilled promises to the Jews were either explained away, or negated on the basis of Jewish disobedience, or transferred to the church as the spiritual heir of Abraham. Israel became synonymous with the church, and the Jews were written off as a lost cause.

## THE BIBLICAL POSITION

It is incredible that a heritage which prided itself in believing the Bible could ever have deluded itself into taking such a thoroughly un-Biblical position regarding the promises to the Jews. Consider for example, the following scriptures:

- 1) "Then what advantage has the Jew? Or what is the value of circumcision? Much in every way. To begin with the Jews are entrusted with the oracles of God. What if some were unfaithful? Does their faithlessness nullify the faithfulness of God. By no means! Let God be true though every man be false . . ." (Romans 3:1-4)
- 2) "They are Israelites, and to them belong the sonship, the glory, the covenants, the giving of the law, the worship, and the promises . . ." (Romans 9:4)
- 3) "I ask then has God rejected His people? By no means! . . . God has not rejected His people whom He foreknew . . . there is a remnant chosen by grace." (Romans 11:1, 2 & 5)
- 4) "Lest you be wise in your own conceits, I want you to understand this mystery, brethren: a hardening has come upon part of Israel, until the full number of the Gentiles come in, and so all Israel will be saved . . . for the gifts and the call of God are irrevocable." (Romans 11:25, 26 & 29)

As all these passages make crystal clear, God's promises to Israel are still valid, and God intends to fulfill them with regard to literal, physical Israel—specifically, to a remnant of the Jews who accept Jesus as Lord and Savior.

To argue that God's promises to Israel were really meant for the Church is to make God a deceiver and a liar. If we can't believe the promises which God made to the Jews in the Old Testament, how can we believe the promises He has made to the Church in the New Testament?

## A SURVEY OF PROMISES

Let's look for a moment at a panoramic overview of the promises which God has made to the Jews:



- 1) *Dispersion* – The Jews were promised a world wide dispersion if they committed idolatry. (Deut. 28:62-66)
- 2) *Preservation* – God promised He would preserve the Jews as a separate people during their world wide wanderings. (Jer. 30:11 and 31:35-37)
- 3) *Regathering* – A world wide regathering of Jews to their homeland was promised in the final days. (Isa. 11:6-9; Ezek. 36:22-28; Amos 9:14 & 15 and Zech. 10:6 & 7)
- 4) *Nationhood* – The Jews would not only be regathered; they would be re-established as an independent nation in the land of Palestine. (Isa. 66:7 & 8 and Zech. 12:3)
- 5) *Jerusalem* – Jewish reoccupation and control of Jerusalem is promised by God through the prophets. (Zech. 12:3 & 6)
- 6) *Reclamation* – After the re-establishment of the state, God promised a restoration of the land. (Isa. 35:1-7 and Ezek. 47:7-12)
- 7) *Focal Point* – The prophets also said that Israel would be the focal point of world politics in the end times. (Zech. 14:1-9)
- 8) *Tribulation* – God promised that the Jews would be put through a period of unparalleled tribulation. (Deut. 4:30; Ezek. 20:33-37; Jer. 30: 1-9)
- 9) *Salvation* – The experience of the Tribulation will bring a remnant of the Jews to repentance. (Zech. 14:1-9; Ezek. 36:24-27)
- 10) *Primacy* – God promises repeatedly that during the reign of the Lord on the earth, Israel will be honored as the prime nation of the world. (Deut. 28:1, 10 & 13; II Sam. 7:9-11 and Zech. 8:22-23)

### CONCLUSION

Looking back over these promises, we can see that God has been perfectly faithful to the first two. Just as He warned, He dispersed the Jews all over the world as punishment for their idolatry and their rejection of Him and His son. But just as He promised, He refused to allow the annihilation or absorption of the Jews. He preserved them and enabled them to maintain their separate identity.

In future articles in this series, I will contend that promises 3 through 5 have been fulfilled in this century and that promises 6 and 7 are in the process of being fulfilled right now. Promises 8 and 9 are shortly to be fulfilled during the seven years of Tribulation that will soon plague the earth. The tenth promise, the promise of primacy, will be fulfilled after the return of Jesus to the earth to reign in glory from Jerusalem.

Next Month: Is Bible Prophecy Being Fulfilled in Israel Today?

## THE EVILS OF A BAD DISPOSITION

by A. W. Tozer

A bad disposition has been called "the vice of the virtuous." The woman who would not gamble or drink or attend places of worldly

amusements may yet manifest a churlish temper and keep her family in terror with her acid tongue. A man who will fight for the faith once delivered to the saints may be so hard to live with that his family actually wishes him gone, and feels little real sorrow when he finally shuffles this mortal coil to go, as he had fondly believed, to dwell with the saints in the peace of heaven forever.

The sick habit of blaming the devil for conditions in the average church is too smooth to escape suspicion. That explanation explains too much. We do not underestimate the ability of the devil to raise trouble, nor do we believe that he has softened up in his attitude toward the followers of Christ. But his power is specifically limited. It is extremely doubtful whether he has any real power unless we give it to him. At least we know that he could not get to Job without special permission from God, and it is hard to conceive that God took better care of Job than He does of the rest of us. Chrysostom once preached a great sermon to show that nothing can harm a Christian who does not harm himself. Over the humble and obedient soul the devil has no power. He can harm us only when we, by unspiritual and un-Christlike ways, play into his hands. And we play into his hands whenever and as long as we harbor unjudged and uncleansed evil within us.

Dispositional sins are fully as injurious to the Christian cause as the more overt acts of wickedness. These sins are as many as the various facets of human nature. Just so there may be no misunderstanding let us list a few of them: Sensitiveness, irritability, churlishness, faultfinding, peevishness, temper, resentfulness, cruelty, uncharitable attitudes; and of course there are many more. These kill the spirit of the church and slow down any progress which the gospel may be making in the community. Many persons who had been secretly longing to find Christ have been turned away and embittered by manifestations of ugly dispositional flaws in the lives of the very persons who were trying to win them.

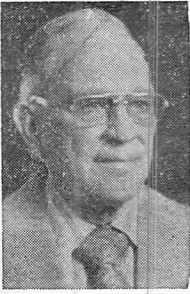
Deliverance from inward sins would seem to be a spiritual necessity. In the face of the havoc wrought by dispositional sins among religious people we do not see how sincere men can deny that necessity. Unsaintly saints are the tragedy of Christianity. People of the world usually pass through the circle of disciples to reach Christ, and if they find those disciples severe and sharp-tongued they can hardly be blamed if they sigh and turn away from Him.

All this is more than a theory. Unholy tempers among professed saints constitute a plague and a pestilence. The low state of religion in our day is largely due to the lack of public confidence in religious people.

It is time we Christians stop trying to excuse our un-Christlike dispositions and frankly admit our failure to live as we should. Wesley said that we will not injure the cause of Christ by admitting our sins, but that we are sure to do so by denying them.

There is a remedy for inward evil. There is a power in Christ that can enable the worst of us to live lives of purity and love. We have but to seek it and to lay hold of it in faith. God will not disappoint us.—from *The Alliance Witness*.





## STUDIES ON PRAYER

Jesse Z. Wood

James and John, surnamed "Sons of Thunder" by the Lord Jesus, were filled with the Holy Spirit, along with the rest of the Apostles, at Pentecost. Little is revealed about James' ministry, save that He and Peter teamed up on one occasion, as they entered the Temple and healed the lame man at the "Beautiful" door of the Temple. James' ministry, like that of Stephen, was relatively short-lived.

Herod, the King, had him beheaded, and seeing that it pleased the populace, he locked Peter up, with plans to bring him out to the people. To insure that those "fearless Christians" about the area would not attempt to "spring Peter from jail" Herod assigned four quaternions of soldiers to guard him. Besides this he had Peter shackled to a soldier on each side. Both Peter and all his guards fell asleep.

"But God!" Here was the One Herod could not "shackle"—One whom Herod the wicked old King could not defeat! God "enters the scene", as He always does when His people band together, humble themselves, and pray! Likely a great number of small hidden groups of Believers huddled together behind closed doors and "fervently" prayed for Peter. Verse 5 of the 12th chapter of Acts tells the story: "But prayer was made earnestly of the church unto God for him."

Someone has said that, "God may be slow, but He is never LATE" (Martha learned that fact after the Lord Jesus "took His time" in coming to take care of her brother, Lazarus—John 11:21ff).

Again, a well known adage: "God and one man make a majority". The Lord doesn't need all His angels to defeat Herod's forces. He sends only one angel. The angel comes; kicks Peter on the side as he lay, soundly asleep. In our words, let's say, he said, "Get up, Peter, dress quickly; let's go" He needs no key to the door: it opens miraculously, as they quietly walk out and down the street. Then Peter is "on his own", for the Angel has done his job, and disappears.

Peter goes to his nearest friends, the home of John Mark's Mother. He knocks; little Rhoda runs to the door, takes one look and runs to stop a prayer meeting. "Peter's at the door, knocking", she screams. "You're crazy," they say to her. "Sure enough, it's Simon Peter, the one you all are praying about." So they run to the door, and likely let their tears of joy flow freely! Almost too good to be true, they think. "But God"! God always makes a way. He makes the great "Difference". Nothing is too hard for Him. He's the God of the so called "Impossible" (see Jer. 32:17, 27). The two marvelous stories

in 2 Chron. 14 and 20 illustrate this fact about our prayer-answering God.

A question arises: "Why were those people so surprised when Peter stands knocking at their front door? Were they not asking the Lord to release Peter from Herod's custody? Didn't they expect this from their Lord? And how about you and me? What do we expect when we pray? Is it a mere exercise, or do we really count on God's acting on our behalf? Read Mark 11:24. Try James 1:6, 7 for "size" (How do you "measure up"?)

God is looking for men and women, boys and girls—any and all who will say, "Lord, I believe, help thou my unbelief" (Mark 9:24). Let's you and me set our goal on "expectancy"—Let's start praying more "expectantly" even saying "Lord, I thank you in advance, for answering my prayer." And, remember, "don't be so surprised when He answers your knock at His door! ("Ask, and it shall be given you; seek, and ye shall find; knock, and it SHALL be opened unto you..." Matt. 7:7,8)

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## The Miracle of the Enduring Marriage

J. Richard Lewis

It is a miracle that any marriage endures today. The subtle shift has been made. No longer is there surprise that a marriage doesn't last. Divorce is accepted as though it was expected all along. The surprising thing today is that any marriage lasts. The latest statistics reveal that there is one divorce for every two marriages. Oh, how contrary to the word of God.

The stress of a faltering industrial nation tests the fabric of a marriage to its limits (and beyond). Finances must be at the top of the list. The struggle to "keep up" much less "get ahead" overwhelms one. Husbands often see "dropping out" as the only way to maintain their sanity as the financial burdens of a family increase. The reasoning may be... they will be better off without me. Materially, this has been true with ones able to qualify (and willing to try to qualify) for the many government programs.

Changing morality contributes to many failing marriages. T.V. must be considered one of the prime influences of morality in America today. (May all pray, work, and support the effort of the Joelton church in its efforts to influence T.V.) The massage parlors, adult bookstores and smut material available are only a spin-off of T.V. and tend to make T.V. seem innocent. Italy has many nude T.V. shows now. Who will be next? Eastman Kodak needs to be highly commended for its refusal to print vulgar pictures in their processing centers. The constant bombardment with all matter of sensuality takes a mighty toll on marriages.

With more and more wives and mothers working out of the home all the various stresses increase. The role of each partner is questioned



and the movement to liberate women contributes to this confusion of role. Thus, stress is increased on a new front. Fear of the future ... economics, pollution, famine, and war all subtly or dramatically add stress to the home and family. "Perfect love (agape!) casteth out fear." I Jn. 4:18.

Sadly, the church offers little to off-set or buffer the stresses put on marriages today. The most that is ever offered in many churches is negative injunctions.

Individually, purpose and carry out, as David of old, to expose yourself to the Word of God. Read it, write it, pray over the Word, and meditate upon the Bible. The Word is powerful and when given the opportunity effectively helps to off-set evil influences and stress. We are so accustomed to "instant everything" that patience, steadfastness and perseverance are required. The influences of stress have been working over a long period of time and the war to combat them will be long and arduous.

Physical exercise such as jogging, etc. are hailed to cure many ills, but how desperately we need again the admonition of I Tim. 4:8 ... "bodily exercise is profitable for a little, but godliness is profitable for all things." This needs to be heard and acted upon.

This Hymn of Marriage recently crossed my desk. The author is unknown. "The question is asked, 'Is there anything more beautiful in life than a boy and a girl clasping clean hands and pure hearts in the path of marriage?' and the answer is given, 'Yes there is a more beautiful thing; it is the spectacle of an old man and an old woman finishing their journey together on that path. Their hands are gnarled, but still clasped; their faces are seamed but still radiant; their hearts are tired and bowed down but still strong. They have proved the happiness of marriage and vindicated it from the jeers of cynics.'"

The miracle is that any marriage lasts with all the stress Satan applies. If it is only God Who can make a tree, then truly it is only God Who can make a marriage. May every one married diligently and steadfastly seek God for that miracle of the enduring marriage.

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## The Sin of Pride

We are living in a moment of history when man and his imagined self-sufficiency openly states he has no need of God. He has all the answers. Society can save itself. So the Law of God has been jettisoned. At least this rebellion is open and honest.

But how about the Christian's attitude of self-sufficiency? Of arrogance? Of a proud, unyielding mind? We can be orthodox in doctrine, separated from the world in our behavior, full of evangelistic zeal—and yet fail miserably in the matter of a proud spirit! It is not sufficient that we humbled ourselves at the foot of the Cross when we trusted Christ to save us. For the rest of our lives God wants us to walk before Him in humility and brokenness and in dependence on Him and Him alone.—S. S. Times

# Missionary Messenger

"Greater things for God"

Donald Harris

Salisbury, Zimbabwe

April 14th

All glass is now installed in the New Home. We would like to do the plumbing now, but have run out of funds. It will cost around \$4,000. We will need three hot water heaters at about \$200 each, and the rest would be for other materials and labor. Who wants to buy a pipe for the Living Water to get to those who need? As soon as this home is completed, other children can come learn of Jesus and have Salvation. Please mark any special offering for this purpose "For Plumbing", and send it to the Rodney Browns, 8207 County Line Rd., Sellersburg, Indiana, 47172.

Two of our older boys and one girl are leaving the home this month. We will receive replacements the first of next month. School is out for a month, starting this Thursday. We pray that the children will be able to see some of their loved ones that they haven't see for a while. May God bless you all for the many prayers concerning this work, and these children.

Shichiro Nakahara

Shizuoka City, Japan

April 15th

The time is nearing when the faithful who wait and love His appearing are to be taken up, and we all should be ready to meet Him, going about the work of the Lord, seeking to save the lost before it's too late. Then we'll have no excuse to make for not living as we should as children of God. Now is a testing time for all of us, trying our own selves, whether we're in the faith, proving our own selves. It's my prayer that not one soul is left behind at His coming to receive His own, while I'm dumbfounded when I think about standing before the judgment seat of Christ because so much of the Lord's work is left undone and so many souls have not been saved. We know we must give account of ourselves to God as to what we have done in relation to our witnessing. For Witnessing is Every Christian's Job!

Now it was 6 yrs. ago when I made my last trip to the U.S.A., and I feel I should make another trip sometime this year. The Elders at the Piedmont church have agreed to my visit, and I've been praying and asking the Lord as to when the best time for me to come. I would like to see as many friends and churches as I possibly can on this trip, if the Lord willing. So please join me in prayer, will you? I'll appreciate any cooperation you might give to help me on this trip. I'm looking forward to seeing all of you, then, if the Lord should tarry. *Lastly*, I would like to express my deep, hearty appreciation for your ever increasing concern for us as well as the work in Japan and for the support that has sustained us and enabled us to do what the Lord would have us do. Please keep us in your daily prayer before the throne of grace!

# The Sunday School's Fight For Life

By Win Arn

Yes! There is hope for the Sunday school.

Despite these sobering national Sunday school trends, there is the first light of a new dawn. There are children, youth and adult education programs today that are enlisting new members and growing with explosive vitality in every denomination and in every area of the country. These Sunday schools are reaching, winning and discipling people into active fellowship within the life of the local church. Today while some Sunday schools are fading into oblivion others are thriving with contagious vitality.

Why?

Can education classes that provide meaningful Christian growth and development turn enrollment decline into active new growth?

During the 1970s considerable attention was focused on the growth and decline of churches, as well as on developing strategy to stimulate new growth. Research conducted by the Institute for American Church Growth now indicates that a growing church does not, by any means, insure a growing Sunday school.

One significant finding is this: A major difference between Sunday schools that are growing and Sunday schools that are not growing can be stated simply—their purpose. *The "purpose of being" is nearly always different in declining Sunday schools than in growing ones.*

## INWARD-FOCUSED SUNDAY SCHOOLS

The reason for being in most declining Sunday schools is exclusively ministry to existing Christians and nurture to members of existing churches.

While a concern for the spiritual health, the personal growth and the social fellowship of Christians within existing Sunday schools is necessary, in declining Sunday schools these concerns have become the entire preoccupation of the classes and curriculum.

What happens when the priority of Christian education focuses exclusively on the nurture of those who are already Christians? People are urged to participate in the Sunday school because it will help *them*. Programs, activities and curricula are focused almost exclusively on their concerns.

Such self-centered education does not motivate people toward involvement in the church's mission of growth and outreach. On the contrary, education that concerns itself with only the spiritual nourishment of its own members contributes significantly to a "self-service mentality" that effectively seals off the Sunday school from the outside world.

In most declining Sunday schools the programs, curricula, activities and training do not reflect the priority of outreach required by Christ



## OUTWARD-FOCUSED SUNDAY SCHOOLS

The purpose of most growing Sunday schools, on the other hand, is quite different. Outward-focused Sunday schools exist primarily to participate in Christ's Great Commission and to train and equip laity for ministry to the world. While concern for the spiritual growth and nurture of existing Christians is an important part of the curricula and activities, it is seen as a means to an end, not an end in itself.

Outward-focused Sunday schools, in contrast to inward-focused ones, see evangelism and education as two sides of the same coin, two tasks to achieve one goal. Carrying out Christ's Commission—to reach and disciple lost people—is the motivation for education in most growing Sunday schools.

The Institute for American Church Growth surveyed 250 pastors and executives from various denominations, inquiring, "What are the reasons for the present decline of the Sunday school?" One of the two most often listed reasons was: "Classes not concerned with reaching/recruiting new people."

In outward-focused Sunday schools each class and each department has high priority for seeking, reaching, teaching and discipling people. Creative strategies that "fit" the Sunday school are devised to identify and reach receptive new people. The focus of the entire organization, events, classes and activities of growth-centered Sunday schools is on making disciples. And the result is growth—God gives the increase!

## HOW TO GROW A SUNDAY SCHOOL

It would be a mistake to conclude that in order to turn a Sunday school around from decline to growth, a concern for spiritual nurture and personal growth must be abandoned in pursuit of a "mission emphasis."

Christ did not abandon His disciples after they decided to follow Him. He spent much time and effort teaching them and encouraging them in their new life. The spiritual growth and maturity of Christ's disciples was essential for Him to carry out His goal.

Yet Christ's goal was not to develop a "class" of spiritual giants. The training and teaching of His disciples was a means to an end—preparing them to be effective in reaching and winning others. The Book of Acts is replete with accounts of the growth of the early church and the central role of Christ's "student" in building the church.

The difference between the inward-focused and the outward-focused Sunday school, and in most cases between a declining Sunday school and a growing one, is simple. One sees Christian growth and spiritual maturity as an essential part of Christian education. But it is not the goal, it is the supporting foundation. The goal is making disciples.

Church and Sunday school leaders, for the most part, continue to have a strong commitment to the Sunday school. And well they should have. The Sunday school provides many unique contributions to the life of the local church that are essential for growth.

The time has come to take a fresh look at the Sunday school—to see it through growth eyes. This means, above all, to see with clear understanding the purpose to which we are called. Our past history has a rich heritage. The future can be equally as bright.

Let us, in obedience to Jesus Christ, go into all the world and make disciples.—from *The Alliance Witness*

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## REPRINTS:

### “Baptized Into His Death”—“Buried Into Death”

R. H. Boll — 1941

There are those who stand valiantly for the strict meaning of the Greek preposition *eis* in Acts 2:38, that it means “into,” “unto,” “in order to.” So strongly do some insist on this that if any man was baptized thinking he was already saved, they must baptize him over; for (in their view) the man has not been properly baptized, since he did not understand at the time that baptism is “for,” that is “in order to,” the remission of sins. But these strong contenders for “*eis*” in Acts 2:38 become considerate and lenient when they come to Rom. 6:3, 4, where the sinner is said to be baptized and buried “into death.” It is the same word “*eis*,” and used in connection with baptism, just as it is in Acts 2:38. There it is “baptized . . . unto the remission of your sins,” and in Romans 6:3, 4 it is “Baptized into . . . death.” “But (it is asked) what kind of man do you bury—a live man or a dead man?” So they *will* have him dead before he is baptized—exactly as certain other folk have them pardoned before baptism. Harken my beloved brethren, hadn’t you better look through your ranks and baptize some of your converts over? For it cannot be much worse to disregard “*eis*” in Rom. 6:3, 4, than in Acts 2:38; and if the failure to understand the “*eis*” in Acts 2:38 is good reason for rebaptism, why should not the disregard of the same “*eis*” in Rom. 6:3, 4, be as good cause for rebaptizing a man? The one is just as much a “design of baptism” as the other; and if a misapprehension of the “design” would render baptism invalid in the one case, why wouldn’t it in the other?

The position generally taken is that a man dies to sin when he repents; in other words, repentance is the equivalent of death to sin. But no such thing is intimated in scripture, particularly not in the context of Rom. 6. The “death to sin” spoken of there is also death to the law; and it is the one because it is the other. It is in fact the death of “the old man” with all that appertains to him as a man “in the flesh”—Or, if it be said that we bury a man who is “dead in trespasses and sins”—this also will not explain the matter; for in that respect a man must be “quickened” before he is baptized, else would he not be a proper subject for baptism. The begetting by the word (which is the same as the “quickening”) must precede the birth. Moreover, the apostle is not speaking of a “death in sin,” but a death *to sin*. (Rom. 6:3)

But the fact is simply this: *we are baptized into Christ's death.* (Rom. 6:3) This death is not an act on our part such as repentance, self-renunciation or self-consecration. It is not anything that we have done or can do: it is *something Christ has done*, something He did *for us*, and in which we share when we are united to Him. Christ died for us, and we become partakers of his death at the moment when we are united to Him—that is, when we are said to be *in Christ*. “Or know ye not that all we who were baptized into Christ Jesus were baptized into his death?” As certainly as we were baptized *into Christ* then, so certainly were we baptized *into his* death. And that is *His* death which *He* died for us. It became ours as we were joined to Him and thus entered into it. “We were buried therefore with him into death, that like as Christ was raised from the dead . . . so we also might walk in newness of life.” “For the death that he died, he died unto sin once; but the life that he (now) liveth, he liveth unto God.” Of this death and in this new life we are partakers together with Him if we are in Christ—joined to Him and identified with Him. And every one who is thus in Christ is bidden to take his stand upon this fact. “Even so reckon ye also yourselves to be dead unto sin, but alive unto God in Christ Jesus.” (Rom. 6:10, 11) The death, burial, and resurrection of Christ becomes ours, in Him. All that He has done for us becomes ours when we are “baptized into Christ.”

## Modernism

by R. H. Boll

“Modernism” is the genteel, cultured, intellectual infidelity of our day, which masquerades the profession and guise of Christianity. There are various shades of it, ranging from a mild sort which has some fundamental truths to the out-and-out radical sort which has thrown everything overboard. But all types have certain features in common. Here are some of the more or less outstanding characteristics which mark all forms of Modernism.

1. There is in all a rejection of the Bible as the written word of God and final authority. Some reject only portions of it—parts of the Old Testament, say, or some books of the New Testament, or passages here and there which they dislike; some deny the divine authority of the whole.

2. They all stress the unscriptural doctrine of the “Universal Fatherhood of God,” and its corollary, the “Universal Brotherhood of Man.” And consistently with this they believe in no essential difference and line of demarcation between the church and the world. Some go even so far as to recognize heathen religions as relatively true and good forms of divine worship and service, lower in degree, not different in kind, from Christianity; and show more or less readiness to enter into combine with systems of idolatry (—religious “syncretism.”)

3. They consider the kingdom of God as merely a new and better social order, in which some such ethical principles as those of the Sermon on the Mount will be followed. They speak of “bringing in the kingdom,” and attempt to accomplish this aim by various civic and political schemes, by reforms, legislation, changes of government,



even to the agitating for socialism and communism, and the overthrow of "capitalism" and the like.

4. Accordingly the emphasis of their teaching is upon ethics, altruism, service, progress, self-improvement, culture, ideals, will-power, character-building, civic-righteousness, social reform, and like subjects; while in great measure they ignore or even oppose the great fundamental truths of the Christian faith—about sin, blood atonement, the cross, the resurrection, the new birth, salvation by grace through faith, etc.

5. Modernists in general seek to build up a humanistic religion on what they fondly imagine to be a "scientific basis"; the first article of their creed being the denial of the supernatural. Consistent Modernists deny all miracles; the virgin birth, the resurrection, the deity of Christ, the gift of the Holy Spirit. As a class they are evolutionists, and seek to explain the physical universe as well as the Christian faith on purely "natural" grounds.

6. Finally, they have no outlook upon the future. They mind earthly things, and wait for no Savior from heaven. They are supremely concerned about matters of the present. As for heaven or hell or judgment—these are in their view only outmoded notions of the past. The Coming of Christ means nothing to them, unless perhaps as "interpreted" as a highly figurative representation of man's progress toward perfection (2 Peter 3:3, 4). The Book of Revelation is their butt of ridicule, and is considered as a specimen of "Jewish apocalyptic." The Day of the Lord is but a bugaboo; and all the doctrines of the Old and New Testament relating to the future are mere poetic speculations. They do not profess to know any more of what is after death than the old pagan philosophers did.

Dreary religion is this Modernism, though it has its increasing number of apostles, who hold popular pulpits, and entertain large audiences. Their empty scholarly lectures, in which they dress up their hopeless fatalism with great glittering, swelling words of vanity, hold no comfort to the soul, and their human gospel has no power to save. For, lo, they have rejected the word of the Lord, and what manner of wisdom is in them? As Lord Halifax said of the Totalitarian Powers—"there is not an inch of common ground between them and us"—so there is none between Modernism and "the faith once for all delivered to the saints." Let us beware of any toleration, complicity, affiliation, or fellowship, with Modernism.

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## **ROMANS:**

Edited by Dr. Horace E. Wood

# **The Messiah—God Over All**

S. Lewis Johnson, Jr.

Paul has completed Romans eight on the note of the supreme joy that we have in God's salvation. He has written, "For I am persuaded that neither death, nor life, nor angels, nor principalities, nor powers,

nor things present, nor things to come, nor height, nor depth, nor any other creation (that means that we cannot overthrow His plans for us, for we are part of the creation!), shall be able to separate us from the love of God, which is in Christ Jesus, our Lord" (Rom. 8:38-39). At the finish of that we say, "What joy!" But immediately he writes, "I say the truth in Christ, I lie not, my conscience also bearing me witness in the Holy Spirit, that I have great heaviness and continual sorrow in my heart" (9:1-2). And at that we say, "What sorrow!"

Why the difference? In answering that question we are introduced to several questions that come before the reader here. In the first place, we must ask, "Is Paul's gospel true?" The apostle, you see, has pictured an election according to grace in the first eight chapters of this magnificent epistle, but astoundingly Israel is lacking among them. What about the promises made to the nation through the fathers? What has happened to them? Paul has only briefly referred to the natural question of the reader, "Have the promises made to the nation been cancelled because of their unbelief?" In other words, it seems to come down to this: Either Paul's gospel is true and the promises nullified, or the promises are true and Paul's gospel is false, and Jesus Christ is an imposter. Paul, of course, in the process of expounding the subject will point out that the question is not one of an either/or nature, but of a both/and character. The gospel he preaches is true, and the promises are also true and sure to be fulfilled, although that time lies in the future. Then, he will say, "All Israel shall be saved" (cf. 11:26).

Another, and more ultimate question also comes before us, one closely related to the previous one, as all readers will see. It is this, "Has God failed in His program?" Is it possible that man's "no" to God in the rejection of His promises is able to overcome God's "yes" in the offering of His promises? Can man prevent God from carrying out His program of the ages? As is evident to thinking students, what this question raises is the old question, or struggle, between the Arminians and the Calvinists. The former contend that man may thwart the intention of God in His program, while the latter contend that God's faithfulness to His promises is complete. As Paul puts it in the third chapter, "Let God be true, but every man a liar; as it is written, That thou mightest be justified in thy sayings, and mightest overcome when thou art judged" (3:4). In other words, while the Calvinists limit the design of the atonement and the program of God, the Arminians limit the efficacy of the atonement. The one stands firm on the principle of the faithfulness of God to His purposes, while the other contends for the ability of man to overthrow those divine purposes.

Paul's answer to the second question is the theodicy of Romans 9-11, a vindication of God according to the principles of justice. He traces the divine purpose in history, or, as William Manson put it, "the righteousness of God in history," showing that the divine intention of saving a remnant according to the election of grace has been accomplished, is being accomplished, and will be completed in the future.

A final question arises out of the exegesis of verse five. It is, "Who, then, is Jesus Christ?" Paul will show that He, the Messiah, is God over all, blessed forever.

To sum up Paul's treatment of Romans 9:11, we may say that he makes three points. In the first place, he shows in Romans 9:1 - 10:21 that Israel's failure is not to be traced to the divine unfaithfulness to His promises, but rather to Israel's spiritual pride and self-sufficiency. God never intended that every single Israelite should be saved. The principle of distinguishing grace has been operative in history all along. For example, Ishmael was not included in the divine plans for salvation, for "in Isaac shall thy seed be called" (cf. Gen. 21:12). Esau was not chosen, for the Scriptures say, "Jacob have I loved, but Esau have I hated" (cf. Mal. 1:2-3). On the other hand, for the human side of things Israel sought salvation by human works instead of by divine trust, thus not submitting to the righteousness of God (cf. 10:3). And by this she failed as a nation to find that which she was seeking.

Second, the apostle points out that the failure is not total, for there is a remnant of saved Israelites, proving that God is still faithful to His Word (cf. 11:1-10).

And finally, he reaches the climax of the theodicy by affirming that the day is coming when Israel as a nation shall be saved. Their failure, then, is not final (cf. 11:11-27), a fact that is really a part of the overall program of the ages (cf. 11:28-32). Ultimately it shall be seen that "of him, and through him, and unto him, are all things: to whom be glory forever" (cf. 11:36).

We turn now to the exposition of this important section of the Epistle to the Romans.

### PAUL'S GRIEF OVER ISRAEL'S FAILURE

The apostle, after reaching the climax of joy descends to the valley of sorrow and pain. He writes, "I say the truth in Christ, I lie not, my conscience also bearing me witness in the Holy Spirit, that I have great heaviness and continual sorrow in my heart" (9:1-2). These are not crocodile tears, as Stedman points out, as if he were like some who upon occasion say to us, "I'm only telling you this because I love you," and then proceed to cut us up a bit! The apostle is speaking of a deep pain from God, his conscience bearing him witness in the Holy Spirit.

The words are the more touching when we remember that Israel not only did not like Paul, they hated him (cf. Acts 22:22; 25:24).

The apostle continues with what is really an unattainable wish, both grammatically and theologically, "For I could wish that I myself were accursed from Christ for my brethren, my kinsmen according to the flesh." It is a beautiful picture of a true soul-winner's heart, and it inevitably reminds us of Moses' great words in Exodus 32:3-35, where he pleads with God for the salvation of Israel from divine judgment when the nation sinned by the making of the golden calf.

It also reminds us of the great ministry of David Brainerd to the North American Indians in the early years of the 19th century. Finally



he died in the attempt to minister to them amid many difficulties and trials. He wrote of his feelings for the lost in these memorable words, "I dream of lost souls. I care not what sufferings I undergo, as long as I see souls saved." The apostle had a similar love for the lost to whom he ministered.

## THE JUSTIFICATION OF PAUL'S EMOTION

*The adoption* (Rom. 9:4). In seeking to show the reason for his grief and his compassionate desire that Israel be saved, the apostle laments their privileges and lost opportunities. His description of Israel's favored lost includes eight great blessings, the first of which is the adoption. He refers to the fact that God called Israel His first-born son (cf. Exod. 4:22; Deut. 32:18). In effect, he speaks of them as "the chosen people." Their failure seems more terrible in the light of what God had done for them.

*The glory* (Rom. 9:4). The second of the great blessings is "the glory," an expression that refers to the pillar of cloud and the pillar of fire, by which God miraculously guided the nation through the wilderness to the promised land. What a blessing to have His daily, moment-by-moment guidance! From Sinai to Bethlehem His hand was upon them, and yet they have now turned from Him.

*The covenant* (Rom. 9:4). The covenant is an expression that includes both the conditional and the unconditional covenants of the Old Testament but, in the light of the specific mention of the giving of the law, it is likely that the stress of the words lies upon the unconditional ones, that is, the Abrahamic, the Davidic, and the New Covenant. Those covenants are unconditional in the sense that God has determined to bless the recipients of the covenantal blessings on the basis of His sovereign good pleasure. They, therefore, shall be fulfilled in His time surely and certainly. The Abrahamic Covenant, the fountainhead of the plan, is marked out by a special sacrificial inauguration of it. The passing of the smoking furnace and the burning lamp, the symbol of the presence of God, through the pieces of the sacrificial animals, with Abraham not being invited to follow, stressed the fact that God was undertaking to fulfill the covenant Himself. It did not depend upon man's contribution, except insofar as there was presupposed the penitence and faith of the human parties to the covenant. That faith, however, is given by God, so that He alone determines the completion of the stipulations of the covenant. That characteristic pertains to the other covenant mentioned above, too. What a confidence the nation should have had in a God keeping such covenants!

*The giving of the Law* (Rom. 9:4). Paul refers to the giving of the Mosaic Law, a code in which the saints of the Old Covenant rejoiced because of the beauty of its revelation of the righteousness and justice of a holy God, as well as because of its foreshadowings in the cultus of the coming saving priestly ministry of the Messiah (cf. Exod. 19:1 - 20:1; Psa. 147:19-20).

*The service of God* (Rom. 9:4). The apostle in using the term, "the service of God," refers to the priesthood, the offerings, and the

tabernacle and temple, in which the service was carried on (cf. Heb. 10:1-3). If ever a religion had a beautiful liturgy, the Old Testament cultus was that, and, best of all, it all pointed very tellingly to the ministry of the Lord Jesus Christ.

*The promises* (Rom. 9:4). By the promises Paul refers to what Reformed theologians call the Covenant of Grace. In reality he points to the Messianic promises, that is, the promises of the coming Messiah and their application to the elect of God. The Messianic promises have their beginning in the Protevangelium of Genesis 3:15 and encompass all of the promise program of the Old Testament, including the promises of the Great Prophet, the Priest after the order of Melchizedek, and the promises of the King to come. The ministry of Isaiah's great Suffering Servant of Jehovah would also be in the mind of the apostle. In fact, the term includes all the redemptive promises ultimately, those that begin in Genesis and those that conclude the story in Revelation.

*The fathers* (Rom. 9:4). Not the least of the blessings of the nation are those traditions seen in the life of the fathers of the faith, men such as Abraham, Isaac, Jacob, Joseph, and Moses. In fact, one might include here all of those mentioned in the Westminster Abbey of Faith, Hebrews 11:1 - 12:2.

*The Messiah* (Rom. 9:5). And, finally, there is the Messiah, related to them according to the flesh, but also "God over all, blessed forever."

The last words of verse five have been debated for ages by biblical students. Liberal theologians have generally contended for a punctuation of the original text that attributes deity to "God," not to the Messiah. Conservatives have generally taken the words, "who is over all, God blessed forever," to refer to Christ. For example, the Revised Standard Version has translated verse five in this way, "to them belong the patriarchs, and of their race, according to the flesh, is the Christ. God who is over all be blessed for ever. Amen." This rendering refers the term "God" to the Father, and not to the Messiah. The New International Version has, "Theirs are the patriarchs, and from them is traced the human ancestry of Christ, who is God over all, forever praised! Amen." This rendering attributes deity to Christ.

The decision is one that must be settled by exegesis, for it cannot be settled with certainty by grammar or by textual concerns, although there are a few weak manuscripts with variant readings at this point. The reference to the human nature of the Messiah in the text might suggest a reference to the divine nature as well, and the reference of the term "God" to Christ would satisfy that expectation, but the reasoning can hardly be proof of the reference of "God" to Him. Further, one might argue that, if the clause is an ascription of praise to the Father, then the word "blessed" should naturally come first in the clause before the word "God," and it does not. In spite of these things, however, one must agree with Moulton, "It is exegesis rather than grammar which makes the reference to Christ probable." The context of the passage suggests a lament over the blessings of Israel, of which they have not availed themselves, rather than the offering of praise to God

at this point. Israel has turned from God in spite of large spiritual advantages. How much more appropriate, then, for this to be a reference to the deity of the Messiah! To have rejected one who possesses deity makes Israel's rejection of Him the more lamentable. The rendering which accords Him deity accounts nicely for Paul's "great heaviness and continual sorrow." The text, then, is one that proclaims the deity of the Son of God. He is "God over all, blessed forever."

Thus, Paul concludes his lament with an affirmation that Jesus Christ is the God-man, in harmony with other words of his, such as the statements in Galatians 4:4. There he contends that in the fullness of time God sent forth His Son, who was made of a woman. The deity is *sent*, the humanity is *made* (lit., *came to be*). To put it more accurately, at a point in time the divine Son took an additional nature, a human one, and was sent on the mission of redemption of the elect. Both natures were essential to the salvation of the people of God. He must be one of them, apart from sin, and at the same time be God, in order that His sacrifice might have the infinite value necessary to pay their penalty.

The humanity of the Lord Jesus and the deity of the Son are beautifully seen in one striking incident. Probably nothing is more human than the payment of taxes. That our Lord did, but not without a mild rebuke of Peter for failing to understand His position as a Son. On the other hand, was there ever such a divine way of paying taxes as His? He told Peter, "Notwithstanding, lest we should offend them, go thou to the sea, and cast an hook, and take up the fish that first cometh up. And when thou hast opened its mouth, thou shalt find a piece of money; that take, and give unto them for me and thee" (Matt. 17:27). How nice it would be to be able to pay taxes that way! A trip to White Rock Lake, with a fishing line, hook, and bait and one bite from a fish with a mouth full of Kruggerands would do the job quite easily! I think I would like that method a bit better than my present one!

This, then, was Israel's supreme privilege. Of them came the Messiah, the God-man, but they with the Gentiles crucified Him. In the future, however, awakened by the Spirit of grace and supplication, they shall perceive their sin and folly at His coming, and a nation shall be converted in a day. In the meantime, with Paul we lament their lost opportunity, although we look forward to the day when Israel shall say with their greatest prophet, "For unto us a child is born, unto us a son is given, and the government shall be upon his shoulder; and his name shall be called Wonderful, Counselor, The Mighty God, The Everlasting Father, The Prince of Peace" (Isa. 9:6).

#### THE CONSEQUENCES, IF PAUL IS WRONG

*No knowledge of God.* If Paul is wrong, then diastrous things become true and, first of all, we have no knowledge of God. Why not turn to one of the Hindu avatars? How would we know with certainty that God is merciful to sinners, if God Himself had not come to tell us?

*No atonement.* The reconciliation of men to God would be a



myth, and we would be as alienated from God as ever, lost in our sins, if Paul is wrong.

*No resurrection.* If Paul is wrong, then Bertrand Russell's gibe at Christianity, "belief in fairy tales is pleasant," would have justification.

*No Holy Spirit.* We would have no companion and guide, no teacher to unfold the mysteries and beauties of divine revelation to us, and no real entrance into the divine life.

*No gospel.* And, of course, our book and our message would be gone. We may as well turn to the reading of fiction of the Hindu or Muslim sacred literature.

*No Christianity.* And, finally, we would have no Christianity at all. We might still have the creeds of Christendom, but they, too, would be only beautiful stories without substance. No revelation, no divine Trinity, no cross and blood, no forgiveness of sins, no hope of the second coming and a heavenly home. We would be of all men most miserable. But, thanks be to God, Paul is right, and in Jesus Christ we have a divine revelation, a saving cross and blood, the forgiveness of sins, and a heavenly hope. As Paul says in another place, "But now is Christ risen from the dead and become the first fruits of them that slept. For since by man came death, by man came also the resurrection of the dead. For as in Adam all die, even so in Christ shall all be made alive; But every man in his own order: Christ the first fruits; afterward they that are Christ's at his coming" (1 Cor. 15:20-23). We are of all men most joyous.

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## USING GOD UNSELFISHLY

by Alvin N. Rogness

A man who marries a woman because he needs a cook cannot be called a lover. A man who adopts a son in order to have help on his farm does not deserve the name father. A man who shows kindness to his neighbor in order to sell him some goods is no friend. Nor does the man who embraces God in order to get His protection thereby become a Christian. True religion is no investment, either for time or for eternity. Great love, true parenthood, sublime friendship, and Christian faith do not take the form of business transactions. In none of these is the driving motive the desire for gain. That which ennoble each of these roles is the selfless outpouring of one's life for others.

It is true that in each of these instances there are towering rewards and satisfactions. But they constitute the by-products; they are not the reason for loving or believing. If a person loves his wife truly, it is likely that his reward will be a happy home. But if his only reason for loving her is the thought of the reward (a happy home), it is more than likely that they will both be miserable. If, in the Christian life, a man wanted above all else a comfortable suite in heaven, and therefore came to God, it is certain that both he and God would be unhappy. The rewards are there most surely, but they steal in almost like unexpected and unsolicited surprises to the person who has not been seeking the rewards.

All of us are tempted to use God selfishly. We cry for Him when shells are screaming over our foxhole. We do not really want Him, we want life. We call upon Him when sickness stalks in upon us. We want health, we do not particularly want Him. We summon Him whenever things go wrong, because we want things to go right again. But Him, God Himself personally, we are not so sure that we would like Him around. Let Him deliver the bill of goods we have ordered, and we would be delighted to have Him retire quietly back into His heaven and wait there until we cry again. He is such a handy errand boy, or family doctor, to have on call. But to have Him stay in our homes, in our schools, in our offices, at our parties, on our dates—well, that is quite a different matter. Worse still to have Him on our hands to love and serve and honor and obey come what may—whoever heard of anyone desiring that!

That is precisely what real, honest-to-goodness Christian living means. You take God for what He is and asks, not for what He does and gives! You start with His having already given you more than you ever can repay, then you receive Him and go on to try repaying Him in some little measure for what He has already put in your hands. (Use your imagination and try to think of anything you have, behind which God is not the giver.) Above all else He has given you forgiveness of sins and life with Him. That cost Him the cross. If in all sincerity you try to repay Him for that, this is certain, that you will pretty well forget about trying to wheedle something more out of Him. Because He has first and already given His love to you, you will think the more of trying to give your love and thanks to Him. Whenever you begin to take Christian living seriously, you get yourself out on the giving end of things.

We can use God. He is the most explosive power known. In comparison with this power, the release of atomic energy is a child's pop-corn party. He who made the suns, millions of them, can overturn the life of the whole world. And He will, provided we let Him do it His way. His way is through the minds and hearts of men who will use Him unselfishly. If we try to employ Him to execute our own pet plans to make life softer and safer for our own paltry selves, we block the power. If, on the other hand, we let it flow in with a prayer on our lip, "Thy will be done," explosive things will begin to happen within our spirits, and the concussions will rearrange the world.

It is uncanny how hard it is for us to use Him unselfishly. A mother prays for her son. She asks God to keep him from danger. What does she mean? The danger of collision on the highway, which would cost him pain and money? Or the danger of temptation, which would cripple his character in the service of God? The first is a prayer for God's power to serve him and his comforts; the other is a prayer for God's power, the better to serve and honor God. She might pray, "God, keep him from bad company and out of jail," and while she would not say it, or perhaps even consciously think it, she might have added, "because God, he would bring shame upon us, the newspaper stories would be embarrassing, and we might even have to pay

a heavy fine." Even a mother's prayer for her son, you see, might be an attempt to use God selfishly.

Many serious-minded people are now saying that if the Freeworld does not turn to God democracy is done and Communism will take over. We clap our hands, and are thrilled to think that surely then, if democracy is in danger, people must turn to God. The churches will be filled, and people will remember their prayers—because we just must keep democracy going! What are we doing with God through all this enthusiasm over Him? Simply pulling Him in to make a last ditch stand for a certain type of government which we have learned to like, that is all. Or, we hear people say that if men now do not turn to God, another great war will come and wipe us off the earth. (And how we would dislike to leave this earth with its automobiles and football games and pretty girls.) But if men will turn to Him, then war will not come, and probably we shall be able to fly to Delhi for our honeymoon. Let us not be easily deceived. Much of the return to God is fool's drivel. It is man's desperate attempt to float a loan in heaven so that he can keep the crumbling assets of his selfish enterprises from plunging him into bankruptcy. And God will not invest in this business. He wants man to abandon this business of self, to enter into partnership with God in His business. Then, and then only, will the limitless assets of heaven be open to him.

Very glibly, and often absentmindedly, we offer the prayer, "Thy kingdom come. Thy will be done on earth as it is in heaven." It is an exceedingly dangerous prayer. If God should some day really do what we are here asking Him to do, what violence might be done! We want to make something of ourselves in life; God wants us to make something of life for Him. We want to make the world safe for democracy and for our grandchildren; God wants us to try making it safe for righteousness and mercy, and that might make it a very perilous world for some sorts of democracy and for some sorts of grandchildren. We want life comfortable, God wants to do away with pride; we want security, God wants holiness; We want God on our side to fortify our own fond plans; God wants us on His side in the perilous plans of His will for this world.

Our most pious deceit, strangely enough, has to do with man's longings for heaven. If we cannot cash in on God here in this life, we will at least hold out for a pretty pay-off in the next. (If man's longing for heaven is a longing for God Himself, this of course is not true. If we have learned to love God's presence here, and therefore desire to live with Him forever in heaven, our longings are of eternity itself.) In the profoundest sense, a man should so desire God in this life that if he could have Him only here, and never hereafter, even that would be treasure enough. Paul expressed some such exalted feeling when he said that if only he could use God unselfishly here to make his fellowmen share with him some of the joy of God's presence, he would be willing to surrender heaven. All the riches of earth and all the bliss of heaven notwithstanding, to live with God here and now was for Paul the fullness of life. God did not run errands to bring him ease or safety or health; God ushered him into the frightening paths of His



will, through pain and strife and death. Never, in all the anguish of all those years, did Paul doubt that what he had lost in the form of honor and riches as a leader in Jerusalem was as nothing compared with the sheer fulfillment of life which he had discovered as a selfless follower of the Christ. And while it was the love of Christ, and that alone, which drove him on, God had let him see, through the mists of this life, the fadeless crown that awaited him.—from *Christian Platform*

## NEWS AND NOTES

"They rehearsed all that God had done with them . . ."

A great week is expected July 12-18. The bulletin insert distributed to several churches did not mention that Bro. Earl Millins, Sr. would also be present for the week. This worked out after the printing. He will be speaking 5 times from Daniel 10-12, with comments regarding the "West" in the the end-time.

Also this is not a week just for families; but those single, widowed or divorced are encouraged to attend.

—Dick Lewis

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We enjoy the magazine so very much. Please keep it coming.

Mr. & Mrs. A. E. Gourdon

### Meditating On The Word

"Andrew Bonar tells of a simple Christian in a farm house who had 'meditated the Bible through three times.' This is precisely what the psalmist had done; he 'had shaken every tree in God's garden and gathered fruit therefrom.' The idea of meditation is to 'get into the middle of a thing.' *Meditation is to the mind what digestion is to the body. Unless the food be digested, the body receives no benefit from what we read or hear: There must be that mental digestion known as meditation.* If we would 'buy the truth,' we must pay the price which Paul intimated when he wrote to Timothy: 'Meditate upon these things, give thyself wholly to them.' David meditated in God's Word because he loved it, and he loved it because he meditated in it."—copied