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The Doctrine of Amillennialism In The Light of the Scriptures

Amillennialism is a comparatively new word. Its teachings have supplanted postmillennialism in many otherwise orthodox theological schools. The meaning of the word is, no millennium. Amillennialists believe that there will be no thousand-year period of blessing and peace upon earth following the return of Christ. They see no golden age, no utopia in the future, but sudden destruction of the world at Christ's second coming.

But the Old Testament describes an age of peace, prosperity, healing, justice, righteousness and happiness, such as the world has never yet seen. This golden age is to be brought about by the presence of Christ, and by His removal of the curse upon the earth, and by His rule with "a sceptre of righteousness." Isaiah 11:35, Zechariah chapter 14, and many other references, prove this. And the New Testament never nullifies these glorious

By W. N. Blankenship

promises; but it does refer to them many times.

In Revelation, chapter 20, the definite period of one thousand years is mentioned six times. Surely premillennialists, who believe that the millennium will begin at the coming of Christ, have an abundance

of Scripture to maintain such a position.

Postmillennialism teaches that Christ will come at the close of the millennium; that the world will be converted by the gospel; and that, through the efforts of the churches, the kingdom of God will

come on the earth. This theory has been explored and forsaken in most orthodox circles.

Amillennialism Based on Figurative Interpretation

The writer is convinced that amillennial belief cannot stand the acid test of the Scriptures. Where the amillennialists go astray is in their method of interpreting Bible prophecy. They contend that we must give a spiritualized interpretation of prophecy. Why?

The prophecies that have been fulfilled in times past have not been spiritually or figuratively fulfilled, but literally, just as they were written. For example: the prophecies concerning the captivity of Israel, the destruction of Jerusalem, and the birth, life and death of Christ, were literally fulfilled even to

The Importance of the Church

By I. W. Rogers

There are only two institutions that have come into being by direct acts of God. They are: *the home*, which was instituted in the early days of the human race; and *the church*, which had its beginning during the earthly ministry of our Lord Jesus Christ. There can be no doubt that both these institutions are dear to the heart of our Lord.

It is indeed gratifying to

see the increased interest in the home, as expressed in the large number of books and magazines on the subject that are coming from the press, and a deeper concern on the part of pastors and churches and denominations, who have been aroused by the prevalence of divorce, and the frightful and concerted attacks upon the home by

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(See **A-MIL** on page 11)

Quiz The Pastor

What Does The Bible Say About Cremation?

By Garner Smith

Question: What does the Bible say about cremation?

Answer: There are two known cases of cremation in the Bible. In Joshua 7:25-26 it is used of Achan as a method of judgment of God not the disposing of a body. In 1 Samuel 31:8-13 again it is not used as a means of burial or disposing of a body but for special purposes to keep from further misuse of the body. This was not a Hebrew or Scriptural custom.

Over and over again in the Bible God commands the burning of things as a sign of displeasure and a dishonorable way of disposing of a body. See Exodus 32:15-20. When God commands cremation it is a severe form of con-

tempt or punishment, not a normal, honorable, or respectful means of disposing of a body.

I do not believe a Christian should use cremation as a means for disposing of the body because of the following reasons:

(1) It is of heathen or pagan origin and practice. The Romans copied it from the Greeks and it was common in pagan Europe until the growth of Christianity, then it declined. The reason paganism practiced cremation was to prevent the use of the body by evil spirits or for magic ceremonies.

(2) It is against Scripture. When we bury a body in the ground we are following the commands of God. The body is to return



A Hindu Cremation

to the earth from whence it was made. This is done in a natural way as ordained by God (Gen. 3:19). God Himself set the example in His own burying of the body of Moses (Deut. 34:5-6).

(3) We have Christ's example in opposition to cremation. In God's plan of redemption part of that plan was Christ was to be buried (Matt. 12:38-40; 1 Cor. 15:3-4).

(4) The burial of the body was practiced by God's faithful Old Testament saints. In Genesis 23:4 we see Abraham seeking a burial place for his wife. If cremation was acceptable why go to so much trouble to bury her?

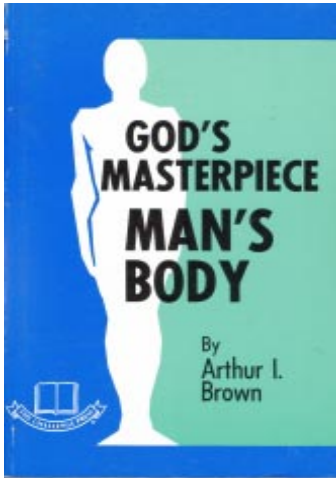
(5) The sanctity of the human body. Christians bodies belong to the Lord (1 Cor. 6:19-20). We are never to let our bodies be used for any purpose to dishonor God (Rom. 6:13). Our bodies should be buried in such a way to proclaim

our faith in the sure and certain hope of the resurrection. Romans 14:8 says that when we die we are to die unto the Lord. Our death and burial should declare Gods ownership of our body and glorify Him. We as Christians are not free to do with our bodies as we will. We are Gods and must consider and do His will in all things.

Because of the aforementioned reasons we must conclude the practice of cremation should never be practiced by a Christian. It has no support from the Scripture and was rejected by both Israel and the early Christians. It was considered a heathen custom and a judgment of God. It dishonors the body and seeks to deny the resurrection. Christian burial is a necessary part of our Christian faith from beginning to end and to forsake it is to forsake our God-given faith. □

THE BAPTIST CHALLENGE

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God's Masterpiece -- Man's Body — #46

Joints

By Arthur I. Brown

We are engaged in an examination of the bony structure of the body. I am trying to avoid too minute study, which is not the purpose of these articles. I want you to have a good general idea of many of the most interesting features, and so today let us gather up a few more facts which I am sure are worthwhile and which tend to prove that design, which is the aim of our study. Some of this article will be by way of review.

Bone is conspicuously a hard tissue, due to the mineral or inorganic substances which it contains. These are mostly phosphate and carbonate of lime and form two-thirds of the weight of an adult bone. The remaining one-third is composed of organic or animal substances: vessels, marrow, bone corpuscles, and gelatinous matter or collagen.

The hardest part of a bone is its surface; in color, it is ivory white and is called compact bone tissue. The deeper part is porous,

and is called spongy or cancellous tissue, since it has the appearance of lattice work. The hard compact tissue is most abundant on the shafts of the long bones. These bones require special strength to resist external violence to which they are exposed in the extremities. Since bones must be slender as well as strong, these two results are gained by packing the bone tissue as closely as possible.

The cancellous or porous tissues is more abundant in the parts of bones where extent of surface is desirable, as in the extremities of long bones where the enlargement is covered with a thin layer of compact bone. Thus they can give attachment to many tendons and ligaments, while the spongy character of the bone prevents excessive weight.

We must not overlook the remarkable bone marrow. This mysterious substance is contained in the spaces of cancellous tissue and in little canals running through the bone substance. Red marrow is found in flat and long bones, and in the joint ends of long bones. This marrow, so important in the formation

of blood cells, contains connective tissue, blood vessels, and numerous cells, among which are marrow cells or myelocytes. Among these marrow cells are small cells from which the red blood corpuscles are derived. A large canal runs in the shaft of each long bone, containing firm yellow marrow and larger vessels. How these cells give rise to blood cells through many intervening stages is not understood.

Another very interesting feature is that there is no normal bone which is uncovered. All bones are closely covered more or less completely with a strong fibrous membrane called periosteum. This is essential to the life of the bone, because the many blood vessels which nourish it lie in the periosteum.

If the periosteum is injured sufficiently, that area of bone immediately underneath dies from want of food and becomes dead bone because the blood vessels have been bruised and are unable to deliver the life-giving nourishment. The deep inner layers of the periosteum contains bone-forming cells which are responsible for the healing of fractured bones. A similar membrane called

endosteum lines the canal in the shaft of long bones. It bears an important artery which divides into two branches one going to each end of the bone. All these vessels provide bone with an ample blood supply.

Another important function of bone and one often overlooked, is its use as a storehouse from which the blood may secure its very essential supply of calcium. Abnormalities in the calcium metabolism of developing bone tissue are responsible for rickets. In this connection it has been found that a deficiency of Vitamin D is at the basis of the abnormal calcium reaction in the bone tissues.

The basic important of free calcium in the blood plasma is now recognized, and the essential factor in the maintenance of the normal amount of calcium in the blood is due to an obscure action of the hormone secreted by a very tiny gland in the neck — known as the parathyroid gland. The parathyroid hormone is almost infinitesimal in amount and has never been subjected to chemical analysis.

It is known today that calcium is necessary to

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Scholars Mull Founders' View of Religion In Public Life

By Kevin Mooney

America's founding fathers championed a prominent public role for religion in politics that contrasts with the secular impulses dominating contemporary society, according to several scholars who took part in a symposium here honoring President Ronald Reagan.

George Washington "audaciously challenged the patriotism of those in society who sought to undermine religion or its public role," argued Daniel Dreisbach, a professor in the school of public affairs at the American University. Dreisbach told audience members at the seminar hosted by Regent University that Washington's view of religion and its proper station in public life would greatly antagonize secular forces in America today. "One can easily imagine the scorn the mainstream media would heap on the original George W," he said.

Washington's "Circular Letter" of 1783, announcing his resignation as commander and chief, and his "Farewell Address" in 1796 provide a complete picture of his "core political beliefs," Dreisbach explained. Because he did not anticipate returning to public life as president, the two documents can be viewed

Do you know the Preamble for Your State?

Alabama 1901, Preamble. We the people of the State of Alabama, invoking the favor and guidance of Almighty God, do ordain and establish the following Constitution.

Alaska 1956, Preamble. We, the people of Alaska, Grateful to God and to those who founded our nation and pioneered this great land ...

Arizona 1911, Preamble. We, the people of the State of Arizona, Grateful to Almighty God for our liberties, do ordain this Constitution ...

Arkansas 1874, Preamble. We, the people of the State of Arkansas, Grateful to Almighty God for the privilege of choosing our own form of government ...

California 1879, Preamble. We, the People of the State of California, Grateful to Almighty God for our freedom ...

Colorado 1876, Preamble. We, the people of Colorado, with profound reverence for the Supreme Ruler of Universe ...

Connecticut 1818, Preamble. The People of Connecticut, acknowledging with gratitude the good Providence of God in permitting them to enjoy ...

Delaware 1897, Preamble. Through Divine Goodness all men have, by nature, the rights of worshipping and serving their Creator according to the dictates of their consciences ...

Florida 1885, Preamble. We, the people of the State of Florida, grateful to Almighty God for our constitutional liberty, establish this Constitution ...

Georgia 1777, Preamble. We, the people of Georgia, relying upon protection and guidance of Almighty God, do ordain and establish this Constitution ...

Hawaii 1959, Preamble. We, the people of Hawaii, Grateful for Divine Guidance Establish this Constitution ...

Idaho 1889, Preamble. We, the people of the State of Idaho, grateful to Almighty God for our freedom, to secure its blessings ...

Illinois 1870, Preamble. We, the people of the state of Illinois, grateful to Almighty God for the civil, political and religious liberty which He hath so long permitted us to enjoy and looking to Him for a blessing on our endeavors ...

Indiana 1851, Preamble. We, the People of the State of Indiana, grateful to Almighty God for the free exercise of the right to choose our form of government ...

Iowa 1857, Preamble. We, the People of the State of Iowa, Grateful to the Supreme Being for the blessings hitherto

as farewell statements to the nation. Washington's acknowledgements of God and divine intervention in the affairs of nations were not preserved for private musings or obscure missives — rather, they were central to his most important public addresses, Dreisbach said.

The "indispensable" role of religion in America's constitutional order and its connection with public virtue were widely recognized by Washington and other prominent figures of his day, Dreisbach contended. In Oct. 1782, for example, the Continental Congress issued a Thanksgiving Proclamation that most likely was authored by John Witherspoon, a Presbyterian clergyman who signed the Declaration of Independence.

Dreisbach singled out a passage from Washington's farewell address to bolster his point: "Of all the dispositions and habits which lead to political prosperity, religion and morality are indispensable supports. In vain would that man claim the tribute of patriotism who should labor to subvert these great pillars of human happiness — these firmest props of the duties of men and

(See **PREAMBLE** on page 6)

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STATES . . .

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citizens.” That portion of the speech is rarely invoked and often overlooked, Dreisbach observed. “This is pretty stunning language,” he said. “He seems to be coming close to saying that if you’re undermining the public role of religion, you can’t call yourself a patriot — indeed, you may be a traitor to the polity.”

Some have speculated that Washington may have been referring to Thomas Jefferson, who is widely viewed as being less pious than many of the other founders. But Jean Bethke Elshstain, a professor at the University of Chicago and another forum participant, noted that Jefferson — ironically — would be viewed today as someone with strong religious convictions.

Elshstain argued that the institutional separation of church and state should not be seen as justification for the secularization of society at large.

Other speakers included Hadley Arkes, author and Amherst College professor, who discussed the influence of natural law on America’s founding, its relationship with freedom and the “immutable” moral code that pre-exists civil society. Arkes also discussed the rationale some federalists such as Alexander Hamilton had for opposing the inclusion of a

PREAMBLE . . .

(Continued from page 4)

enjoyed, and feeling our dependence on Him for a continuation of these blessings establish this Constitution.

Kansas 1859, Preamble. We, the people of Kansas, Grateful to Almighty God for our civil and religious privileges establish this Constitution.

Kentucky 1891, Preamble. We, the people of the Commonwealth are grateful to Almighty God for the civil, political and religious liberties ...

Louisiana 1921, Preamble. We, the people of the State of Louisiana, grateful to Almighty God for the civil, political and religious liberties we enjoy ...

Maine 1820, Preamble. We the People of Maine acknowledging with grateful hearts the goodness of the Sovereign Ruler of the Universe in affording us an opportunity ... And imploring His aid and direction ...

Maryland 1776, Preamble. We, the people of the state of Maryland, grateful to Almighty God for our civil and religious liberty ...

Massachusetts 1780, Preamble. We ... the people of Massachusetts, acknowledging with grateful hearts, the goodness of the Great Legislator of the Universe ... In the course of His Providence, an opportunity and devoutly imploring His direction ...

Michigan 1908, Preamble. We, the people of the State of Michigan, grateful to Almighty God for the blessings of freedom establish this Constitution.

Minnesota, 1857, Preamble. We, the people of the State of Minnesota, Grateful to God for our civil and religious liberty, and desiring to perpetuate its blessings ...

Mississippi 1890, Preamble. We, the people of Mississippi in convention assembled, grateful to Almighty God, and invoking His blessing on our work ...

Missouri 1845, Preamble. We, the people of Missouri, with profound reverence for the Supreme Ruler of the Universe, and grateful for His goodness ... Establish this Constitution.

Montana 1889, Preamble. We, the people of Montana, grateful to Almighty God for the blessings of liberty establish this Constitution ...

Nebraska 1875, Preamble. We, the people, grateful to Almighty God for our freedom ... Establish this Constitution.

Nevada 1864, Preamble. We the people of the State of Nevada, grateful to Almighty God for our freedom establish this Constitution ...

New Hampshire 1792, Part I. Art. I. Sec. V. Every individual has a natural and unalienable right to worship God according to the dictates of his own conscience ...

New Jersey 1844, Preamble. We, the people of the state of New Jersey, grateful to Almighty God for civil and religious liberty which He hath so long permitted us to enjoy, and looking to Him for a blessing on our endeavors ...

Bill of Rights in the Constitution. Hamilton was reluctant to embrace the first ten amendments because he feared that explicitly writing them out would leave any unmentioned rights unprotected, he said.

The caliber of the presentations greatly impressed Josh Bachman, a first year law student at the university. “Keep feeding me the red meat,” he said. “The founders took deliberate steps to protect our natural rights and my generation needs to re-discover the philosophical roots of American exceptionalism.”

Jon Beutel, a government student, told Cybercast News Service he particularly enjoyed the lecture given by Michael Novak of the American Enterprise Institute, who highlighted the connection between Christian theology and the language used in early American documents, such as the Virginia Declaration of Rights.

Novak said the definition of religion used in the Virginia Declaration helped set the tone for religious freedom, which was ultimately followed throughout the nation. Holly Wagner, who is pursuing a master’s degree in communications and government, told Cybercast News Service she felt emboldened by the symposium, as she hopes to

(See **PREAMBLE** on page 6)(See **STATES** on page 7)

God In Our Government

By William Jennings Smith

Before the birth of our nation, the American people debated the volatile issue of religious freedom. After the adoption of the United States Constitution, these debates continued, and on September 25, 1789, the First Congress proposed to the states ten amendments that were ratified and

became known as the Bill of Rights. The First Amendment was written to allay the fears of some of the people concerning certain liberties, including freedom of religion. This Amendment reads as follows:

“Congress shall make

no law respecting the establishment of religion, or prohibiting the free exercise thereof; or abridging the freedom of speech, or of the press; or of the right of the people peaceably to assemble, and to petition the government for a redress of grievances.”

Even though I do not attempt in this work to present a legal history of the First Amendment or even the religion clauses contained in the Amendment, I think it is important to note that application of the Amendment was limited (See **GOV** on page 7)

PREAMBLE . . .

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New Mexico 1911, Preamble. We, the People of New Mexico, grateful to Almighty God for the blessings of liberty

New York 1846, Preamble. We, the people of the State of New York, grateful to Almighty God for our freedom, in order to secure its blessings ...

North Carolina 1868, Preamble. We the people of the State of North Carolina, grateful to Almighty God, the Sovereign Ruler of Nations, for our civil, political, and religious liberties, and acknowledging our dependence upon Him for the continuance of those ...

North Dakota 1889, Preamble. We, the people of North Dakota, Grateful to Almighty God for the blessings of civil and religious liberty, do ordain ...

Ohio 1852, Preamble. We the people of the state of Ohio, grateful to Almighty God for our freedom, to secure its blessings and to promote our common ...

Oklahoma 1907, Preamble. Invoking the guidance of Almighty God, in order to secure and perpetuate the blessings of liberty ... establish this ...

Oregon 1857, Bill of Rights, Article I, Section 2. All men shall be secure in the Natural right, to worship Almighty God according to the dictates of their consciences ...

Pennsylvania 1776, Preamble. We, the people of Pennsylvania, grateful to Almighty God for the blessings of civil and religious liberty, and humbly invoking His guidance

Rhode Island 1842, Preamble. We the People of the State of Rhode Island grateful to Almighty God for the civil and religious liberty which He hath so long permitted us to enjoy, and looking to Him for a blessing ...

South Carolina, 1778, Preamble. We, the people of the State of South Carolina grateful to God for our liberties, do ordain and establish this Constitution ...

South Dakota 1889, Preamble. We, the people of South

Dakota, grateful to Almighty God for our civil and religious liberties ...

Tennessee 1796, Art. XI, III. That all men have a natural and indefeasible right to worship Almighty God according to the dictates of their conscience ...

Texas 1845, Preamble. We the People of the Republic of Texas, acknowledging, with gratitude, the grace and beneficence of God ...

Utah 1896, Preamble. Grateful to Almighty God for life and liberty, we establish this Constitution ...

Vermont 1777, Preamble. Whereas all government ought to enable the individuals who compose it to enjoy their natural rights, and other blessings which the Author of Existence has bestowed on man ...

Virginia 1776, Bill of Rights, XVI. Religion, or the Duty which we owe our Creator can be directed only by Reason and that it is the mutual duty of all to practice Christian Forbearance, Love and Charity towards each other

Washington 1889, Preamble. We the People of the State of Washington, grateful to the Supreme Ruler of the Universe for our liberties, do ordain this Constitution ...

West Virginia 1872, Preamble. Since through Divine Providence we enjoy the blessings of civil, political and religious liberty, we, the people of West Virginia reaffirm our faith in and constant reliance upon God ...

Wisconsin 1848, Preamble. We, the people of Wisconsin, grateful to Almighty God for our freedom, domestic tranquility

Wyoming 1890, Preamble. We, the people of the State of Wyoming, grateful to God for our civil, political, and religious liberties ... establish this Constitution ...

After reviewing acknowledgments of God from all 50 state constitutions, one is faced with the prospect that *maybe*, the ACLU and the out-of-control federal courts are *wrong!*

“Those people who will not be governed by God will be ruled by tyrants.” — William Penn. GOD BLESS AMERICA !

GOV . . .

(Continued from page 6)

to the federal government for about 150 years. The Supreme Court held in property rights case in 1833 and in a religious rights case in 1845 that the Bill of Rights did not apply to actions by the states or their political subdivisions.

Therefore, during this period, religious liberty was a matter for the states. A few of them had adopted official religions. However, after heated political battles in the states that had established official religions, these states, one after another, withdrew official sanction of all official religions.

Religious freedom remained in the states' legal domain until the Supreme Court brought the First Amendment under the umbrella of the constitutional protection guaranteed by the Fourteenth Amendment. This occurred in 1940 when the Supreme Court held in a Jehovah's Witnesses case that the fundamental concept of liberty in the Fourteenth Amendment embraces the liberties guaranteed by the First Amendment. Since that time religious freedom

STATES . . .

(Continued from page 5)

pursue career opportunities in agencies that are not necessarily receptive to Christian ideas, such as the United Nations. ■

issues have been federal legal problems, and there has been little unanimity of opinion in the federal courts on the interpretation of the religion clauses in the First Amendment.

Some of these volatile issues have been, and still are, when and where one may pray to God; what may or may not be taught in public schools; government financial aid to parochial schools; religious displays on government property; whether governmental legislative bodies may employ chaplains, pray and be led in prayer; whether gifts for religious purposes should be deducted from income taxes; whether property used for religious purposes should be taxed; whether courts should be opened with a plea for God's protection, whether ministers and ministerial students should be exempt from military service; should God's name be used in oaths of office; should chapels be in government buildings; should displays of religious art be permitted in government buildings, et cetera.

Can anyone doubt that this list will continue to grow in the years to come?

The Supreme Court's decision in 1940 has caused an expanded dialogue which has increased litigation on the subject of freedom of religion. The right to participate in this dialogue and litigation is a precious right.

Even after many of

these religious issues have been declared legal or illegal, the dialogue, often bitter, rages on, questioning or approving the courts' decisions. This situation is aggravated by the in-fighting between the Justices of the Supreme Court who criticize one another's opinions and in many instances in words of sarcasm and ridicule.

For examples, I refer to three of the most controversial cases.

In a 1962 New York case, the Supreme Court held prayer in public schools violates the First Amendment. Two Justices did not participate in the decision. Five Justices joined in the Court's opinion, one Justice filed a concurring opinion and one Justice filed a dissenting opinion. Here we find a divided Court with multiple opinions.

In a 1963 Pennsylvania case, the Supreme Court held that reading from the Bible, without comment, and the reciting of the Lord's Prayer by students in unison violates the First Amendment. While joining in the decision, four Justices filed separate opinions and one Justice dissented. here again we find a divided Court with multiple opinions. And now we have the Supreme Court's decision on June 4, 1985 striking down an Alabama moment of silent meditation statute, because it contained the word prayer. Once more we find

a divided Court with multiple opinions. Justice Stevens wrote the opinion of the Court and was joined by Brennan, Marshall, Blackmun, and Powell. However, Justice Powell wrote a concurring opinion. Justice O'Connor filed an opinion concurring only in the judgment. Here is an interesting quote from her opinion:

"No law prevents a student who is so inclined from praying silently in public school."

Justice Rehnquist's dissenting opinion included a detailed history of the religion clauses of the First Amendment.

Justice White filed a brief dissenting opinion in which he stated: "I appreciate Justice Rehnquist's explication of the history of the religion clauses in the First Amendment."

Chief Justice Burger filed a dissenting opinion and I am constrained to quote his first two paragraphs:

"Some who trouble to read the opinions in this case will find it ironic — perhaps even bizarre — that on the very day we heard arguments in this case, the Court's session opened with an invocation for Divine protection. Across the park a few hundred yards away, the House of Representatives and the

(See **GOV** on page 24)



Gaza Baptist Church Seized by Palestinian Authority Police. — An official with Open Doors International says the only evangelical church in Gaza has been seized by Palestinian Authority police, and the pastor of that Baptist congregation is describing conditions in the violence-riddled area as “the worst situation we ever went through.” — ONN

Clinton, Carter Support Liberal Baptist Group. — “Former Presidents Jimmy Carter and Bill Clinton are lending support to next year’s gathering of the self-proclaimed Moderate Baptists. Their aim, they say, is to improve the image of Baptists and to broaden the agenda of Baptist churches. At a recent gathering at Atlanta’s Mercer University, Clinton and Carter told the group to seek unity on issues like religious diversity, ecology and racism,” said a recent Focus On the Family report. Russell Moore, dean of the School of Theology at the Southern Baptist Theological Semi-

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nary, told Family News in Focus ‘The Cooperative Baptist Fellowship is a group of disaffected former Southern Baptists. They have no confessional statement. They’re really united around what they don’t believe rather than what they do believe.’”

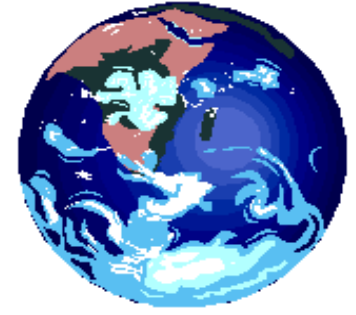
Q: What Does Vegetarianism Have To Do With the Fossil Record?

— **A:** In Genesis 1:29–30, the Bible says: And God said, ‘See, I have given you every herb that yields seed which is on the face of all the earth, and every tree whose fruit yields seed; to you it shall be for food. Also, to every beast of the earth, to every bird of the air, and to everything that creeps on the earth, in which there is life, I have given every green herb for food; and it was so. God’s Word tells us that Adam and Eve — and the animals — were vegetarian before sin. However, sin changed everything. In Genesis 9, right after the Flood, we read that God told Noah that man could eat meat from that time onward. This is an important point. In the fossil record, there are numerous instances of fossils of animals with bones of other animals in their stomachs. These fossils showing carnivory could not have formed

before Adam sinned. Yet, if you believe in millions of years of history, these fossils contradict the Bible’s account of history. The Bible’s account is true — man’s ideas are fallible.

Southern Baptist Agency Mismanaged, Claims Former Director.

— Having served 16 years with the SBC’s North American Mission Board (NAMB), a former director, Mary Kinney Branson “says she witnessed numerous instances when contributions were misused and wasted during her time with the agency.” Dr. Bob Reccord resigned as NAMB president “shortly after an investigation by the agency’s board of trustees” but has denied Branson’s charges. Reccord said he resigned to allow himself “to devote more time to family matters.” Some of the charges Branson has put forth are that “Reccord had a personal fund of one-million dollars that he could use at his discretion.” According to Branson, “Reccord and his wife traveled to London to see the premier of the movie *The Chronicles of Narnia*” charging the tickets “to NAMB”. Among other charges she says “Reccord allowed personal friends to land lucrative contracts for various services, such as



public relations and private airline flights.”

SBC Theology Teacher Denied Tenure.

— Sheri Klouda, a theology professor at Fort Worth’s Southwestern Baptist Theological Seminary, said officials told her to leave the Southern Baptist seminary because women are biblically forbidden to teach, while school officials say she wasn’t dismissed but was denied tenure. — A/G

Yoga Stretches Into Public Schools.

— In Tara Guber’s ideal world, American children would meditate in the lotus position and chant in Sanskrit before taking stressful standardized tests. But when she asked a public elementary school in Aspen, Colo., to teach yoga in 2002, parents — some conservative Christians, some secular — lobbied the school board. They argued that yoga’s Hindu roots conflicted with Christian teachings and that using it

(See **WNR** on page 17)

La Voz Del Desierto

El Privilegio de Conocer A Dios

Por M. A. Curet

¿Qué haría usted si supiera que Dios desea que lo conozca mejor a Él, que a cualquier otra persona en su vida? Al mismo tiempo que Él nos ha provisto de amigos y familiares, a quienes amar y con quienes podemos compartir nuestra vida. Él es quien más nos ama, y el que promete nunca dejar de amarnos por ninguna razón.

David escribió “Cuando veo tus cielos, obra de tus dedos, la luna y las estrellas que tú formaste, digo: ¿Qué es el hombre, para que tengas de él memoria”

(Salmo 8:3-4)? Sin embargo, esto es exactamente lo que Dios hace: Él dirige sus pensamientos hacía nosotros, pensamientos de compasión y amor, no de perjuicio ni destrucción. Veamos lo que escribió Pablo en Filipenses 3:8.

Antes de su conversión, Pablo tenía lo que muchos consideraban todo lo que una persona podría desear. Él tenía posición social, dinero y poder político. Tenía una buena educación y además era religioso. Como resultado de su disciplina había sido elegido

como un fariseo. Los hombres le respetaban y escuchaban cuando hablaba. Sin embargo, él estaba espiritualmente ciego ante la gracia y el amor personal de Dios. Para Pablo el privilegio de conocer a Dios provenía de la acción y el deber, no en un encuentro personal con el Salvador de este mundo. Por ende, su vida estaba vacía y sin sentido.

Sin embargo, esto cambió, cuando él conoció al Salvador y Señor resucitado. Las palabras de Pablo en Filipenses 3:8 son

evidencia de su profunda devoción a Dios y de su relación íntima con el Salvador. Aunque él experimentó muchos momentos de reconocimiento en su vida, ninguno se comparaba con el gozo, paz y plenitud que eran suyos a través del conocimiento de su Señor Jesucristo.

¿Has pensado alguna vez cuánto Dios te ama y cuánto desea que le conozcas? Él nos creó, y nos ama y ha tenido cuidado de nosotros aun cuando hemos

(Vea CURET en el pág. 10)

Nuestras Aflicciones Como Seres Humanos

Muchos de nosotros pasamos por diferentes pruebas que nos producen aflicción, esto es totalmente normal, pero no debemos afligirnos demasiado hasta el punto que nos dejemos morir.

El entristecernos y el llanto son respuestas normales de nuestra parte humana (sentimientos). Pero nos dice la Palabra, que es necesario que tengamos aflicciones para ver si podemos resistir (Job

5:7).

Dios prueba nuestro corazón, en medio de nuestras aflicciones nos brinda consuelo, fe, fortaleza, y nos sirve para evaluarnos (1ra Pedro 1:6-7). Muchos de nosotros creemos que podemos resolver todas las situaciones que trae la aflicción.

No debemos manejar la situación como lo haría cualquier persona inconversa. Al único que debemos acudir y que nos

puede consolar en medio de la aflicción es Dios (1ra Tesalonicenses 3:7).

Hay dos clases de aflicciones: 1) Aflicción espiritual — cuando no oramos, no leemos la Palabra, no nos congregamos, pecamos desobediendo la Palabra de Dios.

2) Aflicción material — cuando perdemos algo, o alguien se nos muere, algún ser querido, enfermedades, soledad, vacío, tristeza.

Dios conoce nuestro corazón cuando pasamos por aflicción, pero sólo Él nos sustenta y nos conforta, por ésto debemos estar fortalecidos y gozosos en medio de la aflicción (Jeremías 16:19).

Recordemos hermanos que la sanidad depende de la obediencia a Dios, y que la aflicción nos sirve para crecer en el Evangelio y estar más unidos a Dios.

[Por Hna. Jemar Montes, Redactora.] ■

CURET . . .

(Vino de la pág. 9)

sido lastimados, malentendidos o ignorados (Jeremías 9:23-24; Oseas 6:6; Juan 14:8-10). Jesús vino a morir por nuestros pecados, pero también vino para que podamos conocer a Dios de manera personal y darnos cuenta del privilegio maravilloso que es conocer a Dios y caminar con Él cada día. Algunas personas encuentran esto algo difícil de creer. Se sienten olvidados y piensan que Dios no se interesa por sus vidas.

Dios nos creó primero para su comunión y luego para que tuviésemos comunión con otros. Abraham fue llamado "amigo de Dios" (Santiago 2:23). David fue considerado un hombre "conforme al corazón de Dios" (Hechos 13:22). Veamos lo que Jesús le dijo a sus seguidores en Juan 15:15-16. Veamos también lo que David escribe en Salmo 16:8-11.

Nuestro Dios es un Dios a quien podemos conocer. Hay varias razones por las cuales la gente no llega a conocer a Dios. Cada una de éstas no les permite experimentar la

bondad de Dios, la cual está disponible para todos los que le buscan:

1) No se puede conocer a Dios cuando se vive en pecado. Aquellos que nunca han aceptado a Cristo como su Salvador no pueden conocer a Dios. La única forma en que se puede llegar a conocer a Dios es a través de una relación personal con Jesucristo. El Señor le dijo a sus seguidores: "Nadie viene al Padre, sino por mí" (Juan 14:6).

2) Muchas personas no tienen interés en Dios. Algunos se preocupan por sí al final de sus vidas, sus buenas obras serán suficientes para permitirles entrar en el cielo. Nunca podrán hacer suficientes "buenas obras" para ganarse un lugar en el cielo. Solo los que conocen a Dios a través de la vida de su Hijo Jesucristo podrán algún día estar en su presencia.

3) Nosotros los creyentes, podemos conformarnos con mucho menos de lo que Dios quiere que experimentemos, al no tomar tiempo para buscarlo y gozar de su comunión. Las prioridades puestas equivocadamente están entre muchas de las ra-

zones por las cuales no llegamos a conocer mejor a Dios. Veamos Lucas 12:29-31. Las cosas de Dios deben ser lo primero siempre en nuestras vidas; todo lo demás vendrá por añadidura.

4) Muchos no están dispuestos a pagar el precio de conocer a Dios. Al principio Pablo se resistió al llamado de Cristo y evitó conocerlo. Pero Jesús no se dio por vencido con Pablo. Él lo creó con un plan en mente y sabía exactamente lo que tendría que hacer para llamar su atención. Durante su vida, Pablo sufrió mucho por el Evangelio. Una vez que entregó su vida a Cristo, no miró más atrás y nunca lamentó su decisión, aunque fue azotado, dejado por muerto y abandonado por sus amigos (Filipenses 3:4-17).

Algo inexplicable sucede cuando nos sometemos a Dios. Abandonamos aquello que nos parecía importante y recibimos una recompensa eterna. Esa es una retribución magnífica que no merecemos. Si está experimentando un tiempo de sufrimiento, siéntase animado. Dios está en el proceso de revelársele. Él usa los tiempos difíciles para que nos acerquemos más a Él, y para enseñarnos más en cuanto a su fidelidad y amor.

La adversidad se convierte en una herramienta poderosa en manos de Dios, la cual sólo lleva a la bendición. Cuando pense-

mos que ya no podemos caminar ni un paso más, ni soportar otro dolor más, clamemos al Señor. Él es nuestra fortaleza eterna (Filipenses 4:13). □

El Vestido Sin Bolsillos

El día del cumpleaños de la abuela, su hija le regaló un corte de tela, para que la nieta le hiciera un vestido.

La abuela contestó: "Muy bien pensado en comprar la tela negra. Con ese vestido deseo ser enterrada."

¿Es que piensa morirle madre?" le preguntó su hija sonriendo.

"Sí, hija, pienso dormirme en los brazos de Jesús, un día u otro, pues ya tengo, ¿cuántos? ¡Ah, sí! Cumpló 80 años ya."

"Bueno, bueno ... no hablemos de morir madre" le dijo la hija. Hablemos de cómo quiere que le cosamos el vestido."

"Como mejor ustedes crean. Sólo que no le hagan bolsillos."

"¿Qué extraño! Si siempre has querido no sé cuántos."

"Sí, tienes razón, pero lo digo, ¿sabes por qué? por si me tienen que enterrar con él. ¿Para qué bolsillos en el último vestido que nos hacen? No los necesitamos, nada nos podemos llevar. ¿No te parece hija?"

"Porque cuando muera no llevará nada, ni descenderá tras él su gloria" (Salmo 49:17). □

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minute details. To be more specific, the very place of Christ's birth was prophesied (Mic. 5:12), the manner of His birth was foretold (Isa. 7:14), and the exact way in which He would die was depicted by the remarkable prophecies of Psalm 22 and Isaiah 53. It is true that Jesus found only a few who believed that the prophecies concerning Himself would be literally fulfilled. But amillennialists are making the same error today. Should Christ come today He would chide many religious leaders for their unbelief, for *God will fulfill to the letter every promise that He has made.*

In writing about the beliefs of the amillennialists we want to be perfectly fair. We respect and love our amillennial brethren, but believe their views are unscriptural, therefore untenable. We expect to answer with Scripture, not with scholarship. The writings of men are of value only as they are confirmed by the Scriptures. Scholarship was not Paul's highest appeal, and neither should it be ours. Scholarship was wrong when Jesus came the first time; it will be wrong regarding many issues when He comes again.

Amillennialists Say That the Church Is Israel

First, amillennial view is that the prophecies concerning Israel in the Old Testament apply either to the church in this gospel age or to believers in the eternal state. They say, "The church is Israel." *Not one verse can be found in the entire Bible that substantiates this statement.* A close study of the passages that speak of the Christian as a Jew or an Israelite will reveal that the writer is addressing Israelite believers, or is writing about them. The context of a verse cannot be ignored. The Bible does not teach that every believer is a Jew, but that every Jew who believes is a real Jew (Rom. 2:28-29).

The church and Israel are differentiated in the New Testament (1 Cor. 10:32). When an Israelite is saved he becomes a Christian, when a Gentile is saved he becomes a Christian, but not an Israelite. The belief that the church is Israel causes its advocates to disbelieve that the nation of Israel will be restored to its own land with the Messiah as their King, as was prophesied. (Jer. 23:5-8; Zech 14; Isa. 11).

The question was asked Jesus, "Wilt thou at this time restore again the kingdom to Israel?" He did not reply that the prophecies concerning Israel would be fulfilled in the church age; but He did say, "It is not for you to know the times or the seasons which the

Father hath put in his own power" (Acts 1:6-7). The Holy Spirit through Peter spoke these words: "When the times of refreshing shall come from the presence of the Lord; and he shall send Jesus Christ, which before was preached unto you; whom the heaven must receive until *the times of restitution of all things which God hath spoken by the mouth of all his holy prophets* since the world began" (Acts 3:19-21). This Scripture plainly teaches that the prophecies of the Old Testament concerning the restoration of Israel ("all things"), will be fulfilled at the second coming of Christ.

In Romans 11 God shows that Israel in part is blinded to Christ as Savior, and that now is "The times of the Gentiles." Then in verse 25 a great secret is revealed — that this blindness will only continue until the Gentile religious opportunity has ended. And then, "All Israel shall be saved: as it is written, There shall come out of Sion the Deliverer and shall turn ungodliness from Jacob: for this is my covenant with them, when I shall take away their sins" (Vs. 26-27).

There is one more reference to consider (Acts 13:14-17). *These verses give God's plan for this age and the millennial age.* (1) God is calling out from among the Gentiles a people for His name (the bride of Christ). (2) After

this Christ will return (vs. 15). He is not speaking of Christ's first coming, for He is *returning* to the earth that He previously visited (vs. 16). (3) When He returns, David's tabernacle (dwelling place, or house, or kingdom) will be established (Vs. 16; Lk. 1:32-33). This is the restoration of the kingdom of Israel, and the millennium. (4) The whole world will outwardly turn to Christ during the millennium (Vs. 17; Zech. 14:16).

What Amillennialists Overlook

Second, the amillennialist believes that at the second coming of Christ there will be a cataclysmic destruction of the earth and that the saved and lost will, at that time, enter their eternal state. This view ignores in one statement an abundance of Scripture. One never reads that the earth will be destroyed simultaneously with Christ's coming. It will be destroyed during the "day of the Lord", which involves many judgments and a long period of time. If you will read all Bible references on the "day of the Lord" you will understand that it refers to the time of the Great Tribulation, the judgment of the nations, the millennium, the white throne judgment, and finally, the destruction of the earth by fire.

The idea that at the

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coming of Christ the saved and lost will be ushered into their eternal state, does not harmonize the Scriptures. This view is arbitrarily propagated in the face of Bible facts contradicting it.

This view also logically demands a general resurrection. But Revelation, chapter 20, specifically mentions “the first resurrection”, and *shows that the second resurrection follows in its proper sequence one thousand years later*. The status of the first resurrection group is given, and they are located on the earth for one thousand years with Christ (Rev. 20; 2 Thess. 1:10). The second resurrection is not so called, but is signified by the plainest description possible. The time is following the one thousand years, and the group resurrected is consigned to the lake of fire.

In the light of Revelation, chapter 20, we may easily see the order of events outlined in 1 Corinthian 15:23-28. (1) Christ the first fruits (resurrection of Christ). (2) They that are Christ’s at His coming (resurrection of the saints). (3) He must reign till He hath put all enemies under His feet (the millennium). (4) The last enemy that shall be destroyed is *Death* (the second resurrection (Rev. 20:12-13)). (5) Then shall the Son also Himself be

subject unto Him that put all things under Him, that God may be all in all (the eternal state) (Rev. 21-22).

Amillennialism and the Book of Revelation

The third belief of the amillennialists (many of them at least) is that the prophetic book of Revelation was written for the most part for the comfort of the first century Christians, and was fulfilled in the first and second century. The most apparent fallacy of this interpretation is that end-time events are interspersed throughout the book from chapter 6 and following. The amillennial interpreters recognize this difficulty but ignore or spiritualize it. The fact is, such events as are described in chapters 6 to 18 have never yet taken place.

Another difficulty with this third belief is the view that Revelation 6 to 18 has reference to the sufferings of the early church. But the church is not once mentioned. We understand all this Scripture to refer to the future. We believe that the church, as was John in his vision, will be in heaven at the time the judgments of God and man are heaped upon the cursed earth.

Finally, the “A-group” holds to the view that there is no relationship between the prophecy of Daniel and the Revelation. That these two prophetic books are similar, none will deny; but again they refuse to

interpret Scripture in the light of Scripture. The Bible is a book of progressive revelation. The prophetic books of the Old Testament are essential to the understanding of the prophetic portions of the New Testament. Paul compared spiritual things with spiritual (1 Cor. 2:13). The New Testament writers confirmed their new revelation with Old Testament truth, or explained the absolute newness of it.

Amillennialism An Issue

Many ask, “Why make an issue of Amillennialism?” The answer is — The method of interpretation used in this teaching is *unwarranted and dangerous*. Suppose you interpret the Virgin Birth by the same process. You will have Christ born of a virtuous woman, but in an illegitimate way. You may interpret as you feel, if you are spiritualizing. Modernism — the denial of the Virgin Birth, the Deity of Christ, the Atonement, the Resurrection, and the Second Coming — is the fruit of liberal and figurative interpretation of the Scriptures.

The great need of Christians today is simply in believing that God means just what He says about Sin, Satan, Salvation, the Second Coming, Thousand-year Reign, Heaven, Hell, and all other themes. We must not say what God has not said. *We may safely*

quote the word of God, but we dare not deny it. We cannot go wrong if we use God’s terminology. We firmly believe that the moral and spiritual fiber of a Christian is weakened when he undertakes to explain away a mass of Scripture. Unbelief is the root of worldliness. The figurative interpretation of the Scriptures, formalism and worldliness tend to exist together. □ □

CHURCH . . .

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the movies, the liquor industry, television, and other forces of evil. Let us hope and pray that the present efforts to show the importance of this basic institution of Christian civilization is only the beginning of a strong emphasis on all that belongs to a genuinely Christian home, and on an all-out war against the evil forces that are pulling millions of homes apart. May God’s blessings be upon every one who has a part in arousing the interest of the people in the importance of the home, and upon every soldier of the cross, who enlists in the fight against the enemies of the home.

But we are not going to succeed on our efforts to build genuinely Christian homes by neglecting the other God-ordained institution, *the church*. No nation can have the right

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sort of homes without having the right sort of churches, and no nation can have the right kind of churches without having the right kind of homes. These twin institutions of God are dependent upon each other. The question, "Which is the more important, the church or the home" is not a debatable question. Both are indispensable, and neither can get along without the other.

The importance of the church is attested by the emphasis that Jesus and the apostles and the New Testament Scriptures, as a whole, place upon this God-ordained, and God-built institution. Jesus not only instituted His church, but He built it. On the night before He was crucified, in His intercessory prayer, He said, "I have finished the work which thou gavest me to do" (Jn. 17:4). This was spoken probably less than an hour and perhaps less than thirty minutes, after He had instituted the Lord's Supper, the final act in building His church. While the four Gospels do not use the word "church" but a few times, Jesus was diligently working throughout His ministry, using the material that had been prepared by John the Baptist, and fashioning it into the institution which he called, "My Church" (Mt. 16:18). Jesus, Himself, is the Chief Corner Stone

upon which His institution was built; His apostles were the foundation sills, the charter members (Eph. 2:12; 1 Cor. 12:28). He loved His church so much that He died for it (Eph 5:25), and He promised to be with His institution all the days even to the end of the world (Mt. 28:20). This promise He has literally fulfilled down to the present day. One of the most beautiful word pictures in all the Bible, and one that stirs the saint of God with emotion, is the picture of Jesus walking among the seven golden candlesticks — His seven churches in Asia (Rev. 1:12-13, 20).

The apostles of our Lord placed strong emphasis on the church. The book of Acts is a story of the growth of the institution which Jesus built, and its multiplication into many other like institutions. Paul wrote nine of his letters to one or more churches for each letter, and his other four letters deal largely with instructions as to how church officials ought to behave themselves "in the house of God, which is the church of the living God, the pillar and ground of the truth" (1 Tim. 3:13). John wrote his second and third epistles for instruction to churches and their leaders. He wrote the last book of the Bible as "The revelation of Jesus Christ" to the seven churches of Asia. One of the greatest burdens of Paul was his daily "care of all the churches" (2 Cor.

11:28).

So, the New Testament as a whole is largely concerned with the churches of our Lord Jesus Christ. Understand, we did not say the Bible, because you will not find instructions concerning or for the churches of our Lord in the Old Testament. The reference in Stephen's sermon to the "church in the wilderness" (Acts 7:38), simply means *the congregation* in the wilderness, and has no reference whatsoever to the church that Jesus built.

Since the church of our Lord is so important, the question arises, "Are Baptists being taught what a church of Jesus Christ is, and are they being thoroughly grounded in the New Testament doctrine of the church?" In most of our churches and in most of our Southern Baptist institutions the answer is an unequivocal "No." In all too many instances, the pastors

of our churches and the teachers in our institutions of learning know almost nothing about the church that Jesus built. They never, in all their lives, have made a thorough study of what God has told us in the New Testament about the supremely important institution brought into existence by our Lord, and, sad to say, many of them do not care enough about it to even learn! Is it, then, at all surprising that the average Baptist church member is extremely ignorant about the church that Jesus built? He does not know what a New Testament church is, and there is no one who will instruct him! Is it any marvel that all the cults such as Mormonism, Seventh Day Adventism, Jehovah Witnesses, and Campbellism are making such inroads among Baptists? Is it not time we were doing something about it? □

A Glorious History

By Charles Wellborn

Baptists have a glorious history of upholding the pure democracy of the local church. We face today the challenge of standing fast by that doctrine.

A church which is "run" by the pastor, or by the deacons, or by any other minority group is not a New Testament church. Many other groups are giving up their hard-won freedom.

May God help Baptists to maintain real democracy in their churches!

Eyewitness Account of a Benny Hinn “Miracle” Crusade

[The following report is by Missionary Ryan Gray of Fiji Islands.]

The world famous television evangelist Benny Hinn came to the Fiji Islands to hold a “miracle crusade” January 20-22, 2006. The crusade was held in the national stadium in the capital city of Suva, just a few miles from Victory Baptist Church where I am the missionary pastor.

In the middle of 2005 we first learned of the upcoming crusade, and I began preaching and warning our people about this dangerous and deceptive false prophet who would undoubtedly capture the attention of much of the Fiji Islands, many of whom already watched Benny Hinn’s “This Is Your Day” program on the Trinity Broadcasting Network and highly esteemed him as a “man of God”. It is so sad to see multitudes of people carried away by such false prophets because they are ignorant of the way of salvation and completely lacking any Biblical understanding.

From the very onset, people were encouraged to attend the crusade because of what they would “experience”. I have a poster handed out as an invitation



to the crusade stating, “Come, Hear & Experience an Anointed Gospel Message That Will Change Your Life.” An advertisement placed in the Fiji Times newspaper said, “Experience the Excitement.” I believe that these words were carefully chosen because the atmosphere crusade focused on exactly that manipulating

the crowd so that they would experience a feeling that God was present, and that great miracles of physical healing were taking place.

I attended the first night of the crusade, and arrived at the stadium at 11:00 a.m. even though the gates would not open until 2:00 p.m. and the service would not begin until 6:00 p. m. I

wanted to be sure to get a good seat as close as possible to the platform so that I could closely watch all that happened, take plenty of pictures, and write notes about the service. I had seen Benny Hinn’s program on television, but this was my first time to attend a large scale miracle crusade of this nature. I began to wonder if Benny Hinn would be able heal the blistered sunburn I was getting while waiting in the hot Fiji sun!

While waiting for the gates to open I took several pictures of people who were gathering for the evening service. I took several pictures of an Indian man who walked with crutches because I saw that, although he had the crutches, as he walked it was obvious that his own legs were supporting his full body weight. I even saw him put the crutches down and then sit down on a bench, bending both legs at the knees to be seated. Only until later that night would I realize just how valuable those pictures would be!

Upon entering the stadium, we were greeted by the pulsating beat of contemporary praise music, sounding identical to secular

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rock and roll. This music was played through the massive sound system until the service began. I took a seat directly behind the platform on the bleachers right next to the huge choir. I noticed that large screens were put up on both sides of the platform so that everyone could see what was happening on stage.

A couple of Benny Hinn's assistants spoke from the platform for a few minutes challenging the people to "expect great things tonight". Benny Hinn's band then took the stage, warming up for the evening service with keyboards, guitars, loud drums, a thumping bass guitar, and jazzy saxophone. People were cheering as the band played, even when they played a secular rock and roll song that I remembered listening to before I was saved! The air was already electric with the great anticipation of what would happen during the service.

I watched sadly as parents brought their mentally handicapped children into the stadium and ambulances unloaded person after person on stretchers. Many sick people were brought directly from the hospital to attend the crusade in hope of being healed. I found it interesting that the seating areas on both sides of the platform, and directly in front were roped off,

keeping those who were genuinely sick away from the platform, and instead, they were seated in their reserved areas towards the back of the crowd. I wondered, "If this is truly a miracle healing crusade, why not get those who most need healing as close to the front as possible?"

As the service began at 6:00 p.m. an American lady traveling with Hinn's team sang a solo with the help of the band. She was dressed like a nightclub singer in a short skirt, high heels, and skimpy top while she sang, danced, and waved her arms to the contemporary 'Christian' rock music that was identical to that used by any worldly entertainer.

Physical healing was the main message of the crusade from the very opening moments. When Benny Hinn came on the platform, some of his first words were, "Expect something tonight "this will be the greatest miracle crusade in this part of the world!" The crowd erupted with cheers and shouting, especially when Benny Hinn told them three times to repeat aloud with him, "All will be healed." He then said, "If Jesus healed them all 2000 years ago, He will heal them all today. You are going to leave healed and free. The power of God is going to invade this place." He then told everyone to turn to the person next to them and say, "The Lord is going to

heal me, and the Lord is going to heal you." He affirmed these claims by saying, "This is the Word of God. This is His promise. Lift your hands and thank Him." Once again, the crowd burst into deafening cheers and shouting.

Until this night I never realized the importance of music in a crusade such as this. Without hesitation I can say that Benny Hinn's most important worker is his choir director. Through the whole service he stood about 15 feet behind Benny, keeping one eye on him, and one eye on the choir. He had to be ready at all times because Benny Hinn would talk then spontaneously break into singing a chorus and be joined by the band and choir. The powerful music was used to hold the emotions of the people high throughout the service. The only time that the band was silent was the fifteen minutes that Benny Hinn preached. The music of the crusade was the key to the "experience" of the people. I remember reading of Benny Hinn's admission that he needs the "atmosphere of faith" in order to heal the sick. The music is what creates the atmosphere of the crusade, and manipulates the audience into feeling whatever the organizers want them to feel. Make no mistake about it, music is powerful! Interestingly enough, Christ and the apostles did not need a rock band and

super-charged emotional atmosphere in order to perform miracles!

Then came the time that Benny Hinn would preach the message from the Bible. He read from Matthew 12:15, "But when Jesus knew it, he withdrew himself from thence: and great multitudes followed him, and he healed them all." He turned to several other similar verses and emphasized the statement that Jesus healed everyone. He said, "I have come to Fiji to tell you that this same Jesus is still healing the sick and giving sight to the blind." He quoted from Hebrews 13:8, "Jesus Christ the same yesterday, and today, and for ever" and said, "Jesus is still the same, so *He will still heal all. Not one or two, or one hundred, but all.* This same Jesus is going to heal you tonight, so get ready! *Today on Friday the 20th of January, 2006, Jesus will heal you all!*"

It was sad and even frightening to see the crowd enraptured into hysteria by these words. What power this man held over them! They had completely given themselves over to believe whatever Benny Hinn said, and they truly believed that every sick person would be healed that night. This was a sobering reminder to me as I sat in the midst of such powerful deception that we must examine every mes-

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Domination of Church by State

By Ted Byfield

Canada's ideological left, confident of its control of academe, the Supreme Court and the federal Liberal Party, appeared this month ready to declare war on its most formidable enemy of all, namely conservative Christian churches that refuse to make their teachings conform to the Charter of Rights and Freedoms as defined by the Supreme Court. Janice Gross Stein, Belzberg

professor of conflict management and director of the Munk Centre for International Studies at the University of Toronto, a luminary and advanced thinker in the feminist and human rights movement, effectually disclosed the new campaign in an article published in the Literary Review of Canada, entitled "Living Better Multiculturally: Whose Values Should Prevail?" Her

answer was clear: The Supreme Court's values should prevail.

Then she played her trump card. Churches whose teachings fail to conform to the Charter should be denied charitable status in Canadian tax law and exemption from property taxes. To my knowledge it was the first time the tax threat was seriously levied. It will seek to force the churches

to accept gay rights, abortion and (in the case of the Catholic and Orthodox churches) female priests. The Stein article appeared in the fall edition of the Review, but did not attract media attention until an Ottawa reporter, Deborah Gyapong, quoted it last week in the Canadian Catholic News. Though professor Stein

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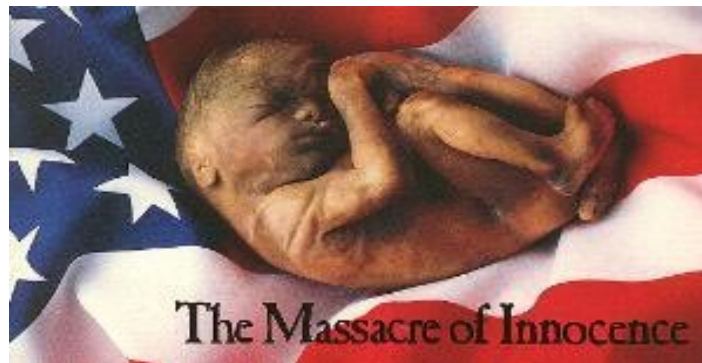
Anti-Abortion Rally In Arkansas

By Stella Prather

Fifteen years ago, Amy Burns believed she was making a wise decision when she had an abortion. She was divorced with two young children. She didn't feel she could care for another baby.

Now she knows "my right to choose" was a lie.

"I chose a life of wondering whether my baby was a boy or a girl, what would it have looked like and been like and many more questions I will never have the answer to," tearfully says Burns, a member of Grace [Baptist] Church of Camden. "I also have the vivid memory of the abortion procedure and



the guilt of knowing I never gave my baby a chance at life — the opportunity of fulfilling the plans God had especially for him or her.

"My abortion has affected me and others in my life in ways I never thought of, ways no one ever told me about."

Burns was one of about 20 women and men who gathered for a press conference at the Arkansas State Capitol building in Little Rock Jan. 22 to tell their stories of how abortion harmed their lives. Caring signs which read, "Abortion hurt me," the women and

men were taking part in the annual Operation Outcry's Silent No More campaign.

The Silent No More event is held each year in conjunction with the anniversary of the Jan. 22, 1973 decision by the U.S. Supreme Court to legalize abortion in the Roe v. Wade case. Since that time, 45 million abortions have been performed in the United States, according to Silent No More leaders.

Speaking to the crowd, Burns, who is also Arkansas state leader for

(See RALLY on page 18)

CANADA . . .

(Continued from page 16)

centered her article on churches, synagogues and mosques that refuse to ordain women, the same threat would likewise apply to churches whose teachings on moral questions do not conform to the Charter. “Religious institutions that systematically discriminate against women are recognized at least implicitly by government,” she wrote. “They enjoy special tax privileges. Religious institutions do not pay property tax and most receive charitable status from the federal government. Does it matter that the Catholic Church, which has special entitlements given to it by the state and benefits from its charitable tax status, refuses to ordain women as priests?” Once it became aware of this new leftist initiative, the response of the right was immediate.

“Religious practices discriminate against women? What women?” asked Gwen Landolt, lawyer for REAL Women of Canada. “It’s only radical feminists who feel Christian practices are against women. And as for charitable tax status, who does more charitable work in this country than the Catholic Church and the Salvation Army?”

Ms. Landolt also saw the wide implications of the Stein article: “We are right at the periphery of perhaps the most serious issue we

have faced.

All the things that we have had in the past “abortion and same-sex marriage” are closing around the freedom of the churches. This is a gauntlet that has been thrown down.” □

WNR . . .

(Continued from page 8)

in school might violate the separation of church and state. Portrayed as a New Age nut out to brainwash young minds, Guber crafted a new curriculum that eliminated chanting and translated Sanskrit into kid-friendly English. Yogic panting became “bunny breathing,” and “meditation” became “time in.” “I stripped every piece of anything that anyone could vaguely construe as spiritual or religious out of the program,” Guber said. Now more than 100 schools in 26 states have adopted Guber’s Yoga Ed Program and more than 300 physical education instructors have been trained in it. . . . Despite mainstream popularity, yoga in public schools remains touchy. Dave Hunt, who has traveled to India to study yoga’s roots and interview gurus, called the practice “a vital part of the largest missionary program in the world” for Hinduism. The Bend, Ore., author of “Yoga and the Body of Christ: What Position Should Christians Hold?” said that, like other

religions, the practice has no place in public schools. “It’s pretty simple: Yoga is a religious practice in Hinduism. It’s the way to reach enlightenment. To bring it to the west and bill it as a scientific practice for fitness is dishonest,” said Hunt.

* * *

Kansas Again Cuts Doubts of Evolution.

— The Kansas Board of Education repealed science guidelines questioning evolution. The new guidelines represent a political defeat for advocates of “intelligent design” who had helped write the standards that are being jettisoned. The intelligent design concept holds that life is so complex that it must have been created by a higher authority. The board removed language suggesting that key evolutionary concepts -- such as a common origin for all life on Earth and change in species creating new ones — were controversial and being challenged by new research. Also approved was a new definition of science, specifically limiting it to the search for natural explanations of what is observed in the universe.

* * *

Imam Leads Democrats.

— “With heads bowed reverently, Democrats were led in prayer yesterday by a Muslim imam who essentially asked

Allah to assist in converting the party members to Islam, according to a scholar and author.” Robert Spencer, director of Jihad Watch said “Imagine if a Christian priest or minister had prayed at a DNC meeting that those attending be guided away from the path of those doomed by God.”

* * *

Iowa Prison Ministry Helps, Appeals Panel Told.

— An evangelical Christian prison ministry program in Iowa should be allowed to continue because it succeeds at modifying inmate behavior and reducing recidivism, an attorney for the state said. But Alex Luchenitser, the attorney for Americans United for Separation of Church and State, told an appeals court panel that state funds shouldn’t be used for religious indoctrination — and there is no reliable study that the program reduces recidivism. The Eighth U.S. Circuit Court of Appeals panel, which included retired and visiting U.S. Supreme Court Justice Sandra Day O’Connor, is considering an appeal of U.S. District Judge Robert Pratt’s ruling in June. Pratt, nominated to the bench by President Clinton, ruled that the ministry is unconstitutional and that the Iowa Department of Correction must shut it down and that

(See **WNR** on page 21)



Statue Of Billy Graham — Another Idol?

“The new Billy Graham statue in downtown Nashville, Tennessee, shadowing the Southern Baptists’ national offices, inspires deep emotion, affection and occasional grumbling that the rock-solid rendering is a form of idol worship ...

“Now 88 and in ailing retirement, Graham has been America’s leading evangelist nearly 60 years. The statue harkens back to the Graham of decades ago, the vigorous young preacher from Cold War days, when Protestants were in charge and Graham was unofficial chaplain to the

(usually Republican) White House. ..

“In the 1960s and ’70s, his fiery TV crusades urged born-again salvation and fear of hell. He made every non-Baptist kid in America momentarily doubt his own brand of belief. Real Christianity seemed to mean embracing mournful hymns and endless altar calls, a 19th-century Protestant style that Graham perfected. Waves of new evangelists adopted the formula, pressing audiences to make a decision for Christ this very minute, lest they die tomorrow and lose

their eternal soul” (Nashville Tennessean).

Though he had hundreds and often thousands respond to his invitations, those who were able to follow up his meetings found that most of those who responded did not join local churches, and often, no result could be found after a few weeks had gone by.

Then something happened. Graham got older. And he cooled down. Whereas before he would only have meetings with those who believed in the fundamentals of the faith, he was ready now to welcome anyone as a “sponsor” of his meetings, whether they be Roman Catholic, liberal or conservative, or what. He recommended that all his “converts” join the “church of their choice” even if that church denied the fundamentals of the faith, or as in the case of Catholics, followed the Pope and his teachings.

Talking to Newsweek last summer, Graham reaffirmed the authenticity of the Bible but said “Scripture is open to interpretation.” He stressed Jesus is still the way but refused to condemn non-Christians religions and would not say that accepting Jesus as ones personal Savior was the only way to get to heaven. Even Jews, other religions, and even pagans might enter heaven by a different way than belief in Jesus Christ.

So when people stroll past the downtown statue, what will they see? Billy Graham: the world’s most, far-reaching evangelist, Scripture’s unwavering evangelical ambassador, or one who has done a 180 degree switch where he no longer stands for the firm convictions and the fundamentals of the faith he had when he started preaching, and now is willing to approve of every heresy that at one time he condemned. □

RALLY . . .

(Continued from page 16)

Operation Outcry, said she has since found “healing and peace” from the abortion “only through the grace and forgiveness of my Lord and Savior, Jesus Christ. ... My prayer today is that the lie of abortion will be overcome by the powerful testimonies shared here and that other women who bought into that lie like I did, will hear or see this

Importance of Baptism

“To eliminate, modify, or soften the emphasis on baptism is to hide redemption’s cost. One may be perfect on a thousand points of Biblical Theology, but if he is wrong on baptism he is not a Baptist. — Dr. Earl Griffith in Daybreak. □

and will reach out for hope ... through Christ.” — Arkansas Baptist News

Jesus Loves Me

(Children's Version)

Jesus loves me this I know,
For the Bible tells me so.
Little ones to Him belong.
We are weak but He is strong.
Yes, Jesus loves me ...
The Bible tells me so."

(Senior Version)

Jesus loves me, this I know,
Though my hair is white as snow.
Though my sight is growing dim,
Still He bids me trust in Him.

(Chorus)

Yes, Jesus loves me ...
Yes, Jesus loves me ...
Yes, Jesus loves me
For The Bible Tells me so.

Though my steps are oh, so slow,
With my hand in His I'll go
On through life, let come what may,
He'll be there to lead the way.

(Chorus)

When the nights are dark and long,
In my heart He puts a song,
Telling me in words so clear,
"Have no fear, for I am near."

(Chorus)

When my work on earth is done,
And life's victories have been won,
He will take me home above,
Then I'll understand His love.

(Chorus)

I love Jesus, does He know?
Have I ever told Him so?
Jesus loves to hear me say,
That I love Him every day.

(Chorus)

North Korea Tops List of Countries Persecuting Christians

The communist nation of North Korea, under the dictatorial hand of Kim Jong-il, has once again topped a list of countries that persecute Christians. The annual "World Watch List" by Open Doors has placed North Korea at the top of the list for the fifth year in a row. "Nothing has changed" for the North Korean people, says Open Doors, despite media attention focused on the country last year because of the regime's missile and nuclear testing.

According to information obtained by the ministry, more people were arrested last year in North Korea than the previous year, leaving an estimated 50,000 to 70,000 Christians in prison camps.

Paul Estabrooks, minister at large for Open Doors, says conditions for believers in North Korea are brutal and harsh. "North Korea has almost an official policy against Christianity," he explains. "They're very much against the United States."

Part of the North Korean culture, says Estabrooks, includes teaching children that their country and the United States are still at war. "They teach their children that they've never ended the war that occurred in the 1950s," he says. As a result, "they have this

terrible anti-Western attitude throughout the country — and part of that expands, of course, to Christianity" he says.

According to Open Doors, the North Korean government considers Christianity to be a "tremendous threat" the nation's stability and, therefore, "hunts Christians" all over the country, especially those who try to return from China.

Estabrooks shares that there is no other nation in the world where believers are persecuted so severely. "They're a country where it's technically illegal to be a Christian," he says. "People leave the country for food, then come back as Christians and often receive torture, arrest or even life in labor camps because of their faith."

But amidst such harshness and persecution, says Open Doors, the local Christians are "firmly standing strong" and remain dedicated to serving the local body of believers.

Following North Korea, the report lists Saudi Arabia, Iran, Somalia, and the island nation of Maldives. Islam is the majority religion in six of the top ten countries on the list. ■ ■

A Good Reputation Is More Valuable Than Money
Proverbs 22:1

HINN. . .

(Continued from page 15)

sage, every sermon in the light of God's Word.

Also in his message, Benny Hinn criticized those who would test his teachings and practices by the Bible. He said, "While Jesus was healing, the theologians wanted to argue theology. You need to quit arguing over theology and heal one another! Those who want to argue about healing, want to argue about the Bible and what the Bible says "we need to quit arguing about this and that.

Those who want to argue doctrine want to divide us." The only time that Benny Hinn mentioned the gospel, was in the context of physical healing. He said, "Jesus died on a cross, shed His blood for you and loves you. He wants to heal you." He preached for almost 15 minutes turning to several Scriptures about physical healing, but he never opened the Bible to any verse explaining the way of salvation, and only made one vague passing reference to the saving work of the Lord Jesus Christ. Sin was only mentioned one time, hell was never spoken of, neither was repentance or faith. Checking my watch, I noticed that Benny Hinn only vaguely spoke about salvation for three minutes! Later on as the service ended, people were encouraged to come forward and "give their lives

to Christ". Hundreds came to the front of the platform, and they were led in mass to pray a generic sinner's prayer. What shame and deception!

After the preaching concluded, the healing time was to begin. In a breathy, quiet voice Benny Hinn told the crowd, "I feel the presence of the Holy Ghost", as the band began to play the popular chorus, "He touched me." Hinn made mention of the crippled man who was healed in Acts 3, emphasizing to the crowd that this was the moment they had been anticipating, this was the very time that supernatural miracles would take place before their very eyes. "Receive your miracle tonight!" he shouted to the people.

He then coached the people on how to receive a miracle. "Some may feel electricity in their body, or a tingling sensation, or warmth, or heat. That is God's power healing you. Lift your hands and call His name. Place your hand on your body where the sickness is and I will pray for it to go." Benny Hinn announced that cancer, crippled legs, a brain tumor, throat cancer, arthritis in the back, deaf ears, a right leg, and a neck growth were being healed at that very moment.

The choir continued singing "He Touched Me" over and over again, and the band played louder each time, while the pianist

played with increasingly bigger and louder crescendos. The sound of the singing and music was deafening.

Those in the audience who were healed were instructed to speak to a member of the "healing team" that was spread out across the stadium, and they would be brought to the platform to proclaim their healing. The first person to come to the platform was the Indian man with crutches whom I took pictures of before the service! He said he had been crippled for fifteen years but that God had healed him that night and he felt no pain in his legs. The crowd cheered and roared as the man said, "I want to be a Christian because Jesus healed me." Benny Hinn threw the crutches off the platform, and knelt with the man, instructing him to repeat a prayer and become a Christian. Benny Hinn then said, "I believe that God is going to make you a preacher to take the gospel back to your own people in India!" Once again, the crowd exploded with thunderous applause and cheers.

If only these people had seen this man as I did before the service. He was not a cripple! No miracle had taken place! What greater shame that Benny Hinn had pronounced this man a Christian. A person does not become a Christian because they get

healed physically, but because they know that they are a hell bound sinner, unable to save themselves, and they trust the Lord Jesus Christ to save them based upon His work on Calvary's cross! This Hindu man was not told to repent of his idols, or to acknowledge his sin, nor was he told about hell, or the gospel of salvation! Yet he became the "star of the show" this night, was proclaimed a Christian and a preacher of the gospel which he knew nothing about.

The next person who came on the platform was an elderly man who had traveled all the way from New Zealand to attend the crusade. He said he was healed of diabetes. Obviously he was not familiar with the protocol of a Benny Hinn crusade, because when Benny tried to "slay him in the spirit", the man refused to fall down backwards! The crowd had a good laugh over this, but I thought, "Why didn't he fall if this was truly a work of the Spirit?" This was proof to me that the "spirit slaying" is nothing more than learned behavior. People do it because they expect it to happen.

Next a girl who claimed to be deaf from birth was healed, yet I wonder if her deaf condition was as genuine as the first man's crippled condition!

(See **HINN** on page 21)

HINN . . .

(Continued from page 20)

Next, a lady said her right side was healed from the effects of a stroke, and then another woman proclaimed that her heart condition was healed. Another woman said her right leg was healed of arthritis, and she also did not fall when Benny Hinn tried to “slay her in the spirit”. A lady said she was healed of an itchy virus because she felt electricity in her body, another lady said she was healed of back pain, and next was a lady who said that deafness was healed in her right ear. Last of all a man came and said he was healed of back pain.

Most of the claims of healing were made because people felt better, their pain was gone, or they had experienced an unusual sensation in their body. In this supercharged atmosphere of expectation, combined with powerful, repetitive music, everyone felt something in their body! Even I felt the pulsating beat of the music, and the energy of the people around me, but this was not a divine miracle! It is quite possible that during the crusade many people experienced relief of the symptoms of their illness, but when the emotions of the crusade wear off, the symptoms return!

None of the mentally handicapped were healed, nor were any of the blind

or those brought in ambulances from the hospital. None with deformed limbs were healed, nor were any of those brought in wheelchairs. As I walked out of the stadium that night looking at all the crippled and sick people making their way home and parents carrying their crippled children, I remembered Benny Hinn’s words, “*Today on Friday the 20th of January, 2006, Jesus will heal you all!*”. I wondered what these people must have been thinking. Why they didn’t get healed? Were they not good enough? Did they not have enough faith? Did they not give enough money? Did God not care about them? My heart was grieved that this wolf in sheep’s clothing was making merchandise of these ignorant people, and allowing them to take the blame for not being healed!

Benny Hinn claimed that the same kinds of healing found in the New Testament would be seen on this night, but the Lord Jesus Christ and His apostles did not merely heal back pain and arthritis! They healed withered limbs, opened blinded eyes, gave strength to the crippled, and even raised the dead, and they did not need the electric, rock music supercharged atmosphere of a healing crusade to do it! While we still believe that God can and does heal today according to His will, we do not believe that

anyone today has the gift of healing as seen in the lives of Christ and the apostles.

Benny Hinn deceived the people by implying that it is God’s will for every Christian to be healed physically right now, while the Bible promises no such thing. Romans 8:23 says that we are still waiting for “the redemption of our body.” Sickness and pain is part of the curse of sin, and we will have to endure these trials until we get a glorified body at the resurrection.

The greatest tragedy of all is that multitudes of people who attended this crusade sincerely believe that they are born again and going to heaven because they experienced a feeling in their body, and repeated a sinner’s prayer after Benny Hinn without any Biblical knowledge of why they need to be saved, and how they can be saved. I have already met people while out soul winning and listened as they told me that they were going to heaven because of what they experienced at the crusade.

The Word of God has forewarned us that, in the latter days, there would be an abundance of doctrinal delusion. First Timothy 4:1 says, “Now the Spirit speaketh expressly, that in the latter times some shall depart from the faith, giving heed to seducing spirits, and doctrines of devils.” Our Lord Himself warned us of false prophets such as Benny Hinn in Matthew

7:15, “Beware of false prophets, which come to you in sheep’s clothing, but inwardly they are ravening wolves.”

Christians today need to follow the example of the Bereans in Acts 17:11, who “searched the scriptures daily, whether those things were so.” As we carefully examine every doctrine and practice in the light of God’s Word we will be protected from the deception of false doctrine and false prophets like Benny Hinn. □

WNR . . .

(Continued from page 17)

\$1.5 million in contract payments be returned to the state. The orders were suspended pending the appeal.

* * *

Q: Aren’t The Days of Genesis 1 Just An Issue of Language? — A:

The true meaning of the days of creation is, in part, a language issue. After all, the only way words have meaning to all of us is because we stick to the rules of grammar for a particular language. But many people — including some Christian leaders — want to change the rules when it comes to the meaning of the days of creation. The word “day” as used in Genesis 1, according to the rules of

(See **WNR** on page 22)

WNR . . .

(Continued from page 21)

the Hebrew language, means an ordinary day in that particular context. Yet even though most theologians agree that the word “day” in Genesis 1 means a 24-hour day, many say it can’t mean that because the universe is obviously billions of years old. By doing this, they are actually saying that the fallible dating methods of fallible man are more important than the actual words of the Bible that God inspired people to write. Thus they’re making man the authority — not God. Yes, this is an authority issue. The Word of God should be read as written and used to judge the fallible words of man — not the other way round! — AIG

* * *

Belarussians Order 10 Americans Out. — Ten Americans left Belarus on Friday after authorities ordered them deported for reportedly singing religious songs and reading spiritual literature in violation of laws restricting religious activity in the former Soviet republic. The Americans “preferred to leave Belarus voluntarily” after authorities decided they should be deported, said Interior Ministry spokesman Oleg Slepchenko. Slepchenko said police raided what was supposed to be a seminar in conversational English at

an evangelical Protestant church in the eastern city of Mogilev. He said police found Bibles on the tables, and participants were singing religious songs instead of talking. The Americans, who arrived in Belarus Feb. 5, were fined and warned they were violating the law with their activities, Slepchenko said.

* * *

Churches Back Plan to Unite Under Pope. — Radical proposals to reunite Anglicans with the Roman Catholic Church under the leadership of the Pope are to be published this year, *The Times* has learnt. The proposals have been agreed by senior bishops of both churches. In a 42-page statement prepared by an international commission of both churches, Anglicans and Roman Catholics are urged to explore how they might reunite under the Pope. The statement, leaked to *The Times*, is being considered by the Vatican, where Catholic bishops are preparing a formal response. It comes as the archbishops who lead the 38 provinces of the Anglican Communion meet in Dar es Salaam, Tanzania, in an attempt to avoid schism over gay ordination and other liberal doctrines that have taken hold in parts of the Western Church. The 36 primates at the gathering will be aware that the Pope, while still a cardinal, sent a message of

support to the orthodox wing of the Episcopal Church of the US as it struggled to cope with the fallout after the ordination of the gay bishop Gene Robinson.

* * *

Stop Meddling With Our Ten Commandments Monument. — In the piney flatlands of Dixie County, a place where churches easily outnumber traffic lights, Florida’s latest battle between God and government is being fought on the steps of a 40-year-old courthouse. At the top of the steps stands a six-ton piece of granite inscribed with the Ten Commandments and the admonition, “Love God and Keep His Commandments.” The massive gray monument, approved by county commissioners and installed last November, is the target of a lawsuit brought by the American Civil Liberties Union. The ACLU says the display is unconstitutional because it violates a provision in the First Amendment prohibiting the government from establishing a preferred religion. But what ACLU lawyers see as a violation of law, many locals see as a fitting tribute to the county’s Christian heritage. And those locals aren’t happy. “I don’t think they have the right to come in here and tell us what to do,” said Wanda Wester, 68, a Dixie County native. “We all believe in God. If

they don’t like it, they can stay away.”

* * *

Roe Versus Wade Opposed. — Republican presidential candidate John McCain, looking to improve his standing with the party’s conservative voters, said Sunday the court decision that legalized abortion should be overturned. “I do not support Roe versus Wade. It should be overturned,” the Arizona senator told about 800 people in South Carolina, one of the early voting states. McCain also vowed that if elected, he would appoint judges who “strictly interpret the Constitution of the United States and do not legislate from the bench.” The landmark 1973 decision in *Roe v. Wade* effectively legalized abortion in the U.S. The Supreme Court has narrowly upheld the decision, with the presence of an increasing number of more conservative justices on the court raising the possibility that abortion rights would be limited. Social conservatives are a critical voting bloc in the GOP presidential primaries. □

People, places, and things were never meant to give us life. God alone is the author of a fulfilling life.

John 10:10

BODY . . .

(Continued from page 3)

keep nerve and muscle tissues at the proper degree of irritability. Calcium seems to act as a sedative and when the calcium supply falls below normal greatly increased irritability is at once noted. The muscles contract spasmodically and more and more violently until a condition known as tetany is reached. The muscles become rigid, as in convulsions, with stiffened limbs and clamped jaws, ending in death, if not relieved. If parathyroid extract or calcium salts are given to the patient, there is an almost miraculous change.

You will agree that I have described to you a number of fascinating details hidden in this common tissue of bone. It would never be suspected that so many essential operations are working here, depending for their successful carrying out, on a delicately poised and most intricate mechanism. All this is far removed from any possibility of chance and our wonder grows as we get additional glimpses of the amazing wisdom of the Creator.

I ought to say also, that linked in the complete picture of blood calcium is the little understood relationship between phosphorus and calcium. In some unknown way, these two elements work together to maintain normal

conditions in the blood stream and are apparently deposited in the bone or are removed from it as the conditions demand.

The bones of the skeleton are held together by joints or articulations. In a typical joint the ends of the bones are covered with a thin plate of gristle or cartilage. This permits greater smoothness of action and elasticity. Also there may be places or rings of cartilage around or between the bones either to deepen the joint surfaces or secure better adaptation.

Surrounding the joint here is a continuous sheath of white fibrous tissue lined with a synovial membrane secreting a substance like egg white, which lubricates the joint in a perfect manner. Here and there where the stress and strain in the joint is pronounced, there are reinforcing bands of inelastic portions of white fibrous tissue, called ligaments. Then, around the joint, protecting bony prominences are small sacs lined with synovial membrane containing the remarkable synovial lubricating fluid. These sacs are known as *brusae* and often communicate with the joint cavity. These interesting structures act as admirable protections to the joint and illustrate the infinite skill and thoughtfulness of the Designer.

Most muscles are attached to bone at both ends. So, when they contract, a bone is moved. The

movements depend upon the kind of joint one bone forms with another. The joint surfaces of bones, as we have seen, are covered with a layer of smooth cartilage. This smooth surface obviously lessens friction. Also, the space between the two bones, the joint cavity, is lined with a layer of epithelial cells which secrete a wonderful lubricating fluid making movement smooth and frictionless. If these cells are irritated or inflamed, a greater than normal secretion results and accumulates in the joint. We know of this as "water on the knee." Passing through this joint cavity are dense connective strands or ligaments which connect bone to bone.

The articulations that bones make with one another are of three kinds — immovable joints, movable joints, and freely movable joints. Some bones are fused together so firmly that no movements are possible. The lines at which they join one another may still be visible and look somewhat like the seams made when pieces of cloth are sewed together; hence they are called sutures. Joints like this are found between the bones of the skull and between the three fused bones which make up the innominate bone of the pelvic girdle. The fusion of the skull bones rightly seals the cranial cavity and protects the brain. The solidity of the pelvic girdle

produces the firm foundation needed in this region to support the weight of the upper part of the body.

Partially movable joints are found between the vertebrae of the backbone. Such joints allow one bone to glide over the surface of another but not to move freely. In this way the twisting and bending movements of the trunk are made possible. If the vertebrae should become fused we would be compelled to hold ourselves stiff at all time or risk the chance of cracking the backbone.

The joints that allow comparative freedom of movement to bones are of three kinds. The first of these is known as a hinge joint, as at the knee, and also at the elbow, between the humerus of the upper arm and the inner bone of the forearm, the ulna. Flexion and extension are possible here. Ball and socket joints are seen at shoulder and hip joints, with movement of arms and legs in almost every possible direction. The third class of joint is that which allows rotation, as that between the skull and the upper part of the vertebral column.

There are many other points which could be mentioned but space does not permit. I ask you for a moment to think of the altogether miraculous wisdom exhibited in all the details I have mentioned.

(See **BODY** on page 24)

BODY . . .

(Continued from page 23)

To believe that evolution gradually brought about these various adjustments until they reached the pinnacle of perfection which we now see, is to put an incredible strain on our credulity. It is absolutely impossible that any explanation but creation can satisfy an intelligent mind.

The Lord Jesus Christ had a body exactly similar to the one we have. He had all the organs and tissues that are familiar to us today. He used them in exactly the same way. And even after His resurrection He told His disciples that He still possessed "flesh and bones." And this bony portion of His body seems to have been specially precious. In Psalm 34:20 I read, "He keepeth all his bones — not one of them is broken." This is also spoken of the righteous who are here given the same standing as the Passover lamb of which it was commanded not a bone should be broken. Our Lamb of God fulfilled every prophecy written of Him.

When He had surrendered His life on the cross, the soldiers came to Him after fracturing the limbs of the two thieves, the shock of which brought sudden death, and discovered that Jesus was already dead. Here is what the record says in John 19:36: "But when they

came to Jesus, and saw that he was dead already they brake not his legs ... for these things were done that the scripture should be fulfilled: A bone of him shall not be broken."

Does anyone doubt that this Man of Galilee was really the Son of God? Even a casual examination of the Record ought to convince one that He was really what He claimed to be and that He accomplished what He had died for — our salvation. Have you permitted Him to make a gift of this everlasting life to you. Why not do it now? Thousands have done so and all have discovered that 'HE'S WONDERFUL!'

[Next month: "Fractured Bones.] □

GOV . . .

(Continued from page 7)

Senate regularly open each session with a prayer. These legislative prayers are not just one minute in duration, but are extended, thoughtful invocations and prayers for Divine guidance. They are given, as they have been since 1789, by clergy appointed as official Chaplains and paid from the Treasury of the United States. Congress has also provided chapels in the Capitol, at public expense, where members and others may pause for prayer, meditation — or a moment of silence.

"Inevitably some wag is bound to say that the

Court's holding today reflects a belief that the historic practice of the Congress and this Court is justified because members of the Judiciary and Congress are more in need of Divine guidance than are schoolchildren. Still others will say that all this controversy is 'much ado about nothing,' since no power on earth — including this Court and Congress — can stop any teacher from opening the school day with a moment of silence for pupils to meditate, to plan their day — or to pray if they voluntarily elect to do so."

Nine Justices participated in this case and six opinions were filed. This lack of consensus by the Court shrouds the religion clauses in the First Amendment with mystery as to meaning.

There is one thing I am certain of, no one can deny the fact that this on-going dialogue and litigation has led to the unquestioned right of the individual to choose a religion or no religion without interference by the Government at any level.

Even though the words "separation of church and state" do not appear in the First Amendment, these words constitute the phrase most often used in arguments and litigation (pro and con) concerning the relationship between government and religion. It is quite significant that

while all these arguments and all this litigation have been going on, the citizens of our country have never elected a person to lead the United States who has failed to publicly state his belief in and reliance on God. This should tell us all something about the vast majority of our people, something that we should think about, reflect upon, and cherish.

Yes, every President of the United States of America has publicly proclaimed his belief that Almighty God is our Creator and is the Ruler of the World. □

**FELLOWSHIPS
and
CONFERENCES**

LUBBOCK, TX

March 12-14, 2007, Tabernacle Baptist Church, 1911 34th St., Lubbock, TX 79452, Bob Jackson, Pastor.

* * *

WICHITA, KS

April 16-18, 2007, Lincoln Baptist Church, 7801 Lincoln St., Wichita, KS 67207, V. L. Lindbloom, Pastor.

* * *

SANTA FE, NM

April 22-25, Temple Baptist Church, 2103 Yucca St., Santa Fe, NM 87505, James Velazquez, Pastor.

* * *

SIoux FALLS, SD

Sept. 30 -- Oct. 4, 2007, Empire Baptist Temple, 412 S. Hawthorne, Sioux Falls, SD 57104, Ron Tottingham, Pastor.