

THE PREDESTINARIAN

VOLUME 1: ISSUE 7

“.. to set forth in order a declaration of those things which are most surely believed among us ... that thou mightest know the certainty of those things wherein thou hast been instructed.” **Luke 1:1-4.**

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“UNTO THE POOR, AND TO THE STRANGER”

“And when you reap the harvest of your land, thou shalt not make clean riddance of the corners of thy field when thou reapest, neither shalt thou gather any gleaning of thy harvest: thou shalt leave them unto the poor, and to the stranger: I am the LORD your God.” —Leviticus 23: 22.

The twenty-third chapter of Leviticus is an orderly setting forth of the seven (7) feasts of the Lord. Indeed, EVERY verse of the chapter (except one) is specific in its reference to one or other of the seven feasts. The single exception to that specificity is the twenty-second verse. Yet, we believe that in a certain sense THAT single verse has an immediacy for the Gentiles which cannot be understated.

Notice, that the twenty-second verse falls after the instructions concerning the fourth feast (Pentecost), and before the instructions for the fifth feast (Trumpets). It is as though the twenty-second is out of place, for the mark of the scroll division sets it off from the Scripture which precedes and follows. At some time in the distant past, when these Scriptures were first being transcribed, did an un-named scribe find this scrap of writing on the floor; and not knowing where to put it — insert it — into its present position?

We know better than that! God does not make mistakes. Nor did He allow

a single mistake when He caused the Scriptures to be written down, It is for our benefit that the twenty-second verse was so placed. Let us take for our consideration the example of Ruth, the great-grandmother of David.

“So Naomi returned, and Ruth the Moabitess, her daughter-in-law, with her,...” Ruth, a stranger in Israel, went into the field to glean for their needs. And it was her lot (hap) to light on the part of the field which belonged to Boaz. When she was approached by Boaz she fell on her face before him saying “... Why have I found grace in thine eyes, that thou shouldest take knowledge of me, seeing I am a stranger?”

Her question has been asked ever since by every child of God when confronted by a greater than Boaz... “Boaz commanded his young men, saying, let her glean even among the sheaves, . . . let fall also some of the handfuls of purpose for her.. . So she gleaned in the field until even, . . .” So it is that the Church has gleaned in the field until the even:

- (1) Passover,
- (2) unleavened bread,
- (3) first fruits, the first three feasts had been experienced by National Israel in its history. And now the Lord having been delivered, crucified and risen we see the feast
- (4) of Pentecost dawn. “And when the day of Pentecost was fully come,... And they were all filled with the Holy Ghost,. . . Peter, standing up with the eleven, lifted up his voice, “...Ye men of Judea, and all ye that dwell at Jerusalem, . . .” The good news of deliverance was prepared and published first to the Jews. . . and then to the Gentiles.

Before going further we should look at the time periods and yearly relationship of the first five feast:

1. Passover — the 14th day of the 1st Month.
2. Unleavened Bread — the 15th day of the 1st Month.
3. First Fruits — the 16th day of the 1st Month.
4. Pentecost — 50 days after First Fruits.

Now, after the Feast of Pentecost was a long period of time (about four months) until the next feast,

5. Trumpets — the 1st day of the 7th Month.

It is precisely in the long period of time between the Feast of Pentecost and that of Trumpets that the gospel is given to the Gentiles. It is to this long period of “summer” that the twenty-second verse of Leviticus 23 refers. And it is to this “period”, we believe, the Lord referred when He said, “Say not ye, there are yet four months, and then cometh the harvest?.. John 4:35.

Now, look at the order of events after the day (feast) of Pentecost. There

was great persecution of the Church at Jerusalem (still Jewish) and the disciples (not the apostles) were scattered abroad. The Gospel was then preached to the Samaritans by Philip and confirmed by Peter and John. Next comes the striking conversion of Saul (. . . to bear my name before the Gentiles . . .) in Acts 9. Before the Gospel was “borne” to the Gentiles God had prepared the “bearer”.

Then, in the 10th chapter of Acts, we see the purposeful handiwork of God on display: The appearance of the angel to Cornelius (a Gentile), the clocklike precision of the movements of the messengers to Peter, the letting down of the sheet, the perplexity of Peter, the arrival of the men at the gate. Finally, with Peter’s WORDS still echoing in their ears, the Word of Life is confirmed to the Gentiles (Cornelius and his kinsmen and near friends) and shown to the Jews...Peter had been given the keys and turned the lock, opening the doors of faith unto the Gentiles.

Since that day some nineteen hundred and fifty years ago, the Israel of God has (like Ruth of old time) been gleaning in the corners of the field and even among the sheaves. From time to time, the Church finds a handful dropped of a purpose by the young men (angels who minister of God).

The Holy Spirit speaks of the things of the Lord Jesus Christ to the poor and to the stranger; from time to time He reveals the richest jewels of heaven to Christ’s Beloved — in somewhat the same way Eliezer displayed his lord’s treasure to Isaac’s chosen bride, Rebecca.

As the long summer nears its end, expectation for the Feast of Trumpets rises among the true Israel Past are the dark nights of trial and noonday burnings. The watchings and patient waitings soon shall be only memories. Pressing pain and urgent need will be no more. The Trumpets! The Trumpets shall sound — and resound with that “certain sound”. Then shall be, “an holy convocation”. Leviticus 23:24. “Ye shall do no servile work therein: . . .” Lev. 23:25.

“O the depth of the riches both of the Wisdom and Knowledge of God! How unsearchable are His judgments, and His ways past finding out!” Rom. 11:33. —G. E. Dearman

THE EFFICACY OF REDEMPTION

By Elisha Coles, 1882

The life of the Son of God was infinitely too precious to be given for perishing things; nor would it be consistent with divine Wisdom to venture it for an UNCERTAINTY. It had been a light thing for Christ, and not worthy His sufferings, to raise up the ruins made by Adam to such a degree of restoration as would UNLIKELY SUCCEED. This had been to give a greater value for things

of lesser moment. For it must needs be a happier state to be made upright, without bias to evil, than to be moved with all manner of motives while fettered by unbelief and a natural bent to revolt further. For notwithstanding all these motives and means, not the majority only, but the universality of mankind, might have perished and gone to hell; which would in no wise have answered God's end in making the world, much less in redeeming it.

It was therefore necessary redemption should have a farther reach than to bring men into a MERE SALVABLE STATE; and that could not be less than a state of salvation.

To make redemption larger than electing love is to overlay the foundation; which (all men know) is a very momentous error in building, especially of such a tower whose top must reach to heaven. It therefore behooves us to see that we separate not what God hath conjoined, either by stretching or straining the bounds He hath set.

The Jews were opinioned that the promise of the Messiah belonged only to them, exclusive of the Gentiles. Others since would extend it to ALL the sons of men universally and alike; not considering the reason why the promise was made to the woman's seed, and NOT to Adam's. But the Messiah Himself, who best knew the line of the promise and the end of His mission, exempted none; but extends it to all nations indifferently; yet so as that He RESTRAINS it to the ELECT among them, describing them still by such appellations as import a SELECT party. They are called "His seed," and "the travail of His soul;" with respect to whom He should "make His soul an offering for sin." (Isa. 53:10,11) These also He terms "My sheep," and Himself "the good shepherd" (as He well might), whose own the sheep are, and FOR WHOM HE LAID DOWN HIS LIFE. (John 10:15) And that He might not be taken to intend those only of the Jewish nation, He presently adds, "And other sheep I have, which are not of this fold; them ALSO I must bring." (John 10:16).

It further appears (by Isa. 53:6) that they were sheep whose iniquities were laid upon Christ; and again (ver. 8), "For the transgression of MY PEOPLE was He stricken." And here let me note (for it is very considerable) that we read not of any party of men termed "sheep", "the people of God," and His "children," in distinction from others, but with respect to some peculiar interest He hath in them above others; and what that interest may be, EXCEPTING ELECTION, doth not appear to us. For those other sheep were not yet called, and therefore not yet believers and sheep on that account, but as they were of God's elect. For, though all men were lost, Christ was "not sent but to the lost sheep of the house of Israel;" that is, those persons of the lost and perishing world whom God hath CHOSEN for His peculiars, as He did the house of Israel from among the nations; and who in that respect were a special

type of the spiritual election. And on this account the promises of the new covenant were made to the Church under such names and titles as were proper to that people, as distinguished from other nations.

In Luke 1:72, God's sending of Christ is said to be in performance of His holy covenant, which was first proclaimed in Paradise as made with the woman's seed (Gen. 3:15); and afterwards renewed with Abraham (Gen. 12:3); and is therefore termed, "The mercy promised to Abraham and to his seed." We also read that it was for a peculiar people that Christ gave Himself, and whom He purchased. (Titus 2:14) It denotes some special propriety He hath in them above others; and so a special cause for giving Himself for them. It also seems that a *peculiar* people and a *purchased* people are so nearly allied that one word is used to signify both. (I Pet.2:9) According with this is that in I Peter 1:20, where Christ is said to be "verily fore-ordained, and manifested" for those to whom the epistle is written. That they were persons ELECTED is evident by the first and second verses, and "elect unto the sprinkling of the blood of Jesus Christ." As they were elected to it, so in John he professes to make it good: "For their sakes I sanctify Myself." And twice in John 10 He says He "laid down His life for the SHEEP." (vers 11 & 15); which is as exclusive of others as where He saith, "My righteousness extends unto the SAINTS;" and, "He that BELIEVETH shall be saved;" that is, such, and none else.

It further appears from Acts 20:28 that it was the CHURCH of God He "purchased with His own blood." Now the Church and the world are plainly distinct, (The true church, that is. S.C.P) as a garden enclosed from the common fields. That the Church consists of elect persons is proved before; and that it was the Church He died for is proved by this Scripture; as also from Eph.5:25, where husbands are required to love their wives as "Christ loved the Church, and gave Himself for it." This verse shows that as the husband's love to his wife is another kind of love from that he bears to others of the same sex; so is Christ's love to the Church; and therefore His death, which was the special effect of that love, is peculiar to the CHURCH ONLY.

From all which it seems undeniably evident that as a certain NUMBER were elected, so a certain NUMBER, and those the very same persons, were redeemed. The ground and truth of this assertion is further confirmed by such reasoning as these:

1. The Levitical sacrifices were offered for the HOUSE OF ISRAEL, exemptive of other nations; and this being a type of the spiritual election, it follows that the sacrifice of Christ (typified by theirs) was also peculiar to Jews in spirit, or spiritual Jews. For he only "is a Jew that is one inwardly." (Rom. 2:29) So Aaron's making atonement for his household, and bearing the names of the twelve tribes on his breast-plate,

was typical of our great High Priest's bearing the names and sustaining the persons of those for whom He offered Himself on the cross. Of all those legal shadows, Christ and the Church of the first-born are the body and substance.

2. The right of redemption among the Jews (which shadowed this) was founded on brotherhood. Hence, I infer that that relation (spiritually taken) was both the ground and limit of Christ's office as a Redeemer. The apostle's discourse in Heb. 2 seems to point at this; where he says they were "brethren", children, and sons, whom Christ should deliver from bondage, make reconciliation for their sins, and bring to glory. But how came they to be God's children, sons, and brethren to Christ, above others? It was by PREDESTINATION; and that was what entitled them to redemption; as evident by comparing the fifth and seventh verses of Ephesians 1: "Having predestinated us to the ADOPTION of CHILDREN by Jesus Christ; in whom we have REDEMPTION through His blood." And it is worthy your notice that by the law of redemption, a stranger (one that was NOT of the brotherhood) might not be redeemed; but one that was, not before redeemed, MUST yet go free in the year of jubilee (Lev. 25:46, 48, with 54); which shows the peculiar respect the Lord has for His peculiar people.

3. The saving benefits of redemption do not redound to any but ELECT persons. Whatever in one place is ascribed to redemption as the special fruit and consequent thereof is elsewhere ascribed to election; and to this as the first and original root. And that redemption itself IS the fruit of ELECTING LOVE is evident by I Peter 1:2: "Elect unto obedience and sprinkling of the blood of Jesus Christ." They are also said to be "blessed with all spiritual blessings in Christ according as He hath CHOSEN them in Hlin." (Eph. 1:3-4) If ALL spiritual blessings be dispensed by the law of election, then ALL the saving benefits of redemption (which are the same with those of election) must be dispensed by the same rule; and so, to the same persons only.

4. The price of redemption was of that precious and matchless value that it could NOT be parted with, but with respect to the CERTAINTY of the end for which it was paid. Now the end of redemption was the SALVATION of men; below which there could not be an end worthy the death of Christ; and this NOTHING could secure BUT election. The elect ALWAYS have obtained and shall obtain. This is the rule affirmed in Rom. 11:7. "Israel hath not obtained that he seeketh for, but the ELECTION hath obtained it, and the REST were blinded;" that is, they are left to their own voluntary misunderstanding; and being so left, not

only they do not, but they CANNOT believe. And Christ knowing “from the beginning who they were that believe not,” but who would certainly despise Him, to what end should He make His soul an offering for them? Whom the Lord intends to save alive, He appoints an atonement to be made for them (Numbers 16:46-47); but for those He intends to destroy (which is always done justly) He will NOT accept an offering (Judges 13:23); and therefore NOT appoint it; as He did not under the law for those crimes for which men were to die.

5. I confine redemption to elect persons, because intercession, which is of equal latitude with redemption, is LIMITED to them, exclusive of others. The priests under the law were to pray for those whose sacrifice they offered, and what they did was a pattern of our Saviour’s priestly office, whom likewise we find to sacrifice and pray ONLY for the same persons. “I pray NOT for the world, but for those thou hast given me out of the world, for they are thine, and thou hast given them me.” (John 17:11) He is the Advocate for those for whose sin He is a Propitiation (I John 2:1); for whose transgressions He was smitten, for them He makes intercession (Isa 53:8-12); for their sakes He sanctified Himself; and for them it was that He made that solemn prayer in John 17. And He prayed for them as being just then upon offering their sacrifice. He also SHUTS OUT THE WORLD EXPRESSLY from having any interest in it: “I pray NOT FOR THE WORLD, but for them which thou hast GIVEN ME.” And He adds the REASON why He would pray for these: “For they are thine;” that is, they were the Father’s by ELECTION; for in all other respects “the earth is the Lord’s and the fullness thereof.” (Psa 24:1)

6. Another argument for peculiar redemption is founded on the merit of Christ’s death, together with its efficacy. He was not cut off for Himself (Dan.9:26); but for those for whom He undertook. And it was to procure them a right to those glorious blessings to which election ordained them. Hence I state: (1) That for which Christ laid down His life, that He merited. And (2) What He merited is due to those for whom it was merited. Now the principal thing intended and merited by His death was the justification of sinners; and that God might be just in justifying them (Rom. 3:26); and finally, that they might have eternal life. (John 17:2) If therefore He merited this for ALL, then ALL must be justified and saved (Rom. 5:8-10); and it cannot be justly denied to ANY. For it is their DUE, by virtue of a price, and that price well worthy of it; which also was paid to that very end; and this by the Creditor’s own appointment, who cannot condemn any for whom Christ died. (Romans 8:34) His justice shall not be liable to such a reflection.

Whence it may be rationally concluded that IF all men are NOT justified, justification doth not BELONG TO ALL and consequently, that Christ did NOT GIVE HIMSELF FOR ALL. And, as for efficacy, Adam's transgression was efficacious on the will and whole man to deprave; why not, then, the righteousness of Christ to restore, since the pre-eminence in that very thing is given to Him? "For if by one man's offense death reigned by one (Adam); much more they which receive abundance of grace and of the gift of righteousness shall reign in life by one, Jesus Christ." (Rom. 5:17).

7. The doctrine of special and peculiar redemption is further confirmed by those perilous consequents which attend the theory of general redemption (that Christ died, in general, for all mankind), as it is commonly held forth. For: (1) It . . . general redemption . . . seems to reflect on the Wisdom of God; as imputing to Him such a contrivance for men's salvation as was altogether frustrable; which is far from convincing the world that Christ crucified is the Wisdom of God. (2) It also seems to tax God of injustice as not discharging those whose transgressions are answered for by theft Surety; or else that the sufferings of Christ were not sufficient to make a discharge due to them. Or, (3) It insinuates a deficiency of power, or want of good-will to prosecute His design to perfection. (4) It makes men boasters; suspending the virtue and success of all Christ hath done for them upon some work to be done by themselves, which He is not the doer of; and consequently, that men are principals in procuring their own salvation. And so Christ shall have but His thousands. . . in truth His nothing; while freedom of will shall have its ten thousands to cry up the praise of men. This is NOT that "the Lord alone should be exalted." (5) It also follow that those who are saved and gone to heaven have nothing more of Christ's to glory in, and praise Him for, than those who are perished and gone to hell. For, according to the principles of general redemption, He did and doth for all alike; and no more for one than for another. (6) It makes men presumptuous and carnally secure. How many have soothed themselves in their impenitence and hardness of heart, and fenced themselves against the Word, upon this very supposition, that Christ died for all; and why, then, should they not look to be saved as well as any other? And so they lean (pretendedly) on the Lord and transgress, not considering that for those for whom Christ died He purchased a freedom FROM sin, and NOT a liberty of sinning, nor impunity; but gives to them faith and repentance. And that the Tempter disturbs them not in their rest upon such a foundation, may be one reason why men so stiffly adhere to it, and that those of the general redemption

principle are so seldom troubled with terrors of conscience.

Lastly. There was yet another reason of Christ's dying peculiarly for the elect. They were His designed spouse; and that brought upon Him peculiar engagements to die for them. (1) As being His spouse, He was chargeable with THEIR debts. They being made under a law, and He assuming them into a SPOUSAL RELATION, He made Himself one with them, and answerable FOR them. It was in the law's account, as well as His own intent, a making Himself their Surety (Isa 53:8-11); and consequently, in case of forfeiture, His life must go for theirs. He is therefore said to be "made under the law" (Gal. 4:4-5) as they were; and to be "made sin for them" (II Cor. 5:21); and being so, it behoved Him to suffer (Luke 24:46); and that could not be avoided (Acts 17:3). For the law being just and holy, its violation must be answered for, either by principals or Surety. And here it was that mercy and truth, grace and justice, met together, making that due temperament which answers the ends of both. Grace takes hold of Him as a Surety, that the sinner might go free; and justice, as of the most responsible party (for none else could answer the law's demands); and being apprehended, He readily yields to make satisfaction, and says to the law (as once to the Jews, when He was on the point of suffering for His spouse): "If ye seek me, let these go their way." (John 18:8) (2) Another engagement was the LOVE He bore to them. If possibly He might have been quit of that suretyship engagement, this of His love would have held Him to it. He could not bear to see His beloved fast-chained, like slaves, to the devil's galleys, and forced to serve against her natural Lord. And this bondage they COULD NOT BE FREED FROM, but by conquering him whose bond-slaves they were; nor could that be done but by His own death. (Heb.2:14; John 12:31-33) And to this His love constrained Him (Eph. 5:25; Rev. 1:5; Gal. 2:20); for love (to be sure His love) is "stronger than death" (Sol. 8:6); and accordingly we find that this is still made the ground and motive of His dying. (3) As the contract could not be dissolved (for "he hateth putting away") nor His love taken off, for He changeth not; so neither, as the case stood, could He and they dwell happily together. Creatures defiled with sin were not meet consorts for the Lord of Glory; nor could they be brought to a meetness but by being washed in His blood; as He said to Peter: "If I wash thee not, thou hast no part with me." (John 13:8) The Church must be sanctified and cleansed, "without spot or wrinkle, or any such thing" (Eph. 5:26), before she is fit for the presence of Christ in glory. And this could not be effected, but by His giving Himself for her. To this, therefore, the spirits of just men made perfect do ascribe their being in heaven; "And they sang a

new song, saying, Thou art worthy to take the book, and to open the seals thereof; for thou wast slain, and hast redeemed us to God by thy blood out of every kindred, and tongue, and people, and nation.” (Rev. 5:9)

So dear is the Church of Christ that He thinks not Himself complete without them. (Eph. 1:23) It was one of the last requests before He died, that they might be with Him. (John 17:24) And if the body must be with its head, the holiest of holies must be their mansion. But such is that place’s holiness as not to admit them without a perfect purity; nor could they, if not so purified, bear the holiness of the place. All which, considered together, shows such a reason of Christ’s dying for the elect as was not predicable of other men.

For the rest of the world, they were given as handmaids to His spouse, by virtue of which donation they are also His: “He is Head over all to the Church.” (Eph. 1:22) They are His, but not as His spouse; as Sodom’s daughters and Samaria’s were to Jerusalem, “but not by her covenant.” (Ezek 16:61.) His relation to them was not such as to make Him responsible for their defaults, or to oblige Him for their recovery. Howbeit the price wherewith He ransomed His spouse took in her handmaids also; as Abraham’s rescuing His brother Lot brought back the Sodomites with him. All the benefits the world has by redemption they may thank the church for, next unto Christ Himself; for they have it upon her account, as the Sodomites theirs upon Lot’s. And, to speak freely, the spouse of Christ could not well have been without her hand-maids. We little think what service the world does for the Church; albeit, because they intend not so, they are not rewardable for it. (Isa 10:5-12) I shall only add our Saviour’s own assertion in that 17th chapter of John, where, speaking of those His Father had given Him that He might give them eternal life, He saith expressly that for theft sakes He sanctified Himself (vers.9); which was to say, in effect, that had it not been for them, He had not stirred out of heaven.

From what hath been said of redemption as peculiar to the elect, I infer:

1. The important necessity of trying the spirits, and the doctrines they bring, whether they be of God. A plausible outside and fair show in the flesh is no argument of TRUTH in the bottom. Takingness of nature should render things suspicious to us, rather than approved. Our best rule of judgment in this case is that of our Saviour: “The tree is known by its fruits.” And if by this we measure the point of general redemption, it will be found wanting in what it pretends to be, and not a little reprove-able. For: (1) Instead of magnifying the grace of Christ and merit of His sufferings, it does, in effect, nullify both. It makes redemption general as to persons, but not as to things. It redeems the whole of mankind from PART of their bondage, but no part of them from the whole; or upon such

a condition as no man in nature is able to perform; which is too defective to be the device of sovereign Wisdom and grace. That cannot be called a catholicon (universal) or general remedy that suffers itself to be generally worsted by the disease; nor that a perfect redemption which leaves still under bondage. I doubt not at all that the blood of the Son of God in our nature is of infinite merit; but withal that it is of like infinite virtue and efficacy, and will for ever operate accordingly. (2) Instead of laying a foundation for faith and a help to believing, the general atonement doctrine (Freewill--i.e., that Christ died for everyone — S.C.P) muzzles the soul in its unbelief, upon a presumption of power in himself to believe when he will. We little think how much presumption and carnal security derive from this root, whereas peculiar redemption in the vigour and latitude of it (viz., as procuring for us a right to faith and holiness, with the Spirit of Christ to work them effectually IN us), is far greater encouragement to apply ourselves to Christ for them as a part of His purchase (Phil. 1:29), and that without which we cannot partake of the other benefits of His death.

I cannot but think any man in his right mind (upon a due inquiry and thorough considering the matter) would rather depend upon such a redemption as REDEEMS from ALL iniquity, though the persons concerned in that redemption be but few, than on that which is SUPPOSED to redeem all universally, upon condition of faith and repentance, but does NOT redeem from impenitence and unbelief. In that redemption let my part be that which saves from sin; that slays the enmity; that reconciles to God effectually; that makes an end of sin, and brings in everlasting righteousness; that does not only bring into a salvable state conditionally, but works also and maintains those conditions and qualifications that have salvation at the end of them.

2. If Christ gave Himself a ransom for the elect, then is redemption also of grace, and free as election itself; which speaks both our thankful remembrance, and all self-denial. There is a great aptness to forget our original; to pay tribute where it is not due, and to withhold it where it is. It was needful counsel of old, and no less at this day: “Ye that follow after righteousness, look to the rock whence ye were hewn.” (Isa. 51:1). Your Redeemer first brought you out of nothing; and when you had sold yourselves for nought, He Himself became your ransom, though He needed you not. See therefore that ye ascribe all to His love.

It was not any betterness of yours that gave you preference in redemption, nor was it your ingenuous compliance that made redemption effectual to you. Those are slight pretences. Had not your Redeemer

BOUGHT YOU from yourself, RELEASED YOU from your imaginary “freedom”, and SAVED YOU from unbelief, you had never known what this redemption had meant, nor what it is to be free indeed. No; it was purely your Redeemer’s love. He valued you as being His Father’s gift, and as given to be one with Himself; He therefore loved you and gave Himself for you. When you were in your blood and no eye pitied you (no, not even your own), then was the time of His love; even then He accepted the motion made by His Father and yours, and signed the contract. He knew both your weight and your worth; your natural unfitness for Him and averseness to that match. He also knew what it must cost HIM to make you both meet and willing; and that it was so stupendous a work that all the hosts of heaven would have broken under. He further knew that after all He should do and suffer for you, you could not advantage Him the least; only He should have the satisfaction to have made you happy against your unrenewed will; and yet He declined it not. He came “leaping upon the mountains and skipping upon the hills” (of death and difficulties), as longing for, and delighting to be in that work. He was straitened until it was accomplished; such was the intenseness of His love to you! And a great deal ado He had with your wills, before you were brought to be willing!

3. Christ’s giving Himself a ransom for you warrants your largest expectation of good things from Him. What sins too great to be pardoned? or iniquities so stubborn as not to be subdued (Heb. 9:14) For graces so precious as not to be obtained? The Lord DELIGHTS in nothing more than mercy. The only bar was sin; which being dissolved by the blood of Christ, grace and glory run freely. The making us “kings and priests unto God,” yea, one in the Father and Himself (John 17:21), being the thing He died for, no inferior good thing can be withholden from us. Faith and holiness are great things indeed, and highly to be valued; yet let me say that even these, and all other good things laid together, will be but a very little heap to that grace which put us into Christ; the honor and blessing of union with Him; and the price He hath paid for our ransom. “Herein is love, that God sent His Son to be the propitiation for our sins!” (I John 4:10) The purchase IS paid, releases ARE sealed, and He IN possession; all things are ready. It is now but His giving forth the revenue that lies by Him; which also He delights to do. — Gospel Standard, 1882

JACOB, ISRAEL, AND ESAU
By Stan Phillips

“And not only this; but when Rebecca also had conceived by one, by our father Isaac; (for the children being not yet born, neither having done any good or evil, that the purpose of God according to election might stand, not of works, but of Him that calleth;) It was said unto her, The elder shall serve the younger. As it is written, Jacob have I loved, but Esau have I hated.” Romans 9:10-13

The travels of Jacob are well known by the household of faith. His name in the Hebrew language means “supplanter” and his actions fulfilled his name in supplanting his elder twin brother, Esau. Esau means in the Hebrew: “rough.” The brothers were unlike in almost every way: Esau was hairy, while Jacob had smooth skin; Esau was a hunter, while Jacob was a shepherd; Esau was a fornicator and profane person, while Jacob was a child of electing love; Esau was rejected of God, while Jacob was called of God; Esau was hated of God, while Jacob was loved of God; Esau was a reprobate, and Jacob an elect. It is never recorded that Esau ever called upon God, and Jacob walked before the Lord.

The Biblical biography of Jacob reveals many things which are characteristic of children of grace. For the first years of the lives of the twins, they both manifested that they were, as all men are, “vessels of wrath even as others.” Indeed, the first record reveal Jacob as a deceiver, liar, and cowardly individual. Yet, before the twins were born, God said to their mother Rebecca, “The elder shall serve the younger” — and Esau was the elder firstborn of the two.

Prior to their birth, it is recorded: “And the children struggled together within her; and she said, If it be so, why am I thus? And she went to enquire of the Lord. And the Lord said unto her, TWO nations are in thy womb, and TWO MANNER OF PEOPLE shall be separated from thy bowels; and the one people shall be stronger than the other people; and the elder shall serve the younger.” (Genesis 25:22-23) Thus from the beginning Jacob typified the election of God as a separated people from the reprobates.

We wish the reader will keep constantly in mind throughout this article the following point: The Holy Spirit has given the interpretation of the meaning of this analogy, as recorded by Paul, in Romans 9:10-13. The reason given for this analogy is “that the purpose of God according to ELECTION might stand, not of WORKS, but of HIM THAT CALLETH.” No other reason is given. It is contrasted by such a glaring contrast: “Jacob have I LOVED, but Esau have I HATED.” Thus, it demonstrates: (1) the ELECTION OF GRACE. Jacob is loved, chosen, selected, picked, and called; and represents one of the “two manner of peoples”. (2) Esau is not chosen, selected, picked, or called but rather

rejected. He represents the other people. This, I believe, is the ONLY lesson given by the Holy Spirit of these “two manner of people.” We hope the reader will keep this in mind, for all we write must be consistent therewith, or we shall be in error ... and our purpose in writing it is to expose a subtle error which has attacked the above foundation of election and reprobation.

Most are familiar with the story: how Isaac loved Esau and Rebecca, Jacob; and how Jacob deceitfully purchased the birthright from Esau while Esau “despised his birthright” and sold it for a “mess of pottage.” For many years they dwelled with Abraham and Isaac. (Heb. 11:9) And during those years there is no record of either twin calling upon God, referring to God, or God to either of them. Then, following Isaac’s blessing of Jacob and his flight into the wilderness from his brother Esau, we read of Jacob’s first heavenly experience. On his journey to Padanaram, “He lighted upon a certain place, and tarried there all night, because the sun was set; and he took of the stones of that place, and put them for his pillows, and lay down in that place to sleep. And he dreamed, and behold a ladder set up on the earth, and the top of it reached to heaven: and behold the angels of God ascending and descending on it. And, behold, the Lord stood above it, and said I am the Lord God of Abraham thy father, and the God of Isaac: the land whereon thou liest, to thee will I give it, and to thy seed. . . “ (Gen. 28:11-15). In the morning, Jacob took the stone from his pillows and set up a pillar, and poured oil upon the top of it. “And he called the name of that place Bethel” (which means: the House of God). But ah, how feeble is his religion as a lamb, for we read his conditional words “And Jacob vowed a vow, saying, IF God will be with me, and will keep me in this way that I GO, and will give me bread to eat, and raiment to put on, so that I come again to my father’s house in peace; THEN shall the Lord be my God” (Gen. 28:19-21). This, my brethren, is the word and voice of Jacob! It is NOT the language of spiritual Israel!

The silence of God followed him for years thereafter. Years passed away with no evidence of any spiritual change in Jacob. He went on to Haran to Laban’s house, married Leah after seven years of labor for Rachael, and then labored seven more years for Rachael; and his children were born. Twenty years later, he leaves Laban’s house, leading his wives and children .. sneaking away like a thief in the night!

On the way again, he meets the angels of God at Mahanaim, and as he faces his brother Esau we first find him calling upon God for help. . . see how shamefully he behaved himself in his brother’s presence: hiding behind all his wives and children out of fear, and then lying to Esau about meeting him at the house of Isaac their father! But it was there in that desert that “the Lord found Jacob in a desert land, and in a waste howling wilderness.” (Deut. 32:10) “And

Jacob was left alone; and there wrestled a man with him until the break of day.” (Gen. 32:24) It is THEN that we read these precious words of comfort, and promise: “Thy name SHALL BE CALLED NO MORE JACOB, but ISRAEL: for as a prince hast thou power with God and with men, and hast prevailed.” (Gen. 32:28)

Henceforth Jacob, now Israel, will walk by faith. And when in life was this? It is said of Esau his twin brother, that “Esau was forty years old when he married” (Gen. 26:34). And this was before Isaac blessed Jacob and sent him away from Esau. Thus, the forty years, plus fourteen years of labor for Rachael and six years for the cattle, Jacob is at least SIXTY YEARS OLD, or more at this time. The point is made to show that Jacob was as other unregenerate children of God prior to their calling until God quickens them by His Holy Spirit and calls them to grace and glory.

The angel (if he were an angel — as many suppose) committed the promise to Jacob that his name should be ISRAEL. God then confirmed it in Padanaram, (Gen. 35:9-10) “And God appeared to JACOB again. . . and blessed him. And God said unto him, Thy name is Jacob: thy name shall not be called any more Jacob, but ISRAEL shall be thy name: and He called his name ISRAEL.”

There is little doubt that Jacob in his early years was very carnally minded (as are all the saints of God prior to the call of the Spirit to life and immortality). It was JACOB who was called of God to salvation, and it is noteworthy that God FOUND HIM in a desert land and waste howling wilderness while in trouble and in natural fear of his elder brother. But it is also pleasant to see how the Supplanter was subdued by sovereign grace, and was re-named ISRAEL — a PRINCE with God. All through the New Testament, this same typology is used for the children of God, whether Jew or Gentile.

The Jews of Christ’s day said: “We have Abraham to our father”, only to hear the Lord’s correction: “Ye are of your father the devil.” (John 8:44) But to Nathanael we hear Him say: “Behold an Israelite indeed, in whom there is no guile.” (John 1:47) Again, Paul wrote: “For he is not a Jew, which is one outwardly (as Jacob); neither is that circumcision which is outward IN THE FLESH (as was Jacob’s). But he is a Jew, which is one inwardly (as Israel). And circumcision is of the heart, in the spirit, and not in the letter; whose praise is not of men, but of God.” (Rom.2:28-29), as was Jacob’s after God changed his name to Israel As Paul wrote in Romans 11:26, “And so all Israel shall be saved.” “For we are the circumcision, which worship God in the spirit, and rejoice in Christ Jesus, and have no confidence in the flesh.” (Phil. 3:3)

For one to become a spiritual Israelite — prince with God — he must be circumcised in the heart by the Spirit of God. For the child of grace has the old

outward man, as Jacob, which shall return to the dust to await the resurrection—the adoption, to wit, the redemption of the body; yet, being born again from above, he has an inner man which makes him a prince of God. Yea, we are made more than this, for we are “made kings and priests unto God.”

It was God’s electing love for Jacob that moved Him to call him and make him Israel. It is also true that this same everlasting love is the moving cause for God to call us in Christ to make us to be a part of spiritual Israel.

Not once do we find such favor shown to Esau. “Jacob have I loved, but Esau have I hated” is God’s word concerning the “two nations”. Two other sons share in this distinction: “In Isaac shall thy seed be called,” and Ishmael, Abraham’s son by the bondwoman, was cast off. Esau married Ishmael’s daughter. Both Ishmael and Esau were the first born of Abraham and Isaac; but the blessing of God to us was confirmed in Isaac and Jacob . . . the elect of God. The laws of men confirm the inheritance through the firstborn as a “natural right” whereas our inheritance is supernatural in God’s firstborn, the promised Seed.

What shall we say of Esau? Even as the Scripture speaks: “lest there be any fornicator, or profane person, as Esau, who for one morsel of meat sold his birthright. For ye know how that afterward, when he would have inherited the blessing, he was REJECTED: for he found no place of repentance (in Isaac), though he sought it carefully with (Heb. 12:16-17 and derived from Gen. 27:34).

APPLICATION

It has often been said that Jacob represents the “inner man”, or spiritual man of the heart; whereas Esau represents the “outward man”, or carnal flesh. We see no Scriptural justification for such an analogy. Jacob, as “Jacob” represents the elect before regeneration, and Israel represents THE SAME after they are made to be spiritual Israelites. According to Paul, Esau represented, by analogy, the ungodly, non-elect, reprobates. Paul expressed this clearly in Romans 9:11 “(for the children [Jacob and Esau], being not yet born, neither having done either good or evil, that the purpose of God ACCORDING TO ELECTION [to chose one and reject another] might stand, not of works, but of him that calleth;)” Can it not be seen that just as Cain offered an unacceptable sacrifice, so too Esau, the hunter, was as much in error; and that both Abel and Jacob were of kindred spirits?

There are very serious threats to the Truth of election and reprobation in this false analogy of Jacob and Esau being the SAME PERSON, and the argument defies all logical and Biblical reasoning. It is unbelievable that one could honestly believe that Jacob was the inner man of Esau, rather than his brother! Some of the errors being proclaimed on the basis of the false analogy is as follows: Firstly, this theory can easily lead to the heresy of non-resurrection of

the body, and it has already been so reasoned: if Esau represents Jacob's flesh, and God hates the flesh of His elect, He will not favor it with a translation from the corruptible to the incorruptible; from mortality to immortality. But Paul writes: "...and I pray God your whole spirit and soul and **BODY** be preserved blameless unto the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ." (I Thess. 5:23) Secondly, If this theory is held to consistently, it denies the Eternal Son-ship of Christ Jesus, and He has been so denied already by some holding the view under discussion. It has been argued that Christ did not die for sinners, but it was Jesus the son of Mary who died for our sins .. as if Jesus is not the Christ, the Son of the Living God! Yet the testimony of EVERY Scripture relative to Christ's death is that "Christ died for our sins." And the **BODY** of Christ Jesus did NOT SEE CORRUPTION, although in the tomb for seventy-two hours, or three days AND three nights, according to the "sign of Jonas", "Because thou wilt not leave my soul in hell, NEITHER wilt thou suffer thine Holy One to see corruption. This was before spoken of the resurrection OF CHRIST, that His soul was not left in hell, neither HIS FLESH did see corruption." (Acts 2:25-31) Thirdly, This heresy denies the sanctification of God's people, and it tends to encourage corruption in daily deportment; for it contends that there is no union between the spirit, soul, and body; and that the inner man is separate and apart from the individual. Too often, those who advocate it live accordingly, saying "I have the hands of Esau and the voice of Jacob." Neither is very commendable, seeing the hands of Esau are reprobate, and the voice of Jacob was deceit and hypocrisy.

Is there no union between the spiritual man and the body? When one is rejoicing in the spirit, from whence do the tears flow? The body. Is it not true that often we hear the gospel of free grace, yet not being spiritually uplifted feel dry and lifeless? Where is that feeling if not in both spirit and body? And when we are chastened for sins, do we not also feel it in both spirit and body? When our mourning turns to joy and gladness, is it not written upon the very expressions of the face, and our frame? In fact, can one rejoice in the spirit and not have any manifestations of it in the body?

CONCLUSION

Let us briefly notice some details of the man "Israel-Jacob's" life. When JACOB could not believe that Joseph was alive, "JACOB'S heart fainted," then "the SPIRIT of Jacob revived: and ISRAEL said, it is enough; Joseph my son is yet alive." (Gen. 45:27-28) It is Jacob's spirit that fainted and revived over a NATURAL UNBELIEF; but, it was ISRAEL which believed!

"And JACOB rose up from Beersheba: and the sons of ISRAEL carried JACOB their father. . .into Egypt." (Gen. 46:5-7 and context) It was JACOB

that went down into Egypt, carried by ISRAEL'S sons! Have you ever been in symbolic "Egypt"? In Genesis 47, Joseph ALWAYS referred to his father as JACOB to the Egyptians; and it was JACOB (not Israel) who blessed Pharaoh (Gen. 47:7). Yet it was ISRAEL who blessed the twelve tribes! (Gen. 48:8-21)

But at his death, what excellent beauty shone forth to the heirs of God and joint heirs of Christ Jesus! "And the time drew nigh that ISRAEL must die." (Gen. 47:29) After blessing his sons it then reads: "And when JACOB had made an end of commanding his sons, he gathered up his feet into the bed, and yielded up the ghost, and was gathered unto his people." (Gen. 49:33) Ah, what a confirmation of our blessed hope in Christ Jesus. Though ISRAEL may bless, it is JACOB that dies! Oh, Glorious hope in the resurrection!

Dear reader, some times men get too carried away in "spiritualizing" Scripture and thus "opinionize" them instead. Care must always be taken to make sure that such an opinion is consistent with sound doctrine, and thus our views must be weighed carefully in the light of the doctrines of free grace. An opinion may not necessarily be bad, but if others build upon it, they are building on sand, or worse, a figment of the imagination. Images are hard to destroy once bowed before. We ought always be mindful that the "carnal mind is enmity against God, it is not subject to the law of God, neither indeed can be..." The Scriptures are a "thorough furnisher" unto all good works, and there is sufficient there to occupy one's time without vain speculation.

CONVERSION — AT THE LAST

By Woodrow W. Hudson

"And one of the malefactors which were hanged railed on Him, saying, If thou be Christ, save thyself and us. But the other answering rebuked him, saying, Dost not thou fear God, seeing thou art in the same condemnation? And we indeed justly; for we receive the due reward of our deeds: but this man hath done nothing amiss. And he said unto Jesus, Lord, remember me when thou comest into thy kingdom. And Jesus unto him, Verily I say unto thee, Today shalt thou be with me in paradise." —Luke 23:39-43

Before attempting to comment upon this text, let us quote Matthew 27:44, "The thieves also, which were crucified with Him, and cast the same in His teeth." To the natural person, it may appear that Matthew has contradicted Luke in this account of the thieves upon the cross.

We deeply need the Spirit of God to enable us to rightly divide the word of truth, to write in the spirit of love, and to handle the word of God for the edification of

the readers. It is written, “nor handling the word of God deceitfully . - .“ (II Cor. 4:2)

I believe this text is applicable to the conversion of the children of God, and if the Lord enables us to enter into the beauty of the text, we will be blessed to feast and meditate upon heavenly things. “He maketh me to lie down in green pastures” (Psa. 23:2) “And hath raised us all up together, and made us sit together in heavenly places in Christ Jesus.” (Eph. 2:6) “There shall be a handful of corn on the top of the mountain.” (Psa. 72:16) “A feast of fat things.” (Isa. 25:6) Please notice that the feast of fat things is not in the valley but on the mountain. All of this has reference to Gospel food, which is nourishing to a poor hungry soul who is seeking after the presence of the Lord. Almighty God has given him a spiritual appetite and caused him to hunger and thirst after righteousness.

Dear Reader, do you have the desire to seek after Jesus? Does your heart become so full that you have the desire to talk with those who are of like precious faith? Do you feel all alone and feel to be a stranger below upon this low ground of sin and sorrow? Do you find a sweet relief in praying to the God of heaven?

May the Lord bless us to consider the experience of the thief upon the cross. Let us first establish the fact that one of the thieves upon a cross was one of those the Lord had predestinated to eternal life, one of the chosen, of the elect.

Matthew gives the account where both of the thieves railed upon Jesus and mocked Him. This is Scriptural evidence that there was a time when both thieves railed upon Jesus. But Luke gives the account where one repented. What caused one thief to repent? Was he smarter or more wise by nature than the other? Why did the grace of God pass over one and touch the other? Who are we to question God? “As it is written, Jacob have I loved, but Esau have I hated. What shall we say then? Is there unrighteousness with God? God forbid. For He saith to Moses, I will have mercy on whom I will have mercy, and I will have compassion on whom I will have compassion. So then, it is not of him that willeth, nor of him that runneth, but of God that sheweth mercy.” (Rom. 9:13-16) Jacob is a type of those whom the Lord has loved with an everlasting love. Do you believe that the thief who repented was one of those that the Lord loved? Esau is a type of those whom God has determined from all eternity not to favor with mercy. “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 confess unto them, I never knew you: depart from me, ye that work iniquity.” (Matt. 7:22-23) This means that God never knew the wicked as His people, and as those whom He loved from all eternity.

We believe that the Spirit of God enlightened and taught one of the thieves. "It is the Spirit that quickeneth; the flesh profiteth nothing." (John 6:63)

What caused many to cry out when they were touched by the preaching of Peter? "Now when they heard this, they were **PRICKED IN THEIR HEARTS**, and said unto Peter and to the rest of the apostles, Men and brethren, what shall we do?" (Acts 2:37) Please notice they were pricked in their heart. What caused this? Do you believe the Spirit of God pricked theft hearts?

This awakened thief rebuked the other because he felt the condemnation and the death sentence which was upon mankind. He acknowledged that he was receiving the **JUST** reward for his deeds. The awakened thief was blessed to see Jesus as the sinless Lamb of God who satisfied Divine Justice and redeemed His people from the curse of the law.

"But we had the sentence of death in ourselves, that we should not trust in ourselves, but in God which raiseth the dead: who delivered us from so great a death, and doth deliver: in whom we trust that He will yet deliver us." (II Cor. 9:10) Dear reader, do you know anything about the sentence of death? Have you ever felt the condemnation of sin? Have your sins weighed you down and caused you to pray for mercy? Have those that sit in "Moses' seat" told you that you must "exercise faith", or "work a little harder" and you did not feel any comfort in this; because you had come to the end of your strength; you desired a God who could reach down and deliver you from your distress?

I believe it is the work of God to convict the hearts of all His people, and they shall be taught by God at the appointed time known only to Almighty God. The text shows that one of the thieves was taught the truth while he hung on the cross. I believe the text teaches "death bed conversion" and all of this is the work of God...as any other time. **MAN DOES NOT HAVE ANY PART IN THE MATTER.**

How wonderful it is to believe that salvation is of the Lord. It does not make any difference where the children of God are (I refer to such as those who have not yet been taught the truth), what nation they are in, etc., God has a people in every nation and it is wonderful to believe the Lord knows where they are; that Jesus is upon the right-hand of God, who ever lives to make intercession for the saints according to the will of God. Jesus also prays or intercedes for those who have not as yet been taught the truth. "Neither pray I for these alone, but for them also which shall believe on me through their word." (John 17:20) This shows the foreknowledge, predestination, and decrees of Almighty God, meaning that all shall be converted at that appointed time. "And they shall be **ALL** taught of God." (John 6:45) All of those whom God has elected to eternal life, or chosen in Him, before the foundation of the world (Eph. 1:4) shall be brought to the knowledge of the truth in due time. How do they

come to Jesus or believe in Him? The Scriptures teach that the children of God are DRAWN by the Lord, with love.

“No man can come to me, except the Father which hath sent me draw him; and I will raise him up at the last day. . . And He said, Therefore said I unto you, that no man can come to me, except it were GIVEN UNTO HIM of my Father.” (John 6:44, 65) Do not these Scriptures explain why one thief believed in Jesus and the other did not?

“And I heard another voice from heaven, saying, Come out of her, MY PEOPLE, that ye be not partakers of her sins, and that ye receive not of her plagues.” (Rev. 18:4) “Come unto me, all ye that labour and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest.” (Matt.11:28) The children of God come out when the Lord calls because they are drawn by the power of God... drawn by love. They are made a willing people to believe, “Thy people shall be willing in the day of thy power. . .” (Psa. 110:3)

“And you hath He quickened, who were dead in trespasses and sins: wherein in time past ye walked according to the course of this world, according to the prince of the power of the air, the spirit that now worketh in the children of disobedience: Among whom also we all had our conversation in times past in the lusts of our flesh, fulfilling the desires of the flesh and of the mind; and were by nature the children of wrath, even as others.” (Eph. 2:1-3) One of the thieves was quickened and taught the truth by the Spirit of God, and made to lay hold upon Jesus as the hope of eternal salvation.

Why did one thief feel this condemnation? Please notice that he said, “For we receive the due reward of our deeds.” Does not this show that he felt to be a wretched, ruined sinner in the hands of a just and perfect God? He did not hang his head in despair, because the Lord blessed him with the faith to cry out, “Lord, remember me when thou comest into thy kingdom.” The Lord blessed this thief with faith and courage to come boldly unto the throne of grace. “Let us therefore come boldly unto the throne of grace, that we may obtain mercy, and find grace to help in time of need.” (Hebrews 4:16)

This thief was looking beyond the law to the righteous blood of Jesus. (There is not any mercy in the law. “He that despised Moses’ law died without mercy under two or three witnesses.” Heb.10:28) “Unto Him that loved us, and washed us from our sins in His own blood, And hath made us kings and priests unto God and His Father; to Him be glory and dominion for ever and ever. Amen. (Rev. 1:5-6) The righteous blood of Jesus has made His people holy and has prepared them to enter into the kingdom of heaven.

Surely Satan was accusing this thief before God. “The accuser of our brethren is cast down, which accused them before God day and night.” (Rev.12:10) How about the case when Joshua stood before God and had filthy

garments? (Zech. 3:14) Satan was resisting Joshua, but let us notice the comfort in the 4th verse: “Take away the filthy garments from him. And unto him He said, Behold I have caused thine iniquity to pass from thee, and I will clothe thee with change of raiment.” Does not this show the debt paid in double? (Isa. 40:2) The blood of Jesus not only washes away the sins of His people, but it also clothes them with the garments of salvation and with the robe of righteousness. (Isa. 61:10)

The thief was looking to the blood of Jesus to save him. The blood of Jesus speaks better things than the blood of Abel. “And to Jesus the mediator of the New Covenant, and to the blood of sprinkling, that speaketh better things than that of Abel.” (Heb.12:24) The blood of Abel cried for vengeance. The blood of Jesus speaks peace and pardon to a poor needy sinner.

There is something touching and special about the words that this thief said to Jesus: “Lord, remember me when thou comest into thy kingdom.” Dear one, do you desire to be remembered by your friends and loved ones? Does not it touch you when the Lord remembers you? “Casting all your care upon Him, for He careth for you.” (I Pet. 5:7) Friends may forsake you and turn against you and even hate you, but thanks be to the grace of Almighty God, there is one who does care and loves you to the end. There is nothing that can separate from the love of God.

ADMINISTRATION OF THE ORDINANCES Editorial of Gospel Standard, 1867

Note: The article on “Three Branches of Seceders” in the October issue raised some interesting comments; some negative, some positive, and some inquiries.

The main interest was relative to church perpetuity. While the article was not on that subject, yet the history of the English Baptists brought the question up by those who hold to a serial or link-chain succession of Modern Baptists back through the ages.

Since many Baptists do hold to the perpetuity of the church as through Papal Succession and trace it through our English Baptists. . . who hold no such view. . . we thought it well to print a view published by the Particular and Strict Baptists brethren in England on “Is the Administration of the Ordinances of the Lord’s House, and Especially of Baptism, Limited by the Holy Ghost in the Word of Truth to Ministers only?” January 1, 1867.

We have plans to follow up this article with one on perpetuity of the gospel church by the truth of free grace. This article is printed first to raise some

questions in the minds of such readers as have never seriously considered how the God of all grace has preserved His truth.

We intimated on the wrapper of our last October Number that it was in our mind to take up the above subject, as involving considerations hidden from the eyes of men of one idea, who only know what they have been taught by the precept of men, and as having also an important bearing on many points of divine truth. This pledge, therefore, we shall now attempt to redeem.

Were it a mere idle, unprofitable question, or a point of dry and barren controversy, we would willingly let the whole subject drop, for we cannot but think most of our readers would consider that our proofs from the Scripture were decisive and conclusive of the truth of our views; but we believe it will be found on mature examination that it contains in its bosom some instructive lessons, and involves some important consequences which, perhaps, may not have presented themselves to their minds in the light in which we see them. The deep wisdom of the Holy Ghost, as manifested in this question, is altogether HIDDEN from superficial, ignorant professors, who know neither the Scriptures nor the power of God; and indeed is not only usually OVERLOOKED by ordinary readers of the New Testament, but, in our judgment, is not sufficiently understood or appreciated even by some who possess a deeper insight into the mysteries of the kingdom.

In examining, however, such points, we should bear in mind several important considerations. First, let it be remembered that the Scriptures, as given by inspiration of God, were written for ALL TIME, as well as for the then present time, and as such looked forward prospectively to ALL the various circumstances and phases in which the church should be placed down to the end of the world. Secondly, it should be recollected that there are certain strong, deep-seated tendencies in the human mind which are EVER displaying themselves, and unfolding, as a necessary consequence, different forms of error or evil. Now the Holy Ghost, possessing an infinite and infallible knowledge of the heart of man, and foreseeing with ineffable clearness and distinctness the whole end from the beginning, has in the depths of His wisdom provided beforehand suitable and sufficient remedies against these evils for the guidance of the family of God.

The amazing subtlety with which these tendencies of the human mind have been worked upon and drawn out so as to issue in the firm establishment of error and evil in the professing church, compels us to believe that Satan has been the main agent in this matter, and that he has employed these tendencies to the building up of HIS KINGDOM OF DARKNESS and wickedness. We trust we shall make this clear as we carry on our argument and work out the chief points of the question now before us. Two preliminary considerations will, however, be necessary:

1. We shall first, then, assume that there are two standing ordinances in the Lord's house — ordinances of His own institution, Baptism and the Lord's Supper. And we shall assume that these are not *sacraments*, according to the views of the Church of Rome and the Church of England, but *ordinances*, the difference between the two consisting in this that sacraments are claimed to be immediate channels of grace, whilst ordinances are merely celebrations or memorials, which may or may not be attended with a divine blessing, but are not channels of spiritual life. This distinction between sacraments and ordinances it is most important clearly to understand, and ever to bear in mind, for without it neither this nor many similar questions can be fully comprehended.

2. We shall, secondly, assume that these ordinances of the Lord's house, Baptism and the Lord's Supper, are LIMITED to believers in the Son of God; for not being sacraments to convey grace to the soul, but memorials of the sufferings, sacrifice, death, burial, and resurrection of the Lord Jesus, faith is required in the recipient that they may not be lifeless forms, but spiritual sacrifices, acceptable to God by Jesus Christ.

But now comes the main gist of our present question — the *administration* of these ordinances of the Lord's house. Is their administration, for the same arguments apply to BOTH ordinances, LIMITED TO MINISTERS — in other words, may none but ministers either baptize or break bread? WE HOLD that their administration is NOT so limited, and that the Holy Ghost has not confined the administration of the ordinances to one class of men — the ministers of the word of truth. If you deny this, you are bound to show us two things:

1. That the Scriptures of the New Testament have CLEARLY drawn this limit. 2. To inform us what you mean by the word "ministers."

We shall take the last point first, as occupying less room for its examination and clearing the ground more fully for the consideration of the first. What, then, do you mean by "ministers," when you say that to them is limited the power or privilege of baptizing and breaking bread to believers? Do

you mean ordained ministers — men on whose heads have been laid the hands of the presbytery? “No,” you answer, “we do not mean that, for we do not hold with human ordination.” Do you mean then, pastors of churches, or will you include supplies of various kinds, from the man who is regularly engaged in a wandering ministry to the man who sometimes reads a sermon, gives out a hymn, reads a chapter from the desk or pulpit, and comments a little on what he reads? “No,” you answer, “I do not mean all who thus occasionally speak, but only generally recognized ministers, such men as those whose engagements appear every month on your wrapper.” Well and good. But these very men — most of them, at least — began in a small way. They were led first to read a chapter and make some comments on it; then, as their grace and gifts became more manifest, and the Lord seemed more evidently with them, they advanced from the desk to the pulpit, and went gradually on from strength to strength till they obtained a firm footing in the esteem and affections of the church of God. Now, if you limit baptizing and breaking bread to these recognized ministers, please tell us when they might *begin* to administer the ordinances of the Lord’s house? Draw the line for us when this great blessing became theirs. Was it when they mounted the pulpit? Then you make a low box or a high box the exact turning point, and that a man in the low box is not a minister and must not baptize, but the same man, when mounted in the high box, is a minister and may. Hold the ordination of ministers as the Church of England and some dissenting churches do, and you can then draw a line between the ordained and the unordained, and say boldly, “None but an ordained minister may break bread or baptize.” But if once you give up the ordination of ministers as held by them, we defy you to draw a line, on one side of which there stands the man who speaks in public; but may not baptize, and, on the other, the man who speaks in public, and who may baptize. False principles necessarily lead to false conclusions, and to set out and walk in an unscriptural path must end in folly and confusion. If you, limit the administration of the ordinances to ministers, you are bound to show us who are ministers, and what makes them ministers, what sort of recognition is required to manifest them as such, and at what period of their ministry the blessing is to be conceded them to administer the ordinances of the Lord’s house. If you cannot do this, it is evident that you do not understand the question, and are talking of matters in which you possess neither earthly nor heavenly wisdom.

But now a few words upon this all important point: “Has the Holy Ghost LIMITED the administration of the ordinances to ministers of the word of truth?” If He has, show us where. Point out the chapter and verse in which we find, either in word or substance: “None may baptize but a minister of Jesus Christ.” We are bold to say that there is no such limitation to be found in the

New Testament. (Ed. Note: comments welcome on this point from our readers, S.C.P.) And what is more, the precedents given us in the New Testament prove just the contrary; in other words, most plainly show that private believers may, if occasion need, Scripturally baptize their believing brethren. We have before adduced the remarkable instances of Paul and Cornelius, neither of whom was baptized by a minister. Ananias, who baptized Paul, was simply a “disciple at Damascus,” where there was no church or congregation, (See Acts 9:2 and verse 10 — these believers were in the Jewish synagogues still) but only a few scattered disciples, who had fled there for refuge, at the time of the persecution at the death of Stephen. There is not the slightest ground to believe that he was a minister in any sense of the word, as set apart to preach the word of faith.

Peter would not baptize Cornelius himself, moved probably by the same godly motive which kept Paul from himself baptizing at Corinth, lest any should say he baptized in his own name. (I Cor.1:15). He therefore simply “commanded them to be baptized in the name of the Lord,” (Acts 10:48) which was doubtless done by one of the brethren who had come with him from Joppa. They were simply believing brethren, what we should call members of the church, who accompanied him on his journey for his protection and comfort.

Indeed, to these men of God, Peter and Paul, as long as the candidate was a believer in the Son of God, as long as the ordinance of baptism was rightly attended to, it was a matter of little importance who took him down into the water and baptized him — that is, of course, so long as the baptizer was himself a true believing brother. Paul therefore considered it a matter of so little importance that he had almost forgotten whom he had and whom he had not baptized: “I thank God that I baptized NONE of you but Crispus and Gaius; lest any should say that I had baptized in mine own name. And I baptized also the household of Stephanas; besides, I know not whether I baptized any other.” (I Cor. 1:14-16) Custom and tradition have invested it with a factitious importance, and turned a simple memorial into a solemn ceremonial; but could we view the baptism of a believer as a mere memorative act, a simple, open profession of faith, we should see that it really mattered very little who led him into the water and immersed him in the name of the Godhead, so long as the administrator was a believing and baptized brother. **IT IS THE FAITH AND PROFESSION** of the candidate, **NOT** of the person who merely baptizes him, in which the chief stress of the whole act lies. Were it otherwise, and did its right administration depend on the ministerial office of the administrator, its validity might be **CONTINUALLY IMPAIRED** or **CALLED IN QUESTION**.

But now take a matter of fair inference, for this is admissible where positive proof seems defective. Could the twelve apostles have baptized all the 3,000 who were called on the day of Pentacost? It seems physically impossible that

twelve men should have baptized 3,000 persons in that space of time. But assume that the 120 brethren who met with them aided them, and the difficulty much disappears. That allows about twenty-three candidates to each administrator, whereas to limit it to the twelve apostles would allot 250 to each apostle. (Ed. Note. The 5,000 with only Peter and John in Acts 4:4 — if baptized is even more staggering!)

But we pass on now to another part of our subject, to which we made some allusion in the opening of the present article. We have there alluded to the wisdom of the Holy Ghost in not limiting the administration of baptism to ministers. To set this point forth more clearly, we shall consider it under the two following heads: 1. The genius, character, and spirit of the New Testament dispensation. 2. The tendency of the human mind to set up a system of its own distinct form and opposed to the mind of God.

1. Unless we can understand and enter into the character and spirit of the New Testament dispensation, we cannot properly understand the nature and bearing of the question now before us. Observe this, then, as a fundamental principle of the New Testament dispensation, that its main, its ruling spirit and character is, that it is a *spiritual* dispensation. Forms, rites, ceremonies are all foreign to, and alien from this spiritual character. Order is needful to prevent confusion, and ordinances have been graciously given as commemorative acts of the sacrifice, death, and resurrection of the blessed Lord, as well as pledges of His love, and distinctive badges of true discipleship. But these very ordinances are as if impregnated and permeated with the character and spirit of the whole dispensation. They are, therefore, on the one hand not sacrificial or sacramental rites, nor on the other mere forms and ceremonies, but spiritual institutions, and as such for believers only, and to be attended to by them in faith.

Now, if you assert that none but ministers may administer these ordinances, you at once endow them with a kind of sacramental character. You make their validity depend on the administrator being the member of a kind of priesthood — one of a privileged caste or body of men to whom in some mysterious, unexplained way belongs a peculiar privilege. But this is the very essence of the Old Testament dispensation, and to hold this is virtually a renunciation of the distinctive character of the New Testament. You are, therefore, as far as you have the power, bringing us back to the “beggarly elements” from which the gospel has delivered us, and thrusting our necks under the old yoke. You are virtually restoring priesthood as the peculiar privilege of a separate class, and thus overthrowing that grand and blessed truth that all believers are priests, for as they are “a chosen

generation,” so are they “a holy nation, a royal priesthood,” (I Pet. 2:5) whom Christ Himself has made kings and priests unto God. (Rev. 1:6) We have all along admitted that, for the sake of order and other reasons, it is BEST for one to administer the ordinance of baptism who has some recognized standing IN THE CHURCH OF GOD. Our present argument is to show that it is NOT so limited, and that so to limit it is contrary to the free spirit of the new dispensation, which allows and sanctions a liberty unknown to the old.

2. But now see the evils which would have been produced had the administration of baptism been so limited. Never was there a time when these evils were more FORCED on our attention. What is the MAIN doctrine of what is called Puseyism (Ed. Note. A higher-churchism which appeared among Baptists in England and America in the 1860’s — and now commonly accepted), or Ritualism? The doctrine of sacramental grace, that is that grace is communicated mainly if not solely by the sacraments, of which the chief are Baptism and the Lord’s Supper. But what thence follows? That they are only channels of grace as entrusted to, and administered by the ordained *successors* of the apostles to whom alone appertains the Christian priesthood. And who are these priests to whom alone appertains the right of baptizing infants and celebrating the Lord’s Supper? The regularly ordained ministers of the Church of England, who have been set apart as consecrated by the laying on of hands by the bishops, the only legitimate successors of the apostles. To them alone, according to this doctrine, are given the keys of the kingdom of heaven. They alone are priests, and all other ministers excepting their brethren of Rome, are schismatics, who have no more divine right to baptize or celebrate the Lord’s Supper, than the priests made by Jeroboam of the lowest of the people, which were not of the sons of Levi, (I Kings 12:31) had right to minister in the temple and offer sacrifice at Jerusalem.

We see, then, where we should be landed, were this doctrine true that none but ministers may baptize or break bread. What a stepping-stone to that domineering priesthood which is everywhere now lifting up its head. How soon would the doctrine be established on the following basis: 1. None but ministers may baptize or administer the Lord’s Supper. 2. If so, then they must be ordained ministers, that all may know their office, and that none should thrust themselves into it without proper testimonials. 3. If ordained ministers, who is to ordain them? In whom is lodged the power to ordain? It must be some superior order, some SUCCESSION OF MEN, like Timothy and Titus, who ordained elders in every city. Then it must be the bishops, for these claim to be the only

legitimate successors of the apostles. All this finely-spun web seems to us, and rightly seems, a mere figment. But it is the creed, and the advancing creed of thousands. How wisely, then, does the breath of the Holy Ghost blow away all this gossamer web by the simple fact that, in the Scriptures of the New Testament, the administration of the ordinances of God's house is not limited to ministers, though, as a matter of order, they may be most suitably and conveniently administered by them.

But of all sects and denominations we should be the last to limit the administration of the ordinances to ministers. For who and what are our ministers, and how are they distinguished from their believing brethren? They are NOT educated at an Academy, and made into ministers there. They are not ordained by the laying on of hands at any chapel, and made ministers there. When called to the pastoral office by a church, and they accept the call, they are not made ministers there. They wear no distinctive dress, take no distinctive title, and assume no priestly position to separate or exalt them, as a peculiar and privileged caste, from above their fellow believers. Some of them labour through the week at their secular business, and by honest industry maintain themselves and their families; some are deacons of churches, with the good will of the church still retaining their office; some assume no higher position than serving occasionally destitute places; few are pastors regularly settled over a church and congregation. As called of God to preach the gospel, as honoured instruments of good, as possessed of grace and gifts, as labouring many of them under poverty of circumstances, heavy trials, and many afflictions, they have an enduring place in the esteem and affections of their hearers, and to them is willingly entrusted the administration of the ordinances. To baptize, to break bread, falls as much within the scope of the pastor's office as to take the chair at a church meeting; and we should be the last persons to wrest the administration of the ordinances out of their hands. Order, regularity, the giving of honour to whom honour is due, the avoiding of petty jealousies, and the general maintenance of peace and quietness in a church and congregation, all point to putting into the hands of the pastor the administration of the ordinances. And, by parity of reasoning, where there is no pastor, the same should be conceded to the minister who supplies the pulpit. But what is conceded as a matter of order must not be claimed as a matter of right, or, what is worse, demanded as a matter of divine warrant. For were it so, it would nullify our ordinances, unless it were proved in every instance (and through the ages as well — S.C.P.) that they were administered by an accredited minister. It would make them like the mass if the wafer were not consecrated by a priest --- profane, invalid

ceremony. It would unchurch a large number of our members, fill our churches with strife and confusion, and land us next door to, if not actually within, the threshold of Ritualism and Popery. From all which evils, good Lord, deliver us. Gospel Standard, January 1, 1867

**BEFORE THE FOUNDATION OF THE WORLD,
AN ATONEMENT FOR SIN
By R. E. Neighbors, deceased**

Before the foundation of the world, God beheld the entrance of the tempter, the fall of man, the death on the cross, and the full atonement for sin.

The question: "How could God be just and the Justifier of the guilty," was settled in the eternities past. God did not make man, witness his fall, and then begin to plan his justification. The announcement of the "Last Adam" immediately followed the sinning of the first Adam.

Before the curse fell upon man, or beast, or land, Christ was, in the mind of God, "made a curse for us," and, "there shall be no more curse," had long been decreed in the purposes of God.

Before the thorns and thistles were announced, Christ wore, in the mind of God, the crown of thorns; and the earth, in the vision of God, had groaned out in pain, and was delivered from its bondage of corruption.

Before God said to the woman: "I will greatly multiply thy sorrow and thy conception," and: "In sorrow shalt thou bring forth children," He had seen in His mind, the coming of the "Man of Sorrows," and the time when "God shall wipe away all tears from their eyes, and there shall be no more sorrow nor crying, and neither shall there be any more pain."

God, in His eternal foreknowledge, had decreed: "Blessed are they that wash their robes that they may have right to the tree of life, and, enter in through the gates into the city," long before He had actually placed the tree of life in the garden of Eden; long before He drove man from the garden, placing His Cherubim and His turning and flaming Sword to keep the way of the Tree of Life.

God in His eternal foreknowledge, saw the "river of the water of life, clear as crystal," that proceedeth from the throne of God, and the Lamb, long before He placed the river that "went out of Eden to water the garden."

God in His eternal foreknowledge, beheld the Wife taken from Christ's pierced side, and presented to His Son, long before He took the rib from Adam's pierced side and brought to him a wife.

The **WHOLE SCHEME** of redemption **WAS BEFORE GOD** how the sinner dead in trespasses and in sins, walking according to the course of this

world, according to the prince of the power of the air, would be quickened together with Christ, raised up together, and made to sit together in the heavenlies in Christ Jesus.

God saw how the children of the flesh, given over to adultery, fornication, uncleanness, lasciviousness, idolatry, witchcraft, hatred, variance, emulations, wrath, strife, seditions, heresies, envyings, murders, drunkenness, revelings, and such like, would, in Christ Jesus, become the children of the living God, walking in love, joy, peace, long-suffering, gentleness, goodness, faith, meekness, and self-control.

God saw how the children of darkness, with their rioting and drunkenness, their clamoring and wantonness, their strife and envyings, would become through Christ Jesus, the children of Light, walking in fellowship with the Father, bearing the fruit of the Spirit in all goodness, and righteousness and truth.

God saw how the children of wrath, with vain imaginations, their foolish hearts darkened, their professed wisdom, backbiters, haters of God, spiteful, proud, boastful, inventors of evil things, would become, through Jesus Christ, the children of the Bridechamber, decked in the white robes of imputed righteousness, welcomed into palaces of the King and anticipating in ages to come, the yet unrevealed but exceeding riches of His grace.

God, before the foundation of the world **FIXED** the depth of meaning that fill those wondrous words that today cluster round a **FULL SALVATION**.

Dear Readers: May God grant sweet riches of peace, pardon, reconciliation, grace and mercy to you, establishing you in sound doctrine, moral deportment, and righteousness to redound to His great grace in the coming year. Remember us before His throne. Editors.