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The Second Coming of Christ

By B. H. Carroll

“Surely I come quickly. Amen. Even, so, come, Lord Jesus.” — Rev. 22:20.

No other event of history is so well accredited and so universally believed and so widely honored as the first coming of the Lord Jesus Christ. The fact of His coming, and all the circumstances attending His life here upon the earth were so clearly and vividly foreshown in prophecy that a profound expectation of that coming took possession of the whole earth. When He came, and where He came; His birth; His life; His doctrine; His death; His burial; His resurrection; and His ascension into heaven, are facts more accredited by evidence than any other historical event.

Upon this, the reputed anniversary of His first advent, it is my purpose to speak of His second advent. Just so certainly as He came once He will come again. And as He came the first time personally, literally, visibly, audibly, tangibly, so He will come the next time personally, literally, audibly, and tangibly. I mean to say that as no event in the world's history prior to His first coming fulfilled the prophecies with reference to that coming or exhausted their meaning until He actually came, and men

looked into the face of the babe Christ, and saw Him as a boy walking the streets, and heard Him as a man preaching His gospel, and witnessed the agonies of His death upon the cross, so that He was to them as real a person as any other person who had ever lived upon this earth, in the same way no alleged figurative fulfillment of present promise will forestall His second advent. He will come again and we shall see Him face to face and hear Him speak.

The text naturally divides itself into five parts, upon each one of which I desire to impress a thought that ought to be fruitful of good in our lives. The first is the fact of His coming. “I come.” That is His declaration. “I come.” If we take the first scripture that was read, it closes with His ascent into heaven. They were there talking with Jesus. They told Him good-bye; and while they were talking with Him, He began to rise, to go up; and while they were steadfastly and intently watching that ascent into heaven until a cloud hid Him from their sight, two angels of God stood by them and made this statement: “This same Jesus,” — mark the identity expressed by the word “same” — “This same Jesus, which is

taken up from you into heaven, shall so come.” Let the emphasis on that word “same” impress itself on your minds this morning.

There are so many good people that interpret a great many things as fulfilling the promises of Christ's second coming. If a judgment comes, if an earthquake, if the downfall of Jerusalem or the downfall of Rome, any of these things are quoted as exhausting what the prophecies say about the second coming of Jesus Christ. Now mark that word “same.” “This same Jesus, which is taken up from you into heaven,” and you saw Him taken up, “shall so come again.” The heavens will receive Him until the time of the restitution of all things.

Notice the second scripture quoted, in the fourth chapter of the first letter to the Thessalonians, and sixteenth verse. Listen to the words of it: “The Lord himself shall descend from heaven with a shout.” Mark how that stands over against the other scripture. One of them describes His ascension into heaven. So here is a scripture which tells of His “descension” from heaven. The Lord Himself shall descend from heaven with a shout. You can-

not take that word “same” and that word “himself,” and notice how the ascension and the descension are contrasted, and fail to fix the thought in your mind of a personal coming of the Lord Jesus Christ. It is not any one past event, nor a succession of past events, but a future coming of Jesus, a literal coming.

Then let us take the third scripture presented. Here doubt is expressed by certain infidel minds who have heard about this second coming of Christ, and they say: “Where is the promise of his coming?” Not what place in the Bible contains a promise, for they do not use the word “promise” in this sense, but where is the indication; where is the sign in human affairs that foreshadows such a coming? And they argue in this way: They say since the fathers fell asleep — those fathers that knew so much about the second coming of Christ, and talked so much about it, and seemed so anxiously to wait for it — everything continues just as it has been doing from the foundation of the world. The sun rises just as it rose before; it sets just as it did; the daily affairs of life move on just as they

(See ADVENT on page 18)

Guest Editorial

"One Step Further"

By **Jerry D. Pastor, Pastor**
Lake Worth Baptist Church, Ft. Worth, Texas

My office telephone rings with considerable frequency with calls from "independent" Baptist missionaries requesting appointments to present their work to the church I pastor. Where and how they get my number remains an unsolved mystery. The calls are usually from total strangers, with a list of references which are supposed to win me over, but usually the references are also unknown to me. Not a problem. I do not expect everyone who is sound in the faith to know me, nor do I know every one of God's preachers and churches around the world. I will gladly leave that job to God.

Allow me to break away from my phone calls for a line or two about the kind of Baptist church I pastor. It is a genuine, independent, unaffiliated,

unattached, fundamental, Bible-believing (KJV naturally), evangelistic, missionary, historical Baptist church. Now that says a lot, but it does not say it all. Our church also has a Bible conviction about the authority of the Lord's church and the kind of missionary work we should be doing.

- By conviction, we do *all* mission work, sponsorship and support, through the Lord's churches. We sponsor two missionary families from our church, one to Brazil and the other to Oregon, USA. These two men are directly and ultimately only accountable to our congregation. Over one hundred and ten churches have joined us in these works and send all of their money to our church for these men. We are

more than a clearing house for their finances. We extend to them authority to do their work, along with reasonable supervision, and have accountability for their doctrinal, moral and financial integrity. Also, we send monthly financial support to 40 other church-sent missionaries from 29 sponsoring churches (independent Baptist, of course).

- By conviction, we do not support any board-sent missionaries. We are not mad about this; nor are we mad at those who say they are independent Baptist and yet support board-controlled missionaries. We do deeply believe the commission to carry out God's work and the authority to do that work was given to God's first church and other scriptural churches following, Matthew 28:18-20.

But we go one step further. We have chosen, based on this Bible conviction, not to knowingly support missionaries who are church sponsored (which is right and scriptural), but who's church also supports missionaries sent out by a board (which is wrong and unscriptural).

Now back to those telephone calls from those "independent" Baptist missionaries looking for appointments with the view of receiving financial help. I usually ask a few questions.

- Who is your home church and your pastor?
- What Bible does your sending church endorse and use?
- Is your church connected to any organization, fellowship or association?
- Does your church send any financial support to missionaries who are sent out by boards?

ceiving from missionaries tell me their sending church is an independent Baptist church, but that it supports board-missionaries, along with church-sent missionaries.

Now hold on to your seat. Should independent Baptist churches send financial support to missionaries who are sponsored by churches who support both church-sent and board missionaries?

Here are the situations that seem to prevail.

Many present-day independent Baptist churches have a background in which they at one time belonged to a convention or an association or a fellowship. Years of friendships connected them with good men in their past who are still a part of those organizations. So, when they themselves leave those organizations and become truly independent, they have a choice to make. Do they keep this conviction personal and private, just within themselves? If they are pastors, do they attempt to lead their churches out of the organization to which they are tied and declare themselves truly independent? Many have done this, for which we praise God, and great is the price that has been paid for such a courage step.

But they may need to go one step further. Should they then seek to lead the church to do *all* of it's mission work through God's churches alone and eliminate any and all connections with man-made boards?

Now, that is a problem. What about those good men the church has helped for years who are sent out under those boards? It does not seem right to disregard all the years of faithful service to God. What does a person do?

These are the options:

Many of the calls I am re-

(See **LOCKE** on page 16)

THE BAPTIST CHALLENGE

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Christmas Traditions Not Always Based On Facts

Christmas is Jesus' birthday. Any child in Sunday School knows that, which is unfortunate, because it almost certainly is wrong.

The modern celebration of Christmas combines a number of traditions so ancient that their origins have become lost to all but historians and trivia buffs. Following is all you ever wanted to know (or perhaps not) about the celebration of Christmas.

Followers of Jesus celebrated His death and resurrection early in church history, but Jesus' nativity was not celebrated until 300 years later. While Dec. 25 eventually came to be associated as Jesus' birthday, no evidence remains about the exact date of Christ's birth.

Luke's gospel tells of angels announcing Jesus' birth to shepherds in the fields, keeping watch over their flocks by night.

Winter in Judea was wet and chilly. It is unlikely that shepherds would spend the night in their fields in December. More likely, scholars say, Jesus was born in the spring lambing season, when nights were balmy and shepherds would need to be awake to tend their ewes.

Early in the fourth century, Christians in Rome began to celebrate the birth of Christ. At the time, the church was embroiled in a controversy over the nature of Christ — whether He was truly God or a created being. It is likely an emphasis on the doctrine of the incarnation, the idea that "the Word was made flesh," in John 1:14, was a factor in the spread of the celebration of Christmas.

The term Christmas, a contraction of "Christ's mass," did

not come into use until the Middle Ages. Another term used to describe the event. Nativity, is from the Latin word for "birth."

Christmas appeared at first to have been observed at different times during the year. There is some evidence that the earliest Christmas festival was held in May.

In the fourth century, Pope Julius I designated Dec. 25 as Christmas, probably to coincide with pagan celebrations of the winter solstice, which many ancient religions observed as signaling the return or rebirth of the sun. The Roman Feast of the Invincible Sun was celebrated across the Roman Empire. Rather than trying to eradicate pagan holidays, church leaders sought to replace them with Christian observances.

Another tradition says Jesus died on the same date as He was conceived, March 25, placing His birth nine months later on Dec. 25.

When the Julian calendar, established by Julius Caesar in 46 B.C. was replaced by the Gregorian calendar, ordered by Pope Gregory XIII in 1582, 11 days were dropped. Some Christian sects refused to accept the redating and continued to celebrate Christmas on the old Dec. 25, which is Jan. 7 on the new calendar. Protestants were also slow to accept the Gregorian calendar, which became official in 1752.

The Christian calendar purports to date history from the year of Jesus' birth, but it is based on a miscalculation. The census by Quirinius cited in Luke 2:2 was dated by the Jewish historian Josephus in 6-7 B.C.

Herod the Great, mentioned

in Matthew's gospel as the jealous king that tried to murder the Christ Child, died in 4 B.C., according to Roman histories. Scholars pinpoint the year of Jesus' birth as sometime between 4 B.C. and 1 B.C.

Christmas became a public holiday by order of the Roman emperor Justinian in the sixth century. St. Francis of Assisi introduced devotion to the Christmas crib, or manger, in the 13th century.

Martin Luther, the Protestant reformer, expressed devotion to Christmas in sermons. English Puritans, however, tried to do away with the holiday in the 17th century. It was revived with the restoration of the English monarchy in 1660, but as a more secular holiday than it had been before.

Some pre-Christian traditions became associated with Christmas and continue today. For example, in the first millennium in what is now Scotland, Druids celebrated the winter solstice by a festival honoring their sun god. Called "Yule," the celebration included dragging a huge log into an opening and starting a bonfire. The Druids would dance around the yule log in a noisy celebration designed to wake the sleeping sun.

The Druids also hung mistletoe in hopes it would bring peace and good fortune. Use of plants like holly comes from an ancient belief that such plants blossomed at Christmas.

The Christmas tree is a fairly recent addition, developing in the early 17th century in Strasbourg, France, and spreading through Germany and into northern Europe. The evergreen trimmed with lights and other decorations was derived from the so-called paradise tree, symbolizing Eden, in German mystery plays.

The use of candles on Christmas trees developed from

the belief that candles appeared miraculously on the trees at Christmas. The Christmas tree was introduced in England in 1841 by Prince Albert, consort of Queen Victoria. From there it accompanied immigrants to the United States.

The figure of Santa Claus, which arguably overshadows Jesus in secular celebrations of Christmas, stems from a historical character from the fourth century, Saint Nicholas.

The patron saint of Russia, Saint Nicholas lived in Asia Minor, now Turkey. He also came to be viewed as the patron saint of children, scholars, virgins, sailors, and merchants. In the Middle Ages, thieves also viewed him as their patron saint as well.

The Saint Nicholas legend tells of surreptitious gifts to three daughters of a poor man, who, unable to give them dowries, was about to abandon them to a life of sin. From that story grew the custom of secret giving on the eve of St. Nicholas Day, Dec. 6. Because of the proximity of dates, Christmas and St. Nicholas Day became merged in many countries.

Colonial settlers on Manhattan Island introduced the name Santa Claus, a corruption of the Dutch "Sinterklaas," a modification of "Sint Nikolass."

The Twelve Days of Christmas, popularized in the carol, refers to the 12 days between Christmas and Epiphany, Jan. 6. Epiphany celebrates the manifestation of Jesus as the Son of God, represented in the adoration of the Magi, the baptism of Jesus, and the miracle of turning water to wine at Cana.

Use of the abbreviation "Xmas," often criticized as an attempt to secularize or remove Christ from Christmas, actually has Christian roots. "X" is a Greek letter transliterated into

(See **FACTS** on page 24)

Was Jesus Christ God? If so, then everything is settled. If not, then nothing is settled. The claim that Jesus, while not God in any unique sense, was, nevertheless, the best and greatest man who ever lived, cannot possibly be true. Logic alone shatters that argument. He claimed to be God (Jn. 10:20-38; 14:7-10; 6:41-54; 20:38; 8:56-58). If He was not God, how then could He be either a good or a great man? Liars are not usually classified as such! But to His falsehood He adds blasphemy! If He is not God He is a blasphemous liar! A long way from a good or great man. But more than that, He now resorts to "black art" to substantiate His false claims. He works miracles in the name of God which are nothing less than devil-aided tricks to help Him make good His claim. Here, then, is His status: if He was not God, He was a blasphemous liar aided and abetted by the denizens of Hell, and He was exactly what the critics of His own day said He was, possessed of demons (Mk. 3:22). There it stands! Let the critics of this day be as honest. Either Jesus Christ was God or He was a devil. He was the God-man or He was not a good man.

But can it be demonstrated that Jesus Christ was God? That is the vital point at issue. The burden of Old Testament story seems to be, as we read along through it, that a personal Redeemer was to appear in the world. This is the central truth of the Old Testament.

This Redeemer was to be a man. In Genesis 3:15 God declared that someone born of a woman would put Satan out of business. The first promise of the Old Testament concerning the One Who would redeem us from sin's ruin, and forever crush Satan, was that the Redeemer should be a man.

But what man? Centuries

rolled by and millions of men were born of women. Where are we to look for *The Man*? As we read on, we find that suddenly God narrows the line down to Abraham as the father of the race from which the blessing to all nations should come (Gen. 12:1-3); Gal. 3:16). We need not, therefore, look for *The Man* to come from any other race than Israel.

But which son of Abraham was to become the appointed one to continue the line of suc-

cession till *The Man* should appear? Genesis 21:12 answers that question. Here God announces that Isaac is to be the chosen one.

But again we are baffled, for Isaac has two sons — Jacob and Esau. Which one shall we follow in our search for *The Man*? In Genesis 25:23-26, God again aids us by declaring that Jacob shall be the chosen one to continue the line of succession.

We now watch Jacob and need give no thought to the millions of other men on the

earth. But Jacob has twelve sons, so again we are lost in our tracing of the line of succession. From which one of Jacob's twelve sons will the line spring? Genesis 49:8-10 reveals the fact that it is to be Judah. Now we can eliminate all of Abraham's descendants through Isaac and Jacob except those that shall spring from the loins of Judah.

Here again we are at a maze of crossroads. Which family of this tribe will God choose to

cause of the fact that the nine generations from Pharez had not run out. When Saul was finally removed, however, God again returns to the tribe of Judah and chooses David who was of the tenth generation from Pharez and therefore free from the prohibition of Deuteronomy 23:2. His father, Jesse, could not have been chosen for he was the ninth from Pharez (Ruth 4:18-22).

Now that the "lineless" period is over and God picks up the thread again with David of the tribe of Judah, we are to watch his line for a successor. Which one of his sons will be the chosen one? In such passages as 2 Samuel 7:12-14 and 1 Chronicles 22:7-19 the indication would seem to be that Solomon was to be the successor to David. In running down Solomon's line, however, we come upon a serious barrier. In the kingly line of descendants from Solomon we find the name of Coniah, but we find also an abiding curse upon him and all his heirs. This curse is found in Jeremiah 22:28-30 which reads as follows: "Is this man Coniah a despised broken idol? is he a vessel wherein is no pleasure? wherefore are they cast out, he and his seed, and are cast into a land which they know not? O earth, earth, earth, hear the word of the Lord. Thus saith the Lord, Write ye this man childless, a man that shall not prosper in his days: for no man of his seed shall prosper, sitting upon the throne of David, and ruling any more in Judah."

Just here let us look at the kingly genealogy as recorded in the first chapter of Matthew's Gospel. In this genealogy the Coniah of Jeremiah 22 is found under the name of Jechonias, and Joseph, the husband of Mary, is presented as being the actual seed of Coniah The com-

(See DEITY on page 17)



A True Story

By E. D. Solomon

I want to tell you a story. It is an interesting one and a real one, too.

When I went to the Southern Baptist Theological Seminary, Louisville, I had on a chaplain's uniform. I was chaplain of the 2nd Mess, Regiment, Volunteers, camped in Jacksonville, Fla. That was the Spanish-American War. Another young man came in his chaplain's uniform. He was Harvey Carroll, the son of the great B. H. Carroll, who founded the Southwestern Baptist Theological Seminary. Dr. Carroll was pastor of the First Baptist Church, Waco, Texas, for 27 years. At that time, the Seminary was in Baylor University, Waco, Texas.

We two were naturally attracted to each other. He was married and lived out in the city. But in the day time he shared my room in New York Hall on the campus. Toward the close of the school year I said to him, "Harvey, I wish I could study under your great father this summer." He said, "You can, and you must. I will write to father about you." My family had moved from Mississippi to Ennis, Texas. When school was out and I was ready to leave, Harvey gave me a sealed letter and urged me to give it to his father in person. Harvey went to Chicago University to study Hebrew under Dr. Harper.

I went to see my family, and went on to Waco. I got a hack (taxi) and went to Dr. Carroll's home. His wife met me at the door. I said, "I have a letter from Harvey to his father." She said, "He is very busy now. I will give it to him." I said, "No, Harvey told me to give it to him." She said, "Come in. He is

in the study." She touched him. He put his trumpet to his ear to hear what she had to say, for he was deaf. She said to him, "Here is a young man who has a message from our son, Harvey."

I gave him the letter. He read it, folded it and put it in his pocket. He arose, put his arms around me, and said, "Harvey, we are so glad to see you. We hope you have had a good trip. Where is the check for your trunk? We will have Uncle Ned to bring it up." I gave him my check. He said, "Come with me." He took my suitcase and led me upstairs. He said, "Harvey, this is your room and here is your bed." I tried to tell him my name was Ed, and not Harvey. He paid no attention. When supper came, he sat me to his right hand at the table, all the time calling me "Harvey." After being there some time he asked me to carry some books to the chapel where he lectured to more than 200 preachers. He was a great scholar and a mighty preacher. That day his lecture was on the Atonement. How God received us in the name and for the sake of His Son, Jesus Christ.

He called to me to bring him the books. When I got on the platform he put his arm around my shoulders. He drew me near to his side and took this letter from a pocket over his heart. He read it: "Dear Father: This will introduce to you my dear friend, Ed Solomon. He has received me into his room here in the Seminary. Will you receive him as you would me, and give him my place in our home? Love to all. Devotedly, Your son, Harvey."

Tears came to this great man's eyes and ran down his long beard upon my face. He said, "This is the way the Father will receive all who accept Jesus Christ in their hearts. This is redemption." The audience was profoundly moved. Many


Pre-millennialism: Barnabas A.D. 71

He was the companion of St. Paul. He was a Levite, and was born on the Island of Cyprus. He was brought up with Paul at the feet of Gamaliel, and is declared by Clement to have been one of the seventy sent out by our Saviour [Quoted by Euseb. *Eccl. Hist.*, B. ii. Ch. i]. He first introduced Paul to the other Apostles (Acts 9:27). "He was a good man, and full of the Holy Ghost and faith." An Epistle is extant bearing his name, in which the writer speaks as though he were Barnabas the Apostle. It was read in the churches at an early period, and was cited by Clement of Alexandria, Origen, and others, the latter styling it, "The Catholic Epistle of Barnabas." Jerome and Eusebius pronounce it Apocryphal. Vossius, Dupuis, Dr. Mill, Dr. Cave, Dr. Burnet, Dr. S. Clarke, Archbishop Wake, Bishop Fell, Whiston, and many others esteemed it genuine.

Barnabas recognizes the Abrahamic covenant as surviving and superseding the Mosaic, and as yet to be perfected by Christ, who is the covenant pledge of its fulfillment. He uses the style of Peter in speaking of the Advent, and says, "The day of the Lord is at hand, in which all things shall be destroyed, together with the wicked one. The Lord is near and His reward is with Him." On the creation-week he says, "Consider, my children, what this signifies, He finished them in six days. The meaning of it is this; that in six thousand years the Lord God will bring all things to an end. For with

have told me this is the best and greatest illustration they ever heard. I hope it will be used by my preacher brothers. — The Faith and Southern Baptists, March, 1954.

Him one day is as a thousand years; and Himself testifieth, saying, Behold, this day shall be as a thousand years. Therefore, children, in six days (i.e. 6000 years) shall all things be accomplished. And what is that He saith, 'and He rested the seventh day;' He meaneth this, that when his Son shall come and abolish the wicked one, and judge the ungodly; and shall change the sun, and moon and stars; then He shall gloriously rest on that seventh day," i.e. millennium. He taught the "restitution," or "renewing of all things," and said that we should "call to our remembrance day and night the future judgment" [*Apostolic Fathers*, p. 186].

Mr. Brooks and Dr. Duffield esteem this extract as of good authority, and the Fathers who call his Epistle apocryphal, do not deny that Barnabas wrote it. If this be so, and if he was the associate of the Apostle Paul, was not the latter very likely to have been a Pre-millennialist? and is not this testimony overwhelming? Barnabas is supposed to have been martyred about A.D. 75, by being stoned to death by the Jews. 

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“Not Forsaking The Assembling”

By Peter B. Durik

“Not forsaking the assembling of ourselves together as the manner of some is; but exhorting one another: and so much the more, as ye see the day approaching. For if we sin wilfully after that we have received the knowledge of the truth, there remaineth no more sacrifice for sins. But a certain fearful looking for of judgment and fiery indignation, which shall devour the adversaries. He that despised Moses’ law died without mercy under two or three witnesses: Of how much sorer punishment, suppose ye, shall he be thought worthy, who hath trodden under foot the Son of God, and hath counted the blood of the covenant, wherewith he was sanctified, an unholy thing, and hath done despite unto the Spirit of grace? For we know him that hath said, Vengeance belongeth unto me, I will recompense, saith the Lord. And again, The Lord shall judge his people. It is a fearful thing to fall into the hands of the living God” — Heb. 10:25-31).

The words “not forsaking the assembling of ourselves together, as the manner of some is” are often quoted by ministers and yet the problem of absenteeism from churches on the part of Christians hasn’t been corrected and counter-buffed. They go unheeded. They are being cited but they aren’t being complied with. They have not made the impact and the influence that they were designed to do. Somehow they are even being quoted with certain reservation and restraint. So ministers are more at ease and at peace to promote with great powers and persuasion and at

great price new programs by which they hope to entice and excite Christians to come to church.

Bible studies have been reduced to speeches and sermonettes, so there will be enough time for different sorts of programs that appeals and attracts people in masses. In preparing and presenting his sermonettes and meditations the pastor exercises all cautions to also choose only the kind of topics or themes that would not be an obstacle and offense to people’s taste, trend and tendencies; to people’s sensitive ears and sincere emotions.

The truth of the Word of God has been set aside and in its place we now have Bible tales, which are being delivered with great talent and tact; with great elocution, eloquence, effectiveness and emotions; with great speech, sincerity, sensation and sentimentalism; with great command of words, craftiness, cleverness, cogency, and charisma; with great power, persuasion and passion; with great facility, fluency, forcefulness and feelings.

This phenomena reminds me of a lady that, after being absent one Sunday from her church because she visited another, was asked how the service was in that church, she replied: “Oh, my, my, what a sermon that pastor delivered with the anointing of the Holy Spirit!” She gloated and was extremely glad that such a question was asked of her, as she already had an unbearable itch and impulse to have an occasion and opportunity to say that in the first place.

After she was asked what the minister preached on, she

said: “I don’t remember, but it was surely beautiful, beautiful, beautiful.” Even though she was probed from all angles, she still did not remember a single word nor a single verse from the Bible from that beautiful sermon, but continued insisting that it surely was beautiful and was of great blessing for her. In fact, the way she passionately defended the minister, left no question or doubt whatsoever that she was willing to lay down or give her life for him!

The pastor, nowadays being trained to be a homilist, delivers his homily with great hospitality, honor and humor to homey people so, as they go back home, they can hum of being made so happy as to return again to that lovely and esteemed church for another dose of self-love and self-esteem. With such a dose people have no problem to doze by the dozens at a time.

One of the Bible truths that has been universally set aside is the truth of the local church. What the local church ought to be biblically has been attributed to what has been called “the invisible church.” In other words, the way the Bible defines and describes the church, the theologians and pastors alike say that the Bible actually defines and describes “the invisible church.” Then, they come up with their own definitions and descriptions of the local church. They leave the impression that God and His apostles forgot to provide them, but thanks to them we now have such ones that conforms to peoples’ taste, trend and tickling.

They also leave the impression that God and the apostles failed to be specific and, therefore, they were the ones that were called and commissioned by “whosoever” to coin such expression as “invisible.” In other words, when you read the word “church” in the Bible you

must use the word “invisible” to properly understand.

Why did they coin such a word? Isn’t it because the local churches nowadays do not conform, correspond and comply to what the Bible says about churches? The apostles never felt even the need to come up with such a word to cover up the corrupted condition of some of the churches in their time. Paul preferred to correct the problems. To the Corinthians he wrote, saying: “And the rest will I set in order when I come” (1 Cor. 11:34).

Instead of God, why are the theologians and pastors that use the word “invisible” being favored by so-called Christians and churches? Isn’t it because they supposedly did them a favor by relinquishing them from Scriptural standards and specifications and gives them the reins to reign and rule and regulate themselves the way they want instead? Isn’t it because they have liberated them from the domain of theocracy and have given the liberty to have democracy, which led them into disgrace, degradation and degeneration?

Why, with so much reservation and restraint, would pastors even cite the words “not forsaking the assembling of ourselves together, as the manner of some is?” Isn’t it because Paul didn’t pen such words in relationship with religious clubs but in relationship with real churches? Could such words be cited to groups that do not correspond, conform and comply to New Testament churches? How could such words be quoted in relationship with a church that is a church in name only and not in nature? Even if cited, could the following verses, 26 to 31 be appropriate and applicable to other than New Testament churches? Of

(See **FORSAKE** on page 7)

FORSAKE...

(Continued from page 6)

course, not. Not only the pastor knows that but also the parishioners. Like pastor like parishioners. Like shepherd like sheep. Pastors and parishioners don't want verses 26-31 to be cited with regards to the visible church as that makes both of them convicted, culpable and condemned.

Frankly, it would have been better to see pastors quote Hebrews 10:25 with remorse and repentance, instead of just with reservation and restraint. It would have been better to see pastors restoring the natures of their churches so it would correspond and conform to the New Testament churches. It is not enough just to have the name but there must be the Scriptural nature of the church. It is not enough just to have the designation but also the design, the description, the doctrines, the duties and the destiny of a true New Testament church.

The words "not forsaking the assembling of ourselves together, as the manner of some is" are written in the context of the importance and indispensability of the local and visible church. Paul wrote such words because of his great care and concern for Christians and churches. How could you have care and concern for one and not for the other? After all, didn't Christ have care and concern for both? Doesn't the Bible say that Christ also loved the church and gave himself for it" (Eph. 5:25)?

Is Paul teaching here the invisibility of the church or the inclusion of the Christian in the church? Why do people nowadays have such a concern for the invisible or mystical church? Did Paul have that in mind? Was it so husbands could also love their wives in-

visibly and mystically, which would have amounted to nothing but to love them mythically? Do you think that's the kind of tale, since the "invisible church" is not a truth but a theory, that the husbands needed and need? Is Paul saying to visible husbands to love their visible wives just as a visible Christ loved the invisible church? Husbands wouldn't have problems of loving their wives if they were invisible, at least once a while, or at least when they were to love them selflessly and sacrificially as Christ loved the church. It is no wonder that a lot of Christians have no problem to fall for and fall in love with the invisible church! But their problem in relationship with the local visible church has not been corrected nor changed but continues to grow progressively and persistently.

The apostle had in mind the visible church when he wrote: "Not forsaking the assembling of ourselves together." In fact, he began to establish the importance and indispensability of the visible church beginning with verse 19. This truth is presented positively in verse 19 to 25 and negatively from verses 26 to 31. Verse 25 constitutes like a hinge that unites the positive and the negative sections. The argument that Paul builds beginning with verse 19 climaxes with verse 25, and then on the basis of verse 25 Paul delivers the most stern, severe and strong warning which in turn climaxes with verse 31. Here Paul exclaims, saying: "It is a fearful thing to fall into the hands of the living God."

All the positive exhortations given to Christians are to be carried out and complied with by them in and through the visible church, just as Jews under the period of the Law did through their visible Temple. The Jewish Temple was visibly

rendered inoperative through the renting of the visible veil (Mt. 27:51; Mk. 15:38; Lk. 23:45). Then Jerusalem and the Temple was completely destroyed in 70 A.D. in fulfillment of Christ's prophecy (Mt. 24:1-2; Mk. 13:1-2; Lk. 21:5-6). During the dispensation of the Church the Jews are not going to have their own Temple. They will have it after this dispensation, during the Tribulation Period.

Therefore, the very fact that the Jews don't have their own visible Temple during this dispensation is not accidental and coincidental. It is in harmony with God's sovereign and scriptural designs. Christ established His visible assembly instead as He promised (Mt. 16:18).

The "new and living way" is in contrast with the visible Temple of the Old Testament, and includes the visible church of the New Testament. The phrase is reminiscent of the old visible way of visible dead sacrifices in the visible House of God in the Old Testament. The purpose of the phrase is not to contrast the visible with the invisible, but the old with the new and the dead with the living. To the believers at Rome Paul wrote: "I beseech you therefore, brethren, by the mercies of God, that ye present your bodies a living sacrifice, holy, acceptable unto God, which is your reasonable service. And be not conformed to this world: but be ye transformed by the renewing of your mind, that ye may prove what is that good, and acceptable, and perfect, will of God" (Rom. 12:1-2).

The new visible "house of God" or the visible church is the veridical testimony that the visible Temple of the Jews has been set aside during this dispensation, as the people that compose the church is a visible and veridical testimony that the Jewish people have also been set aside. In verse 20 of He-

brews 10 the veil is interpreted and identified as something that is visible, as "his flesh." That is reference to Christ's visible body.

It must be observed that the phrase "the house of God" appears six times in the New Testament in the following passages: Matthew 12:4, Mark 2:26, Luke 6:4, 1 Timothy 3:15, Hebrews 10:21 and 1 Peter 4:17. The first three are references to the visible Temple of the Old Testament and the last three references to the New Testament visible house of God. Just as the house of God was visible in the Old Testament so it is in the New Testament.

There is no question whatsoever that in 1 Timothy 3:15 there is reference also to the visible house of God as in Hebrews 10:21. Paul exhorts, Timothy, saying: "but if I tarry long, that thou mayest know how thou oughtest to behave thyself in the house of God, which is the church of the living God, the pillar and ground of the truth."

Likewise the phrase "the house of God" in 1 Peter 4:17 is found in such a context that it would be impossible to interpret the house of God as invisible. Peter wrote: "Yet if any man suffer as a Christian, let him not be ashamed; but let him glorify God on this behalf. For the time is come that judgment must begin at the house of God: and if it first begin at us, what shall the end be of them that obey not the gospel of God? And if the righteous scarcely be saved, where shall the ungodly and the sinner appear? Wherefore let them that suffer according to the will of God commit the keeping of their souls to him in well doing, as unto a faithful Creator" (1 Pet. 3:14-19).

The house of God was and is for glorying God. It is where the glory of God is visibly mani-

(See **FORSAKE** on page 8)

FORSAKE...

(Continued from page 7)

fested. It is the place where brethren are encouraged to "consider one another to provoke unto love and to good works" (Heb. 10:24). After all, they weren't saved by works but by God's grace, by God's power, "unto good works, which God hath before ordained that we should walk in them" (Eph. 2:9-10).

"Good works" is one of the key phrases in the pastoral epistles (1 Tim. 2:10; 3:1; 5:10, 25; 6:18; 2 Tim. 2:21; 3:17; Tit. 1:16; 2:7, 14; 3:1, 8, 14). James spoke of works as something that needed to be shown and seen and, therefore, needed to be visible (Jas. 2:14-26). Christ also spoke of works as something visible. He said: "Let your light so shine before men, that they may see your good works, and glorify your Father which is in heaven" (Mt. 5:16).

Notice that the Bible speaks of "the church of God" as visible in Acts 20:28. It says: "Take heed therefore unto yourselves, and to all the flock, over the which the Holy Ghost hath made you overseers, to feed the church of God, which he hath purchased with his own blood." As Christ's blood was visible so the church, the overseers, and the flock, need also to be visible. If the church is invisible, why is Paul concerned about "grievous wolves" entering among the "you" mentioned in verse 29? What kind of wolves could the invisible church have? Are these "grievous wolves" supposed to also be invisible?

Just as the visible Temple of the Jews was the House of God in the Old Testament, so the visible church of the New Testament is "the house of God." "The house of God" mentioned in Hebrews 10:21 is the visible place where "brethren"

are encouraged "to enter," to "draw near," to "hold fast the profession of our faith," to "consider one another to provoke unto love and to good works," and not to forsake "the assembling ... together."

Are these things to be done invisibly in the invisible church? How do you, being visible, go about doing all these things in the invisible church? How do believers, being visible, go about not forsaking the assembling of themselves together in the invisible church? Or how do visible believers know assuredly when they have assembled themselves together in the invisible church?

If the invisible church existed, it would have been to the advantage and convenience of the converted Jews of Paul's time as they greatly endured great rebuke, reprimand, reproach, rejection, revenge, recrimination, reprisals, retribution and retaliation from their own people for the cause of Christ and His visible church. They were not persecuted visibly for their adherence or belonging to something that was invisible in the first place. Why didn't Paul tell them not to worry about not being able to come to the visible church because of persecutions since they automatically belong to the invisible church, which is more important?

Such facts prove that the invisible church didn't exist in Paul's days to which believers could belong in the most needed times of great persecution. How is it that theologians and pastors are telling us that the invisible church began at the day of Pentecost? How come Paul didn't know that then? Isn't it because he did not have the high and holy honor of attending Bible Colleges and Seminaries?

Isn't it interesting that such invention of the invisible church did not come during the

time of great persecution but during the time when so-called Christians enjoy the worldly conveniences, commodities and complacences as never before in history? Why did believers continue to assemble themselves together during the persecutions? Why didn't they follow their own instinct and inclinations of self-protection and self-preservation? Why did they follow Christ's instructions to assemble themselves together instead?

Such convenient invention of the invisible church allows Christians today to indulge in what the world has to offer them, and more so when they ought to be in church! Nowadays the so-called Christians follow their own instincts, impulses and interests instead of following the instructions of the Lord Jesus Christ. That fact demonstrates that He is not their Head. If He is not their Head then they are not members of His body. If not members, then, they are not saved.

The visible church was and still is the veridical and visible testimony of the now invisible and yet visibly resurrected and ascended Christ. His visible body and bride gives testimony of Him as the Head and the Bridegroom that is going to come visibly for her.

Notice the phrase "the living God" is found both in 1 Timothy 3:15 and also in Hebrews 10:31, and in both cases in the context of the visible church. In 1 Timothy 3:15 Paul identifies "the house of God" as "the church of the living God." Frankly there is nothing in Hebrews 10 that would impede and interfere for "the house of God" to be "the church of the living God;" to be the visible church of God.

Does the expression "high priest" used of Christ rule out the house of God to be God's visible church? Absolutely not!

If Christ could be "the head of the church" and "the saviour of the body," why couldn't He also be the high priest (Eph. 5:23; Heb. 10:21)? Why couldn't entering "into the holiest by the blood of Jesus" be a reference to entering the visible church by the blood of Jesus? Doesn't the Bible say that Jesus loved the church and gave Himself for it (Eph. 5:25)? Didn't the visible apostle Paul say visibly to the visible overseers "to feed the church of God, which he hath purchased with his own blood" (Acts 20:28)?

After all, what was the holy of holies but where God's personal presence was? Didn't Christ promise His presence where two or three visibly meet in His name (Mt. 18:20; 28:20)? Why couldn't the church be "the holiest" when He is its head, savior and high priest and the church is His body (1 Cor. 12:27; Eph. 5:23; Heb. 10:21)?

In view of all these facts about the visible church and about Christ in relationship to His church, brethren are exhorted with boldness "to enter into the holiest by the blood of Jesus," to "draw near" and not to forsake the assembling together (Heb. 10:19, 22, 25). The church is the result and the product of Christ's love and life. To assemble together is also Christ's law.

Therefore, not to assemble together is to sin wilfully and to despise Christ's love, life and law. This is more serious than despising the law of Moses (Heb. 10:26-31). To despise the visible church is to despise the church with great visible truths: the body of Christ purchased by His blood, where He is its head, savior and high priest; His bride and He its bridegroom; "the house of God, which is the church of the living God, the pillar and ground

(See **FORSAKE** on page 9)

FORSAKE...

(Continued from page 8)

of the truth" (1 Tim. 3:15).

To scorn, spurn, sneer, snub, slander and shun the church is to do all these things to Jesus Christ. To despise, disdain, detest, dislike, defy, discard, discontinue, desert, depart and disown the church is to do all these things to Christ Himself. The person that has done that is described as one "who hath trodden under foot the Son of God, and hath counted the blood of the covenant, where-with he was sanctified, an unholy thing, and hath done despite unto the Spirit of grace" (Heb. 10:29).

If shunning the church is a serious matter before God, how much more serious it is to strip down the divine nature of the church of Jesus Christ! This is precisely what has been done nowadays with visible churches. In fact, the nature of today's churches is such that pastors and parishioners think of churches from the denominational standpoint rather than from the divine standpoint of being of Jesus Christ; instead of being His body, His bride, and His building. The nature of churches has been deluted so they can become denominational instead of being divine. This was done deliberately so that churches will conform to peoples' desires, delights, design and democracy. No wonder today's churches do not conform and compare with new Testament churches but they are a contrast. No wonder that churches are also in a state of degradation, degeneration, and disgrace.

Churches have been made to become churches of peoples' choice, instead of God's choice. The popular and well publicized slogan even in telephone directories is "attend the church of your choice." Churches nowa-

days revolve, respond to and find the reason for their existence in peoples' choice and caprice. That's what the churches clearly reflect.

If churches are the result and the product of peoples' choice, it follows that the people could choose their own belief and behavior; their own creed and conduct; their own principles and practice; their own reasoning and responsibility; their own doctrine and duty; their own attitude and actions; their own tenets and tasks. And all of this is done in the name of democracy; in the name of liberty; in the name of freedom. Religiously, however, it is done in the name of Jesus Christ.

No wonder Christ gave a stern, serious and strong warning to those who use His name unscrupulously, unauthoritatively, unsoundly and unscripturally. He said: "Not every one that saith unto me, Lord, Lord, shall enter into the kingdom of heaven; but he that doeth the will of my Father which is in heaven. Many will say to me in that day, Lord, Lord, have we not prophesied in thy name? and in thy name have cast out devils? and in thy name done many wonderful works? And then will I profess unto them, I never knew you: depart from me, ye that work iniquity" (Mt. 7:21-23).

If the church is the result of peoples' own attitude and actions, it follows that their accountability is also to themselves. All of this gives them a sense of satisfaction, soothing and security; of accomplishment, achievement, alleviation and appeasement.

However, the apostle Paul expounds and explains the visible church to be of divine origin with divine objectives, orders, oracles and obligations; with divine design, doctrine, duties and destiny. Before anybody doubts and dismisses

Paul's explanation, giving his own explanation or excuse, should be reminded what he wrote to the Corinthians: "What? came the word of God out from you? or came it unto you only? If any man think, himself to be a prophet, or spiritual, let him acknowledge that the things that I write unto you are the commandments of the Lord. But if any man be ignorant, let him be ignorant" (1 Cor. 36-38).

To reject what the Bible teaches has a great risk, the risk of one being rejected in turn by God Himself (2 Thess. 2:9-12). How much greater is the risk of rejecting the visible church of God. To reject the visible church is to reject the headship and the body of Jesus Christ; it is to reject the blood and sacrifice of Christ; it is to trod "under foot the Son of God;" it is to do "despite unto the Spirit of grace" (Heb. 10:26-31).

That is the reason why people that desert or destroy the nature of true churches are referred to in Scriptures as adversaries, apostates and antichrists (Heb. 10:27; Jude 4; 1 Jn. 2:18-19).

Satan, with the help of so-called Christians, succeeded to strip visible churches from the divine nature that God wanted them to have and thus made sacrilege of them. Satan distracted such Christians with "the invisible church" so they will distrust, disregard, discard and disgrace visible churches. Such Christians having the nature of tares are tearing down the visible churches of Jesus Christ instead. They are building synagogues of Satan, disguising them under the name of churches of Jesus Christ. How could many visible churches today have a true divine nature when their members are nothing less than tares?

It must be emphasized that Christ established the church at

the cost of His own blood and that He enjoined His disciples to meet in His name. Thus assembling themselves they could enjoy His presence, as a token of that eternal presence of Him that they will enjoy when He returns for them. Their assembling themselves together in His name is Christ's proof, pledge and promise of being assembled to meet Him at His return.

Maybe that is the reason why Paul chose to use identical words both in Hebrews 10:25 and 2 Thessalonians 2:1. The Greek word for "assembling" is identical in both places both in relationship with Christ's church and with His coming. Only in these two places is this Greek word used in the New Testament. To the Thessalonians Paul wrote: "Now we beseech you, brethren, by the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ, and by our gathering together (assembling) unto him."

The purpose of assembling is "to meet him" both in the church and also at His coming. We are to meet Him in the church till He comes for us. Our meeting Him in the church will climax with our meeting Him at His coming. Our meeting Him in the church is a preview of that glorious meeting with Him in the air (1 Thess. 4:13-18). It is a pledge, promise and proof of our assembling to meet Him at His return. Our earnest coming to meet Him in the visible church is the earnest of our assembling to meet Him at His visible coming. Both assembling and meeting of Him has been appointed to believers. You don't want to miss either one.

My dear friend, would you want to be a participant of that imminent assembling to meet Him when He comes? What about then assembling of yourself with brethren that already meet Him regularly at His

(See **FORSAKE** on page 15)

The Greening of Israel

By Stephen Caesar

One of the greatest proofs of the Divine inspiration of the Bible is the literal fulfillment of the Old Testament prophecies concerning the regathering of the Jewish people to the Holy Land. Not only has the wide-ranging prophecy been fulfilled in general, but small details of the prophecy have come true as well — true to the very syllable. One excellent example of this is the prediction that when the Jews would be ejected from their land, it would become a desolate wasteland, but when they returned, it would bloom with vegetation once more. Both aspects of this prophecy have come true to the letter.

In Deuteronomy 29:22-24, Moses predicted that “*the stranger who shall come from a far land, shall say ... that it is not sown, nor beareth, nor any grass groweth therein ... Wherefore hath the Lord done thus unto this land?*” The prophecy came true — when the Jews were ejected from Israel, it became desert wasteland. Mark Twin, upon visiting the Holy Land a century ago, wrote, “Over it broods the spell of a curse that has withered its fields and fettered its energies ... desolate and unlovely.” Alphonse de Lamartine called Israel “The tomb of a whole people.” Christian author and Israel defender Elwood McQuaid wrote, “For centuries the land had been afflicted by calculated destructiveness. A succession of armies had warmed themselves by fires built from the woodlands of Israel. Finally, the hills would stand denuded with no more fuel to offer imperial encampments. ... Attempts at agricultural pursuits

were a thing of the past.”

But, as Jesus taught, Scripture cannot be broken. No matter how barren and desolate a wasteland Israel had become, the writings of the prophets were clear — Israel would bloom again when her children returned. Isaiah proclaimed: “*The wilderness and the solitary place shall be glad for them [the re-gathered Jews]; and the desert shall rejoice, and blossom as the rose. It shall blossom abundantly*” (Isa. 35:1-2a). Likewise, Ezekiel prophesied: “*The desolate land shall be tilled, whereas it lay desolate in the sight of all that passed by. And they shall say, this land that was desolate is become like the garden of Eden*” (Ezk. 36:34-35). Amos rightly predicted: “*Behold, the days come, saith the Lord, that the plowman shall overtake the reaper, and the treader of grapes him that soweth seed; and the mountains shall drop sweet wine, and all the hills shall melt. And I will bring again the captivity of my people of Israel, and they shall build the waste cities, and inhabit them; and they shall plant vineyards, and drink the wine thereof; they shall also make gardens, and eat the fruit of them*” (Amos 9:13-14).


These prophecies have been fulfilled to the letter. From 1903, when Jews started returning to Israel in appreciable numbers, to 1948, the year of independence, the Hebrew immigrants took 11,120 acres of desert and turned them into productive farmland. From 1948 to 1971, the total acreage of desert-turned-farmland skyrocketed to 119,293. The total number of productive acres claimed by the drainage of useless swampland was a whopping 110,456. Even the parched Negev, that eternally arid part of southern Israel, has been made to bloom with orchards

and cotton fields. The Israelis developed a method called drip irrigation to permanently and abundantly water the former wasteland and discovered, through trial and error, that some crops can be grown on brackish and even salt water. The result has been that the former sun-baked hell known as the Negev is now carpeted with green, a phenomenon reported by the July 1985 issue of **National Geographic** magazine.

McQuaid wrote, “Northern valleys are carpeted with green. Hillsides abound with maturing forests. Jerusalem pine, tamarisk, eucalyptus and acacia now thrust skyward on hills down the length of the country. To the south, the desert lands stand deep in ripening grain. The Jordan valley yields abundant harvests of succulent produce. Dates, bananas, avocados and mangoes are among produce items grown here and along the coastal plain. Coastal areas and the hill country are dotted by emerald citrus groves.”

The literal fulfillment of Biblical prophecy regarding regathered Israel’s transformation from a wasteland to a garden is so perfectly accurate that it boggles the imagination. Tiny Israel, a barren wasteland when the Jews returned, actually became an *exporter* of agricultural produce, particularly fruit, within a generation of Independence. This is in flawless fulfillment of Isaiah’s divinely inspired prophecy: “*He shall cause them that come of Jacob to take root: Israel shall blossom and bud, and fill the face of the world with fruit*” (Isa. 27:6). This prophecy has come true to the last syllable; in my home town of Merrimack, New Hampshire, grocery stores feature Israeli oranges right alongside oranges from California and Florida. Indeed, re-gathered Israel has “fill[ed] the face of the

whole world with fruit.” If any out there still doubt that the Jews’ return to Israel is the direct will of God, let them doubt no more. The Bible said it would happen, it happened, and that settles it.

[For more evidence of Scripture, write to Bible Proof Ministries, Merrimack Baptist Temple, 5 Depot St., Merrimack, NH 03054.] 

Spurgeon On Baptist History

“We believe that the Baptists are the original Christians. We did not commence our existence at the reformation, we were reformers before Luther or Calvin were born; we never came from the Church of Rome, for we were never in it, but we have an unbroken line up to the apostles themselves.

We have always existed from the very days of Christ, and our principles, sometimes veiled and forgotten, like a river which may travel underground for a little season, have always had honest and holy adherents. Persecuted alike by Romanists and Protestants of almost every sect, yet there has never existed a Government holding Baptist principles which persecuted others; nor, I believe, any body of Baptists ever held it to be right to put the conscience of others under the control of man. We have ever been ready to suffer, as our martyrologies will prove, but we are not ready to accept any help from the State, to prostitute the purity of the Bride of Christ to any alliance with Government, and we will never make the Church, although the Queen, the despot over the conscience of men.”

— New Park Street Pulpit, Vol. vii, pg. 225.

Seay's Sorties**O, Those Kansas Bullfrogs**

By Gene Seay

In the 1950's we lived in the little town of Perth, Kansas south of Wichita. About forty or fifty miles to the east of us was Arkansas City where the Heberly and Chace families lived. We were so poor in those days that we often were tempted to sneak out at night and milk the neighbor's cow or raid his henhouse, but being Christians we were able to resist the temptation.

We were so poor that we would give our children a special treat by cutting out a picture of a pork chop from the grocery ads (they were in black and white in those days), and hang it over the table, with the ceiling light behind it, and let the kids sop the shadow. Sometimes we would vary the menu by hanging up a picture of a chicken or a fish. We sent a lot of cottontail rabbits and squirrels, and once a 'possum, to that place of inner darkness.

But one thing we had in abundance was frog legs. East of Arkansas City was a creek named Grouse Creek, and there were bullfrogs all up and down the creek. Leon Wyckoff made us a boat by welding two old Ford hoods together that would float two of us at a time. Of course it was not a white-water vessel, but Grouse Creek had a current that barely moved.

We would go over to the creek in the afternoon. The first thing we did do was seine some bait with a minnow seine. A couple of passes would yield us a lot of minnows and crawdads. The crawdads we would sort out and put the small ones in a bucket for bait, and the big ones we would keep for us to eat. We would hang a few drop lines

from tree limbs with the hook and bait in the water. Then it was back to our camp to break off the crawdad tails and wrap them in aluminum foil and drop them into the camp fire and cook them in preparation for the evening meal.

When it got dark two of us would get into the boat (if you can call it that) and go frog hunting. As often as not it would be Don and me. He would paddle and I would be in the front with a light and a zipper bag to put the frogs in. When one was spotted on the bank Don would ease the boat into the shore while I shone the light in the frog's eyes. When I was near enough I would reach out with my hand and whop the poor frog down into the mud so that he would not get away. Don would open the zipper bag, and I would drop the frog in. We would repeat until we had the bag pretty full.

When we got back to the camp we would separate the frogs from their legs. I thought up an assembly line system where I was the anesthesiologist. I would grab the frog by its rear feet and whop his head on the car bumper to kill him humanely. Then I would hand it to the surgeon who would cut off its legs and hand them to the dermatologist who would skin the legs with a pair of pliers and drop them into the ice chest. After that we would have a supper of crawdad tails (if I remember Don would not eat them) and then crawl into the sleeping bags. We would check our drop lines in the morning.

The first and last time we used the assembly line system I woke up in the morning to

greet a sun shining brightly in a blue sky. I was surprised to hear a frog croak from the direction of the place we had thrown the dead frogs the night before. When I looked in that direction all the frogs were sitting on their legless posteriors with their front legs holding them up in their natural position. I felt pretty bad about that, but noticed that the frogs did not seem to be suffering any pain. I believe that they do not have a very well developed nervous system. They looked perfectly normal but were obviously *ribbited* (pun intended) to the little spot of ground they were sitting on.


The first time we went frog hunting we brought our frog legs to Heberly's house. Don and I were so tired we decided to take a nap while Betty Jo and Mary cooked the frog legs. It turned out they could not do it as the legs kept trying to jump out of the skillet, so they called in the kids to do it.

We may have been poor but that was gourmet eating. Frog legs are expensive and usually only found in the finest restaurants, which reminds me of the fellow that went into a fine restaurant with frog legs on his mind. He was seated at a choice table, and when the waiter brought the menu the fellow asked him if he had frog legs. The waiter got a hurt expression on his face and answered, "No, sir, I only walk this way because my pants are too tight."

At the age of seventy-three I can look back over my life and see that it has been one long sortie. Only in old age does one have the advantage of being able to look back over the years and sort out values that the young cannot perceive, and assign to the events in life their proper degree of value. The young are so taken up with ambitions and the desire for what

they perceive as greater things that they fail to see that the best things might be the things already at hand. Some of the best times of my life was back in the early years when I had the least.

Memories are some of our greatest treasures, and I thank God for the memories of our good times in the fellowship of faithful friends when we had little of this world's substances. The vision of a bullfrog in the flashlight's beam, the scent of decaying vegetation on the night air, the sound of the bullfrogs calling somewhere down the creek, the exquisite taste of crawdad tails roasted in the wood fire, the fireflies flashing the little light bulbs in their tails in the blackness of night, thousands of stars sparkling like diamonds on black velvet, the Milky Way splashed across the night sky, the firelight flickering on the faces of cherished friends and the feeling that all is well because the Lord has blessed us with such blessings.

Those same friends are still our closest friends after nearly fifty years. This love between us has not diminished with the passing of the years and the diminishing of our strength. This fellowship we can carry into eternity with us. The memories of those things that has cost us the least we now see to be among our greatest possessions. These are some of the best things the world can offer because they are among the best things that God has given to those who are His blood-bought children. This fellowship is made possible because we share salvation in the same Savior and serve the Lord in a New Testament church the Lord gave His blood for. 

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Pro-Choice On Abortion Is Illogical. It is illogical to say that the fetuses belonging to pro-choice people can be killed and the fetuses belonging to pro-life people can't be killed, as if they have different value or no value at all. "Choice" is a consumerist, libertarian word that effectively keeps morality at bay. In the Lincoln-Douglas debates of 1860, Douglas was pro-choice on slavery. He said the 1857 Dred Scott decision gave slave owners the "right to choose." Lincoln's answer applies to abortion today as it did to slavery then: "No one has the right to choose to do what is wrong." Pro-choice" leaves "no choice" for the baby. — CC

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Truth Eludes Our Powerful Media. "... [Truth is fallen in the street ...]" (Isa. 59:14). Our liberal news media are the most powerful propaganda machines ever known. We recently read that politicians in a certain nation hires professional liars for a small fee to sit in coffee shops and spread rumors about their opponents. In America these "liars" are given microphones and TelePrompTers and rake in millions of dollars a year. Their liberal bias and leftist agenda are evident for all with an ounce of discernment to behold. They are pro-abortion. They present homosexuality not as behaviorally deviant but as an alternate lifestyle. Mainstream journalists tend to be globalists and in recent elections have voted near 90% for Democrats. Our media

elite have praised political movements run by brutal, atheistic thugs. They misrepresent, mislead, and deceive. They call evil good, and good evil. — CC

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From Scandal To Glory.

The Jennifer Flowers affair hardly hurt our president in 1992. When the "man from Hope" has no bedrock beliefs, and the morals of an Arkansas sow, it is no great surprise when his chief advisor instantly rebounds after resigning in disgrace over an affair with a prostitute. After the notoriety, Dick Morris got a \$2.5 million dollar book advance. A 9/30 *U.S. News* article said: "His reputation may not stay down for long. It used to be that famous offenders served some time in a state of disgrace before emerging, good as new. Now the rehab phase is skipped entirely by just ignoring the bad behavior. Sleazeballs and felons are instantly recycled as respectable characters." Psalms 12:8 says: "The wicked walk on every side, when the vilest men are exalted." — CC

* * *

Graham's Use of Rock Groups. Dr. Billy Graham uses rock groups to draw crowds for his crusades. Dr. Gordon Sears writes: "I was sent a copy of Billy Graham's paper this week. He made the statement: 'The message — the Gospel of Jesus Christ — is timeless, but the packaging for the message needs to change according to the culture.' This was in reference to the use of rock groups,

etc. Isn't it strange that for years, missionaries have said that the Gospel lifts the cultures of paganism up and changes lives, but now the opposite is taking place?" — CC

* * *

Mercer President's Book Bothers Southern Baptists. Mercer University, Macon, GA., is a Southern Baptist school. Twenty-five years ago, Catholic revolutionary Bernadette Devlin from Northern Ireland promoted communism in a chapel message at Mercer. Today, Mercer's president, R. Kirby Godsey, in a new book, says he will not be tied to creeds. His other ideas include: Everyone will eventually get to heaven. The Bible is not infallible. And "the notion that God is the all powerful, the high and mighty principal of heaven and earth should be laid aside." The backlash from these "ideas" could affect school funding. We should hope so! — CC

* * *

Medical School Now Teaching Abortion As Elective Course. For the first time, medical students at the University of Washington are being offered a class on abortion. The elective is one of a handful like it being taught in medical schools around the country, a group of medical students who pushed for its inclusion said. Until this year, abortion, the most common operation performed on women, had been absent from the medical school curriculum. "During my first two years, I never remember the A-

word being mentioned," said one fourth-year medical student. She and other students, active in a national organization called Medical Students for Choice, complained to their professors that they weren't learning what they needed to know about abortion. After consideration, her teachers agreed, and so did the University of Washington and medical-school administrators. "Abortion is a legal medical procedure, albeit a controversial social issue. It is a part of physicians' medical practice, and we do feel that it should be something we offer at least electively to students," said John Coombs, the university's associate vice president for medical affairs. Others disagreed. "A doctor is supposed to be trained to save lives, and every abortion involves the taking of life of a member of the human family — the most vulnerable, tiny members, said Maureen Malloy, lobbyist with the National Right to Life Committee. Four students have signed up for the elective this year.

* * *

Promise Keepers, Memphis '96. This editor attended, with Media credentials, the Saturday sessions of the recent PK Conference at the Liberty Bowl in Memphis. About 55,000 attended, including about 1,800 from Dr. Adrian Rogers' Bellevue Baptist Church (SBC). The Memphis paper said the Friday night session "with its lights and TV screens and towering stacks of speakers, looked fit for a modern-day rock concert." The music was super loud

and super rock (with drums and bass, sway and swivel), even on old hymns like “Nothing But the Blood,” or “There Is a Fountain.” PK will no doubt help some men be better husbands, fathers, and church members. Some have been helped in Graham Crusades also, but that does not excuse unbiblical methods used. This writer came away convinced more so than ever that Promise Keepers is a massive and deceptive tool of Satan to mix truth and error. For a 2-page report and list of speakers (which included Charles Colson), send a self-addressed stamped envelope to Calvary Contender, 1800 Sparkman Dr., Huntsville, AL 35816. — CC

American Baptists & Women Pastors. Mary Mild is the new director for American Baptist Personnel Services. In an interview in the ABC's Fall 1996 WATCHword she bemoans the fact that only 5% of American Baptist pastors are women. She says: “It's my strong belief that every church should have two pastors — one woman and one man....” She cites progress in the area of ABC women in leadership: “In 1975, there were no women area ministers. Now there are around 20. There were no women regional executive ministers; now there are four. There were about 100 women pastors; now there are over 300.” The ABC is a member of the NCC/WCC. — CC

Canada Health Care Woes.

Canada's largest province, Ontario, is locked in a bitter dispute with doctors over health-care funding. Hospitals across Canada are closing, and the public healthcare system is in crisis. Doctors are emigrating across the U.S. border for higher salaries, others threaten to stop taking new patients, and Ontario is arranging for pregnant women to get medical care in the U.S. Governments usually make a mess of health care. — CC

Liberals Leads PBS. For years, Public Broadcasting has been a tool of the liberal media elite. Now, in September, self-proclaimed liberal Alan Sagner was elected its new chairman. He was a founding member of the Fair Play for Cuba Committee which reportedly supported Castro's revolution and its membership included Lee Harvey Oswald. Clinton close friend Diane Clair is the new PB vice-chairman. Her husband is chief counsel for Tyson Foods. The outgoing chairman says PB will become more politicized. — CC

Graham: “Other Paths To God?” In a recent interview, Billy Graham declared that he is a Democrat, and seemed to give credence to idol-worshippers. The 10/20 *Parade* said: “Graham has been noted for his willingness to work with leaders of different religions. ‘Each time a President has asked me to lead the Inaugural prayer, I have argued that I should not do it

alone, that leaders of other religions should be there too,’ he said ‘We are all brothers and sisters in our hearts,’ he stressed.” He said, “[As an American, I respect other paths to God....” But there is only *one* God, and only *one* path to Him (1 Tim. 2:5; Jn. 14:6). Demanding equal time for idolatry is scriptural treason. — CC

Colson At PK-Memphis. Prison Fellowship founder/chairman Charles Colson was a main speaker at the Promise Keepers conference in Memphis. His topic was: “The Unity of the Body: Brothers United in Christ.” He warned of the government's encroachment on the freedom of Bible-believing Christians. He also said “Shame on us when we're divided,” and said division is our sin today. He said that when we're not one, we are working against God and there's no evangelism. He said we need to reach across denominational lines, that whatever your denomination, you belong to Jesus. If Catholic, etc., we belong to each other, he said. He said some people even say Mother Teresa's not a Christian. Then for “proof” he said: “That 90-pound lady had the courage at the National Prayer Breakfast [last Spring] to say to President Clinton that the greatest sin today is abortion.” [paraphrased] Colson said: “I'm proud Mother Teresa is my sister in Christ.” But the 10/96 *Berean Call* mentioned her Roman Catholic belief that personal suffering helps to earn one's salvation, and her view that each person must believe

in whatever “God” is in their mind. Colson, a Southern Baptist, co-authored (with a Roman Catholic priest) the notorious ECT document and was a recipient of the ignoble 1993 Templeton Prize. — CC

Mrs. O'Hair Still Missing. Madalyn Murray O'Hair ... has been missing, along with her son and granddaughter, for a year. ... For more than three decades, O'Hair, 77, was the rowdy, hectoring voice of atheism in the United States. She came to prominence in 1963 when the Supreme Court found in her favor, banning prayer and Bible recitation in public schools ... Shortly afterwards she founded American Atheists.... at its height the organization boasted a national network of 40,000 followers.... Staff at the organization's headquarters in Austin, Texas, last spoke to O'Hair, her son Jon and granddaughter Robin in September, 1995, while they were in Texas on a working holiday.... O'Hair, with her brusque manner and sometimes ragged appearance, also managed to upset many of her fellow atheists. “She was obnoxious, dictatorial and unreasonable,” says Marie Castle, co-president of the Atheist Alliance in Minnesota, which was founded five years ago by disgruntled members of O'Hair's organization. “I remember saying to her that we gave up one god, we don't need another. She

(See **WNR** on page 16)

Five Bible Warnings

By
Chester E. Tulga

Jesus and the apostles had no illusions about human nature or religious human nature. They knew the menace of false religion, the attractiveness of false prophets, and the susceptibility of the unthinking multitudes of false teachers and false doctrines. Looking into the future they warned the infant church of the same things which had marked the religious history of Israel.

1. The warning against false professors. "Not every one that saith unto me, Lord, Lord shall enter into the kingdom of heaven" (Mt. 7:22-23). False professors appeared in the earliest days of the church and have persisted through the centuries. In spite of these stern warnings, we are living in a day when one may be called Christian regardless of beliefs, conduct or religious experience. False professors are even more acceptable in the modern church than true professors. But Jesus says, "Depart from me, ye that work iniquity; I never knew you."

2. The warning against false prophets. "Beware of false prophets, which come to you in sheep's clothing, but inwardly they are ravaging wolves. Ye shall know them by their fruits" (Mt. 7:15-16). The church of our day, having abandoned the authority of the Scriptures, and having no concern for the purity of the church, has lost its ability to identify false prophets, so it has come to pass (as in ancient times) that false prophets are more popular than true prophets and more widely accepted. Jesus said they would deceive many (Mt. 24:11) and this has come to pass. The

broad way leading to hell is thronged, with the false prophets and false teachers leading the procession.


3. The warning against false doctrines. "Now the Spirit speaketh expressly, that in the latter times some shall depart from the faith" (1 Tim. 4:1). "For the time will come when they will not endure sound doctrine" (2 Tim. 4:3-4). Our present age is a vivid fulfillment of these warnings. Our great denominations are filled with men who have departed from the faith and have risen to high places in religious circles. Our seminaries are filled with men who deny the faith of the Scriptures and create a type of ministry who will follow in their footsteps and infect the churches with their apostasies. Our pulpits are filled with men who are more interested in scratching itching ears than bearing the message of God to a sinful world. Our great denominations are not only filled with men who deny sound doctrine, but *who cannot endure sound doctrine in others*. The New Testament insists upon purity of doctrine, on the form of sound words, on fidelity to the great doctrines of the faith. It condemns in unmeasured words the "damnable heresies" which have destroyed the testimony and effectiveness of the churches. We have been warned against false doctrines, but the churches of our day, forsaking the Word of God, no longer knows the difference between the false and the true.

4. The warning against heresy. "Damnable heresies" (2 Pet. 2:1). "A man that is an heretic after the first and second admonition reject" (Tit. 3:10).

This does not mean that he is to be appointed to a leading denominational position, nor given a leading pastorate or appointed to a faculty position in a seminary, as many denominations do, but he is to be rejected and refused religious fellowship. The Christian attitude toward a heretic is a loving and prayerful concern, but he is not to approve, support or fellowship with him in heresy. This is a day when there is no distinction between heresy and orthodoxy in the great denominations, and even many fundamental people, in the name of love, will enter into full fellowship with heresy. This is contrary to the plain statements of the Word of God (2 Jn. 9-10).

5. The warning against apostasy. "Now the Spirit speaketh expressly, that in the latter times some shall depart from the faith, *giving heed to*

seducing spirits, and doctrines of devils" (1 Tim. 4:1). The Scriptures do not connect apostasy with intellectual doubt or the inability to believe, but finds the source of apostasy in Satan, and attributes apostasy to the seduction of evil spirits. Apostasy in our day hides behind an intellectual front to conceal its Satanic character.

We have lived to see the day when ministers, professors and preachers deny the authority of the Scriptures, the virgin birth of Christ, the deity of Christ, His atoning death, His bodily resurrection, His personal return. They deny the very fundamentals of the Christian faith and yet they occupy high positions in religious circles. This is the apostasy against which Paul warned. Apostasy occupies the high places in religion, while orthodoxy is on the side street. The apostasy is here. 

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January 9-10, 1997,
Northway Baptist Church, 5939
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WESTCLIFFE, CO

January 21-24, 1997, "Re-
treat In the Rockies", Wetmore
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Wetmore, CO 81253, (719) 784-
4197, Brian Withrow Pastor.,

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Jim Allmond, Pastor.

SIOUX FALLS, SD

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Baptist Temple, 412 S.
Hawthorne Ave., Sioux Falls,
SD 57104, Ron Tottingham, Pas-
tor.

LITTLE ROCK, AR

October 27-29, 1997,
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Taylor Loop Rd., Little Rock,
AR 72221, B. Lawrence Jones,
Pastor

Jerry Falwell Joins Southern Baptist Convention

Evangelist Jerry Falwell, a pillar of the independent Baptist movement and founder of Liberty University, has led his Lynchburg, Va., congregation to affiliate with the Southern Baptist Convention.

His affiliation follows the formation last month of the Southern Baptist Conservatives of Virginia. The SBCV broke away from the Baptist General Association of Virginia, charging its leaders with liberalism and lack of loyalty to the national convention.

"For many years, I have watched with admiration the theological renaissance within the Southern Baptist Convention," said Falwell in a statement released Oct. 24. "...When inerrantists in Virginia formed the SBCV recently, the Thomas Road Baptist Church was quick to show its approval and to offer encouragement by beginning modest monthly financial support."

That financial support essentially gives Thomas Road a new Southern Baptist identity. Membership in the national denomination is based only on "bona fide" contributions to the convention's ministries as well as "sympathy with its purposes and work."

Recently Liberty University added three well-known Southern Baptists to its board of trustees: Ronnie Floyd, pastor of First Baptist Church, Springdale, Ark. and chairman of the SBC's Executive Committee; Johnny Hunt, pastor of First Baptist Church of Woodstock, Ga. and Eugene Mims, a vice president at the Baptist Sunday School Board.

The church, thus, becomes dually aligned with the SBC and the Baptist Bible Fellowship,


based in Springfield, Mo., encompassing about 3,500 churches. To be known as part of the Baptist Bible Fellowship, a church must provide support for group's missionaries and/or affiliated colleges and ask to be listed in the Fellowship's directory published every two years. The amount of the contribution to the Southern Baptist Conservatives of Virginia was not specified in Falwell's statement. The contribution will qualify the Liberty Baptist Church to send messengers to the Southern Baptist Convention annual meeting, scheduled next year from June 17-19 in Dallas.

Falwell Now a Southern Baptist. Dr. Jerry Falwell announced last month he has become a Southern Baptist. He thus now is officially and directly yoked with unbelievers in a new way. Over the years he has swapped pulpits with SBC leaders and spoken at Southern Baptist meetings. Several Southern Baptist leaders are trustees of Falwell's Liberty University, and former SBC president Jerry Vines is chairman of LU's board. When he and protégé Tim Lee spoke at a 1993 Southern Baptist "Building Bridges" conference in Maryland, Falwell said:

"I would say we're a couple of years away ... but I don't think there's any question that we're heading toward some major mergers that will probably surprise a lot of people." So with the "bridge" in place, he now just crosses over it. (On other occasions he has denied he would join the SBC.)


Falwell and other SBC "conservatives" are linked with: apostates in the Baptist World

Alliance, liberals in SBC schools and agencies, thousands of SBC pastors who are Masons, hundreds of SBC women clergy, and with ecumenicals such as Graham and Colson. The tragedy is compounded if he influences some BBF, Southwide Baptist Fellowship, and other independent churches to follow him into the SBC.

Dr. Falwell has caused untold confusion and harm within fundamentalism for two decades by claiming to be a Fundamentalist when his ecumenical practices clearly revealed he was not. — CC 

FORSAKE...

(Continued from page 9)

church? Don't you want to have a preview of that glorious assembling to meet Him in the air as you meet Him regularly in the assembly of believers? This will be a great exercise or rehearsal as you exercise now your privileges here on earth. Such assembling is being enjoined by the Lord to His followers so they could enjoy His presence now and thereafter. Remember those that will enjoy His glorious presence then are those that already enjoy His presence now with the assembling of believers. 

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LOCKE...

board-sent missionaries. *This is not right!* It is not right to immediately drop a missionary who is depending on your promised support when he is on a foreign field. It is not ethical. There is a better way.

Option 2: Notify the missionary of your and your church's conviction and make him aware that on his next furlough your church will discontinue sending financial support, so long as he is sent out by a mission-board. Encourage him to study the scriptures and come to his own decision.

Option 3: During the period mapped out under option 2, begin financially supporting only church-sent missionaries, thoroughly looking into their sending church's position on mission work before supporting the missionary.

Why is such a radical proposal made? Missionaries who are truly independent and church-sent are not being supported as quickly and as generously as they might be because many independent Baptist churches send some of their money to missionaries who are board-controlled.

It is my observation that "kind produces kind." Board-missionaries will build board-inclined and board-sympathetic churches on their fields of service. Church-sent missionaries, on the other hand, will be more inclined to build churches that exalt Christ and honor the Bible.

I have observed some who take a good stand on the historical lineage of Baptists back to Christ; they trumpet the loved doctrine that the Lord's church is the Bride of Christ; they practice scriptural baptism and reject any of its alien forms; they keep the Lord's Supper for their faithful church members only, and yet — choose to selectively ignore the absolute

and exclusive authority that the Lord gave His churches to send missionaries to preach the gospel and establish churches.

God's authority which He gave to His churches is not to be delegated to any other organization. And yet, churches cannot be involved with mission boards without surrendering some of their authority.

I have heard some preachers say, "That's why I'm an independent Baptist. We support the 'man.' We are free to support him if he is under a board or out of a church."

We are not independent Baptists to do as we please. We are independent Baptists to be free from the pressure of a group or organization so we can do what God's Word commands us to do.


I have heard other preachers say, "That board doesn't have any real control over our missionary." Really? Here is a truism: He who controls the money controls the man. Mission boards are notorious for rejecting men because of their age or health, determining their field of service, the term of their service and furlough. If the board is not offering some service, then why would a missionary go out under one? And why would a mission-board sent out a man over whom they have no actual control?

I would not be so arrogant as to try to tell any of the Lord's churches who they should support as a missionary or to impose on another church policy or directives. Every congregation is under the Lordship of Christ as her head. According to Hebrews 13:17 pastors will give an account to God for the leadership they have given or failed to give to God's church.

Without sounding unduly hard and harsh, let me offer

this suggestion. Missionaries who are sent out of sister, independent Baptist churches that are still determined to support both church-sent and board-authorized mission works ought to seek support only from churches which have their same dual position. Truly independent Baptist missionaries go begging because other missionaries are working both sides of the street (solicit financial support from independent Baptist churches that do direct-missions only and Baptist churches that support direct and board missionaries). Let those who are sent from board-inclined churches get their support from other board-inclined churches.

And let churches that have a conviction about exclusive church authority do *all* missionary work through the Lord's churches *only*.

Allow me to conclude by quoting from a booklet written in 1946 by the late Dr. J. Cullis Smith entitled, **New Testament Church Association** (pp. 24-25). "Shall the Lord's churches continue to let these super-parasites suck their life blood and use their birthright? '*God forbid!*' Rather, let the Lord's churches rise up in righteous indignation, and with firm fidelity to the Word of God, dispose of them in short order! I plead earnestly with the churches of the Lord and with my Baptist brethren, in the name of the crucified and risen Lord, to throw overboard this excess baggage and bend their strength to the work of the Lord, according to New Testament order. 'As I have given orders to the churches of Galatia, even so do ye' (1 Cor. 16:1)." 

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WNR...

(Continued from page 13)

was way too paranoid, had this way of excommunicating people she didn't agree with... When we formed the Atheist Alliance she even hit us with a lawsuit. She has created this image of atheists as nasty, belligerent people. Our opinion is that we hope she doesn't show up again." Jack Massen, who helped form the alliance, agrees.... "She did more harm to atheism than good," he says. "She once described herself as an offensive, unlovable, aggressive slob; she was right." ... O'Hair's disappearance is a mystery; and atheists, who believe in a rational interpretation of the world about them, hate mysteries. — Sword of the Lord.

* * *

Indonesian Pastor & Others Burned To Death Inside Their Church. A pastor, his family and two others were burned to death in their church Oct. 10 during extremist Muslims' latest attack on the minority Christian community on Indonesia's most populous island. Mobs destroyed 18 churches, two Christian schools and an orphanage in four cities of East Java, according to sources close to the Christian church in Indonesia. No Baptist churches were involved in these attacks. A mob riding in three trucks and 20 motorcycles was stopped as it was heading toward Banyuwangi, however, where a Baptist church is located. The mob destroyed three churches in a nearby village, the sources said. Indonesia, a string of islands in southeastern Asia, is the world's most populous Muslim nation. 

DEITY...

(Continued from page 4)

monly accepted interpretation of the Matthew genealogy is that the genealogy proves that Joseph had a *legal* right to the throne because he was in the line of the kingly seed of David, but that he could not *exercise* this legal right because of the curse upon the *seed* of his ancestor Coniah. Being in possession of a legal right without ability to exercise it, he could, however, so the interpretation under discussion says, give that *legal* right to his *foster son*, Jesus. Since Jesus was Joseph's son without being his *seed*, therefore, we are told that Jesus took His legal right to the Davidic throne from His foster father, Joseph, and thus got around the curse on Coniah's *seed*. He was *son* but not *seed*.

We have no desire to be "different" from other teachers just for the sake of being different, but we do feel constrained to take issue with the interpretation of the Matthew genealogy as outlined above. There is another clause in the curse pronounced upon Coniah in Jeremiah 22 which we feel has been uniformly overlooked. We refer to that clause which says "Write ye this man childless." If language means anything at all it seems to us that we must conclude that God orders Coniah to be reckoned as though he had actually died childless so far as *throne rights* are concerned. True, he had many children, and through the succeeding generations, Joseph comes upon the scene as a direct descendant of Coniah, *but so far as any of these descendants having any legal right to the throne is concerned it is as though they had never been born*. In other words, so far as the perpetuation of a *legal* line of descendants is concerned, it is as though Coniah died child-

less while on the throne. How then, we would ask, can it be said that Joseph had a *legal* right to the throne, when, so far as that throne is concerned, Joseph was not reckoned to be even in existence?

The Purpose of the Matthew Genealogy

If the Matthew genealogy is not given to establish Joseph's legal right to the throne, then for what purpose was it given? To answer this question we must go back into the Old Testament law of inheritance. When Israel entered Canaan, the land was divided and given to each tribe for an inheritance. This in turn was divided to the families in each tribe, the law of inheritance being from father to son. In the 27th chapter of Numbers, the daughter of Zelophehad came to Moses advising him that their father had died, leaving only five daughters, and no sons. Therefore, the daughters were left without any property. Moses took the case before the Lord and in verses 7 and 8 the Lord declared that where all the children in a family were daughters, they were to inherit on the same basis as sons.

Things moved along fairly well in Israel under this provision, until another dilemma presented itself in the last chapter of Numbers. The daughters of Zelophehad were marrying outside of their tribe and family. The result was that their inheritance was being transferred to other tribes. This matter was presented to Moses, and the Lord provided the remedy. Any daughter who had an inheritance in Israel, in order to retain her inheritance, *must marry some man in the tribe and family of her father*. Otherwise she forfeited her inheritance. Any Jewish maiden who wished to retain her inheritance, in order

to pass it on to her children, must marry in the tribe and family of her father.

Herein I believe we find the explanation of the Matthew genealogy of Joseph. Joseph, like Mary, was of the *tribe* of Judah and the *family* of David. He was, therefore, the proper man for Mary to marry in order to preserve her inheritance which was the right to the Davidic throne, coming to her through Nathan. The purpose of the Matthew genealogy is not to prove his *legal* right to the throne, but to prove once and forever, beyond any possibility of dispute that Mary, who did have the legal right, in marrying Joseph did not forfeit that right and, therefore, could pass it on to her son Jesus.

What About Solomon's Right?

A moment ago we said that Mary was the possessor of the legal right to the throne through Nathan. This is an assertion which, of course, needs to be proved. One thing is absolutely certain, if we are to permit the text to speak for itself, the Solomonic line came to an abrupt end in the person of Coniah. He was to be childless. If Jesus was to get a legal right to the throne through that line, then we are face to face with an absolute impossibility. Yet Jesus must get His legal right from some source. Since it is shut off in Jeconias, we assume that it reverts back through Nathan, and comes down to Mary according to the Luke genealogy. But do we have Scriptural grounds for such an assumption? We believe so.

In the seventeenth chapter of 1 Chronicles God is speaking to the prophet Nathan (not David's son Nathan). He is giving His prophet His message for King David concerning the future of the Davidic House and the perpetuity of his throne. In

verse 11 God says, "And it shall come to pass, when thy days be expired, that thou must go to be with thy fathers, that I will raise up thy seed after thee, which shall be of thy sons; and I will establish the kingdom ... and I will stablish his throne forever."

We are of the opinion that these verses refer to the Nathan line of sons and not to the Solomon line. 1 Chronicles 17:11-14 certainly refers in its ultimate application to the Lord Jesus Christ. "Thy seed" of verse 11 is unquestionably the Lord Jesus Christ. The same verse further declares that this seed was to be "of thy sons." In other words, when the Lord Jesus Christ, who was to be the ultimate *seed* of David, should arrive, He would be a lineal descendant of David, through his sons. The question then immediately arises, from which line of "sons" was this seed (the Lord Jesus Christ) to come? The Solomon line of sons, or the Nathan line of sons? If Solomon, then the Lord Jesus Christ, in order to meet the requirements of the divine announcement, *would have to be the seed of Solomon*. At the time of the birth of Jesus Christ, the one man who could have made Jesus Christ the seed of Solomon was Joseph! *But if Jesus Christ was the seed of Solomon through Joseph, then He must be begotten by Joseph, and the modernist is right, Jesus Christ was not virgin born, and the world is still bound for Hell without a Savior*. If, on the other hand Jesus Christ was to be the seed of the Nathan line of sons, then He was exactly that, because of Mary, who was the seed of Nathan.

Thus, with a childless king on the one hand, and the necessity that Jesus Christ be the

(See **DEITY** on page 22)

ADVENT...

(Continued from page 1)

have always moved on, and what is there in the course of human affairs to suggest such a tremendous fact as the second personal coming of Jesus Christ. That is the argument of the infidels.

Now, the apostle meets it in this way. He says there was a threat of a flood, and men, after that threat was delivered, began to consult the times to see if there was any indication of a flood, any promise; if any clouds were gathering that threatened such a tremendous rain as that foretold; and they looked at the skies, and the skies were serene. They felt no shaking of the earth that would indicate the unsealing of the subterranean fountains of the great deep when the foundations should be broken up by the throes of that dreadful catastrophe; and therefore, arguing from the course of nature around them, they disbelieved the coming of the flood. But, says the apostle, the flood came; it came just as predicted; it came as an actual event, it came sud-

denly, and it was as awful and disastrous in its consequences as had been foretold. Now, he says, by the same word of God, the word of God which, when spoken with reference to the flood, eventuated in the fact foretold, notwithstanding men's doubt about it, by that same word of God it is stated that Jesus will personally come again, and that when He comes the second time the earth shall be destroyed by fire and not by water.

Take the fourth scripture, cited in the first chapter of Revelation: "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" The men that betrayed Him; the men that crucified Him; the man whose spear entered His side; the soldier whose hammer drove the spikes through His hands and feet; the men whose counsels were back of the hammer and back of the spear and were the true agents of that slaying, that crucifixion of the Son of God, they shall see Him. This scripture states that His coming will

be visible; visible to all people; not a man upon the earth; not a man that ever lived upon the earth but shall see Jesus; and Him with his natural eye. Now, this is the first thought that I want to impress upon your minds: The fact of the coming of the Lord Jesus Christ.

The second thought is: Surely I come. That word "surely" covers it all.

It means that God has given us assurance, positive assurance, of the fact of the coming of the Lord Jesus Christ. A great many evidences of assurance might be cited that are passed by, but I want to call your attention to four assurances, and let your mind rest on these four. If you will look at each one of them, and then look at them grouped, they will constitute sufficient evidence for your mind to be assured, positively assured, that the same Lord Jesus Christ who ascended to heaven will so come as He was received up into heaven. These facts are as follows:

1. The ordinance of baptism. Now let me refer again to Rom. 6:3-5: "Know ye not, that so many of us as were baptized into Jesus Christ were baptized into his death? Therefore we are buried with him by baptism into death: that like as Christ was raised up from the dead by the glory of the Father, even so we also should walk in newness of life. For if we have been planted together in the likeness of his death, we shall be also in the likeness of his resurrection"; and this passage, "Else what shall they do which are baptized for the dead, if the dead rise not at all? why are they then baptized for the dead?" (1 Cor. 15:29). This is what you call a monumental evidence.

While He was here upon earth He established a visible and perpetual monument that should be a continual assurance to the mind of every one

that saw it; to the soul of every one that was subjected to it, that He would come again for the resurrection of our bodies; for the coming of the Lord Jesus Christ and our resurrection are simultaneous; they occur at the same time. Now, here is a monument which has been in existence for nearly two thousand years, and wherever water flows or stands in pools, or baptisteries, or lakes, or oceans, there that water by this instrumentality of appointment, has become an assurance to men that the Lord Jesus Christ will come again. No star in heaven has ever reflected its own shining face in any placid brook or stream but that brook has flashed back to the star a brighter and more glorious thought than starlight, to wit: the coming of the Lord Jesus Christ and the resurrection of the dead. There never was a more unmeaning institution; there never was one whose perpetuity would have so little reason as the ordinance of baptism, unless the Lord Jesus Christ is coming again, because there cannot be any resurrection of your body till He comes. He has to be in sight; He has to have with Him the disembodied spirits of the dead whom He brings from heaven, and death will hold his sway and maintain his sovereignty over every graveyard, every cemetery, over all the dust which once was animate, till Jesus comes again.

Now, here are the waters testifying against the graveyard. Here is the river versus the cemetery. Here is the baptistery speaking against the sepulchre; standing over against it as an assurance that God has given to us an assurance that you can see with your eyes, to which you can be personally subjected.

And we will let that assur-

(See **ADVENT** on page 19)

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(See postage rates on page 5)

ADVENT...

(Continued from page 18)

ance stand there for a moment until we place by its side another. Before he died He instituted another ordinance, itself monumental — a supper. That too is visible; that can be tasted; that can be handled; that can be kept up through the ages; and He made that institution a positive assurance that He would come again. Because He says: “As oft as ye eat . . . ye do show the Lord’s death till he come.” You cannot observe the Lord’s Supper without reference to the second coming of Christ. You cannot in the celebration of that supper point back in your mind and heart to His real body, His real blood, the fact of His first personal coming and passion, without at the same time connecting it with another event, which is to the present what the first was to the past, the coming of the Lord Jesus Christ. Whenever men cease to believe in the personal, audible, visible coming of the Lord Jesus Christ, they should discontinue the Lord’s Supper.

Now, I imagine that when He comes, some congregation, — I do not know which, — but some congregation will be in the very act of celebrating His death, the outpouring of His blood, in that solemn monumental ordinance of the supper. For they are to keep this up till He comes. And I imagine that while the minister is discussing these emblems of His body and of His blood, and while the lips of the communicant are receiving these testimonials of the passion of Jesus Christ, that a trumpet shall sound louder than the peals of the trumpets of the earth, and a voice shall be heard, and great shout whose swelling sound shall wake the echoes throughout the universe and a startling cry will fall upon

them: “Behold the bridegroom cometh” — and we will put that assurance beside the other.

The third assurance is this: The promises of Jesus. I have never had any impression made upon my mind any deeper than this: The absolute truthfulness of every statement that ever fell from the lips of Jesus. It forces itself upon my soul that whenever Jesus said a thing would happen, that thing would happen; that whenever He promised to do anything, He would do that very thing.

Now, here we have the promises of the Lord Jesus Christ — Jesus, whose word was never broken; Jesus, whose communication was yea, yea, and nay, nay, without double meaning, without any coloring words of deception, but in plain, simple, straightforward language that a child could understand. I say that my heart takes deep and solemn assurance of His second coming from the fact that He said He would come. “Surely I come.” “Behold I come.” By the borders of death and on the boundaries of life; by the fireside; at the family gathering; in the agonies of His own dying, and in the glories of His own ascension; and in the unearthly splendor of His final manifestations to John upon the island of Patmos, upon all of these occasions, with great simplicity of word and emphasis of language, He said: “I will come,” — and I put that assurance with the other two.

I mention one other: In the letter to the Hebrews the apostle says that men are accustomed to confirm their promises with an oath. A man promises to do a certain thing, and you have his bare word. Then in order to confirm that word, he takes an oath. Now, you cannot take an oath except by some one other than yourself. You always swear by a greater than yourself. Man, then,

swears by the living God; by the One who created him, that he will do what he has said he would do. And in that way men’s promises are confirmed by an oath. Now the apostle says, God, willing to show more abundantly to the heirs of promise, to the believers in the Lord Jesus Christ, the truthfulness of what He had spoken, confirms it with an oath; so that by two immutable things in which it was impossible for God to lie, we have a strong consolation who have fled for refuge to lay hold upon the hope which is set before us, which hope we have as an anchor of the soul, sure and steadfast, and which entereth into that within the veil; whither the forerunner is for us entered, even Jesus.

Now, here I put these four things before you. The ordinance of Baptism. You had that assurance in your own person. You have witnessed it in others. And the minister’s hand would not attempt to administer that ordinance if he did not believe in his heart that Jesus was coming, and at His coming there would be a resurrection of the dead. You have before you the Lord’s Supper, which, as a congregation, you have kept up. Your Minutes are full of it. There are references in every year of your history to the great solemnity, to the tearfulness, and the prayerfulness with which you have observed the Lord’s Supper. And then the solemn promise of Jesus; and then the oath of Almighty God that that promise will be fulfilled. “Surely I come.” Surely by the baptism; surely by the supper; surely by the promises of Jesus; surely by the oath of God. “Surely I come.”

The third thought of this text is the speediness of His coming, based upon the word “quickly.” “Surely I come quickly.” I confess I do not know how to discuss that part

of the subject. I want to call your attention to some of the difficulties of it. It seems at first hard to reconcile the long lapse of time already past with the word “quickly.” But let us try to understand it. So far as the race is concerned it is not quickly, but with the individual it is “quickly.”

To illustrate: There was a promise made in the garden of Eden and just after the fall of man, that He would come the first time. But now for that promise to be of much consolation to those who heard it, and for that promise to be influential in their life and character, it must be something not afar off. We all know that the force of attraction is based upon nearness, and that a most distant thing attracts but little. Hence, a promise that loses itself in the mists of great distances; that is vague on account of its being far off; that promise does not console much. That promise does not influence much.

Now, when God promised the first coming of Jesus, He so stated the promise as that every generation expected His coming would be in their time. Did you ever think about that? Not only so, but I repeat it here that each individual looked for it in his day. When Cain was born, Eve on the birth of this her first child, supposed that the promise of God was fulfilled, and that the Messiah had come in Cain. See how she looked at the first coming. She looked at it as a promise in her time. She looked at it as a promise to excite expectation in her heart. She looked at it as a promise that would come and knock at the door of her house in her lifetime and before she died, and hence when Cain was born she verily thought that he was the Messiah that was to come into the world.

(See **ADVENT** on page 20)

ADVENT...

(Continued from page 19)

Lamech thought the promise would be fulfilled in his child and so named him "Noah," *i.e.*, rest and comfort from the curse. Other parents of Israel thought in the same way. And whenever a wonderful king was promised and there were mixed with his coming some of the signs of the coming of Jesus, men thought that king must be Jesus coming.

You can detect this faith of the speedy coming of Jesus in the names given to the children. They would name one child Emanuel; that is, God with us. Whenever that word "el" comes at the end of a Hebrew name it indicated their faith in God and in the coming of the Messiah; and whenever they named a child it was with some reference to His promises, so that each boy who was held in a pious mother's arms came to her as if he was the revealed Son of God who was to appear upon the earth, and yet we know as a matter of fact four thousand years passed away before He came the first time.

When that venerable old man in the temple held the infant Jesus in his arms and poured out from his inspired lips the joy of his heart that he had seen the salvation of God for which he had waited, and without which he was not willing to die, he but expressed the sentiment that was in the hearts of hundreds and thousands of pious fathers before his time.

Now, just in that way has God promised the second coming of Jesus. I defy any man to take the New Testament and read what is there written about the second coming of Jesus, read what the apostles speak of it, and deny the apparent imminence of the event. It is at hand; it may be here tomorrow. That generation had it right up be-

fore them on the horizon of their near future as one of the most imminent events to which the mind could be directed; and in that nearness of position, it consoled their hearts. The Lord is at the door. The Lord cometh. And there were men in the times of the apostles who did not believe that they would die before Christ would come the second time without sin unto salvation.

I recall visits that I made to the venerable Dr. Buck, a member of this church, and I never shall forget a remark that he made when we were talking about His advent: "Though you see I am old; more than four score years, and my promise of life is very short, yet, every morning when I wake up I look to the east for the coming of the Son of God; for the personal coming of Jesus; for the visible and audible coming of the Son of God." It was in that state of expectancy that he lived and died.

Now, we have this word "quickly." "Surely I come quickly." In order to reconcile that "quickly" with the great lapse of time as to the first event and the lapse of time as to the second event, you have to consider this fact, — I am not sure that I can state it in a way that will take deep hold on your minds, — so far as the world is concerned it was a long time from the fall of man to the first coming of Jesus Christ. It was a long time. But it was not so to any individual who lived upon the earth; because there was no man who lived four thousand years. Now, if a man had lived to be four thousand years old, it would be true, comparatively true, that Jesus did not come the first time quickly to that man. But each man's part of time was very short. He only covered a fragment of that great cycle of the centuries; and it is so with you now. If you had been living ever since Christ

was born, you would now be nearly two thousand years old, and you would begin to say: "Where is the promise of His coming? I have been living two thousand years." But did you know that you will never have to look for Him more than one hundred years; perhaps fifty years; some of you not twenty; some of you not ten? So far as your part of the looking is concerned it is short; it is speedy. He comes quickly to you, and in a very short time you will drop out of time and into eternity, where there is no measurement of days and years. And if the coming of the Lord Jesus Christ is to have any influence upon you, it must have it upon you as an individual and not as merged and lost in the race; I mean so swallowed up in the race as if the race was the individual.

The wicked man also loses himself in the same fallacy. His experience is similar to the Christian's with reference to the delay in this coming of Jesus Christ. The backsliding Christian says: "Why doesn't He come? I have waited and I am sleepy and it is midnight, and I have been watching so long. Why doesn't He come, and is He coming at all?" and so he begins to doubt and distrust and relax in Christian duty. He begins to go astray. He begins to sleep upon his post because of his unfaith in the coming of the Lord Jesus Christ. In the same way the wicked man says: "He is not coming. I will eat. I will drink. I will be merry. I will go on and follow the bent of my inclination. I will go on and indulge in these appetites and passions which His law re-proves. Where is any indication of His coming? I will do as I will; He is not coming."

Now take this picture: Here is a man who finds across the channel of a deep stream a wide, thick, solid dam. He gets down

there below that dam where the channel is dry, and he says: "There is no water here and none coming soon. People say that the water will come down here after a while, but I see no sign of it, and I will build me a house here." Just above that dam the water is coming, and the line on the dam rises every day. He does not see it on his side; and it rises, and he does not see it. He says there is no danger of any water coming down here — and it rises, and it deepens, and the volume and the weight accumulate and press against that dam, and he says: "Where is any indication of its coming?" And at last, all at once, the dam breaks under the mighty pressure that is upon it, and the overwhelming waters fall upon him and sweep him away forever. And it is in that way that the word of God is true when it is said concerning a wicked man: "His damnation lingereth not." And it is in that way that our Lord Jesus Christ speaks to His people and says: "Though I tarry, yet I will not tarry." It is not really tarrying. The events are filling up; the day is approaching, and we are continually coming nearer to it, and we should look at it as an event on our individual horizon, and not as an event on the horizon of the world.

Look at this other thought concerning that delay. We stand here waiting for His coming, and it seems to us the time is very long. And we say: "Lord, are You not slack concerning Your promise? You said You would come, and You said You would come quickly, but are You not slack concerning Your promise? Surely You are, as we count slackness."

Now listen to the reason. I want every Christian to let the reason sink deep down into his heart. Why did not Jesus come

(See **ADVENT** on page 21)

ADVENT...

(Continued from page 20)

yesterday? Why does He not come today while I am speaking and you are listening? He says: "*The Lord is not slack concerning his promise as some men count slackness; but is long suffering toward us, not willing that any should perish, but that all should come to repentance*" (2 Pet. 3:9) — account that the long suffering of our Lord is salvation, which means that God has protracted His stay in order that others might be saved. And yet the impatient Christian stands here crying out, "Lord, why did you not come yesterday?" If He had come yesterday perhaps your own child would have been lost. If He should come today your neighbor would be lost. The only thing that keeps Christ's coming from bursting upon us this very moment is God's desire to save more of the lost.

No more appeals after He comes to the unsaved; no more gracious supplications in their behalf at the throne of mercy. The curtain drops and the drama is ended, and every man who is at that time lost remains lost forever and forever. And whenever I think of my impatience about the Lord's coming, then I think of these, and I say: "O Lord Jesus, wait a little while. Let me speak to this friend, this child, this neighbor of mine. Oh, coming of Jesus, halt, halt, until more of the lost are saved. And there He stands poised in that attitude today and for that reason. "Surely, I will come quickly, and if I tarry it is that others may be saved."

We come to another division of the text. "Amen." "Surely I come quickly. Amen." That means, let it be so — be it so. Now such a response could never be spoken to the assurance of the speedy coming of

the Lord Jesus Christ except for the purposes of His coming. Therefore, when we say "amen," let us see what we mean; amen to the speedy coming of Jesus. When He comes He comes with designs; He comes with purposes. What are they? Now here are the most important of them:

1. He comes to raise the dead. And there will not be after He comes a dead body in the earth nor in the sea, not one. He comes to raise the dead, the just and the unjust. When I say "amen," that means: Let the dead be raised; let it be so; let every grave be opened; let the sea give up the dead which are in it; let every corpse which has been hidden from human sight by its murderer wake up and come out of its hiding place and stand up before God; let the dead arise!

And what else does it mean? It means the judgment: for it says that when the Son of Man shall come in His glory and His angels with Him, He shall sit upon the throne of His glory. It declares that when He comes where will be revealed a great white throne upon which He shall sit as an arbiter of the human race in the judgment, the final judgment, the eternal judgment. When we say amen to Christ's speedy coming we mean that we wish to put our hands upon the door handle, and turning it open the door and say: Let the judgment of God come in. Are you willing to put your hand upon the handle of that door?

When you say amen to the speedy coming of Jesus Christ, do you mean by that that you are ready to stand before the great white throne? Are you ready? Are you ready today as you sit in this house upon the reputed anniversary of His first advent? Are you ready to see the earth wrapped in fire? Are you ready to see the heavens

melted? Are you ready for the division to take place between the inhabitants of the earth, one part to go to the right hand and the other to the left hand? Are you ready to look into the eye that cannot be deceived and to come up before that Judge and say: "Master, let me receive my portion?"

He also comes for heaven and for hell. Back of and under the judgment is hell. Back of and above the judgment is heaven. And over that hell, just as certainly as over that heaven, is written the word "Eternal." Are you ready? Are you ready for one or the other? Why lingers the "amen" upon your lips? Why did you thoughtlessly say: "I wish He would come, and where is the sign of His coming, and why does He tarry?"

We will look at the last thought of the text, "Even so come, Lord Jesus." And that teaches the attitude of Christians toward the coming of the Son of God — not what our attitude is, but what our attitude should be. That we ourselves should be so personally ready that we can answer back: "Even so, come, Lord Jesus." It means that we should be so wakeful that His coming shall not take us by surprise. It means that we should be so engaged in our Christian duties that His coming would not fill us with alarm at the balancing of our account. It means that we should be so engaged in the fulfilling of His will here upon earth that we would be willing for the immediate fulfillment of that will here, even as it is in heaven.

Pardon me. Look at the young people in this house today. See how the mind is filled up with thoughts of the first coming of Jesus. Let me ask you, young men and maidens: Who was it that came? Was it some worldly conqueror whose advent was to be announced with salvos of artillery and beat-

ing of drums and flourishing of swords? Who was it that came? Was it Bacchus, that we should gather together in revelings and in drunkenness? Was it Venus, that we should forget the purity and chastity which God requires in human life and give ourselves up to bestial and unholy desires? Who came? Whose is the anniversary that I make the occasion of yielding to the seductive temptations that assail me upon the right hand and upon the left? Will it be not enough that I have sinned; that I have sinned with a high hand and an outstretched arm, but that I must signalize my sinful life upon the anniversary of the birth of the pure and holy Son of God? Would you make the anniversary of your mother's funeral the occasion for a dance? Would you make the anniversary of the first coming of the Son of God — that coming which ended in His passion, His dying shamefully, bitterly, agonizingly, darkened with the cloud of God's departure and of the opprobrium of man — would you make that the occasion of rioting? Oh, I pray that not one young Christian in this house who believes that Christ will come again; not one young Christian here who believes that He will surely come again; not one who believes that He will surely come again quickly; not one here who would be willing to say, "Amen" and "Even so, come Lord Jesus" — not one of them will put a spot on his white robe during these Christmas holidays.

When He came the angels shouted for joy, and sang with paeans of happiness, and for nearly two thousand years it has made the earth happy. Therefore, let the children, crowded around their hearthstones, be glad; but oh, let not the anni-

(See **ADVENT** on page 24)

DEITY...

(Continued from page 17)

seed of the Nathan line of sons on the other hand, we are forced to the inevitable conclusion that Jesus Christ got both His legal right and His physical right to the throne of David from His mother Mary, and that she safeguarded the throne interests of her son by marrying a man of the tribe and family of her father.

Thus we have traced the line of *The Man* from Genesis 3:15 to Mary's virgin born son. Abraham, Isaac, Jacob, Judah, David, Nathan, Mary, Jesus! And there He stands as the fulfillment of Genesis 3:15 and Isaiah 7:14: "The seed of the woman!" "A virgin shall conceive!"

Proofs of the Virgin Birth

We wish now to present seven simple, but to our mind, conclusive proofs that Jesus Christ is the virgin born man promised and prophesied in the Old Testament Scriptures.

I. He Was That Virgin Born Man by His Own Testimony.

Whom did Jesus regard as His father, Joseph or God? When He was lost in the Temple at the age of twelve His mother chided Him by saying, "Why hast thou dealt with us thus?" Replying to her He said, "Wist ye not that I must be about my father's business?"

If He had considered Joseph as His father, then this reply is meaningless. At that age "his father's business" would have required Him to be engaged in business with Joseph if he were His father. But that God was His father was revealed in the fact that the "business" of His father required Him

to be engaged in an exposition of the Word.

II. He Was That Virgin Born Man by the Testimony of the Angelic Announcement Of His Coming Birth.

When Gabriel announced the approaching birth of John the Baptist, he made that announcement to the *father of the babe* (Lk. 1:5-19). This was the procedure in every case of divine announcement of coming births. It was to *Abraham*, the *father* of Isaac, that the announcement was made. But in the case of Christ, the announcement was made to *Mary* and not to Joseph. Why should the ordinary procedure be abandoned? Because the *ordinary* procedure of generation had been abandoned *and there was no human father to whom the announcement could be made.*

III. He Was That Virgin Born Man by the Testimony of the Husband of His Mother.

Joseph, upon discovering Mary to be with child, was troubled as to its parentage. In Matthew 1:18-25 we read of his concern over the matter, until he was assured by the angel that the child was conceived of the Holy Ghost. Joseph by his very attitude disclaimed the fatherhood of that precious body, and thus he adds his testimony to that of others that Jesus was the Virgin Born Man Whom the Scriptures had promised and prophesied.

IV. He Was That Virgin Born Man by the Testimony Of the Father.

In Hebrews 1:6 we read, "And when he bringeth in the first begotten into the world, he saith, And let all the angels of God worship him." The night that Jesus came into the world,

and lay in His mother's arms, wrapped in swaddling clothes; that night the Father called the angels around His throne and said, "Look, look yonder in Bethlehem of Judea. Look inside that humble stable and see that Babe in Mary's arms, and looking, worship *Him!*" If that Babe was not *God*, then the Father was guilty of commanding angels to break the first commandment.

V. He Was That Virgin Born Man by the Testimony of His Mother.

It has often been pointed out that Mary, the mother of Jesus, never *spoke* concerning the virgin birth of her Son. While this position may be open to debate, one thing is certain, that there was a day when her *silence* was more eloquent than words could ever have been.

The Lord Jesus Christ is now nailed to a cross. The charge against Him is that He made Himself equal with God. If He would retract that statement, He could save Himself. His mother was standing close to that cross. If the One Who was impaled upon it was not what He claimed to be, then here was the opportunity for His mother to plead with Him to end the farce, to tell the truth about Himself and save Himself while there was yet time. But that lovely head was bowed in silent grief, and in her silence she gave her testimony to the fact that that lonely sufferer was what He claimed to be, her virgin born Son.

Not only at the cross, but on many other occasions, Mary had cause and opportunity to plead with her Son to end this miserable life, and to desist in His claim that He had been in existence as God before His birth as her Son. Instead of such pleading, however, Mary is always found endorsing the claims

of Jesus Christ. The one individual above all others, on the face of the earth, who actually knew by her own experience whether Jesus was born of the Holy Ghost or of human parentage, was Mary His mother. Again we say, numerous opportunities had been hers, and certainly there had been plenty of cause, to plead with her Son to tell the world that He was not the virgin born, incarnate Son of God, but was her son, conceived in union with a man. But in the face of all these opportunities she remained silent, and in her silence she eloquently declared that what Jesus Christ claimed for Himself was true.

VI. He Was That Virgin Born Man by the Testimony of Logic.

We have already dealt, to some extent, with this phase of the question in our discussion. But we bring it forward again at this point, and insist that the irresistible downrush of logic forces us to the conclusion that Jesus Christ was the virgin born Son of God. We are living in a day when we are hearing on every hand that Jesus Christ was not the *God-man* but the *good man*. We have shown that Jesus Christ claimed to be God. If He was not, then He was a liar. Furthermore His false claims amounted to blasphemy. He then proceeds to back up His blasphemous lies by resorting to black art in the performing of miracles to substantiate His false claims. There is absolutely no escape from this logic. Jesus Christ was what He claimed to be or He was a blasphemous liar and a demoniac. No liar is a good man. No blasphemer is a good man. No man possessed of and controlled by the Devil is a good man.

I have no hesitation in as-

(See **DEITY** on page 24)

Trouble In the "Amen" Corner

By Thomas Chalmers Harbaugh

'Twas a stylish congregation, that of Theophrastus Brown,
And its organ was the finest and the biggest in the town;
And the chorus—all the papers favorably commented on it,
For 'twas said each female member had a forty-dollar bonnet.

Now in the "amen corner" of the church sat Brother Eyer,
Who persisted every Sabbath day in singing with the choir;
He was poor, but genteel looking, and his heart as snow was white,
And his face beamed with sweetness when he sung with all his might.

His voice was cracked and broken; age had touched his vocal chords.
And nearly every Sunday he would mispronounce the words
Of the hymns, and 'twas no wonder; he was old and nearly blind,
And the choir rattling onward always left him far behind.

The chorus stormed and blustered, Brother Eyer sang too slow,
And then he used the tunes in vogue a hundred years ago;
At last the storm cloud burst and the church was told, in fine,
That the brother must stop singing, or the choir would resign.

Then the pastor called together in the lecture room one day
Seven influential members, who subscribe more than they pay,
And having asked God's guidance in a printed prayer or two
They put their heads together to determine what to do.

They debated, thought, suggested, till at last "dear Brother York,"
Who last winter made a million on a sudden rise in pork,
Rose and moved that a committee wait at once on Brother Eyer,
And proceed to rake him lively "for disturbin' of the choir."

Said he: "In that 'ere organ I've invested quite a pile,
And we'll sell it if we cannot worship in the latest style;
Our Philadelphia tenor tells me 'tis the hardest thing
For to make God understand him when the Brother tries to sing.

"We've got the biggest organ, the best-dressed choir in town,
We pay the steepest sal'ry to our pastor, Brother Brown;
But if we must humor ignorance because it's blind and old—
If the choir's to be pestered, I will seek another fold."

Of course the motion carried, and one day a coach-and-four,
With the latest style of driver, rattled up to Eyer's door,
And the sleek, well-dressed committee, Bros. Sharkey, York and Lamb,
As they crossed the humble portal took good care to miss the jamb.

They found the choir's great trouble sitting in his old armchair,
And the summer's golden sunbeams lay upon his thin white hair,
He was singing "Rock of Ages" in a voice both cracked and low,
But the angels understood him, 'twas all he cared to know.

Said York: "We've here, dear brother, with the vestry's approbation,
To discuss a little matter that affects the congregation;"
"And the choir, too", said Sharkey, giving Brother York a nudge,
"And the choir, too!" he echoed, with the graveness of a judge.

"It was the understanding when we bargained for the chorus,
That it was to relieve us, that is, do the singing for us;
If we rupture the agreement, it is very plain, dear brother,
It will leave our congregation and be gobbled by another.

"We don't want any singing except that what we've bought!
The latest tunes are all the rage; the old ones stand for naught;
And so we have decided—are you listening, Brother Eyer?—
That you'll have to stop your singin', for it flurriyates the choir."

The old man slowly raised his head, a sign that he did hear,
And on his cheeks the trio caught the glitter of a tear;
His feeble hands pushed back the locks white as the silky snow,
As he answered the committee in a voice both sweet and low:


"I've sung the Psalms of David for nearly eighty years;
They've been my staff and comfort and calmed life's many fears;
I'm sorry I disturb the choir, perhaps I'm doing wrong,
But when my heart is filled with praise I can't keep back a song.

"I wonder if beyond the tide that's breaking at my feet,
In the far-off heavenly temple, where the Master I shall greet—
Yes, I wonder when I try to sing the songs of God up higher
If the angel band will chide me for disturbing Heaven's choir."

A silence filled the little room; the old man bowed his head:
The carriage rattled on again, but Brother Eyer was dead!
Yes, dead! his hand has raised the veil the future hangs before us,
And the Master dear had called him to the everlasting chorus.

The choir missed him for a while, but he was soon forgot!
A few churchgoers watched the door; the old man entered not.
Far away, his voice no longer cracked, he sings his heart's desires,
Where there are no church committees and no fashionable choirs!

None of it can be done after He comes — none of it.

Oh, ye men that have been slack in heart and in purse with reference to missionary work, when Jesus comes you can never engage in it any more. There will be no open door then. There will be no soul that can be reached. The fixedness of eternal death will be stamped upon every man that is out of Christ at that time. And it does look as if here, upon the reputed anniversary of His birth, with our eyes fastened upon His second coming, that we ought to close this service today by saying: "Lord, before you come again, one more time let us to, let us work, let us preach, let us sing, let us work for the salvation of some of the lost who will be lost forever if Thy coming shall precede their reception of the divine truth." And before we leave this house let us take up a collection for missions as an earnest that this is our work till Jesus comes. 

ADVENT...

(Continued from page 21)

versary of the coming of the Son of God be made the occasion of any shameful thoughts, of anything that deflects to the right hand or to the left hand from the purity of a Christian life.

To all this there ought to be an application. I make this application now. I cannot help thinking of the scene just before He started to rise, when they were clinging to Him and grouped about Him and each ear was expectant for every word that fell from His lips. When He was to deliver His solemn charge to them which was to be an obligation resting on them until He came back, what did He say? He said, "Go ye into all the world, and preach the gospel to every creature." He said "Go and make disciples of all the nations, baptizing them into the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Ghost." When He went up, He left that for them, and we are to keep up this work until He comes again.

DEITY...

(Continued from page 23)

serting that if Jesus Christ was not the God-man then I am ten thousand times a better man than He could ever be. Think of the millions who have gladly gone to the stake, the rack, the guillotine and the cross, rather than to give up their faith in Him as the virgin born, sinless and atoning Savior. If Jesus Christ is not the God-man, then he is the most inhuman monster that ever cursed this earth because faith in His claim for Himself has led countless millions into suffering, agony, privation and death, in order to be true to Him; and no man who could thus lead such an army of dupes into such a fearful disillusionment could be a good man.

We challenge the critics of our day to be as mentally honest as were the critics of His

day. Jesus Christ claimed to be God; the critics of His day said, "You lie." And then they took the position which unadulterated mental honesty would force them to take, namely, that if He was not the God-man, He must be Beelzebub, the Prince of Devils. Let this crowd of modernists and liberals in our schools, colleges, seminaries, pulpits and mission fields who deny the claims of Jesus Christ to deity be as intellectually honest. Let them take the inevitable results of their own logic and cease trying to make a good man out of a devil.

VII. He Was That Virgin Born Man by the Testimony of the Scripture.

The comparison of Old Testament Scriptures with those of the New will disclose that Jesus Christ in the New Testament occupies the same position that God occupies in the Old.

In Isaiah 6:1-3, Isaiah declares he saw the *Lord* sitting upon a throne high and lifted up. In John 12:41, we are told that it was the Lord Jesus Christ Whom Isaiah saw. Therefore, the Jesus of the New is the God of the Old.

In Isaiah 8:13-14, it is declared that the *Lord* shall be a stone of stumbling and a rock of offense. In 1 Peter 2:7-8, the Holy Spirit says that the Lord Jesus Christ is the stone of stumbling and the rock of offense. Therefore, Jesus of the New and God of the Old are identical.


In Isaiah 40:3, we are told that a voice will prepare the way of the *Lord* in the wilderness and make a straight highway in the desert for our *God*. In Matthew 3:3, we are told that John the Baptist, in his announcement of the Lord Jesus Christ, fulfilled this Scripture. Therefore, Jesus of the New and God

of the Old are identical.

In Isaiah 44:6, it is declared that the *Lord* is the first and the last. In Revelation 1:17, the Lord Jesus Christ is speaking and He says, "I am the first and the last." Therefore, Jesus Christ of the New is the God of the Old.


In Psalm 45:6-7, we hear one saying, "Thy throne, O God, is for ever and ever; the sceptre of thy kingdom." In Hebrews 1:8, the Holy Spirit declares, "But unto the *Son* he saith, Thy throne, O God, is for ever and ever; a sceptre of righteousness is the sceptre of thy kingdom." Therefore, the Lord Jesus Christ of the New is identical with the God of the Old.

In Isaiah 7:14, the glorious prophecy is made that a virgin shall conceive and bear a son whose name shall be Emmanuel. In Matthew 1:18-23, speaking of the birth of the Lord Jesus Christ, the Holy Spirit says that the birth of the Lord was the fulfillment of the prophecy, and that Emmanuel, which was the name of the Babe, means "God with us." Therefore, the Lord Jesus Christ of the New and the God of the Old are identical.

Therefore, Jesus Christ is God. 

FACTS...

(Continued from page 3)

English as "ch." It is the first letter in the biblical word "Christos," which is translated as "Christ." — The Baptist Record 

No service in itself is small;

None great, though earth it fill;

But that is small that seeks its own,

And great that seeks God's will.

Then hold my hand, most gracious God;

Guide all my going still;

And let it be my life's one aim,

To know and do Thy will.