

The Baptist

CHALLENGE

a voice of independent Baptists

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WHOLE NO. 522

The Protestant Trial and Incarceration of John Bunyan

John Bunyan was a Baptist preacher, a pious man, and a man well-beloved by all who knew him. John Bunyan was incarcerated in the Bedford jail in England. The following account is taken directly from a transcript of the trial on October 3, 1660, that led to his imprisonment at Bedford:

Judge Wingate: "Mr. Bunyan, you stand before this Court accused of persistent and willful transgression of the Conventicle Act, which prohibits all British subjects from absenting themselves from worship in the Church of England, and from conducting worship services apart from our Church.

You come, presumably, with no legal training, and yet without counsel. I must warn you, sir, of the gravity of the charge, the harshness of the penalty, in the event of your conviction, and the foolhardiness of acting as your own counsel in so serious a matter. I hold in my hand the depositions of the witnesses against you.

In each case, they have testified that, to their knowledge, you have never, in your adult life, attended services in the Church of this parish. Each further testifies that he has observed you, on numerous occasions, conducting religious exercises in and

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Message #8, Preached
February 25, 1979

Vision Of the Son of God

Vision of the Son of God
1:12-17

By M. L. Moser, Editor

"And I turned to see the voice that spake with me. And being turned, I saw seven golden candlesticks; And in the midst of the seven candlesticks one like unto the Son of man, clothed with a garment down to the foot, and girt about the paps with a golden girdle. His head and his hair were white like wool, as white as snow; and his eyes

were as a flame of fire; And his feet like unto fine brass, as if they burned in a furnace; and his voice as the sound of many waters. And he had in his right hand seven stars: and out of his mouth went a sharp two-edged sword: and his countenance was as the sun shineth in his strength. And when I saw him, I fell at his feet as

dead. And he laid his right hand upon me, saying unto me, Fear not; I am the first and the last: I am he that liveth, and was dead; and, behold, I am alive for evermore, Amen; and have the keys of hell and of death. Write the things which thou hast seen, and the things which are, and the things which shall be hereafter; The mystery of

the seven stars which thou sawest in my right hand, and the seven golden candlesticks. The seven stars are the angels of the seven churches: and the seven candlesticks which thou sawest are the seven churches" (Rev. 1:12-20).

Here we have a vision of the Lord Jesus Christ. In the preceding verses, verses 8-10, all of a sudden, John heard a voice from the Lord Himself. He says: "I was in the Spirit on the Lord's day, and

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Quiz The Pastor

What Does the Old Testament Say About the Birth of Christ?

By the late Nick Michalinos

Question: “What does the Old Testament have to say about the birth of Christ?”

Answer: Since we have come to that time of the year when most professing Christians around the world observe the birth of Christ, it is good for us to know as much as we can about His birth. After Adam sinned, and God had placed a curse on both man and planet earth (Gen. 2:17; 3:17-19), it was then that God gave the first promise concerning the coming of Christ.

It is written: “The seed of the woman” shall bruise the head of Satan (Gen. 3:15). Thus, the Christ, who will defeat Satan in the end, would be, not of man’s seed (biologically, all humans are normally of the seed of the male) but of the woman’s seed, thus “made of woman” (Gal.

4:4).

Here we have the first mention of the virgin birth of the Christ. We are further enlightened on this prophecy by reading another prophecy found in Isaiah: “Therefore the Lord himself shall give you a sign: Behold, a virgin shall conceive, and bear a son, and shall call his name Immanuel” (Isa. 7:14).

Note that it is “*the virgin shall conceive*” (Heb.), speaking of a specific virgin, no doubt speaking of the “woman” in Genesis 3:15.

Please notice that this conception and birth was to be a “sign” from “the Lord himself.” God Himself would be the source, not man. If the birth of our Lord Jesus Christ was to be an ordinary birth that occurs in similar cases millions of times daily, then what is the significance in

George Washington’s Amazing Prayer

It is a challenge to read the following excerpt from _____ calling it a “sign”?

A “sign” denotes something out of the ordinary, something unique, in this case, a biological miracle where a young virgin was made to conceive a Divine seed implanted in her womb through the instrumentality of the Holy Spirit (Lk. 1:35). The miracle is in the conception and not the birth itself.

It is further stated in Isaiah 7:14 that He is to be called “Immanuel,” which means “God with us” (see also Mt. 1:23). Therefore “God was manifest in the flesh” in the person of the Christ (1 Tim. 3:16). He is referred to as “The Mighty God” (Isa. 9:6), “whose goings forth have been from old, from everlasting” (Mic. 5:2). Truly, “God ... was made flesh and dwelt among us” (Jn. 1:1-2, 14).

It is interesting to note that not only is the manner of His birth prophesied in the Old Testament as we have shown, but also the place of His birth is also prophesied in Micah 5:2 where we are told His birthplace upon earth will be “Bethlehem Ephratah” (see also Mt. 2:4-6; Lk. 2:4-7). He was born in the right way at the right time, and in the right place.

May all glory be given unto God. □

one of George Washington’s prayers, but it is also sad. It is sad because it reminds us that America’s true greatness is long past. It has a glorious and unique heritage. No other Gentile nation that I know of has had such a godly leader in its infancy.

This prayer, which was written in Washington’s own handwriting in his prayer journal, is from William Johnson’s *George Washington, the Christian*, 1919:

“O eternal and everlasting God, I presume to present myself this morning before thy Divine majesty, beseeching thee to accept of my humble and hearty thanks, that it hath pleased thy great goodness to keep and preserve me the night past from all the dangers poor mortals are subject to, and has given me sweet and pleasant sleep, whereby I find my body refreshed and comforted for performing the duties of this day, in which I beseech thee to defend me from all perils of body and soul.

Direct my thoughts, words and work, wash away my sins in the immaculate blood of the Lamb, and purge my heart by thy Holy Spirit, from the dross of my natural corruption, that I may with more freedom of mind

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THE BAPTIST CHALLENGE

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Why We Believe the Bible To Be The Word of God

By Paul S. James

Here are submitted seven reasons for believing the Bible to be the Word of God.

First, **because of its testimony**, what it says about itself. Second Peter 1:20-21 reads: "Knowing this first, that no prophecy of the scripture is of any private interpretation. For the prophecy came not in old time by the will of man: but holy men of God spake as they were moved by the Holy Ghost." This means that Paul, John, Peter, James, and the others record not what they thought, but what the Spirit taught. Second Timothy 3:16-17 leads us to believe in the plenary inspiration of the Bible, which means that the whole Bible came to us as a supernatural message of God, was given through inspired personalities, and is authoritative and final in all matters of faith and practice. So our authority, is not individual conscience,

or the law of the church, but rather the Word of God.

Second, **because of its authority**. It has been said that more than 3,800 times in the Old Testament alone there are such expressions as "the Lord spake," "God said," "the word of the Lord came." So in First Corinthians 2:13 Paul writes, "Which things also we speak, not in the words which man's wisdom teacheth, but which the Holy Ghost teacheth." The psalmist cried out, "Forever, O Lord, thy word is settled in heaven." By illustration, God's authority is felt in such texts as Psalm 101:7, "He that worketh deceit shall not dwell within my house: he that telleth lies shall not tarry in my sight."

Third, **because of its accuracy**. "Scripture in its details contradicts no received results of science, but anticipates many of its discoveries." This is illustrated by such texts as

Genesis 1:3, where light is created before the sun, and Second Peter 3:10-11, where Peter refers to the loosing of the component parts of matter. Dr. Harry Rimmer has offered a \$1,000 reward to anyone who can prove that the Bible contains a scientific error. This reward has been available for years, but it has never been taken. One Christian scholar has said, "The time has come to test scholarship in the light of the Bible, rather than to test the Bible in the light of scholarship."

Fourth, **because of its prophecy**. The first prophecy points to Christ (Genesis 3:15). Centuries after it was made, He fulfilled it. Look at Genesis 12:2-3. Joseph in a pit. Moses in a basket, Jonah in a fish. Daniel in a den; yet across four thousand years God has fulfilled His Word to this people in spite of plagues, persecutions, and pogroms. That which has been fulfilled supports our faith in that which is to be fulfilled: the rapture of the saints, the great tribulation, the millennial reign of Christ, the judgment of

the dead, the eternal woe of the lost and weal of the saved.

Fifth, **because of its unity**. Here sixty-six books, written by more than forty different authors over a period of fifteen hundred years, have the scarlet cord of divine redemption running through them. Here is a central person, our Lord Jesus Christ, who in Luke 24 showed His disciples the testimony of all the Scriptures to Himself.

Sixth, **because of its persistency**. Across hundreds of years, it has come to us, surviving all the attacks that have been made against it. This anvil has broken many hammers. It remains today the world's best seller and only light.

Seventh, **because of its potency**. It is able to make us wise unto salvation. We are born again by the Word of God which liveth and abideth forever (1 Pet. 1:23). It is a discerner of the thoughts and intents of the heart. Read it to be wise, believe it to be saved (Jn. 5:24), and practice it to be holy. — Watchman Examiner.

GEORGE . . .

(Continued from page 2)

and liberty of will serve thee, the everlasting God, in righteousness and holiness this day, and all the days of my life.

Increase my faith in the sweet promises of the gospel; give me repentance

from dead works; pardon my wanderings, and direct my thoughts unto thyself, the God of my salvation; teach me how to live in thy fear, labor in thy service, and ever to run in the ways of thy commandments; make me always watchful over my heart, that neither the

terrors of conscience, the loathing of holy duties, the love of sin, nor an unwillingness to depart this life, may cast me into a spiritual slumber, but daily frame me more and more into the likeness of thy son Jesus Christ, that living in thy fear, and dying in thy favor, I may in thy ap-

pointed time attain the resurrection of the just unto eternal life.

Bless my family, friends and kindred; unite us all in praising and glorifying thee in all our works begun, continued, and ended, when we shall come to make our last account before thee, blessed Saviour..." □

Churches — Strict or Loose Constructionists, Which?

By W. Lee Rector

In the early days of our Republic, a great battle was fought over the question of a *strict* and a *loose* construction of our Constitution. Thomas Jefferson, a states rights man, led the battle for strict constructionism. Alexander Hamilton, a believer in the centralization of governmental power, led a battle for loose construction. The battle was long, and at times bitter. For nearly half a century, the ideas of the two clashed for permanent dominance, and then gave way to the pressure of the slave question. The battle was renewed after the middle of the nineteenth century and as a result eleven states of the South seceded from the Union and the Civil War became a tragic reality. After the war, loose constructionists gained ascendancy. Nevertheless, rather close constitutional lines were observed for another half a century.

The outbreak of the World War in 1914 occasioned a demand for an enlarged application of *loose* constructionism and, as a consequence, hitherto un-precedented power was placed into the hands of President Wilson. At the

conclusion of the war, some of these powers were relinquished by our Chief Executive. With the beginning of President Roosevelt's administration, the Democrat Party, long known for its strict interpretation of the Constitution and for its championship of state rights, threw overboard all previous positions taken, turned champion of loose constructionism, and gave to President Roosevelt all but dictatorial powers. By abandoning the historic principles of strict construction of the Constitution, the Democrat Administration put into the president's hands powers not hitherto known or assumed by any other Chief Executive. With the bestowal of these powers, we have been gradually eased over into the forms of National Socialism.

The birth of the NRA marked emergence of definite forms of Socialism in American life. Wheat raisers were told how much to plant; cotton raisers were told how much to plow up and then how much to plant; farmers were told to kill off 5,000,000 hogs and myriads of cattle; bankers were told how to run their banks; and

industries were told when to open and how long to run, in fact, every aspect of American life, whether industrial, mercantile, or what not, was put under orders from Washington. Such is Socialism in practice.

Socialism, is Satanism whether applied in government or in religion. Loose construction is Socialistic. Both of the major parties have been guilty of applying this principle. That a dangerous precedent is now set for Jeffersonian Democracy few thoughtful people will gainsay. Centralization runs cross-current to the great and mighty principles of Democracy in a Republic.

Now, a friend may inquire, "What bearing have these things upon orthodox Christianity?" Much, indeed! Orthodoxy is strict constructionism in Baptist life. We hold that the application of the laws of church government and the

laws of missionary endeavor are all reserved to local churches. Loose constructionists among Baptists have the authority vested only in local Baptist churches; cast local church sovereignty upon the junk heaps; and set up a super-human organization for the control of Baptist affairs in Baptistdom. *Loose* constructionists lead Baptists into ecclesiastical organizations, and put them in a role of the building up of human machines which dishonor our Baptist faith and practice. *Believers in the redelegation of local church authority are loose constructionists in Baptist affairs.*

Now whether in state or in religion, *loose* constructionism always builds up a hierarchy of authority, and all hierarchies are Socialisms. Southern Baptists, applying loose constructionism, or the principle of

(See **RECTOR** on page 24)

Is there a sinner awaiting
Mercy and pardon today?
Welcome the news that we bring him,
"Jesus is passing this way!"

Comng in love and in mercy,
Pardon and peace to bestow;
Coming to save a poor sinner
From his heart's anguish and woe.

Brother, the Master is waiting,
Waiting to freely forgive;
Why not this moment accept Him,
Trust in His mercy and live?

An Unusual Story

After a few of the usual Sunday evening hymns, the church's Pastor slowly stood up, walked over to the pulpit and before he gave his sermon for the evening, he briefly introduced a guest minister who was in the service that evening.

In the introduction, the pastor told the congregation that the guest minister was one of his dearest childhood friends and that he wanted him to have a few moments to greet the church and share whatever he felt would be appropriate for the service. With that, an elderly man stepped up to the pulpit and began to speak.

"A father, his son, and a friend of his son were sailing off the Pacific Coast," he began, "when a fast approaching storm blocked any attempt to get back to the shore. The waves were so high that even though the father was an experienced sailor, he could not keep the boat upright and the three were swept into the ocean as the boat capsized." The old man hesitated for a moment, making eye contact with two teenagers who were, for the first time since the service began, looking somewhat interested in his story.

The aged minister continued with his story. "Grabbing a rescue line, the father had to make the most excruciating decision of his

life. To which boy would he throw the other end of the life line. He only had seconds to make the decision. The father knew that his son was a Christian and he also knew that his son's friend was not. The agony of his decision could not be matched by the torrent of waves. As the father, yelled out, "I love you, son," he threw out the life line to his son's friend.

By the time the father had pulled the friend back to the capsized boat, his son had disappeared beneath the raging swells into the black of night. His body was never recovered.

By this time, the two teenagers were sitting up straight in the pew, anxiously waiting for the next words to come out of the old minister's mouth.

"The father," he continued, "knew his son would step into eternity with Jesus and he could not bear the thought of his son's friend stepping into an eternity without Jesus. Therefore, he sacrificed his son to save the son's friend.

"How great is the love of God that He should do the same for us. Our heavenly Father, sacrificed His only begotten Son that we could be saved. I urge you to accept His offer to rescue you and take a hold of the life line He is throwing out to you in this service."

With that, the old man turned and sat back down in his chair as silence filled the room.

The pastor, again walked slowly to the pulpit and delivered a brief sermon with an invitation at the end. However, no one responded to the appeal.

Within minutes after the service ended, the two teenagers were at the old man's side.

"That was a nice story," politely stated one of them, "But I don't think it was very realistic for a father to give up his only

son's life in hopes that the other boy would become a Christian."

"Well, you've got a point there," the old man replied. Glancing down at his worn Bible, a big smile broadened his narrow face.

He once again looked up at the boys and said, "It sure isn't very realistic, is it? But, I'm standing here today to tell you that story gives me a glimpse of what it must have been like for God to give up His Son for me. You see, I was that father and your Pastor is my son's friend." □

The Great 3:16's Of the Bible

Gen. 3:16 — The Woman's Curse.

Ex. 3:16 — God's Loving Providence.

Num. 3:16 — Unquestioned Obedience.

2 Kgs. 3:16 — Get Ready for God to Work.

Prov. 3:16 — Good Things in the Hands of Wisdom.

Ezk. 3:16 — Where a True Prophet Gets His Messages.

Mal. 3:16 — God's Book of Remembrance.

Mt. 3:16 — New Testament Baptism.

Mk. 3:16 — Simon Peter, the Rock.

Lk. 3:16 — The Baptism of the Holy Spirit.

Jn. 3:16 — The Little Bible.

Acts 3:16 — Miracle-Working Faith.

1 Cor. 3:16 — The Dwelling Place of God's Spirit.

2 Cor. 3:16 — Removing the Veil from the Heart.

Eph. 3:16 — The Source of Strength in the Inner Man.

Phil. 3:16 — Living Up to Our Privileges.

Col. 3:16 — Where the Word of Christ Should dwell and What It Will Do.

1 Tim. 3:16 — The Mystery of God-Likeness.

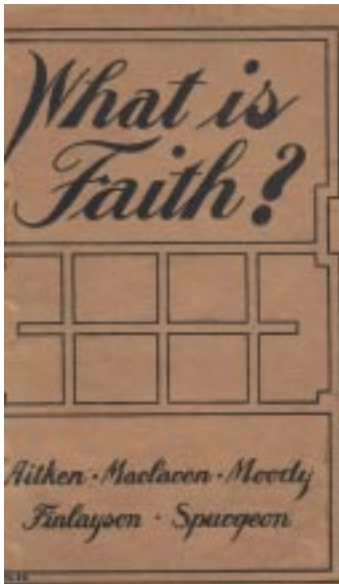
2 Tim. 3:16 — The Inspiration of the Scriptures.

James 3:16 — Companions of Envy and Strife.

2 Pet. 3:16 — Scripture Twisters.

1 Jn. 3:16 — Proof of God's Love.

Rev. 3:16 — What God Will Do With a Lukewarm Church.



What I Believe

By Arthur Finlayson

Much is said in the Bible about faith, and the necessity of believing. Not only in religion but in common life it is the conquering principle. But in religion this is especially true: "This is the victory that overcometh the world, even our faith." No one conquers without it. But although this is indisputable, the ideas of many on the subject of religious belief are vague and hazy.

What is faith? And what am I to believe? These are questions to which I hope to give an answer in a few simple words.

When you take a prescription to the druggist's, you may perhaps notice that in order to fulfill the requirements of this prescription he takes down from a shelf a small phial, and, pouring a few drops from it into a glass, he

replaces it; then taking another bottle he pours out a few drops from it also, and so on until the various ingredients or compounds necessary to your prescription are complete. Now, if one of these ingredients be wanting, the prescription will fail of its efficacy. All must be there, and there in their due proportion, if it is to avail anything.

So in the case of faith there are certain ingredients necessary. It is not enough to have one or more of these ingredients. We must have them all in their true Scriptural proportion, if we would have the faith spoken of in Scripture, without which "it is impossible to please God."

1. The first ingredient in a Scriptural faith is

Knowledge

A man cannot believe while he is in ignorance, and the only means by which we can obtain the knowledge that is needed is the Bible. Here we learn what God is, what we are, and what God has prepared for them that love Him.

God has revealed Himself as a God of love, of wisdom, justice, and mercy. He hates sin, yet loves the sinner. He "will by no means clear the guilty." He is "of purer eyes than to behold evil." He "cannot look on iniquity."

He has revealed to us man's fallen condition. That man is born with innate tendencies to evil is indeed

a fact which requires no revelation. It is as much a fact of experience as it is of revelation. It is as clearly an induction as any law of science. How do we prove the law of gravitation? By the fact that all bodies when free to move show a tendency to move towards one another. How do we prove man's depravity? By the fact that when left to himself he always displays a proneness to evil. A universal effect must have a universal cause.

Scripture confirms this fact. But it does more: it reveals the degree of man's sinfulness. He is radically diseased. Sin has tainted every part of his nature, impairing the judgment, enfeebling the conscience, and blighting the affections. He is depraved. Many objections to this doctrine arise from a misapprehension of its true meaning. "Total depravity" is a term of *extensity* rather than *intensity*. It is opposed to *partial* depravity. It is not affirmed that every man is as bad as every other, or that any man is as bad as he can possibly be, or may become. But it is meant that every man by nature is alienated in his governing disposition from God, and that even his virtues are vitiated by his condition as a rebel.

Hence the soul has no means of saving itself, without supernatural restraints and a miraculous re-creation the condition of man must become hope-

lessly worse. This is not only the teaching of Scripture, but it is the verdict of every awakened experience. "All have sinned." This is common experience. "There is none that doeth good, no, not one." This is the Bible standard.

God declares that the penalty, the wages, of sin is death. For degrees of sin there will doubtless be degrees of punishment, yet

God's One Penalty For Sin

is death.

Fallen man cannot save himself, for he is already "under the curse." A radical disease requires a radical cure. "Whosoever shall keep the whole law, and yet offend in one point, he is guilty of all." Yet there is a complete way of escape. "God so loved the world, that he gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have everlasting life." Man's extremity is God's opportunity. "This is a faithful saying, and worthy of all acceptance, that Christ Jesus came into the world to save sinners." The restoration of man to holiness is the grand end of the whole plan of salvation, and the wisdom of the plan is seen in the unquestionable fact that it adapts itself to the needs of man, and brings about the most magnificent results.

A knowledge of God's

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FAITH . . .

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plan of salvation is, therefore, a necessary and important ingredient if we would have a Scriptural faith.

2. But an equally necessary ingredient is

Assent Or Agreement.

I must agree to what God tells me of Himself, myself, and His plan of salvation, or my knowledge of it will be unavailing. Thus when I read, "It is the blood that maketh an atonement for the soul," and, "without shedding of blood is no remission," I must accept that truth, and whether it be in accordance with the logic of my reason or the dictates of my will, I must assent to it, or my knowledge will be unavailing.

God said to the Israelite, "When I see the blood, I will pass over you." He did not say, "When *you* see it," though He gave it for a token to the Israelites of their coming deliverance. The Israelite, knowing God's will, assented to it, and acted upon that assent or agreement. So let it ever be with you and me. Beware of substituting *feeling* for faith.

When I read that no human effort can avail to procure my pardon, and that there is only one way of salvation—through the Lord Jesus—I must agree to that truth, otherwise my knowledge will be of no

avail. "Neither is there salvation in any other: for there is none other name under heaven given among men whereby we must be saved."

Agreement in God's plan of salvation is therefore a necessary and all-important ingredient, if we would have a Scriptural faith.

3. But an equally necessary ingredient is

Appropriation.

I must lay hold of these truths and make them my own by personal acquaintance. A prescription must be taken if it is to effect a cure.

A man fell overboard during a ship's voyage. Struggling in the water, he saw a life-buoy hanging over the stern. He knew it could save him, he might agree that it was the best means of rescue, but he also knew that unless he stretched out his hand and grasped it, appropriating it to himself, all his knowledge and agreement as to its efficacy and its saving power, would be to him utterly unavailing.

Will you do this at once? There is no time like the present. Do you know and assent to the fact that you are a sinner? Do you know and assent to the fact that Christ died to save sinners? Then come to Him as a personal sinner for a personal Savior. "Him that cometh to me I will in no wise cast out." He will

make you meet for the inheritance of the saints. Are you in need of a Savior? Then take the Lord Jesus as your Sin-Bearer, "in whom we have redemption through his blood, the forgiveness of sins." Take His yoke upon you, and learn of Him. Make Him your Teacher; strive to be an apt pupil. Surrender yourself unreservedly to Him as your Lord and Supreme Ruler. Yield to His Spirit as your constant Guide.

In appropriating Christ as your personal Saviour see that you take Him in His full character as represented in Scripture. He is to be your Lord and Supreme Ruler, your Teacher as well as your Sin-Bearer. Beware of a

divided Christ!

A *personal appropriation* of the Lord Jesus in His full character as the Savior of mankind is a necessary and important ingredient, if we would have a Scriptural faith.

What, Then, Is Faith?

It is simply the link between the soul and Christ. It is the soul receiving or believing in the Lord Jesus.

Don't make a Savior of Faith. This is one of Satan's wiles. The less you look at your faith and the more you look at the divine object of it the better. Faith is merely the instrument. Christ is the agent. It is not the strength or weakness of your faith, but Christ that saves. □

The Bible Convinced Them

"The holy scriptures, which are able to make thee wise unto salvation" (2 Tim. 3:15).

Two Mongol Tartar chiefs were engaged by a missionary to assist him in preparing a translation of the gospels into the language of their country, and they had, as a matter of course, to study the subject intently. At length the work was completed, the last correction made, and the book was closed on the table. Still they sat serious and silent.

At last the missionary inquired what was the matter, and was equally surprised and delighted to hear them both declare themselves converts to Christianity.

"At home," they said, "we studied the sacred writings of the Chinese, and the more we read the more obscure they seemed; but the longer we have read the gospel, the more simple and intelligible it became, until at last it seemed as if Jesus were talking with us."



Bush Says He Sees God in Eyes of Pope. — U.S. President George Bush said that when he looks into Benedict XVI's eyes, he sees God. The president made this affirmation Friday when he answered the last question posed him during an interview with Eternal Word Television Network (EWTN) anchor Raymond Arroyo. Arroyo noted that Bush is planning an all-out welcome for the Pope, who arrives in the United States on Tuesday for a five-day visit. Most notably, Bush will go to the airport to receive the Holy Father, *a courtesy he has never extended to any visiting leader.* ... The president said that the moral strength of the Pope is key for politicians. "And I'm going to remind *His Holy Father* how important his voice is in making it easier for politicians like me to be able to kind of stand and defend our positions that are, I think, very important positions to take," he said. Finally, Arroyo asked him, "You said, famously, when you looked into Vladimir Putin's eyes you saw his soul. ... When you look into Benedict XVI's eyes what do you see?" And Bush

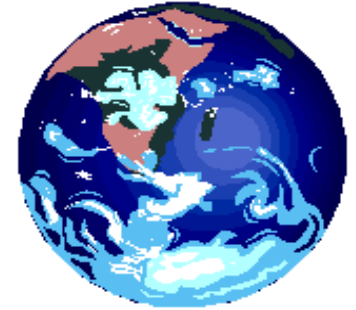
World News Roundup

answered immediately, "God."

* * *

Survey: Americans Split On What Is Sin. — The vast majority of Americans believe that sin exists but they differ on which behaviors are sinful, according to a new survey by Ellison Research. The Phoenix-based marketing research company found that 87% of Americans believe in the concept of sin. While most Americans think adultery is sinful (81%) and consider racial bias to be a sin (74%), far fewer Americans would put gambling (30%) or telling a "little white lie" (29%) in that category. Other activities described as sinful include: Using "hard" drugs, such as cocaine, heroin, LSD: 65%; * Not saying anything if a cashier gives you too much change back: (63%); * Having an abortion: (56%); * Homosexual activity or sex: (52%); Underreporting in come on your tax returns: (52%); * Playing the lottery; (18%); * Not giving 10 percent of your income to a church or charity: (16%). * Dancing: (4%). The survey was based on a sample of 1,007 adults with a margin of error of plus or minus 3.1 percentage points. — RNW

United Nations Official Calls Those Who Believe In The Rapture "Extremists". — Karen Armstrong, of the United Nation's Alliance of Civilizations, calls Christians who believe in the Rapture "extremists." In response I want to thank the lady for reminding me that the Bible is true. More than 2,000 years ago the Bible prophesied that "there shall come in the last days scoffers, walking after their own lusts, and saying, Where is the promise of his coming?" (2 Peter 3:3-4). It would be impossible for a mere human book to prophesy something so exactly two millennia in the future, and it does not contain just one prophecy. It contains thousands of them! All of the detailed prophecies of Christ's first coming were fulfilled to perfection, and so will the prophecies of His second coming. My friends, beware of the evil skepticism of our time and do not doubt God and His holy Word! You won't regret it! "Now faith is the substance of things hoped for, the evidence of things not seen. ... But without faith it is impossible to please him: for he that cometh to God must believe that he is, and that he is a rewarder of them that diligently seek him" (Hebrews 11:1, 6).



Catholics Paid \$615 Million On Abuse in 2007. — The U.S. Catholic Church paid out \$615 million in costs related to sexual abuse claims in 2007, even as the number of victims coming forward fell for the third straight year, according to an annual report issued by the U.S. Conference of Catholic Bishops. More than \$526 million went to settlements between victims and Catholic dioceses and religious orders last year. That's an increase of 90 percent over 2006 and a new high for the U.S. church. At the same time, according to the report, dioceses and religious orders received 691 credible reports of sexual abuse from 689 victims in 2007, down from such 714 reports in 2006. — RNS

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Algeria Closes Two Churches for "Missionizing." — The Algerian authorities have ordered the closure of two Protestant churches in the northern district of Tizi Wazou, in order to investigate alleged

(See WNR on page 12)

La Voz Del Desierto

Verdades Vitales de la Asamblea Como Salvar Su Alma del Infierno — Parte II

Por R. J. Anderson

La pregunta más importante en esta vida se encuentra en Los Hechos: “señores, ¿qué debo hacer para ser salvo?” (Hechos 16:30). La respuesta es de igual importancia “Cree en el Señor Jesucristo y serás salvo.”

Una vez que una persona revisa su condición pecaminosa y perdida y entiende que no hay salvación del infierno final aparte de la obra final de Jesucristo en la cruz, tiene que arrepentirse de sus pecados y recibir, creer, aceptar aquella obra de sustitución

La salvación (necesaria por la santidad de Dios y la pecaminosidad del hombre) se produce por una fe personal en la sangre derramada de Jesucristo en la cruz y esto es una *experiencia personal*, una experiencia definida que pone toda la confianza en el sacrificio que Él hizo en nuestro lugar (1 Pedro 2:24; 1 Juan 1:7b). Aquella limpieza limpia al pecador de todos sus pecados pasados, presentes y futuros.

La persona que piensa

en sus “buenas obras”, en su “moralidad alta”, en su “cultura”, en sus “sacrificios”, en sus “lágrimas, en su “bautismo”, en el aprender la castidad, y en ser “miembro” de una “iglesia”, en sus contribuciones de dinero, o cualquier otra cosa, *¡aquella persona no tiene ningún poder para limpiarse de cualquier pecado en su vida!* Tal persona no ha entendido el plan de Dios para la salvación de su alma del infierno. Ningún pecador puede ser salvo confiando *una parte* en la obra final de Jesucristo y *una parte* en sus propios esfuerzos religiosos.

Hay un dicho entre muchas las “iglesias”: “Hay que hacer *lo mejor* que sea posible para ser salvo.” Amigo, esta es *mentira* de Satanás y completamente opuesto a lo que dicen las Escrituras.

Estudiando las doctrinas falsas de las muchas “iglesias” uno puede ver que ellas dicen que las muchas “obras” tienen algo que ver con obtener la salvación. Esto es mentira

y no tiene base bíblica. Aquellas personas son enemigos de la verdad. Aunque son sinceros están son enemigos de la verdad. Aunque son sinceros están equivocados.

Ciertamente las Escrituras dicen que el creyente debe vivir una vida derecha, honesta, limpia y santa. Dicen que la *perfección* (una vida santa, separada) debe ser la meta de cada creyente, que él debe crucificar la carne con todos los deseos pecaminosos, que debe vivir una vida que agrade el Señor. Pero, haciendo aquellas cosas no van a salvar su alma del Lago de Fuego.

Cuando el pecador arrepentido recibe a Jesucristo como su Salvador, en tal momento él recibe la presencia del Espíritu Santo en su vida y aquella presencia le da el deseo de poner aparte las cosas sucias en su vida. Cuando una persona “salva” no muestra ningún interés en una vida cambiada, tiene una salvación “defectuosa”.

Hay dos dominios en este mundo: el de Jesús y el otro de Satanás y créeme, tú vas a pertenecer a uno u otro (Mateo 12:30).

El dominio de Jesús consiste de todos ellos que *han nacido de nuevo*, habiéndose arrepentido de su vida pecaminosa y ha mostrado una fe de corazón hacia a Dios y Su Hijo (Hechos 20:21). El dominio de Satanás consiste de todos los que *no han ejercido* el arrepentimiento y la fe en Jesús.

Nótese algo: Cada persona pertenece a Jesucristo por:

1. El derecho de creación ya que Él es el Autor de la vida (Col. 1:16).

2. El derecho de provisión ya que Él sostiene toda vida sobre este planeta (Colosense 1:17).

3. El derecho de redención, ya que Él murió para redimir a los pecadores arrepentidos.

Pero la raza humana ha rechazado a Dios y a Su Hijo y ha escogido seguir a

(Vea **SALVAR** en la pág. 10)

Noticias Alrededor del Mundo

Libro de Harry Potter Sobrepasa la Biblia en Ventas. — Hace algunas semanas, la edición final de la serie de Harry Potter, vendió unas 8.3 millones de copias en un solo día, en los Estados Unidos, y 2.65 millones de copias fueron vendidas en Gran Bretaña, en el mismo período de 24 horas. La gente estuvo parada en línea toda la noche para comprar el libro basado en brujería y en lo oculto. Los clientes pagaron un promedio de \$34.99 por copia. Un estimado de 325 millones de libros de Harry Potter, han sido vendidos por todo el mundo. La serie de Potter está ahora imprimida en 65 idiomas. Como resultado de los beneficios de su serie de Harry Potter, la autora J.K. Rowling, se dice ser la mujer más rica del mundo. *“Pero el Espíritu dice claramente que en los postreros tiempos algunos apostatarán de la fe, escuchando a espíritus engañadores y a doctrinas de demonios”* (1ra Tim. 4:1; 2 Tim. 4:1).

Astrónomo Pierde Trabajo Debido a Sus Opiniones Sobre El Diseño Inteligente, Alega Sus Abogados. — A un profesor de la Universidad del Estado de Iowa, se le negó la permanencia el pasado mes de abril, ya que es bien conocido su apoyo al Diseño Inteligente. El Instituto del Descubrimiento, una organización conservadora, ubicada en Seattle, Washington, reclama en defensa del profesor. Aparentemente, también era al parecer, el blanco de un esfuerzo secreto organizado, para expulsarlo por los miembros de la facultad. Diseño Inteligente es una teoría la cual señala que la vida exhibe muestras que fue diseñada y no salió de la nada. El Dr. Guillermo González está siendo defendido por abogados, así como por el Instituto del Descubrimiento, quienes le piden a la Junta de Directores de la Universidad del Estado de Iowa, que reconsidere la negativa de la universidad el verano pasado, en conceder al

profesor auxiliar de astronomía un puesto permanente en la facultad. Los abogados del astrónomo se unieron al Instituto para presentar a los directores evidencia que discrepan con los cargos. □

Esfuerzo Vano

Cuando un nadador, cómo en cierta ocasión trató de salvar a una persona que se ahogaba. Ésta hacía grandes esfuerzos intentando imitar los movimientos del nadador, pero en vano. Cuando llegó su salvador, el naufrago proseguía agitando los brazos y las piernas, hasta que éste le dijo: “O usted o yo, sí hace un esfuerzo más, le abandono a su suerte.” El naufrago pretendía ayudar al nadador, creyendo que éste no tendría bastantes fuerzas para sostenerle, pero no hacía más que dificultar su propia salvación. ¡Cuántos hacen así con respecto a la salvación de sus almas!

“Porque por gracia sois salvos por medio de la fe, y esto no de vosotros; pues es don de Dios; No por obras, para que nadie se gloríe. Porque somos hechura suya, creados en Cristo Jesús para buenas obras, las cuales Dios preparó de antemano para que anduviésemos en ellas” (Efesios 2:8-10). □

SALVAR...

(Vino de la pág. 9)

Satanás (Rom. 1:21, 23, 28).

Los incrédulos siempre has vivido en una rebelión abierta contra Dios y contra Su voluntad como es revelada en las Escrituras. Desde el primer pecado de rebelión en el huerto, la desobediencia, la batalla ha sido librada entre Jesús y Satanás ya que el diablo es el “dios de este mundo” y los incrédulos han escogido seguirle en vez del Creador Santo. El hombre natural, es pervertido, corrompido, y depravado.

Nótese bien estos versículos:

1. La raza humana entera ha sido declarada pecaminosa (Isaias 53:6; Rom. 3:10, 23).

2. El resultado del pecado es la “muerte,” física y espiritual (Rom. 6:23; 5:12; Efesios 2:1; Ezequiel 18:4).

3. Jesús mismo murió en lugar del pecador llevando la pena del pecador sobre Si mismo (1 Pedro 2:24; Hebreos 9:28; Isaias 53:6)

4. Por fe de corazón la persona arrepentida, recibe por fe a Jesucristo como su Salvador y esto produce el nuevo nacimiento y una vida nueva (Juan 1:12; 5:24; 10:28-29; Judas 24; Efesios 2:10; 1 Corintios 6:19-20; Colosenses 3:17). □

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BUNYAN . . .

(Continued from page 1)

near Bedford.” John Bunyan: “The depositions speak the truth. I have never attended services in the Church of England, nor do I intend ever to do so. Secondly, it is no secret that I preach the Word of God whenever, wherever, and to whomever He pleases to grant me opportunity to do so. I have no choice but to acknowledge my awareness of the law which I am accused of transgressing. Likewise, I have no choice but to confess my guilt in my transgression of it. As true as these things are, I must affirm that I neither regret breaking the law, nor repent of having broken it. Further, I must warn you that I have no intention in the future of conforming to it.”

Judge Wingate: “It is obvious, sir, that you are a victim of deranged thinking. If my ears deceive me not, I must infer from your words that you believe the State to have no interest in the religious life of its subjects.”

John Bunyan: “The State, M’lord, may have an interest in anything in which it wishes to have an interest. But the State has no right whatever to interfere in the religious life of its citizens.”

Judge Wingate: “The evidence I hold in my hand, even apart from your own admission of guilt, is sufficient to convict you, and

the Court is within its rights to have you committed to prison for a considerably long time. I do not wish to send you to prison, Mr. Bunyan. I am aware of the poverty of your family, and I believe you have a little daughter who, unfortunately, was born blind. Is this not so?”

John Bunyan: “It is, M’lord.”

Judge Wingate: “Very well. The decision of the Court is this: In as much as the accused has confessed his guilt, we shall follow a merciful and compassionate course of action. We shall release him on the condition that he swear solemnly to discontinue the convening of religious meetings, and that he affix his signature to such an oath prior to quitting the Courtroom. That will be all, Mr. Bunyan. I hope not to see you here again. May we hear the next case?”

John Bunyan: “M’lord, if I may have another moment of the Court’s time?”

Judge Wingate: “Yes, but you must be quick about it. We have other matters to attend to. What is it?”

John Bunyan: “I cannot do what you ask of me, M’lord. I cannot place my signature upon any document in which I promise henceforth not to preach. My calling to preach the Gospel is from God, and He alone can make me discontinue what He has appointed me to do. As I

have had no word from Him to that effect, I must continue to preach, and I shall continue to preach.”

Judge Wingate: “I warn you, sir, the Court has gone the second mile to be lenient with you, out of concern for your family’s difficult straits. Truth to tell, it would appear that the Court’s concern for your family far exceeds your own. Do you wish to go to prison?”

John Bunyan: “No, M’lord. Few things there are that I would wish less.”

Judge Wingate: “Very well, then, Mr. Bunyan. This Court will make one further attempt in good faith to accommodate what appears to be strongly held convictions on your part. In his compassion and beneficence, our Sovereign, Charles II, has made provision for dissenting preachers to hold some limited meetings. All that is required is that such ministers procure licenses (author’s note: Please reread the explanation on license versus liberty found on page 79 of this book.) authorizing them to convene these gatherings.” You will not find the procedure burdensome (author’s note: It is always less burdensome to comply and compromise than it is take a stand.), and even you, Mr. Bunyan, must surely grant the legitimacy of the State’s interest in ensuring that any fool with a Bible does not simply gather a group of people together and begin

to preach to them. Imagine the implications were that to happen! (Yeah, people might even begin to get saved and get right with God! — authors) Can you comply with this condition, Mr. Bunyan?

“Before you answer, mark you this: should you refuse, the Court will have no alternative but to sentence you to a prison term. Think, sir, of your poor wife. Think of your children, and particularly of your pitiful, sightless little girl. Think of your flock, who can hear you to their hearts’ content when you have secured your licenses. Think on these things, and give us your answer, sir!”

John Bunyan: “M’lord, I appreciate the Court’s efforts to be as you have put it — accommodating. But again, I must refuse your terms. I must repeat that it is God who constrains me to preach, and no man or company of men may grant or deny me leave to preach. These licenses of which you speak, M’lord, are symbols not of a right, but of a privilege. Implied therein is the principle that a mere man can extend or withhold them according to his whim. I speak not of privileges, but of rights. Privileges (licenses) granted by men may be denied by men. Rights are granted by God, and can be legitimately denied by no man. I must therefore, re-

(See **BUNYAN** on page 12)

BUNYAN . . .

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fuse to comply.”

Judge Wingate: “Very well, Mr. Bunyan. Since you persist in your intractability, and since you reject this Court’s honest effort at compromise, you leave us no choice but to commit you to Bedford jail for a period of six years (which ultimately proved to cost Bunyan twelve years of his life behind bars).” If you manage to survive, I should think that your experience will correct your thinking. If you fail to survive, that will be unfortunate. In any event, I strongly suspect that we have heard the last we shall ever hear from Mr. John Bunyan. Now, may we hear the next case?”

Of course, neither Judge Wingate nor the world had heard the last of John Bunyan, for during his lengthy incarceration in the old Bedford jail, with his Bible as his constant companion and guide, Bunyan gave to the world the epic *Pilgrim’s Progress*, arguably the greatest literary work in the history of the world next to the Bible. Bunyan was denied pen and paper, and *Pilgrim’s Progress* was written with pieces of charcoal from the fire that kept his body warm on the paper wads used as stoppers in the milk bottles from which he drank.

—from **Purified Seven Times** by Evangelist Bill Brady, p. 89-92 □□□ □

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“illegal activities,” the Algerian daily *Akhbar Al-Yawm* reports. An anti-conversion law was passed in 2006. Violators face a five-year jail sentence and a one million-dinar fine (about \$15,000) for anyone who tries to convert Muslims to other religions. — CN

* * *

California Court to Re-hear Home-schooling Case.

— Pacific Justice Institute has just received word that the court ruling which declared most forms of home-schooling unlawful in California has been vacated. This means the *Rachel L.* decision, which has sparked a nationwide uproar, will not go into effect as it is currently written. The Second District Court of Appeal has instead decided to re-hear the case, with a new round of briefings due in late April. It would likely take the court several additional months to schedule oral argument and issue another decision. Today’s announcement by the court that it will re-hear the case reinforces PJI’s position that home-schooling families should continue their current programs without fear of governmental interference. PJI will be actively involved in the upcoming briefs and will continue to post updates and

special bulletins on this vital issue. Brad Dacus, president of Pacific Justice Institute, commented, “We are pleased that the Court of Appeal has decided to re-hear the *Rachel L.* case, and we are hopeful that the fundamental rights of these parents, our clients Sunland Christian School, and the tens of thousands of home-schooling families in California will be honored. Home-schooling parents should be treated as heroes — not hunted down or harassed by their own government.”

* * *

Canada Shuts Down Apologetics Ministry.

— The following is excerpted from “Canada Orders Ministry by Christians Shut Down,” *WorldNetDaily*, March 21, 2008: “The Canadian government has ordered a Christian ministry that teaches doctrine and the differences between Christians and cults shut down because its reference materials were ‘critical’ of the beliefs of those who are not Christian, WND has learned. So what used to be called MacGregor Ministries with offerings in how to recognize and eliminate ‘faulty fads’ in Christian churches has been re-created in the United States, and now operates under the name MM Outreach Media Ministries. Lorri MacGregor, who has dedicated her life to explaining the

straight and narrow of Christian beliefs since she found her way out of the Jehovah’s Witness system years ago, told WND Canada’s version of a ‘hate crimes’ law prevented their work from continuing as it had for nearly 30 years. ... The ministry was ordered to either make wholesale changes in its presentations, or shut down. [They were required to say that all religions are equal, stop publishing their magazine on cults, remove their website and stop selling any products teaching about cults.] MacGregor said, ‘We could not live under those restrictions.’ ... WND previously has reported how proposals are being made in Canada to raise taxes and fees on churches dramatically, as well as ban them from meeting in some locations. WND also has reported on how many Biblical standards of behavior are under attack by the ‘bastardized courts’ of Canada, where activists who claim they have ‘hurt feelings’ are demanding—and getting—penalties imposed against those who oppose the homosexual lifestyle. It also has reported on the times that ‘hate crimes’ legislation for the United States has been considered in Congress.

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More Muslims Than Catholics.

— Islam has (See **WNR** on page 13)

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surpassed Roman Catholics as the world's largest religion, the Vatican newspaper said Sunday. "For the first time in history, we are no longer at the top: Muslims have overtaken us," Monsignor Vitorio Formenti said in an interview with the Vatican newspaper L'Osservatore Romano. Formenti compiles the Vatican's yearbook. He said Catholics accounted for 17.4 percent of the world population, a stable percentage, while Muslims were at 19.2 percent. "It is true that while Muslim families, as is well known, continue to make a lot of children, Christian ones on the contrary tend to have fewer and fewer," the monsignor said. — AP

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Non-Muslims Deserve to Be Punished. —

A report posted on Islam Watch, a site run by Muslims who oppose intolerant teachings and hatred for unbelievers, exposes a prominent Islamic cleric and lawyer who support extreme punishment for non-Muslims — including killing and rape. A question-and-answer session with Imam Abdul Makin in an East London mosque asks why Allah would tell Muslims to kill and rape innocent non-Muslims, including their wives and daughters, ac-

ording to Islam Watch. "Because non-Muslims are never innocent, they are guilty of denying Allah and his prophet," the Imam says, according to the report. "If you don't believe me, here is the legal authority, the top Muslim lawyer of Britain." The lawyer, Anjem Choudary, backs up the Imam's position, saying that all Muslims are innocent. "You are innocent if you are a Muslim," Choudary tells the BBC. "Then you are innocent in the eyes of God. If you are not a Muslim, then you are guilty of not believing in God." Choudary said he would not condemn a Muslim for any action. "As a Muslim, I must support my Muslim brothers and sisters," Choudary said. "I must have hatred to everything that is not Muslim."

* * *

Student Sues Wisconsin School After Getting a Zero for Religious Drawing. —

A Tomah High School student has filed a federal lawsuit alleging his art teacher censored his drawing because it featured a cross and a biblical reference. The lawsuit alleges other students were allowed to draw "demonic" images and asks a judge to declare a class policy prohibiting religion in art unconstitutional. "We hear so much today about tolerance," said David Cortman, an attorney

with the Alliance Defense Fund, a Christian legal advocacy group representing the student. "But where is the tolerance for religious beliefs? The whole purpose of art is to reflect your own personal experience. To tell a student his religious beliefs can legally be censored sends the wrong message." Tomah School District Business Manager Greg Gaarder said the district hadn't seen the lawsuit and declined to comment. According to the lawsuit, the student's art teacher asked his class in February to draw landscapes. The student, a senior identified in the lawsuit by the initials A.P., added a cross and the words "John 3:16 A sign of love" in his drawing. His teacher, Julie Millin, asked him to remove the reference to the Bible, saying students were making remarks about it. He refused, and she gave him a zero on the project. Millin showed the student a policy for the class that prohibited any violence, blood, sexual connotations or religious beliefs in artwork. The lawsuit claims Millin told the boy he had signed away his constitutional rights when he signed the policy at the beginning of the semester. The boy tore the policy up in front of Millin, who kicked him out of class. Later that day, assistant principal Cale Jackson told the boy his religious expression infringed on other students' rights. Jackson

told the boy, his stepfather and his pastor at a meeting a week later that religious expression could be legally censored in class assignments. Millin stated at the meeting the cross in the drawing also infringed on other students' rights. The boy received two detentions for tearing up the policy. Jackson referred questions about the lawsuit to Gaarder. Sometime after that meeting, the boy's metals teacher rejected his idea to build a chain-mail cross, telling him it was religious and could offend someone, the lawsuit claims. The boy decided in March to shelve plans to make a pin with the words "pray" and "praise" on it because he was afraid he'd get a zero for a grade. The lawsuit also alleges school officials allow other religious items and artwork to be displayed on campus. A Buddha and Hindu figurines are on display in a social studies classroom, the lawsuit claims, adding the teacher passionately teaches Hindu principles to students. In addition, a replica of Michaelangelo's "The Creation of Man" is displayed at the school's entrance, a picture of a six-limbed Hindu deity is in the school's hallway and a drawing of a robed sorcerer hangs on a hallway bulletin board. Drawings of Medusa, the Grim Reaper with a scythe and a being with a horned head and

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protruding tongue hang in the art room and demonic masks are displayed in the metals room, the lawsuit alleges. A.P. suffered unequal treatment because of his religion even though student expression is protected by the First Amendment, according to the lawsuit, which was filed Friday. "Students do not shed their constitutional rights at the schoolhouse gate," the lawsuit said. "No compelling state interest exists to justify the censorship of A.P.'s religious expression.

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U.S. Muslims and Mormons Share Deepening Ties. — The Mormon Church has to be among the most outgoing on earth; in recent years its leaders have reached out to, among others, Latinos, Koreans, Catholics and Jews. One of the most enthusiastic responses, however, has come from what some might consider a surprising source: U.S. Muslims. "We are very aware of the history of Mormons as a group that was chastised in America," says Maher Hathout, a senior advisor to the Muslim Public Affairs Council in Los Angeles. "They can be a good model for any group that feels alienated." Which perhaps explains an open-mosque day held last fall at the

Islamic Center of Irvine. More than half the guests were Mormons. "A Mormon living in an Islamic society would be very comfortable," said Steve Young, a member of the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints attending the event. The sentiment is echoed by Muslims. "When I go to a Mormon church I feel at ease," said Haitham Bundakji, former chairman of the Islamic Society of Orange County. "When I heard the president [of LDS] speak a few years ago, if I'd closed my eyes I'd have thought he was an imam."

* * *

McDonald's CEO: Company Will Put Full Resources Behind Gay Agenda. — McDonald's has signed on to a nationwide effort to promote "gay" and "lesbian" business ventures. According to McDonald's CEO Jim Skinner, McDonald's will aggressively promote the homosexual agenda. In remarks on McDonald's Web site concerning the company becoming a member of the National Gay & Lesbian Chamber of Commerce (NGLCC), Skinner wrote: "Being a socially responsible organization is a fundamental part of who we are. We have an obligation to use our size and resources to make a difference in the world ... and we do." The company gave an undisclosed

amount of money to the NGLCC in return for being recognized as a major promoter of the homosexual agenda. In return, NGLCC placed Richard Ellis, vice president of communications of McDonald's USA, on the NGLCC Board of Directors. Ellis was quoted as saying: "I'm thrilled to join the National Gay & Lesbian Chamber of Commerce team and ready to get to work. I share the NGLCC's passion for business growth and development within the LGBT community, and I look forward to playing a role in moving these important initiatives forward."

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Expert Says No Churches In Saudi Arabia Unless Mohammed Recognized. — Anwar Ashiqi, president of the Saudi Center for Middle East Strategic Studies, says that churches will not be allowed in Saudi Arabia unless they "recognize the prophet Mohammed" ("Saudi Arabia," Pakistan Christian Post, March 29, 2008). It is against the law in this Muslim nation to hold non-Islamic religious gatherings or to preach the gospel of Jesus Christ. Supposedly it is lawful for expatriates to worship in their own homes, but in practice even this is not allowed. In June 2006 four African Christians were imprisoned in Jeddah. In November 2005 a Saudi

Arabian court sentenced a teacher to 40 months in prison and 750 lashes in a public flogging for discussing the Bible and praising Jews. On June 20, 2005 BosNewsLife reported that 100 or more foreign Christians had recently been arrested. In April 2005 a Christian service was broken up and forty Filipino men, women, and children arrested in the capital. In June 2004 Brian Savio O'Connor, an Indian national, was arrested and tortured for "spreading Christianity." His legs were chained and he was hung upside down for seven hours, and the soles of his feet were whipped with electrical wires. In early 2003 two African preachers were arrested and deported after being held in prison for many weeks. Witnesses testifying before the U.S. Commission on International Religious Freedom in 2003 warned that "Saudi Arabia exports an intolerant, violence-producing form of Islam to other countries" (Baptist Press, Nov. 21, 2003). This is being done with the knowledge and approval of the royal family and by means of the nation's oil wealth. Israel is not recognized as a sovereign state in Saudi Arabian textbooks and its name does not appear on any map. No Jews of any nationality are allowed into Saudi Arabia. The Ameri-

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can military had to invent a category “Protestant B” and put this on the dog tags of Jewish soldiers who were stationed there.

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Parents Who Contribute To Their Children’s Delinquency By Ineffective Discipline. —

The following is excerpted from **Training Your Children to Turn out Right**, an excellent book by David Sorenson: “As a pastor, I have visited in thousands of homes. I have witnessed the following scenario played out numerous times. . . . Mom (or, sometimes Dad) would say to Junior, ‘It’s time to go to bed.’ (Or some other parental directive.) Junior ignored his mother and continued to watch TV. . . . After a few moments, she would say, ‘Junior, I told you to go and get ready for bed.’ He replied, ‘Awe, I don’t want to.’ Mom let that go by. A few moments later, Mom became a little hot about the matter. She raised the volume of her voice and said, ‘*I told you to get ready for bed.*’ Junior replied, ‘But Mom, I want to watch my program.’ Mom tolerated that counter for a few more moments. She then announced, ‘*This is the last time I am going to tell you. Go and get ready for bed!*’ Junior by now himself getting exas-

perated at being shouted at, shouts back, ‘*I told you, I don’t want to!*’ Finally, Mom shouts, ‘*I’m warning you. March right now, or I am going to whip you.*’ Variations of that scene go on by the thousands every single day in America. The real culprit was not Junior. He knew from considerable experience that Mom could be ignored. Mom was too lazy to get up and deal with the situation. she, in fact, was in her own way contributing to the delinquency of Junior. . . . One might say, ‘If I handled the situation described above as recommended, there would be a pitched battle.’ Well, you had better get on with the battle and win the war while it can still be won. The day is coming when you will not be able to win the battle or the war” (**Training Your Children to Turn Out Right**, 1995, pp. 69, 70).

* * *

Democrats Move to Stop Border Fence. —

Fourteen House Democrats are taking the federal government to court in an effort to halt construction of the security barrier between the United States and Mexico. It turns out that environmental groups such as the Sierra Club and the Defenders of Wildlife are more concerned over displacing a few animals than in protecting our borders from potential terrorists and the

unchecked flow of illegal immigrants, and the Democrats are more than happy to help.

* * *

Democracy Championed Falsely By America’s Liberal Left.

— Liberals in the U.S. are posed as the champions of democracy whereas they actually circumvent democracy to gain their liberal agenda. They won virtually all their modern victories by going around constitutional or purely democratic processes. How did abortion become legal? How has social secularism been adopted? How have they over-turned virtually all laws against pornography? How have homosexual partnerships become legalized? The U.S. Left has relied on the courts to declare a “right”, then enforced it against the constitutional and democratic process. They win victories very UNdemocratically. — Doorstep Evangel.

Christian Photographer Accused of ‘Discriminating’ Against Same-Sex Couple. —

The New Mexico Human Rights Commission ruled on Wednesday that an evangelical Christian photographer discriminated against a lesbian couple by refusing a job to photograph the couple’s same-sex commitment ceremony. Religious rights attorneys plan to appeal. — CNS

* * *

Flinch! Ford Finally Bends, Homosexual Boycott Over. —

In the face of plummeting car sales, Ford Motor Company has taken steps to reduce its aggressive, pro-homosexual policies, prompting a family-rights group to call off its boycott of the car maker. The American Family Association says it’s suspending its two-year boycott of Ford, noting the auto giant has met the conditions of the original agreement between AFA and Ford from 2005. □

The Letter “E”

The most unfortunate letter in the alphabet, some say, is the letter “e” because it’s always out of “cash, forever in debt,” and never out of “danger.”

That’s all true. Still, it’s never in “war,” always in “peace,” and always in something to “eat.” It is the beginning “existence,” the commencement of “ease,” and the end of “trouble.”

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(Continued from page 1)

heard behind me a great voice, as of a trumpet" (Rev. 1:10). As he turns to see where the voice came from, verse 12 says: "*And I turned to see the voice that spake with me. And being turned, I saw seven golden candlesticks.*" He then describes for us the One whose voice he had heard.

This vision is very similar to a vision that we see in the Book of Daniel. We'll turn there in a few moments and see the vision that Daniel had. John says: "*I turned to see the voice that spake with me. And being turned, I saw seven golden candlestick.*" These candlesticks are really lampstands. They're not to be identified as those that were in the temple. Remember that John is here on the Isle of Patmos. He is not in the temple, nor has he been carried by means of a vision to the temple, but he is here on the Isle of Patmos, and these lampstands are not like the lamps that were used in the temple.

In the temple there was one central lampstand. Each lampstand was two-sided with three candle holders on each side, so that each lampstand would be a holder of six different candles. This is not what we find here. Each of these is a separate lampstand, not combined on one lampstand as were the ones in the

temple, but a separate lampstand, and there are seven of them. These are representative of these seven churches of Asia.

John is commanded by the Lord, saying: "*What thou seest, write in a book, and send it unto the seven churches which are in Asia*" (Rev. 1:11). These churches are then identified for him. He says: "*Unto Ephesus, and unto Smyrna, and unto Pergamos, and unto Thyatira, and unto Sardis, and unto Philadelphia, and unto Laodicea.*" So these lampstands each one is typical or symbolic or representative of one of these seven churches.

If I had a map before me, I would be able to pinpoint these seven churches in Asia, and you would note that these seven churches make a general circle. We see that the Lord is standing in the midst of the seven churches. The churches, being in a circle, shows that the Lord is equidistant from each of these seven churches, indicating that the Lord is able to see, to oversee, to instruct, to assist and to help all of these churches. So what we find now, is that the Lord is going to deal with the churches as individual churches.

That's the way the churches were in the New Testament. All seven churches did not combine to make what the world refers to as the "universal church." In the Bible, each

church was a separate individual church, not all the churches together making one huge denomination, or one huge invisible church. In truth, there is no such teaching anywhere in the Word of God as a universal, invisible church, but every church was a separate, distinct independent body. When you talk about combining all the Christians into one body, this is referred to as the *family of God*, never

the church of God. Everyone that is saved, born-again, has been born into the family of God, but this is not synonymous with the church. The church, in the Bible, is always a local, visible body. It can be located geographically. It has its own building or location, it has its own pastor, and this is what we find among

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Traveling On

My plans were made, I thought my path all bright and clear;
My heart with song o'erflowed, the world seemed full of cheer.
My Lord I wished to serve, to take Him for my Guide.
To keep so close that I could feel Him by my side.
And so I traveled on.

But suddenly, in skies so clear and full of light,
The clouds fell thick and fast, the days seemed changed to night;
Instead of paths so clear and full of things so sweet,
Rough things and thorns and stones seemed all about my feet,
I scarce could travel on.

I bowed my head and wondered why this change should come,
And murmured — "Lord", is this because of aught I've done?
Has not the past been full enough of gain and care?
Why should my path again be changed to dark despair?"
But still I travel on.

I listened — quiet and still, there came a voice
"The path is Mine, not thine; I made the choice.
Dear child, this service is best for thee and Me,
If thou wilt simply trust and leave the end to me."
And so we travel on.

REVELATION . . .

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these seven churches, the Lord standing in the midst of seven literal churches. That each lampstand was made of gold, the costliest and most precious metal, indicates that a church is altogether the most precious thing on earth. It is the pure gold of the world (Eph. 5:25, 27, 29).

These are not all the churches in existence then. There were churches in Galatia, Colosse, Thessalonica, Corinth, Rome, Antioch of Pisidia, another in Antioch of Asia, and the church in Jerusalem just to name a few. So there were many other churches, but these seven churches were selected by the Lord because they are representative of seven different kinds of churches. We will go into that when we get into the second and the third chapters of the book of Revelation as he begins with the church of Ephesus and concludes with the church of Laodicea. The Lord is now standing in the midst of the churches. They are responsible to the Lord and the Lord is the One that will govern these churches.

Next, we find that it says that He looked at these churches. *“And in the midst of the seven candlesticks one like unto the Son of man, clothed with a garment down to the foot, and girt about the paps with a golden girdle”* (Rev. 1:13). John

having seen Him while He was here on earth, saw that He resembled “the Son of man” though he did not know it until informed of this in verse 18. This can be explained by the difference in the clothing Jesus wore on the earth and the garments which He is wearing now. This is one that is like unto the Son of Man, but He is more than just the Son of Man. In the seventh chapter of the Book of Daniel we find in verse 13 of this chapter that Daniel saw one who was the same as the one that John sees in the Book of Revelation. Daniel says: *“I saw in the night visions, and, behold, one like the Son of man came with the clouds of heaven, and came to the Ancient of days, and they brought him near before him”* (Dan. 7:13). This one that is like the “Son of man” is the Ancient of days as well as the Son of man.

We must remember that while Jesus Christ was here upon the earth He was the Son of man. When Jesus Christ ascended into glory He was the Son of man, and when the Lord Jesus Christ returns to this earth, He returns to this earth as the Son of man. When He returns to this earth to receive this universal kingdom that He will have upon the earth, He will receive it as the Son of man, so that He might judge the earth in righteousness.

The Lord came to this

earth and was born and became a man. We must remember that while Jesus Christ was upon this earth He was both man and God at the same time. Not half man and half God, but He was all man and all God. If you cannot understand how that could be, then join the crowd, I don’t either, but this is exactly the way it is revealed to us in the Bible, and we accept this by faith, that Jesus Christ was God manifest in the flesh. When Jesus Christ was born in the city of Bethlehem, He was the Son of man and the Son of God at the time of His birth, so that He was always God.

There were a few who tried to make a distinction that He was born a man and was not God at the time of His birth, that He became God at a later time. Some say that He became God when He began His public ministry. Others say that He became God at the time of His baptism. Still others say He became God at the time of the Transfiguration. The Bible tells us that He was born the Son of God, that He was God from the very beginning.

He is also the Son of man. The distinction being made is that He had no sin in Him whatsoever, for He

had no human father, God was His Father. He was born of the virgin Mary. As far as the physical birth is concerned it was a normal, natural birth. That which was supernatural was the conception, for Mary did not know a man. She had no man to become the father, but God was the Father of the Lord Jesus Christ. He has been known by the name, the Son of man, which He Himself calls Himself, to show His office. He has been identified with the human race in order that He might make redemption for us by going to the cross of Calvary as a man, but as the God-man He was able to pay the penalty for our sins.

This is the same Jesus Christ, the Son of man, in the midst of these churches in His judicial character. He is the One that is to judge the churches, and when we get to chapters two and three and the specific individual letters that the Lord writes to these churches, we see Him in His official character or His official capacity as the Judge of the churches. We must remember that He also is our judge. Just as we found Him walking in the midst of these seven

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You are strong and willing—that’s fine.

You hope to remain so—that’s natural.

You may be disappointed—that’s possible.

You will die—that’s sure.

You’d better get ready—that’s wisdom.

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churches, so the Lord still continues to walk in the midst of the churches today in His official capacity as the Judge of the churches. That means that He is in our presence today as the Judge of Central Baptist Church, so that He knows and He judges us.

Now when I talk about judging, I do not mean judging in the sense that a judge sits upon a judicial bench to issue a judgment of condemnation. He is the judge in the sense that somebody judges as far as rewards or premiums are concerned.

I give you an illustration of what I mean. We have a livestock show in October every year here in Little Rock. There is usually a group of young boys and girls who work in the 4H club or the FFA, raising animals. They might be a bull, a boar or a calf, or some other kind of an animal. They will raise it, groom it and do every thing necessary to win the Blue Ribbon. When they are here in October, there will be a group of judges that will come by. They do not come by to judge whether it is a bull or not. It's already a bull, but they are judging it as far as how perfect it is; as to its overall appearance, and as to its conduct and all of these things.

This is exactly the way the Lord judges these

churches. He's not judging these churches to determine whether they are true churches or not. Every one of them is. He's not judging them to determine whether they are going to heaven or to hell, but He is going to judge them as far as their condition, character, and as far as their works are before the Lord. That's exactly the way the Lord judges Central Baptist Church in Little Rock and every other church. He judges us according to our character, our works and things of this nature to determine our rewards. So we find now that He is in the midst of these churches.

He talks about these candlesticks as being the churches. A candlestick gives light, and the Bible speaks about the fact that we as individual Christians are light-bearers in the world. I want us to note three verses of Scripture. In Matthew we find, where Jesus speaking says,

"Ye are the light of the world. A city that is set on an hill cannot be hid. Neither do men light a candle, and put it under a bushel, but on a candlestick; and it giveth light unto all that are in the house. Let your light so shine before men, that they may see your good works, and glorify your Father which is in heaven" (Mt. 5:14-16).

In the Book of Revelation a New Testament church is referred to as a candlestick. In Matthew

chapter 5 we find that believers are referred to as "the light of the world." The Lord tells these believers, when you have a light, when you have a candle, you do not hide it under a bushel, but you put that light upon a candlestick in order that it might give it's light unto all that are in the house and then into all the world.

This shows the Lord's intention for every believer. You as a saved person, when you became a born-again believer in the Lord Jesus Christ, you became a light in this world. The Lord intends that that light is to shine and this light is to be placed in the proper place, and the proper place for the light is to be placed on the candlestick. That's what the Lord says. He says that we do not take a candle and put it under a bushel but we take that

candle, or that light, and we put it upon the candlestick. This is God's intention for every child of God. God intends for every saved person to put their lamp or their light upon a candlestick. The Lord put the candlestick in the world in order for you and me to have a place that we might serve the Lord.

So God intends for every saved person to become a member of a New Testament church. God did not intend for you as a saved person just to go on trying to serve the Lord in your own fashion, in your own way, for He has prescribed the way and that way is through a New Testament church. The church is the candlestick. This is what He tells us in verse 20: *"The mystery of the seven stars which thou*

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What the Church Needs Today

- More tithes and fewer drives.
- More action and less faction.
- More workers and fewer shirkers.
- More backers and fewer slackers.
- More praying and less straying.
- More of God's plans and less of man's.
- More divine power and less human "Pow Wow."
- More burden bearers and fewer tale bearers.
- More righting squads and fewer tight wads.
- More tongues of fire and fewer fiery tongues.
- More zealous effort, and less jealous thought.
- More love for the Word and less love for the world.
- More seeking for grace and less seeking for place.
- More holiness of life and less bickering and strife.
- More fasting and praying and less feasting and playing.
- More religion in politics and less politics in religion.

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sawest in my right hand, and the seven golden candlesticks. The seven stars are the angels of the seven churches: and the seven candlesticks which thou sawest are the seven churches." The Lord says that we are to put our candle, our light, on a candlestick.

Now I ask you, have you put your light on the candlestick? God's requirements are that you do that. God intends for you to become a member of New Testament church. If you have been saved, and have never joined or become a member of a New Testament [Baptist] church, then you are not obedient unto the Lord. The Lord intends for you to let your light shine, but He has prescribed the way that you are to do that, and it is by putting your light upon the candlestick, and a candlestick is a New Testament church.

I might also advise you, as did the Apostle Paul, and as did the Apostle Peter, that you make certain that you are putting it on a New Testament church. Of all the various denominations in the world today, and of all the various religions in the world today, Jesus Christ did not begin all of these. God is not the author of confusion, and yet Satan has so confused and divided our world today, that we have all kinds of denomi-

nations, and churches. Many sincere, honest believers, those who are really saved, have put their lamps on a false lampstand rather than a true church of the Lord Jesus Christ. Therefore, when we seek to put our light on the candlestick, we need to make certain that the candlestick we use is the one that is a New Testament church, because everything that goes by the name church today is not a New Testament church.

We need to understand that everything that goes by the name Baptist is not a New Testament church. We need to investigate and make certain that when we do join a church, that it is one patterned exactly according to the New Testament churches; that they have the same doctrines as we find in the Word of God. This is where God intends for us to be, to put our light upon the candlestick in order that together we might have our light shine into a world filled with darkness.

In Philippians we read: *"That ye may be blameless and harmless, the sons of God, without rebuke, in the midst of a crooked and perverse nation, among whom ye shine as lights in the world"* (Phil. 2:15). In the Gospel of John, Jesus speaking says: *"I am the light of the world: he that followeth me shall not walk in darkness, but shall have the light of*

life" (Jn. 8:12). This shows us that Jesus is the light of the world, but we are to manifest that light through these vessels that we have here, through the body that we own.

A lampstand and the lamp or the candle has no light within itself. Take a kerosene lantern, and when you light that lantern, we know that the light is not in the lamp itself. It is in the oil that comes from the base of the lamp, and the wick brings the oil to the top, so that it is really the oil that gives forth the light as the oil burns, not the lamp. This is exactly the way the Lord intends for you and me to be. The oil, or the Holy Spirit of God, is inside us

already (Rom. 8:9), and we are to allow that light to shine forth through us. It will not be us actually being the light, but we will be cleansed vessels that allows that light to shine through us and Jesus will still be the light of the world, but we will be the vessels through which that light shines. The cleaner your vessel the better that your light will shine.

We have some lamps at home on the mantel of our fireplace that we use in case we have the loss of electricity. It hasn't happened often, but we used them in one of our ice storms that we had this

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It's Just Not Fair

My kids are at the age where they are always saying "it's not fair" when things don't go their way. I always respond, "Life isn't fair."

Last week I found myself thinking "it's not fair." My 76-year-old father was diagnosed with a debilitating, degenerative disease for which there is no cure. It always ends in death, after a few years of suffering.

It just doesn't seem fair. He faithfully pastored churches for almost 50 years. During his life he has turned down some very lucrative alternatives in order to live in poverty serving other people. And

now, after all those years of sacrifice and service, he gets this diagnosis.

No, it's not fair. And when I stopped to think about it, I realized that not much in life is fair. After all, was it "fair" that the perfect Son of God was tortured, beaten, and killed because of things I had done? Was it "fair" that He who had done no wrong suffered so much for those of us who more often than not take for granted His great sacrifice? Is it "fair" that we who have sinned get to go to Heaven based on something that someone else did for us?

I'm really glad life is not fair. □ □

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winter, and we were able to light those lamps and we used them for light. Now if that chimney on that lamp had been very dirty, then we would not have gotten very much light out of those lamps. So we try to keep those chimneys on those lamps just as clean as they can be, so that the maximum amount of light shines, because the cleaner it is, the more light that we will have. This is exactly the way it works with us as believers. When we keep a cleansed vessel, then our light will shine the brightest and be the most effective and this is, of course, what the Lord intends for us to do. We are not the light ourselves, but we are the vessels through which the light shines. Since the church, the lampstand, is where the Lord intends for the candles to be placed, the churches then are presented in the Scripture as the light in the midst of a world of darkness.

Take one little match over here by itself, it doesn't give very much light, but if you put a group of them together, you have a big light, and that's the way it is with a New Testament church. The Lord intends for us to put our candle upon the lampstand, upon the candlestick.

Now beginning in verse 13 we look at the description that John gives us of the Lord Himself. "And in

the midst of the seven candlesticks one like unto the Son of man, clothed with a garment down to the foot, and girt about the paps with a golden girdle. His head and his hairs were white like wool, as white as snow; and his eyes were as a flame of fire; And his feet like unto fine brass, as if they burned in a furnace; and his voice as the sound of many waters" (Rev. 1:13-15).

When we turn to the book of Daniel in chapter 10 we find that Daniel has a vision that is very similar to the vision of John. "And in the four and twentieth day of the first month, as I was by the side of the great river, which is Hiddekel; Then I lifted up mine eyes, and looked, and behold a certain man clothed in linen, whose loins were girded with fine gold of Uphaz: His body also was like the beryl, and his face as the appearance of lightning, and his eyes as lamps of fire, and his arms and his feet like in colour to polished brass, and the voice of his words like the voice of a multitude. And I Daniel alone saw the vision: for the men that were with me saw not the vision; but a great quaking fell upon them, so that they fled to hide themselves. Therefore I was left alone, and saw this great vision, and there remained no strength in me: for my comeliness was

turned in me into corruption, and I retained no strength. Yet heard I the voice of his words: and when I heard the voice of his words, then was I in a deep sleep on my face, and my face toward the ground. And, behold, an hand touched me, which set me upon my knees and upon the palms of my hands. And he said unto me, O Daniel, a man greatly beloved, understand the words that I speak unto thee, and stand upright: for unto thee am I now sent. And when he had spoken this word unto me, I stood trembling" (Dan. 10:5-11).

There is much of glory and majesty in Christ that cannot be pictured to the eye. Hence the vision which John had of Him is supplemented with titles and descriptions in order to deepen our appreciation of the true nature and sublimity of our great Lord and Judge. We find many simi-

larities between these two descriptions, and the reason is, because each of these has had a vision of the Lord Himself. I want to point out to you the result that we find when men have a vision of the Lord.

First, they see that the garment of the Lord is both a priestly and a kingly garment, expressing His dignity and judicial authority as the King-Priest (Ex. 28:4; 29:5; Lev. 16:4). It has gold. Gold represents His deity and His divine righteousness. When Isaiah had his vision of the Lord we find the same thing when he says: "In the year that king Uzziah died I saw also the Lord sitting upon a throne, high and lifted up, and his train filled the temple" (Isa. 6:1). He then describes the glory of this One that was upon the throne, saying: "And one cried unto another, and said, Holy,

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Looking Unto Jesus

The cost of discipleship very often lies in turning the eye from the better to the best. Dr. Henry Jowett once described how, at the coronation of Edward VII, he sat in Westminster Abbey and watched the honorable assembling of princes, princesses, earls, dukes, and so on.

He said: "There was much bowing and respect shown as these people of

high degree entered, but when the king arrived all eyes left the people of lesser rank and were fastened on the king."

"So," said Dr. Jewett, "literature, music, art and science hold our respectful attention, but when Jesus Christ comes into our heart and life, He must be King, and all lesser subjects must take a lesser place!" □ □

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holy, holy, is the Lord of hosts: the whole earth is full of his glory" (Isa. 6:3). We now see a girdle which speaks of service. The servant would gird Himself and wait upon the table. His hair is white as wool, exceedingly or perfectly white. This is symbolic of His wisdom, of age and of His Holiness, "the Ancient of Days" (Dan. 7:9-12; Prov. 16:31).

Let's turn to the seventh chapter of the Book of Daniel. Again we find that a vision of the Lord is described for us by Daniel. "I saw in the night visions, and, behold, one like the Son of man came with the clouds of heaven, and came to the Ancient of days, and they brought him near before him. And there was given him dominion, and glory, and a kingdom, that all people, nations, and languages, should serve him: his dominion is an everlasting dominion, which shall not pass away, and his kingdom that which shall not be destroyed" (Dan. 7:13-14).

So we see then, that He was as white as snow. Notice in verse 9 of this same chapter: "I beheld till the thrones were cast down, and the Ancient of days did sit, whose garment was white as snow, and the hair of his head like the pure wool: his throne was like the fiery

flame, and his wheels as burning fire" etc. (Dan. 7:9). In other words, we find that these word symbols were symbolical of His holiness. His eyes, it says, were as a flame of fire — bright, sharp, penetrating. This represents His omniscience in that He sees all things and knows all things (19:12; Dan. 10:6; Heb. 4:13; Psa. 11:4), and incidentally, it also represents His wrath with those who do not do His commandments.

Then we find "his feet are like unto fine brass." This is representative of judgment. Brass was the strongest metal known in John's day. We have the Brazen Altar, judgment on the substitute (Ex. 38:1-2); the Brazen Laver, self-judgment (Ex. 38:8); and the Brazen Serpent, a type of the cross where God's justice was satisfied (Num. 21:9; Jn. 3:14). Notice also in the Book of Isaiah chapter 60. Something else about the feet of the Lord Jesus Christ. "The glory of Lebanon shall come unto thee, the fir tree, the pine tree, and the box together, to beautify the place of my sanctuary; and I will make the place of my feet glorious" (Isa. 60:13). So we see that His feet are glorious. Notice also in verse 14: "The sons also of them that afflicted thee shall come bending unto thee; and all they that despised thee shall bow themselves down at the soles of thy feet; and

they shall call thee, The city of the Lord, The Zion of the Holy One of Israel." Here we find that His feet are to be made glorious. Feet are symbolic of absolute authority, control and victory over His enemies. (Psa. 8:6; 1 Cor. 15:25; Eph. 1:22; Heb. 2:8). "As if they burned in a furnace" indicates His feet were so bright that they seemed to be like the dazzling and brilliancy of metal heated in a furnace.

As far as the voice of the Lord is concerned, it says that "his voice as the sound of many waters." This is symbolic of His authority over peoples and nations (14:2; 19:6; Psm. 29; 93:4; Jl. 3:16; Amos 1:2; Ezk. 1:24; Dan. 10:6). We do not have to read all of these passages, but read Psalm 29 about the authority of the Lord over the peoples and the nations. In Joel we read: "The Lord also shall roar out of Zion, and utter his voice from Jerusalem; and the heavens and the earth shall shake: but the Lord will be the hope of his people, and the strength of the children of Israel" (Jl. 3:16). Here we see that it is the voice of God as He speaks with authority. In the Book of Amos it says: "The Lord will roar from Zion, and utter his voice from Jerusalem; and the habitations of the shepherds shall mourn, and the top of Carmel shall wither" (Amos 1:2). Also read Jeremiah 25:30 and Ezekiel

43:2.

Then we find the stars that are mentioned in verse 16. "He had in his right hand seven stars" (Rev. 1:16; Psa. 18:35; 20:6; 110:1; Isa. 62:8; Acts 5:31; Eph. 1:20; Rev. 5:1, 7). These stars speak of His power, and you look to verse 20, and the stars are identified for us as the "angels" or the messengers, or the pastors of these seven churches. He walks among the candlesticks but has the stars in His right hand. Pastors have a relation to Christ and to the church which other members do not have. Their authority comes directly from Him and they are responsible directly to Him. This shows the holiness of their office. The office, therefore, should not be despised, but respected. They are jewels on Christ's right hand. Now we will cover that later on as we do not have time now.

Then notice in the middle of verse 16, "And out of his mouth went a sharp two-edged sword." This means that it cuts both ways (2 Cor. 2:15-16). In Isaiah 11:4; 49:2; Eph. 6:17; Rev. 2:16; 2 Thess. 2:8; Heb. 4:12 and Rev. 19:13-15 all speak about the Word of God; the mouth of God. This is not a sword that He has in His hand, but it is a sword that proceeds out of His mouth and what it has reference to is the Word of God. So

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REVELATION . . .

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this is not a hand-sword but a Word-sword (Jn. 12:48). The Lord tells us that each one of us is to be judged by the Word of God.

So we find altogether that these are summarized with the countenance of His appearance by saying “*and his countenance was as the sun shineth in his strength*” (Rev. 1:16; Ex. 34:30; 2 Sam. 23:4; 2 Thess. 1:8; 2:8; Jn. 8:12; Mt. 17:2; Mal. 4:2; Judg. 5:31; Psa. 19:5). This is the appearance of the Lord. The churches are His lamps, the ministers or the pastors are His stars, but Christ is the Sun and we are to reflect and give forth all of this light that emanates from Him. Sin causes the rays of the sun to be withheld (Isa. 30:26 compared with Isa. 52:14).

What we find then is a sevenfold manifestation of the Lord. What a contrast between the “man of sorrows” as seen in the Gospels, and the One seen here clothed in majesty before whom every knee will bow. Seven, as you know, stands for perfection. We have His head, eyes, feet, voice, hand, mouth and His countenance. This manifestation that the Lord gave unto John was to impress upon him a sense of His majesty and His glory. As such, it was to prepare Him to receive and to deliver these letters and these messages that He is about to receive. It shows

him the authority of this One who will give him this message, and it gives him the authority to deliver that message.

In other words, these messages to these seven churches in the second and third chapters of the Book of Revelation, and this entire Book of Revelation which the Lord commanded John to write and to give to these churches, all comes to us with divine authority. This is God’s special word for us who live within the last days, so that we might know the things that are soon to come to pass, or shortly to come to pass.

The Lord says, “*Behold, he cometh with clouds; and every eye shall see him, and they also which pierced him: and all kindreds of the earth shall wail because of him*” (Rev. 1:7). You and I have a word from God. This is it, right here. This is the divine Word, and this Word of Revelation is a particular word, a special word, for God has connected with it a special blessing to those who read, hear, and keep the words of this prophecy. He says: “*Blessed is he that readeth, and they that hear the words of this prophecy, and keep those things which are written therein: for the time is at hand*” (Rev. 1:3).

The blessing is upon those who read, those who hear and those who keep. If you just read and do not keep, there’s no blessing.

If you just hear and do not keep, there’s no blessing. God intends for us to listen, to read it, and then to obey His word that He has here.

Now what was the primary word that we found from Him now? The primary word is: we are to be a light in this world. To be a light in this world, you must know Jesus Christ as your personal Lord and Savior, else you do not have the Holy Spirit living within you. Secondly, the light is to be put upon the lampstand. If you have never been scripturally baptized and joined a New Testament church, a Baptist church, if you’ve never done this, then you have not kept the words of the prophecy of this book. These are words of instruction that God intends for us to obey and when we do this, then we can expect the blessing of the Lord to be upon us and our work. Our light will then shine and men will see the Lord Jesus Christ in us, and we will lead men and women to know the Lord Jesus Christ as their Lord and Savior. The cleaner we keep our vessel, the better that people will be able to see Jesus Christ in us.

What kind of vessel are you? How clean is your vessel? Earlier we talked about the fact that it says that John was in the Spirit in the Lord’s day. How well do you keep the Lord’s day? Is your vessel clean? How well do you do the things that the Lord

intends for you to do? Is your vessel clean? The promise of the blessing is upon those who read, who hear, and who keep. If you’ve not done it, you ought to, you should. □

Judge Rules Against Bible In School

NEW ORLEANS — A federal judge ordered a public school system to stop allowing in-school Bible giveaways, saying the practice violates the First Amendment separation of church and state.

“Distribution of Bibles is a religious activity without a secular purpose” and amounts to school board promotion of Christianity, U.S. District Judge Carl J. Barbier ruled in a case brought by the American Civil Liberties Union of Louisiana against the Tangipahoa Parish School Board.

As requested by both sides, Barbier made a summary judgment based only on the written briefs — something judges may do only if the law is absolutely clear.

Defense attorney Christopher M. Moody said late Tuesday that the school board decided to appeal the ruling to the 5th U.S. Circuit Court of Appeal.

“We think our chances on appeal are very good,” he said. □ □



Israeli Supreme Court sides With Messianic Jews

The Supreme Court of Israel has ruled that Messianic Jews have the same rights regarding automatic citizenship as Jews who do not believe in Jesus as the Messiah.

The case was brought by 12 applicants who had been denied citizenship primarily because they were Jewish believers in Jesus. Most of them had received letters saying they would not receive citizenship because they “commit missionary activity,” according to an e-mail circulated by Calev Myers, founder and chief counsel of The Jerusalem Institute of Justice.

A clerk at the Ministry of Interior reportedly had told one of the applicants that because she was committing missionary activity, she was acting against the interests of the state of Israel and the Jewish people.

Israel’s Supreme Court ended the two-and-a-half-year legal battle April 16 by ruling that Messianics should receive equal treatment under the Israeli law of return, which says that anyone who is born Jewish can immigrate from anywhere in the world to Israel and be granted citizenship automatically.

“This is yet another

battle won in our war to establish equality in Israel for the Messianic Jewish community just like every other legitimate stream of faith within the Jewish world,” Myers wrote.

Jim Sibley, a professor at Criswell College in Dallas and a former missionary to Israel, told Baptist Press that Jewish believers had been excluded from the law of return by previous court rulings, including one in the 1980s declaring that if a Jew believed in Jesus as the Messiah, he was not to be considered Jewish.

Traditional rabbinic Judaism teaches that Jewishness is determined by the mother’s bloodline, Sibley explained. Biblically, though, it is traced through the father.

“Apparently at least one of these 12 who were being denied citizenship had a Gentile mother and a Jewish father,” Sibley, director of the Pasche Institute of Jewish Studies at Criswell, said. “Even in a situation like that, it’s usually enough to be granted citizenship. All this [court decision] does is to basically say the same rules that apply to any other Jewish people would apply to Jewish believers in Jesus.”

With the ruling, Sibley said, Messianic Jews may seek citizenship in Israel without religious discrimination.

“It’s really a huge ruling because the court apparently further ordered the Israeli Ministry of Interior to stop persecuting Jewish believers,” Sibley said. “Some of the very Orthodox Jewish sectors of society had taken positions in the Ministry of Interior and had been using their positions to revoke believers’ citizenship, deny visas and generally harass not only Jewish believers in Jesus but also Christian workers in Israel.”

The Supreme Court’s decision should alleviate some of the pressure that Jewish believers and foreign Christian workers have felt in Israel, Sibley said, adding that he “can’t help but believe” the ruling is related to a terrorist attack on the Messianic community that occurred in March.

In that incident, 15-year-old Ami Ortiz, whose parents are noted Messianic congregational leaders in Ariel, opened a bomb disguised as a gift delivered to his home. He suffered extensive damage to his body but is expected to recover after at least a

year of treatment. Though a police investigation is ongoing, anti-missionary Orthodox Jews were among those originally suspected as perpetrators.

Sibley said Orthodox Jews should reconsider their view of Messianic believers and stop persecuting them.”

With the multitude of Jewish people simply walking away from their Jewish identity and assimilating through secularism and inter-marriage, Israelis don’t need to fear Messianic Jews,” Sibley said. “As they themselves should know, Jewish believers in Jesus not only affirm their Jewishness, they insist on it. And furthermore, those who are citizens of Israel are patriotic. They serve in the military and they pay their taxes.” — BP □

Some preachers imagine themselves to be top-notch diplomats, when the truth is they are nothing more than bottom-notch cowardly compromisers. The devil is never better pleased than when a servant of the Lord turns yellow.

**FELLOWSHIPS
and
CONFERENCES**

ST. CLAIR, MO

April 28-30, 2008, Mt. Zion Baptist Church, 1352 Parkway Dr., St. Clair, MO 63077, Thomas Smith, Pastor.

BENTON, KY

May 7-9, 2008, Faith Missionary Baptist Church, P.O. Box 153, Benton, KY 42025, Bill Amberg, Pastor.

DEARBORN HGTS., MI

June 17-19, 2008, Van Born Baptist Church, 25866 Van Born Rd., Dearborn Hgts., MI 48125, Greg Albright, Pastor.

NORTH POLE, AK

July 13-18, 2008, Plack Road Baptist Church, Gene Humphrey, Pastor. (907) 488-6697).

SALT LAKE CITY, UT

July 20-23, 2008, Anchor Baptist Church, 1800 E. 5600 South, Salt Lake City, UT 84121, Thomas E. Corkish, Pastor.

SIOUX FALLS, SD

October 5-8, 2008, Empire Baptist Temple, 412 S. Hawthorne Ave., Sioux Falls, SD 57104, Erich P. McCandless, Pastor.

RECTOR . . .

(Continued from page 4)

redelegation of local church authority, have built up a Baptist hierarchy which all but outdoes the ecclesiasticism of the episcopal organizations of our land.

To illustrate, the Southern Baptist Convention hands its program over to the Executive Committee; the Executive Committee hands the program down to the three Southwide Boards; the three Southwide Boards hand the program down to the State Boards; the State Boards hand the program down to the Association Boards; the Association Boards hand the program down to the churches; and the pastor (a Convention bureaucrat) cork-screws the "Kale Seed" from the flock, and back it goes to the Executive Committee, through the regular hierarchical channels where certain local looting take place according to pre-arranged agreements of the racketeering circle. The American Baptist Association, applying the redelegation of local church authority, will build the same kind of a machine.

Baptist cooperation and missionary endeavor is a mighty obligation, but when Baptist church cooperation results from the domination of an organization on the outside of local churches, we witness a thing which does violence to the genius of our faith and makes us

**Another Christian Martyr
In Iraq**



Every night on the news we hear updates of violence in Iraq. The war continues and commentators debate whether American soldiers should be there or not. What we do not hear about is the plight of Christian nationals

a party to discrediting "the faith once and for all delivered unto the saints."

By way of analogy, when Baptists run roughshod over our faith and practice in order to further any objective set forth by an outside agency set up for denominational control, we are guilty of playing a role similar to that of our government when our nation pushes our Constitution aside and sets up a loose construction or selfish rule. The end of either is chaos and death.

To save Christianity, our churches must be strict constructionists. "To the word and to the testimony" — that's the way of the Lord. □

in Iraq. For them a spiritual war wages.

When "Muhammad" first converted to Christianity from Islam, he kept his new faith a secret. In fact, the first person he told outside of his wife and son was a Christian named "Joseph." He knew the risks of sharing his faith with others in his homeland of Iraq but felt led to do so anyway. So he witnessed to his extended family. Following radical teachings of Islam, family members killed Muhammad.

Muhammad's widow sent Muhammed's friend "Joseph" an e-mail after the martyrdom of her husband. She wrote:

"I have bad news. Muhammad is dead. Our family killed him for sharing his new faith in Jesus Christ. I miss him dearly. Muhammad left me two important things: my son and our Bible. I'll never forget why he died. He died for Jesus. I believe Jesus will help me. Tell the people [other Christians] to pray for me. — VOM □ □

"You know the reason I don't go to church, Brother Pastor? Too many hypocrites."

"Oh! you needn't worry," the pastor said with a smile, "there is always room for one more."