

The Remnant

*“Even so then at this
present time also there
is a remnant according to
the election of grace.”
Romans 11.5*

January-February, 2000

Volume 14, No. 1

PREDESTINATION FROM GENESIS TO REVELATION No. 19: II SAMUEL

DAVID: THE SECOND OF THE KINGS IN ISRAEL AND MEPHIBOSHETH

“And David said unto him, Fear not: for I will surely shew thee kindness for Jonathan thy father’s sake, and will restore thee all the land of Saul thy father; and thou shalt eat bread at my table continually (II Samuel 9.7).”

Predestination from Genesis to Revelation is not at all difficult to see for those who have been made to love a sovereign God. For all others it is probably foolishness. In this series of articles, we have attempted to set forth God’s determination of all events, both in time and eternity. This determination of all events we call absolute predestination. By this definition, we mean that God has determined all events before they come to pass. If so, God’s will and pleasure can never fail.

These Old Testament events from which we write are figures of those things declared to us in the New Testament. Call them types, shadows, figures, or pictures; all the events of the Old Testament lead us, in some measure, to a fuller view of the great work of redemption. We shall now examine the remarkable story of one such event: David’s kindness to Jonathan’s son, Mephibosheth.

Events leading up to II Samuel 9

Saul was the first king of Israel. God then rejected him (I Samuel 15.26ff) for David (I Samuel 16.1). According to Acts 13.21, Saul reigned for 40 years. When Saul died in battle (I Samuel 31.1-6), three of his sons, Abinadab, Melchi-shua, and Jonathan also died. Another son, Ish-bosheth, was made king of the 11 tribes of Israel by Abner, but his leadership was soon aborted. The house of David waxed stronger and the remainder of Saul’s house waxed weaker (I Samuel 3.1). Eventually, Abner was slain by Joab, David’s chief-of-staff. Ish-bosheth was murdered in his bed; his head was brought to David, who commanded his young men to slay Ish-bosheth’s murderers (I Samuel 4.1-12). It was a bloody and unsettled period. The transition from Saul to David produced some spectacular moments; nevertheless, all went according to the unerring plan of God.

We first read of Mephibosheth, the son of Jonathan, in II Samuel 4.4. He was five years of age when news came that his Father, Jonathan, and his grandfather, Saul, were slain in battle. There is no mention of his mother; only the nurse that took him and fled, no doubt fearing vengeance on Saul’s household by one of his enemies. During this flight, made in haste, Mephibosheth fell. The fall resulted in lameness in both feet.

Mephibosheth was a cripple for life. The incapacitated were often considered unworthy in ancient times. They were thought to have committed some glaring sin which resulted in their infirmities. Such

The Remnant

published
6 times annually
by
Saints Rest Primitive Baptist Church
of Dallas, Texas

The Remnant Publications

In the interest of
The Old Order of Baptists

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The Remnant is sent free of any obligation
to all interested persons.

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Mephibosheth's affliction was part of the eternal plan of God. It was for his good and for the glory of God. Would the deniers of God's sovereignty prefer to say all this was the sad result of bad fortune in the life Mephibosheth? Consider then: "I will also leave in the midst of thee an afflicted and poor people, and they shall trust in the name of the Lord (Zephaniah 3.12)." Just so, Mephibosheth was afflicted and poor, left alone, deserted, helpless, living out his days until deliverance came by David. Accordingly, Mephibosheth did trust in the name of his Lord *at the appointed time*.

David's desire to show kindness

"And David said, Is there yet any that is left of the house of Saul, that I may shew him kindness for Jonathan's sake (I Samuel 9.1)?" David was a great man in practically every aspect of his interesting life. Despite his great and noble qualities, David was also a bloody man of war; fierce, and often uncompromising. Many of his foes found this out to their grief. Why then, at the time of conquest, of near absolute authority over the whole realm, would David pause to show this unknown cripple his kindness? The answer is not difficult to discover. For those taught by the Lord the answer is this: God controls our affairs. We are not directed by our whims and wishes, except as they fulfill the eternal purposes of God. "A man's heart deviseth his way: but the Lord directeth his steps (Proverbs 16.9)." That applies to David as well as us today. Again, "There are many devices in a man's heart; nevertheless the counsel of the Lord, that shall stand (Proverbs 19.21)." Though David devised, the Lord's counsel alone would prosper. We may conclude then, whatever did come to pass, was from the counsel of the Lord.

Behind the compassion of David to an unknown cripple was something far superior to sudden impulses to show momentary kindness. David's actions reveal (by illustration or figure) the very core of the elect sinner's relationship with a saving God. David had put himself under covenant obligation to Mephibosheth before the lad had ever been born. Not just once did David covenant, but at least three times he swore himself to this unknown heir. "Then Jonathan and David made a covenant, because he loved him as his own soul (I Samuel 18.3)." "And thou shalt not only while yet I live shew me the

was the opinion of our Lord's disciples when Jesus observed a man blind from birth. "And his disciples asked him, saying, Master, who did sin, this man, or his parents, that he was born blind (John 9.2)?" Ridiculous opinions usually produce ridiculous questions. The Lord, however, had a blessed answer for His confused followers. It applies as well to Mephibosheth as the man born blind. "Jesus answered, Neither hath this man sinned, nor his parents: but that the works of God should be made manifest in him (John 9.3)." God had a purpose in the man being blind. It was to manifest His works in his deliverance. God also had a purpose in the lameness of Jonathan's son. If any are too timid to call this purpose predestination, we beg of them to explain to us what it is.

kindness of the Lord, that I die not: But also thou shalt not cut off thy kindness from my house for ever: no, not when the Lord hath cut off the enemies of David every one from the face of the earth, So Jonathan made a covenant with the house of David, saying, Let the Lord even require it at the hand of David's enemies. And Jonathan caused David to swear again, because he loved him: for he loved him as he loved his own soul (I Samuel 20.14-17).” “And Jonathan said to David, Go in peace, forasmuch as we have sworn both of us in the name of the Lord, saying, The Lord be between me and thee, and between my seed and thy seed for ever. And he arose and departed: and Jonathan went into the city (I Samuel 20.42).” The reader will pay due attention to the wording here: “...*between my seed and thy seed for ever.*” And finally, “And they two made a covenant before the Lord: and David abode in the wood, and Jonathan went to his house (I Samuel 23.18).”

The motive that moved David to inquire of any that remained of the house of Saul is clear. David was bound by a three-fold covenant to show kindness to the seed of Jonathan. Serious investigation respecting the necessary qualifications to receive the beneficence of David are revealing. David sought someone in particular to redeem his covenant pledge to Jonathan. What then was the first and foremost qualification necessary to receive this particular kindness from the hand of David? Simply this: one must be of the house of Saul. The covenant benefits would fall only to such as had a family tie to the first monarch of Israel. It was someone from the *house* of Saul being sought out. Well-wishers, close allies, servants or neighbors need not apply. David had entered a covenant! The terms involved the seed of David and Jonathan. Seed! Let the opponents of a seed union disparage the truth if they must. It is cause for rejoicing that a greater covenant than that of David's was made to embrace the seed of the Lamb of God. “A seed shall serve him; it shall be accounted to the Lord for a generation (Psalm 22.30).” “Yet it pleased the Lord to bruise him; he hath put him to grief: when thou shalt make his soul an offering for sin, he shall see his seed, he shall prolong his days, and the pleasure of the Lord shall prosper in his hand (Isaiah 53.10).” “That is, They which are the children of the flesh, these are not the children of God: but the children of the promise are counted for the seed (Romans 9.8).”

Clearly, this cannot be speaking of the fleshly seed of Isaac, for the language is “...*they which are the children of the flesh, these are not the children of God.*”

Ziba, Saul's servant

“And there was of the house of Saul a servant whose name was Ziba. And when they had called him unto David, the king said unto him, Art thou Ziba? And he said, Thy servant is he (II Samuel 9.2).” Ziba was a cunning fellow. With some diligent searching, most anyone can uncover his treachery and deceit. Someone, left unnamed in Scriptures, brought Ziba before David. It is probable Ziba was thought to be the best prospect for the king's kindness. David, though familiar with the house of Saul, did not recognize Ziba. It is very likely Ziba avoided public scrutiny, and for obvious reasons, as will be seen. Ziba also was well practiced in the polite platitudes of palace prevarication and polish. “Art thou Ziba?” David asks. “*Thy servant is he*” was the swift response of Ziba. No allegiance to Saul from Ziba at this critical juncture. In this writer's opinion, Ziba says, “I'm your man! Look no further.”

David, however, looked beyond Ziba. He had not summoned servants or slaves to honor his covenant with Jonathan. The recipient of David's kindness had to be of the seed his covenant embraced, and Ziba did not fit the qualifications, no matter his intentions. Was this simply good will on the part of David? “The king's heart is in the hand of the Lord, as the rivers of water: he turneth it whithersoever he will (Proverbs 21.1).” Unless this text is only wasted verbiage, and may the Lord forbid, David, the king, was turned in heart *whithersoever God willed*. In this case, it was toward Mephibosheth, the seed of Jonathan. (Is it not amazing that Arminians can accept the wildest theories respecting free will and yet either ignore or deny the force of such texts as Proverbs 21.1?)

“And the king said, Is there not yet any of the house of Saul, that I may shew the kindness of God unto him? And Ziba said unto the king, Jonathan hath yet a son, which is lame on his feet (II Samuel 9.3).” Ziba might well have abandoned his cunning desires, but he did not. The king's request appeared to be void of any prospects that Ziba would receive David's kindness, but Ziba had strong reason to press his

personal agenda. Notice the response of Ziba, how it was colored with language detrimental to Mephibosheth. "Jonathan hath yet a son, *which is lame on his feet.*"

Did those words exhibit pity or compassion? Anyone who believes Ziba provided this information from compassion for Jonathan's poor, crippled son has not been well-schooled in the study of human nature. "A servant will not be corrected by words: for though he understand he will not answer (Proverbs 29.19)."

Ziba clearly understood the words of David. The king would restore the estate of Saul to the remaining seed, thus Ziba could not give a fair answer. Though what he said was truth, it was designed by Ziba to be prejudicial. The cripple was not able to handle the vast properties left by Saul, and this point Ziba would press upon David; Mephibosheth was *lame on his feet.*

"And the king said unto him, Where is he? And Ziba said unto the king, Behold, he is in the house of Machir, the son of Ammiel, in Lo-debar (II Samuel 9.4)."

Several points are prominent in this response. First, the whereabouts of the seed of Jonathan was unknown to David, the very person who should know of his residence. Second, Ziba, a servant to Saul prior to the king's death, knew exactly where Mephibosheth resided. Moreover, Ziba did not hesitate to reveal the location.

Mephibosheth was far to the north in Lo-debar, which apparently means *barren*, or *no pasture*. It seems Machir, the benefactor, was himself in poor straits. This, Ziba obviously thought, would further render Mephibosheth undesirable in the eyes of David.

How perverted are the opinions of the carnal minded. Paramount in the thinking of Ziba, however, is the necessity of keeping David and Jonathan's crippled son apart. Ziba was prospering on the former estates of Saul, while Mephibosheth languished away in poverty and obscurity. According to verse 10, Ziba had fifteen sons and twenty servants under his care. The loss of Saul's former estates would cripple Ziba financially as sure as Mephibosheth was crippled naturally. Ziba was no friend to David's plan! Ziba had no desire for David to show kindness unless he received it.

Ziba had cast his lot into the lap but the whole disposing of the matter would be of the Lord. We shall return to the subject of Ziba shortly.

Mephibosheth summoned

"Then king David sent, and fetched him out of the house of Machir, the son of Ammiel, from Lo-debar (II Samuel 9.5)." Of the many expressions used throughout the Bible to indicate a bringing unto, *fetch* seems the most expressive. The primary meaning of the word, fetch, in our dictionary, is *to go after and come back with*. This is precisely what David willed, and nothing less than Mephibosheth appearing before the king would satisfy his intentions. David sent and *fetch*ed this crippled son of Jonathan. This is beautifully illustrative of our Lord gathering His elect to Himself from their awful condition. Like David, the Lord *fetches*.

David sent no invitation to Mephibosheth. Nor did he suggest the cripple drop by when convenient. He tendered no offer of crutches or a walking stick to assist the cripple in his journey. David determined to have Mephibosheth before him so the kindness of his covenant might be conferred. (It would take the daring of a demented devil to suggest David had anything in mind other than the personal appearance of the crippled son of Jonathan as soon as possible.) Moreover, it seems clear that Mephibosheth would come by being *fetch*ed; nothing more; nothing less. From first to last, the entire plan, and all necessary to implement the plan, flowed from the heart of David. Mephibosheth was totally passive throughout.

David *sent and fetch*ed Mephibosheth *out of* the house of Machir. There was no message to the cripple warning him to leave his surroundings. Modern religion might have suggested that David say, "Mephibosheth; if you will just take the first step I will meet you the rest of the way." "Please; won't you come now? Tomorrow's sun may never rise. O, why not tonight?" May God be praised, no such nonsense came from David. His purposes and resolve were equal to the circumstance. David *sent and fetch*ed Mephibosheth for he was determined to show him kindness. There was no offer involved. No contingencies encumbered the issue. The only qualifications necessary for Mephibosheth to be fetched was his seed relationship to the covenant makers.

Mephibosheth had all the necessary qualifications before he was ever born. David had all the necessary resolve to bring the matter to its designed end. No conditions or probabilities here.

When David fetched Mephibosheth, he not only drew him *out of* the house wherein he resided, he fetched him *from* Lo-debar! Some rays of the resplendent glory of our deliverance shine through from this episode between David and the seed of Jonathan. Mephibosheth was fetched *from* Lo-debar. Just so are all the vessels of mercy, chosen in Christ before any of them were born, fetched *from* the waste howling wilderness of this life's sojourn. All the chosen are raised up *from* their Lo-debar and translated *from* the kingdom of darkness and despair to the marvelous kingdom of light where our King David shows us the kindness of His covenant. Surely, King Jesus has called His sons *from* afar! As certain as is His purposes, when our King calls, we answer.

Who can tell the unlimited number of precious sermons that have been preached from this wondrous theme? Even some in the conditional camps have recognized this as a beautiful type of the saints' heavenly calling. Sadly, however, they have not recognized the obvious threads of divine colors woven throughout the whole. If indeed this story is a figure of deliverance, then it must be so by God's approval Himself. It is doubtful any but scoffers would disagree on that point. But, if this figure has God's sanction, then could the story have unfolded any way except as it did originally? Certainly not. So then, as we view back at the major points of this story, we see their importance unfolding.

David must survive all the many dangers he encountered on coming to the throne. No David; no kindness. Jonathan must die so David could fulfill his covenant commitments. Had Jonathan survived the war with the enemy, when his brothers and his father, Saul, were slain, David would not have needed to seek out Mephibosheth. The son of Jonathan had to endure his unforeseen fall at the time his nurse sought to deliver him from any possible pursuers. Mephibosheth must become a cripple. He must become lame on his feet. Just here we pause to re-

examine our thesis, that this episode is a divinely-sanctioned figure of God's delivering His covenant seed.

Question: has God sanctioned events of the Old Testament (such as the one here under consideration) to be used as types, shadows, examples, and figures? If not, we are sadly mistaken. We have then completely missed the meaning of such texts as Romans 15.4; I Corinthians 10.6 and Hebrews 8.5. Happily, most agree here. However, if this figure, where Mephibosheth becomes a fallen cripple, could somehow be another way, then did God give us figures hashed together with variables or contingencies? Was it possible that Jonathan's son not become crippled in his feet? Yes or no? If yes, then why did

God give it to us this way? Moreover, would the type or figure have been complete had the lad remained whole and had not fallen, becoming a cripple? It is not difficult to see how admitting the possibility of events being any way other than they are, is to say God is not sovereign.

To take the point a step further, let the reader remember this; our conditional friends admit God predestinated our eternal salvation. They agree that Romans 8 and Ephesians 1 reveal the predestination

of God in saving His people from their sins. Every circumstance necessary for that salvation is embraced in the predestinated plan. (Of course, they will attempt to extricate God from culpability respecting the sins from which He delivers His elect.) Then, we ask; why would not the types and shadows of that great salvation, as seen in the Old Testament, and as recognized by the New Testament writers, be also certain and predestinated?

How could Mephibosheth be a figure of our great deliverance if he had not fallen; if he had not been a cripple; if he had not lost his estate? On and on we might go but it can be fairly seen by those who love the Word of God that God has ordered all things. He has made them sure by His eternal predestination.

**Mephibosheth
had all the
necessary
qualifications
before he was
ever born.**

Mephibosheth before David

"Now when Mephibosheth, the son of Jonathan, the son of Saul, was come unto David, he fell on his face, and did reverence, And David said, Mephibosheth. And he answered, Behold thy servant

(II Samuel 9.6)!” Honesty compels the reader to confess that, from first to last, David directed this union of the seed of Jonathan and himself. It was David’s design, it was David’s command that brought Mephibosheth before the throne. Had this poor cripple even dreamed of seeking kindness from the new king, he could neither dare or try. Kindness, like grace, is undeserved. It flows from the will and purpose of the giver and from no other source. David here beautifully represents the eternal throne from whence flows all the kindness of heaven to miserable, fallen cripples, who, despite their condition, are heirs because they are the seed of the covenant.

Mephibosheth *was come!* The wording compels us to consider just how passive the cripple was when called. The text does not say Mephibosheth came, as if he were actively responding to a summons. Rather, he *was come*, denoting something accomplished. Accomplishments were not in Mephibosheth’s bag of tricks. No, his bag was empty.

When Mephibosheth was come unto David *he fell* on his face, and did reverence. This was Mephibosheth’s second fall. His first fall rendered him helpless and this fall rendered him subservient to his restorer.

Who but the blind could fail to see the beams of holy light streaming forth from this scene? This was deliverance the outcast could never even hope for until his covenant king ascended the throne, and it is questionable that he was even aware the war was over and victory belonged alone to David. But, at the appointed hour, deliverance came. Mephibosheth fell before his king. It was the time for reverence. Let the opponents of predestination inform us what portions of this lovely story they dare leave to chance or free will.

Words of Comfort

“And David said unto him, Fear not: for I will surely shew thee kindness for Jonathan thy father’s sake, and will restore thee all the land of Saul thy father; and thou shalt eat bread at my table continually (II Samuel 9.7).”

So full is this text of the glory of God’s great salvation that we may barely touch the surface. “Fear not.” How familiar are these words to all the royal seed of Christ.

*Fear not, I am with thee; O be not dismay’d!
I, I am thy God, and will still give the aid,
I’ll strengthen thee, help thee, and cause thee
to stand,
Upheld by my righteous, omnipotent hand.*

Deliverance had come. David would *surely* shew kindness. Was not his kindness firm as his decree? Moreover, since Mephibosheth was Jonathan’s seed, David would restore all the land of Saul to him. Such bounty could not be imagined but there it all was; simply because Mephibosheth was of the family unto whom David was pleased to show the favor of his covenant. There was more!

“And thou shalt eat bread at my table continually.” Come and dine, Mephibosheth! All things are ready. Eat at the king’s table. Make no preparations; come as you are. The kindness of the king is as complete as his will. Mephibosheth’s mind had been set at ease; his future was secured and all because of the love David and Jonathan shared. If this does not give us a complete figure from the Old Testament of our great salvation, where then must we look for it?

Back to Ziba

Mephibosheth confessed himself but a dog. David then called to Ziba, Saul’s servant and said “...I have given unto thy master’s son all that pertained to Saul and to all his house. Thou therefore, and thy sons, and thy servants, shall till the land for him, and thou shalt bring in the fruits, that thy master’s son may have food to eat: but Mephibosheth thy master’s son shall eat bread always at my table. Now Ziba had fifteen sons and twenty servants (II Samuel 9.9,10).” There could hardly be anything possible that would more crush the spirit of this squatter. Ziba was no small time beggar, bleating his case at the hearts of the charitable. No! Ziba had fared sumptuously on the estate of Saul with at least 35 able-bodied men to reap his harvests for him. Now, however, in one pronouncement from David, Ziba is back in the business of being a servant himself. It can hardly be wondered then that Ziba would one day attempt to stab the cripple in the back, for so he did (II Samuel 16.1-4).

Ziba and all his house were servants afterwards to Mephibosheth (verse 12) but Jonathan’s son “...did

eat continually at the king's table; and was lame on both his feet (II Samuel 9.13)." It cannot be only a casual repeating of the description of Mephibosheth when the chapter ends with "...and was lame on both his feet." As a figure of the delivered sinner we see the son of Jonathan restored to favor at the king's court and find him eating daily with the monarch. However, none of this changes the condition he acquired in his fall. He remained a cripple in the flesh. Mephibosheth would take the effects of his fall to the grave. Those readers with an understanding of the old and new man in a believer will see the significance of this.

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A BETTER VINEYARD, PART III MELCHISEDEC: A BETTER PRIESTHOOD

"And without all contradiction the less is blessed of the better (Hebrews 7.7)."

With this installment we continue exploring the general theme of *a better vineyard*. In 1 Kings 21.2, king Ahab offered Naboth "a better vineyard" in exchange for the vineyard he had received from his fathers as his heritage. Our thesis is simple and straightforward: There is no better vineyard, which speaks to us of the spiritual heritage of the saints, than that which God has allotted to His people. The book of Hebrews presents the gospel of Jesus Christ as the better heritage, in every way, than all that preceded it in the Old Testament economy. From this viewpoint we now proceed.

THE BETTER BLESSES THE LESS

And without all contradiction the less is blessed of the better. It cannot be otherwise. The less cannot bless the better. A blessing comes forth from the one who has both the blessing and the ability to bestow it, and it proceeds to the one who has neither. "Blessed are the poor in spirit: for theirs is the

kingdom of heaven. Blessed are they that mourn: for they shall be comforted. Blessed are the meek: for they shall inherit the earth. Blessed are they which do hunger and thirst after righteousness: for they shall be filled." Christ pronounced blessings on the poor, mourning, meek, hungering, thirsting souls. He who is eternally and intrinsically rich blessed the poor in spirit. He who is the God of all comfort blessed those who mourn. He who is King of kings and Lord of lords blessed the meek and the lowly. He who is the Bread of life and the Water of life blessed those who hunger and thirst after His righteousness. He who is the better blessed the ones who are the less.

Light is better than darkness. "The light shineth in darkness; and the darkness comprehended it not." Light is a blessing without which we could not live, even in nature. If darkness could comprehend light, its nature would not be darkness. In the spiritual realm, Christ the Light shines in the darkness of a soul. Christ Jesus, infinitely and eternally rich, blessed the poverty-stricken objects of His eternal love and electing grace. "For ye know the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, that, though he was rich, yet for your sakes he became poor, that ye through his poverty might be rich (2 Corinthians 8.9)." Before the foundation of the world, He blessed them with the light, life, and liberty which can only come from Him, along with all spiritual blessings.

In nature, heat always only transfers from the hotter to the cooler object and never the other way around. We think of boiling water as extremely hot, and it is, to us whose normal bodily temperature is around 98.6 degrees Fahrenheit. But one cannot make white-hot molten iron hotter by pouring boiling water on it. Applied in the spiritual realm, we may say that God is not warmed toward a sinner by the sinner's pouring his or her cold heart upon God; the sinner's cold heart is warmed by God's pouring the warmth of His love upon the sinner. Even as the colder is warmed by the hotter, so the less, when blessed, is always blessed of the better.

It was thus with Abraham and Melchisedec, the less and the better (in that order), the double subject of this text. Melchisedec was the better of the two, Abraham was the lesser, and Paul here tells exactly how and why Melchisedec and his priesthood was the better.

Considering Christ Jesus as the High Priest of our profession is yet another major theme throughout the book of Hebrews. In Hebrews 3.1 Paul bids his readers, “*Consider* the Apostle and High Priest of our profession, Christ Jesus.” He has already told us in 2.17, “in all things it behoved him [Jesus, verse 9] to be made like unto his brethren, that he might be a merciful and faithful **high priest** in things pertaining to God, to make reconciliation for the sins of the people.” Besides these two references, Paul mentions the office of high priest fourteen more times in the remainder of this epistle. Certainly, then, Paul is *considering* the extended, extensive subject of Jesus Christ as the high priest of His people. We here give only a few examples: “Seeing then that we have a great **high priest**, that is passed into the heavens, Jesus the Son of God, let us hold fast our profession. For we have not an **high priest** which cannot be touched with the feeling of our infirmities; but was in all points tempted like as we are, yet without sin (Hebrews 4.14f).” “For every **high priest** taken from among men is ordained for men in things pertaining to God, that he may offer both gifts and sacrifices for sins (5.1).” “Whither the forerunner is for us entered, even Jesus, made an **high priest** for ever after the order of Melchisedec (6.20).” “For such an **high priest** became us, who is holy, harmless, undefiled, separate from sinners, and made higher than the heavens (7.26).” “We have such an **high priest**, who is set on the right hand of the throne of the Majesty in the heavens (8.1).” “But Christ being come an **high priest** of good things to come, by a greater and more perfect tabernacle, not made with hands...(9.11).” “And having an **high priest** over the house of God; let us draw near with a true heart in full assurance of faith (10.21f).” In the last chapter, he is still considering Jesus as both the high priest and the offering: “For the bodies of those beasts, whose blood is brought into the sanctuary by the **high priest** for sin, are burned without the camp. Wherefore Jesus also, that he might sanctify the people with his own blood, suffered without the gate (Hebrews 13.11f).” It is quite evident we need a high priest who has greater power than Aaron had.

The Hebrew Christians were quite familiar with high priests and the priesthood, but it was only the Levitical priesthood that they considered important.

After all, Melchisedec was only mentioned twice in the Old Testament; first in Genesis 14, and again in Psalm 110. This is scarcely what anyone would consider a heavily emphasized subject in the Hebrew Scriptures. Least of all would it seem important to those Hebrews to whom this book was written, who were so heavily influenced by the law of Moses, the Levitical priesthood, the temple, and the Pharisees. Yet Paul now resurrects the strange and until then seemingly unimportant subject of this ancient priest, Melchisedec, a man who was nearly forgotten by the Jews of Paul’s day. Now, seemingly out of nowhere, Paul presents Melchisedec as one of the greatest of all figures of Jesus Christ in His office of high priest for His people. In three chapters (Hebrews 5-7) Paul refers to Melchisedec by name nine times. It takes all three chapters and nine mentions to fully set forth how and why the priesthood of Christ is better than that of Levi. Paul must drive this point home because there were those in the church in Jerusalem who still thought the law of Moses and the Levitical system could not be improved upon. Everything said of Levi and the Levitical or Aaronic priesthood is also just as true of Moses and the law, however; for these two brothers, Moses and Aaron, were descendants of Levi, and together they comprise the one complete law-system.

“The churches of Judea were Hebrews, Jews, even the church in Jerusalem, who had been brought up under the ministry of the Levitical priesthood and the ceremonial law of Moses, to which they were wedded and devoted. They were therefore far more familiar with the order of the priesthood of Aaron than they were with the priesthood of the Son of God, who was a Priest for ever after the order of Melchisedec. Indeed, they did not understand the ancient, and far away Melchisedec and the order of his mysterious priesthood. But with the priesthood of Aaron they were familiar, and it seemed to them suitable and was congenial to the legal bias of their minds and hearts, for it was their home-born religion and mode of worship. Why, then, should they entirely give it up and turn away from it? Had not God himself given it

to them upon Sinai by his servant Moses, and commanded them to walk in all his judgments and statutes and do them?" (from *The Christ-Man in Type*, page 32, by Elder David Bartley).

WAS MELCHISEDEC REALLY CHRIST?

When the eternal Son of God was made in the likeness of men, in the fullness of time taking on Himself a body of flesh, this was referred to as His *incarnation*, meaning that He came in the flesh. On the other hand, an Old Testament appearance of God, when He manifested Himself as an angel or a man, is technically referred to as a *theophany* (Greek *theo-* God, and *phania*, appearance; literally, *an appearance of God*). Webster calls a theophany "a visible manifestation of a deity." Theophanies, when the Son of God visibly appeared in the Old Testament era, are also referred to as *pre-incarnate appearances*, then, because those appearances were *pre-* or before His *incarnation*.

We cannot assume, however, that just *any* man was a pre-incarnate appearance of Christ merely because he is a strong type, shadow, or figure of Him. If we did, then whenever we met such men as Isaac, Joseph, Moses, David, Solomon, Jonah, Cyrus, and others in the pages of our Bibles, we would continually be made to wonder if these men were whom we are told they were or if they were really Jesus making Old Testament appearances. Yea, our father Adam himself, being such a strong figure or type of Christ as he is, would come under question.

Regarding Melchisedec's being a real man, Elder H. H. Lefferts wrote:

"From the record of this man as it reads in both Genesis and Hebrews, there is nothing to warrant us in saying Melchisedec was not an actual, real, person. If he was no actual being and if he was simply a vision of Christ which appeared to Abraham, then we might just as well say that Adam or Noah or Moses or any other of the characters of the Old Testament were not real men, but simply figurative representatives of spiritual things." (Elder H. H. Lefferts, from the June, 1925 *Signs of the Times*, Volume 93, Issue Number 6, page 133.)

If Melchisedec were a theophany, then Jesus the Son of God would have had to have lived in the flesh for uncounted years in Abraham's day; for, remember, Melchisedec was a priest in the city of Salem, not just a one-time appearance to Abraham. And, Christ Jesus would have had to live in the fleshly body of Melchisedec from Abraham's day until now, for, remember again, "he abideth a high priest continually" and "for ever"; and we would then have Jesus Christ being a type or figure of Himself! We would now be left wondering where Melchisedec the Son of God was and what he was doing during the time of the earthly ministry of Jesus the Son of God. Not only so, but, if this thought is carried to the extreme such a position demands, then if Melchisedec is a priest forever, we would certainly want to know where Melchisedec is ministering today.

Most who insist that Melchisedec was a special appearance of Christ seem to base their reasoning on one passage of Scripture, Hebrews 7.2-3: *To whom also Abraham gave a tenth part of all; first being by interpretation King of righteousness, and after that also King of Salem, which is, King of peace; without father, without mother, without descent, having neither beginning of days, nor end of life; but made like unto the Son of God; abideth a priest continually.*

The argument is as follows: Melchisedec was King of righteousness and King of peace; so is Christ. Melchisedec had no parents ("without father, without mother"), no genealogy ("without descent"), no birth into this life ("having neither beginning of days"), and no death ("nor end of life"), but he "abideth a priest continually." This cannot describe a mere man, the argument goes; it must be that Melchisedec was really Christ.

But this approach ignores three chapters (Hebrews 5-7) in favor of two verses taken out of the context of those same three chapters. We cannot rightly conclude from these two verses, though, that Melchisedec literally had neither genealogy nor parents. We must be blessed to examine all else that is said of him, as a figure of Jesus Christ, in these three chapters of the book of Hebrews before we are able, by the grace of God and His enlightening Spirit, to reach a conclusion.

Elder David Bartley, in distinguishing between Melchisedec's manhood and his priesthood wrote,

“*Melchisedec* is both peculiar and wonderful. He was verily a man, a Son of woman, but no other man ever bore his name, so sacred is it...Thus it was **as a priest that Melchisedec was without descent, or father or mother in his priestly office, and had neither beginning of days, nor end of life; for he was a priest for ever and ever.**” (from *The Christ-Man in Type*, page 26, by Elder David Bartley; emphasis supplied.— Ed.).

A. W. Pink, commenting on Hebrews 7.3, points out that, if these statements had referred to Melchisedec as a *man*,

“it would surely be quite impossible to understand them. But it is not as a man he is referred to, but as *priest*. Once this is clearly seen and firmly grasped little or no difficulty remains.

“That Melchizedek was not a superhuman creature, a divine or angelic being, is unequivocally established by Heb. 5:1, where we are expressly told, ‘For every high priest taken *from among men* is ordained for men in things pertaining to God’...Observe carefully how that in v. 4 Melchizedek is expressly declared to be a ‘man’.” (A. W. Pink, *An Exposition of Hebrews*, Volume 1, page 365f)

Now consider how great this man was, unto whom even the patriarch Abraham gave the tenth of the spoils (Hebrews 7.4). Notice in this verse that Melchisedec is referred to as “this **man**.” He was a great **man**. While considering the high priest of our profession, Christ Jesus, also consider how great this man Melchisedec was. He was not a living man in Paul’s day, and he is not a living man today, but in Abraham’s day he was indeed a living **man**, and not God. As a *man*, he had parents, he was born, and he died. It was as a *priest* that his family line was ignored. Hebrews here emphasizes not his manhood, but his priesthood as a type of Christ.

It was totally necessary that, in order to be a priest, the Son of God must take upon Himself human nature. A priest, by the very definition of the office, approaches God in behalf of the people of whom he is a part and whom he represents. By God’s own

requirements Jesus could not be the high priest of His people until He was born into our sinful race. This fact is part of the wisdom of God, that thereby He might the greater show His love, grace, and mercy unto His own dear children. “Now a mediator is not a mediator of one, but God is one (Galatians 3.20).” That is, Christ the Son of God is one with His Father (John 10.30), and, as such, God does not have any need to mediate “between” Himself. The whole purpose of His being born into this low ground was to fulfill the God-given requirement that He be fully and completely identified with His people—in their human nature, their sufferings, their sorrow, their sins (which He bore vicariously; sin was on Him but not in Him), and their death. To be a fit Mediator, He must be one with His people no less than He is one with His Father! Nothing less could do. Therefore, to be a fit type or figure of Christ, Melchisedec must be a man and not a theophany.

MELCHISEDEC A FIGURE OF CHRIST

How, then, was Melchisedec a figure of Jesus Christ?

Without father, without mother, without descent. In the Levitical order, the priest’s family tree was indispensable: “And of the children of the priests: the children of Habaiah, the children of Koz...These sought their register among those that were reckoned by genealogy, but they were not found: therefore were they, as polluted, put from the priesthood (Ezra 2.61f).”

Melchisedec, remember, was *the* priest of the Most High God, yet he was under no such family constraints as were the Levites. He had a “descent” as all priests of necessity do, but Melchisedec’s descent *is not counted* from a man or among men. Even Christ Jesus, as a *man*, had earthly parents (Joseph was thought to be the father of Jesus and is classed as one of His parents in Luke 2.41), beginning of days (Matthew 1.18), end of life (Matthew 27.50), and genealogy or descent as to His fleshly body (Matthew 1.1-17 and Luke 3.23-38). If it is not clearly understood that Melchisedec had genealogy and parents, beginning and end, though they were unrecorded, then the type, Melchisedec, would be greater than the antitype, Christ Jesus. But this is impossible, because in all things Jesus Christ must have the preeminence (Colossians 1.18).

This fact that Melchisedec had a descent, but that descent was not counted from men, introduces one of Paul's major points, the fact that *Melchisedec was descended but not from Levi*: "And verily they that are of the sons of Levi, who receive the office of the priesthood, have a commandment to take tithes of the people according to the law, that is, of their brethren, though they come out of the loins of Abraham: But he [Melchisedec] **whose descent is not counted from them** [the tribe of Levi] received tithes of Abraham, and blessed him that had the promises (Hebrews 7.5-6)."

Paul's argument is, the priesthood of Melchisedec was an entirely different order from the Levitical priesthood, and Melchisedec's order was one in which tracing and proving his genealogy was not required.

Melchisedec was already a fully functioning priest among the Canaanite Gentiles in 1963 BC, when Abram arrived in the land the Lord had promised to him. Melchisedec was in this sense "before" Abraham, and he therefore certainly was before Abraham's great-grandson Levi was born over 170 years later. Much more so, then, Melchisedec was before Levi's own great-grandsons, Moses (born in 1613 BC) and Aaron.

Having neither beginning of days nor end of life is understood in the same way. "This is it that belongeth unto the Levites: from twenty and five years old and upward they shall go in to wait upon the service of the tabernacle of the congregation: and from the age of fifty years they shall cease waiting upon the service thereof, and shall serve no more (Numbers 8.24f)." Their *days of service* began at the age of twenty-five; their *life of service* ended when they turned fifty. No such boundaries were placed upon Melchisedec.

Yet we know in reason that, in respect to his "having neither beginning of days nor end of life," the priesthood of Melchisedec was only a figure of the priesthood of Jesus Christ. That is so, and it must be so, unless the one who would run this type into the ground is prepared to say that, for all these four thousand years, from Abraham's time to ours, Melchisedec has been and is still over there, somewhere, today, still officiating as the priest of the Most High God. And, if such were the case, then where

would be the validity of the priesthood of Jesus Christ? For that would leave us with an eternal Melchisedec who yet maintains a valid priesthood that has not been set aside by the finished work of Christ.

One can go too far, then, with types and shadows, worshipping the picture as though it were the God it represents. The ark of the covenant and the mercy seat were not Jesus Christ; they only pictured Him in certain ways. Melchisedec was not Jesus Christ; he only pictured Him in these respects:

1. In that there is no record of his parents, Melchisedec typifies Christ's eternal deity. Being God manifest in the flesh, the Christ had no parents; being eternal, He had no *origin*. "The Lord possessed me in the beginning of his way, before his works of old. I was set up from everlasting, from the beginning, or ever the earth was. When there were no depths, I was brought forth; when there were no fountains abounding with water. Before the mountains were settled, before the hills was I brought forth: While as yet he had not made the earth, nor the fields, nor the highest part of the dust of the world. When he prepared the heavens, I was there: when he set a compass upon the face of the depth: When he established the clouds above: when he strengthened the fountains of the deep: When he gave to the sea his decree, that the waters should not pass his commandment: when he appointed the foundations of the earth: **Then I was by him, as one brought up with him:** and I was daily his delight, rejoicing always before him (Proverbs 8.22-30)." In the minds of some readers, a few of the preceding phrases might seem to indicate the Son of God had a timely beginning; but what removes all such speculation is the latter statement, "Then I was by Him [the Father], as one brought up with Him. The Son was one with the Father, as a twin, "as one brought up with Him"; that is, coexistent and co-eternal. It's another way of saying, if the Son had a beginning—which He did not—then so did the Father, at the same point. "I and my Father are one."

2. Having no recorded beginning of days (birth), and no recorded end of life (death), Melchisedec typifies this eternity of Christ. This point is different from that immediately preceding, in that the first point primarily has to do with parentage. The

fact that Christ had no beginning or ending has to do with His ongoing and eternal existence itself, without consideration of parents.

CHRIST'S PRIESTHOOD IS BETTER

Having investigated at length the subject as to whether or not Melchisedec was really a pre-incarnate appearance of Christ or only a figure of Him, let us not become weary and lose sight of Paul's real argument: Christ's priesthood is better than the Levitical priesthood because

1. Christ is high priest after an order that was older and better than the Levitical order, that of Melchisedec;

2. The order of Melchisedec better typifies the eternity of Christ's priesthood better than that of the Levitical;

3. Melchisedec and his priesthood were proved better than the Levitical law, and Levi and his priesthood were conversely proved to be subject to Melchisedec, because Levi paid tithes to Melchisedec while he was still in Abraham. Levi was yet in the loins of his father when Melchisedec met him: "Levi also, who receiveth tithes, payed tithes in Abraham. For he was yet in the loins of his father, when Melchisedec met him (7.9f)." This reestablishes the biblical principle, first revealed at the time of Adam's fall, of the federal headship of the father representing his unborn offspring. Other than Adam's unborn posterity and their fall in him, Levi in the loins of Abraham is perhaps the clearest of all examples of this principle in the Scriptures.

4. The order of Melchisedec provides grace and salvation for Gentiles without the necessity of their becoming Jews. When Abraham arrived in the promised land, God already had a people and a priesthood among the Gentiles.

5. Perfection cannot come from law-worship through the Levitical priesthood. The proof is given, "If therefore perfection were by the Levitical priesthood, (for under it the people received the law,) what further need was there that another priest should rise after the order of Melchisedec, and not be called after the order of Aaron (7.11)?"

6. The law is changed along with the change of a priesthood. Aaron's priesthood was done away with, and with it, the Levitical law was fulfilled by

Christ. "For the priesthood being changed, there is made of necessity a change also of the law (7.12)."

7. As the tribe of Levi was set aside, so their priesthood is also set aside. Jesus came born into the tribe of Judah: "For it is evident that our Lord sprang out of Juda; of which tribe Moses spake nothing concerning priesthood (7.14)."

8. This high priest Jesus was not Melchisedec but was after the similitude of, or similar to him. *Similar* to him means *like* him or *resembling* him. "And it is yet far more evident: for that after the similitude of Melchisedec there ariseth another priest, who is made, not after the law of a carnal commandment, but after the power of an endless life (7.15f)." Although Melchisedec was literally a man, his ministry was, as it were, a parable of the eternal priesthood of Jesus.

9. The Levites were made priests by a carnal commandment; that is, God commanded the Levites after the flesh to be priests. But the Lord God neither promised them they could always be priests nor swore to them to that effect. Jesus, on the other hand, was not made a priest by a mere carnal commandment, but by the power of His endless life.

10. God swore with an oath that the Lord Jesus Christ would be priest as long as He lives, which is eternally: "For those [Levitical] priests were made without an oath; but this [Jesus] with an oath by him that said unto him, The Lord sware and will not repent, Thou art a priest for ever after the order of Melchisedec (7.21)."

SUMMARY

The people of God have a better priesthood than that of the Old Covenant. As our opening text says, this is "without all contradiction." It cannot be denied or refuted. How, then, in the face of Paul's inspired argument, could the world expect to produce "a better vineyard" (1 Kings 21.2) than this, the heritage of the saints of God? They cannot, but the Ahabs of this world will always be trying to improve upon the wisdom of our God and the priesthood of His Christ.

We hope at some future date, if the Lord so wills, to look at some more of the better things the Lord has provided in the New Covenant for His people.

—Elder C. C. Morris

Editor's note: The following editorial by Elder Gilbert Beebe is from the forthcoming Volume 7 of the *Editorials of Elder Gilbert Beebe*. Lord willing, we will keep our readers informed about the release date of Volume 7 as the information becomes available.

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THE GOSPEL COMMISSION

Capeville, VA.
March 23, 1868.

Elder G. Beebe:—Was the command, “Go ye into all the world, and preach the gospel to every creature,” given exclusively to the apostles, or is it applicable to the ministers of God in these days?

Yours sincerely,
Jesse S. Smith.

Reply:—This command was given to the eleven disciples, as they sat at meat, as stated in the preceeding verse; and the eleven to whom it was immediately addressed were all of them apostles, and the same unto whom our Lord had, on a former occasion, given power over unclean spirits, to cast them out, and to heal all manner of sickness, and all manner of diseases, etc. But on that former occasion he commanded them to go not into the way of the Gentiles, nor into any city of the Samaritans; but he directed them to go rather unto the lost sheep of the house of Israel (Matthew 10:1-15). But now their commission is extended to Gentiles and Samaritans, or, without limitation to all the world; their holy vocation, as on the former occasion, was also to be attested by signs following, in healing the sick, casting out devils, etc.

But the question is suggested, If this commission, or command, was given exclusively to the apostles, on what divine authority do the ministers of the gospel now preach and baptize?

When our great Redeemer arose from the dead, and ascended up on high, he gave gifts unto men, or to his church, and he gave some apostles, and some prophets, and some evangelists, and some pastors and teachers, for the perfecting of the saints, for the work of the ministry, for the edifying of the body of Christ, till we all come in the unity of the faith, and of the knowledge of the Son of God, unto a perfect man; unto the measure of the stature of the fullness of Christ (Ephesians 4:8-

13). The apostles, being filled with the inspiration of the Holy Ghost, were seated in judgment on thrones of unquestionable authority to judge the twelve tribes of Israel; or the gospel church which answers to that figure. They were by the supreme Head of the church invested with authority to instruct the church in all things, whatsoever Christ had commanded them. In this investment of authority was included all the instructions requisite for the recognition of the gifts, which the exalted Savior received for, and gave to his church, and the rule by which the church should discriminate between the gifts bestowed, and assign to each its appropriate place in the church. There is diversity of gifts, but they are all by but one spirit, and God has placed them in the body or church as it hath pleased him.

The apostles have decided that no man taketh this honor (of the gospel ministry) upon him, but he that is called of God, as was Aaron (to the priesthood). In the calling and qualification to the work, God by his Spirit makes such impressions on the mind of his chosen ones for that service, as are to them unmistakable, and at the same time, by the same spirit, it is made known also to the church, that such a gift is among them. As when it was said “Separate unto me Barnabas and Saul for the work whereunto the Holy Ghost has called them.” The instructions for both ministers and church are carefully recorded by the apostles. Their relative duties and privileges are clearly stated. The special instructions to the ministers are found in the charge given by Paul to Timothy, Titus and the elders of the church at Ephesus, and in the concurrent instructions of the other apostles. And although none of the Lord's ministers of our times can presume to occupy the places and infallible inspiration of the apostles, or to sit with them on thrones of judgment; yet they all have the apostles as examples, and are commanded to follow them, as they followed Christ. They are to continue steadfastly in the apostles' doctrine and fellowship, in breaking of bread, and in prayer, and feed the church of God, over which the Holy Ghost has made them overseers.

Having frequently expressed our understanding of the apostolic commission, in its general bearings, in this article we have endeavored to restrict our remarks to the points on which our views were desired.

Middletown, N. Y.
April 15, 1868.

Editor's note: The following article was first written by Elder Jonas C. Sikes, one hundred years ago this year. It was first published in *The Gospel News*, in April, 1900, as indicated in Elder Sikes' introductory note. What follows is the article as it was republished in *The Lone Pilgrim*, Selma, N.C., May, 1928, Vol. 6, No. 64.

Together, Elder Sikes and Elder J. R. Hardy were the presbytery that organized Saints Rest Predestinarian Primitive Baptist Church in Dallas, Texas, a short time after this article was originally written.

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Dear Brother Hutchens:

I am sending you the first article I ever wrote on the subject of Predestination. It was published in *The Gospel News*, April 1900. I have never changed in the least from the position I then held on this doctrine.

J. C. Sikes

PREDESTINATION

By Elder Jonas C. Sikes
Sulphur Bluff, Texas

I think it is hurtful and wrong to make a hobby of any one point of doctrine (even though it be the truth) to the exclusion of all others, yet I think we should preach a full gospel and not shun to declare the whole counsel of God. But I think it is the best, yea, the wisest and only scriptural course, when speaking on this or any other subject (and especially when we know that some of the dear saints differ from us), to be kind and gentle and meekly instruct them. It has been said that "good words do more than hard speeches." The warm sunshine on a spring morning will make the farmer pull off his overcoat, while all the blustering winds of winter will only make him draw it closer to him. If we would do like Solomon, we would seek to find out acceptable words, yet we should not go so far in that direction as to forsake the truth. He says, "The preacher sought to find out acceptable words, and that which is written is upright, even words of truth". I think this would be a wise course for all of God's ministers, and I desire to follow it.

With this much said, I now desire to say something on the subject of predestination. I desire that after my departure my friends may have my views on

this all-important subject. I think that the statement in the London Confession of Faith with reference to this subject is highly correct, i.e., that "this high mystery of predestination should be handled with special prudence and care." How well I shall be able to succeed in doing this, will be left for your readers to judge.

Predestination means a previous purpose or a previous determination; Webster defines it as the "purpose of God from eternity respecting all events." I accept this as its true meaning. Yet Webster was only a man and must not be considered as infallible in divine things.

This doctrine can never be understood as long as we try to measure it by anything short of God himself. The nearer we come to an understanding of him, what he is, and the nature of his divine attributes, the nearer we will come to a full and complete understanding of this doctrine.

1st. God is eternal. Hence, His purposes or determinations must also be eternal, if He is eternally perfect in all his attributes. I shall not claim that His purpose is an attribute, but it is the outgrowth (to say the least of it) of wisdom. And here I would note that when I say wisdom, that I do not mean knowledge. Wisdom is one thing and knowledge is another, as you will find by consulting the 11th chapter of Romans. Wisdom in man is that natural attribute by which he is enabled to study or investigate and find out things which he would not otherwise know. Hence, when he gets to the limit of his wisdom or intellectual powers in an investigation he can go no farther; he has found out all he can know about it. But if his wisdom had been perfect, he would have seen through the whole thing at a glance the first time it was presented to his mind. Hence, his knowledge of it would have been perfect. God being eternally perfect in wisdom, has known all things. I shall not claim as to the order of time that God's wisdom is older than his knowledge, for then I would set up for a time a God of wisdom without any knowledge. But I will say that in the order of thought, wisdom is the real basis or foundation of all knowledge. Wisdom is the basic attribute of the Deity, by which he is governed in all his other attributes. Without wisdom, power would be misused, love would be without a true guide, justice and judgment could not exist,

mercy would be a misnomer; in fact, chaos would reign supreme, and "God" would be a name for nothing. So then, wisdom being the foundation of all that is right, I desire upon this foundation to build my structure.

It has been suggested by some that if we could prove that the first transgression was predestinated, then the predestination of all things could be established. So to this end I shall first direct my attention. In the first place, I would ask, Did not God know that if he made Adam as he did and placed him where he would be subjected to the evil influence of the serpent, that he would transgress? If not, where is the perfection of his wisdom? If he did, why did he make him and place him thus? Was it because he was not able to make a perfect man? One that would not yield to temptation? One that could not be corrupted? If, so, where is the perfection of his power? If he did not have the power then, and has never, nor will never increase in power, will he ever be able to take a poor, fallen wretch and make a perfect and incorruptible man out of him? I suppose, however, that all who claim to be Primitive Baptists will admit that he had both the wisdom and power to have had it different, if he had wanted it different, but this would be an admission that he did not want it different, which would be to say that he wanted it to come to pass as it did. These are self evident facts. If God wanted it to be different from the way it came to pass is it not remarkably strange that he arranged things so that he knew that it would not work out as he wanted it when he could only have thought how he wanted it to be and said let it be so and it would have been so? It is a self evident fact that needs no argument to prove it, that either the introduction of sin into the world was according to God's purpose, or else the whole covenant plan of redemption, the advent of Christ into the world, all of his righteous life, all his sufferings and death, His resurrection and ascension are not the result of God's free and independent purpose, for it was to redeem man from the consequences of this act and its outgrowth that all the above took place. Hence, if the transgression was not a part of God's eternal purpose then it follows that the covenant of redemption owes its existence (not to the free and independent purpose of God outside of any extraneous influence,

but) to the act of a man by which it was made necessary and a way opened up for it to enter. So in order of thought it would stand thus: 1st. God determined to make a man. 2d. He saw that man would transgress. 3d. He devised a plan of redemption. This cuts God's purpose in two, and sets them thus: 1st. God's free and independent purpose to create man. 2d. God's knowledge of man's independent act in transgression. 3rd. God's necessitated purpose to redeem man, influenced by what he foresaw. If we follow this stream to its end where will it empty? If God had rather sin had not entered the world then it follows that there has never been one single act, or creature, or thing, in this universe that has been as God originally would rather have had it; because every act, creature, or thing, has been in some way affected by sin, which God had rather had never existed. Even the earth, with which every living thing has to do, was cursed because of transgression, which God would rather have had different. Not even one act of the holy son of God was as God would rather have had it for His acts were to redeem sinners, when God had rather there had been no sinners to redeem. Nor throughout all eternity can anything be as it would have pleased God to have had it, for it will be one eternal song and shouts from redeemed sinners praising Him for their redemption, when God had rather that man had not sinned, then there would have been no redemption from sin and no shouting of praises by redeemed sinners. I shall trace this stream no farther at present, for I see from its course that it empties into the broad ocean of infidelity.

But all of the above is true and much more that might be said, if God did not purpose that sin should enter the world. It is said that God foreknew that man would sin and he THEREFORE made arrangements to meet it. But stop, my brother, this "THEREFORE" is what I object to. It says that the foreseen act of man was the cause of God making the covenant, so you see at once that if this act of man was not embraced in God's purpose then the origin of the covenant is owing partly (to say the least of it) to something outside of God, or His purpose. This branch empties into the stream which we have just left, so we will quit it. You say that God foreknew that man would sin, so say I. But I would ask upon

whom did this foreseen act of man then depend? Man was not yet created, and his existence depended yet wholly upon God and the fulfillment of His purpose, and surely none can think that man's act could ever have been, had there been no man to act. So then, this foreseen act of man could not have been any less dependent upon the fulfillment of God's purpose for existence than was the man by whom it was to come.

Having thus far confined myself to what seems to be self-evident facts and irresistible conclusions, I will now notice some scripture on the subject.

I will first call attention to Gen. i:28. "And God blessed them and God said unto them, Be fruitful and multiply and replenish the earth and subdue it." Now, the word replenish means to fill up. From this it will be seen that instead of God meaning for them to remain in the garden, He meant for them to fill up and inhabit the entire earth. To this we will add the 29th verse. "And God said, Behold, I have given you every herb-bearing seed which is upon the face of ALL THE EARTH, and EVERY TREE in which is the fruit of a tree yielding seed, IT SHALL BE TO YOU FOR MEAT." In the first place, we see from this, that man was intended to inhabit the entire earth, from the fact that the fruits that grow on all the face of the earth were to be for meat to him. And in the second place, we see that the fruit of every tree on earth was to be to them for meat. Some questions might arise in our minds right here. Was there any such a tree in all the earth that yielded fruit as the tree of knowledge of good and evil? If so, was it to be for them for meat? If not, what does the above language mean? But I will pass this for the present.

We next call attention to Acts xvii: 24-26. "God who made the world and all things therein, seeing that He is Lord of heaven and earth, dwelleth not in temples made with hands, neither is worshipped with man's hands, as though He needed anything, seeing He giveth to all life and breath and all things; and hath made of one blood all nations of men FOR TO DWELL ON ALL THE FACE OF THE EARTH and hath determined the times before appointed and the bounds of their habitation." It is clearly seen from this as well as from Genesis, that God's purpose was (not that man should remain in the garden, but) that he should dwell on all the face of the earth. This is

what Paul says that he made them FOR. Much might be said right here, but this article is going to grow lengthy, so I must pass on. I will now call your attention to Gen. ii:5, "And there was not a man to till the ground." The next verse tells of God watering the earth and making man. Now, what would we reasonably conclude from the above scripture, was God's purpose for making man. I think all reasonable men would say, "to till the ground." The other passages referred to show that God purposed that man should dwell on all the face of the earth and all of the fruits of the various trees thereof should be to them for meat, while this one shows that God purposed that man should till the ground. Some say, "O, yes, this is all true, but it is because God foresaw that man would transgress that he purposed to scatter them on all the face of the earth and have them till the ground." But then we would be forced to admit one of two things, i. e., that this foreseen transgression was a part of God's original purpose, or else the cause of this purpose to scatter them on all the face of the earth and that they should till the ground was outside of both God and His original purpose to make man. This again resolves itself into the absurd position which we have already noticed: 1st. That God freely and independently purposed to make man. 2nd. That he foresaw that man would not do as he wanted him to. 3rd. That God was governed in all of His other purposes concerning man, both for time and eternity, by the foreseen act of man rather than his own sovereign and independent will and choice. But I must quit this part of the subject and notice for awhile the reason why God created all things. It is said by Solomon that "The Lord has made all things for himself, yea even the wicked for the day of evil." From this we learn that He made all things for himself. It is said in Revelation that "Thou hast made all things for thyself and for thy pleasure they ARE [now exist] and were created." From this we find that they were all created for His pleasure, and they ARE still existing for the same purpose. In Colossians it is said, "All things were created by Him and for Him." This is enough to prove that God had a use for all that He created. Now it is admitted by all that some men come into the world sinners, they live in sin and they die in sin and go to eternal perdition. Will someone please tell me whether or not God's

purpose in creating them is or will be fulfilled in them?

God's purpose in time and all created things is, I think, for the manifestations of His own glory. In other words, to manifest Himself in all of His divine perfections and manifestly glor[if]y Himself in all of His attributes. Now, we read of His own eternal purpose, His immutable counsel, the counsel of His will, etc., so in order of thought we say that God held a council in eternity. He was guided by wisdom, and consulted His own will. In this council was considered all things that He now works after the counsel of His will. As a result of that council the world was created and all things therein. Now look at this creation as it fell from the plastic hand of the creator. Is it not wonderful? Yea, marvelous? But how many of the attributes of the Deity do you see manifested in this wonderful work? Only two, wisdom and power. Wisdom to contrive this wonderful plan and power to perform it. Wisdom and power are here manifested as being infinitely great, but love, mercy, justice, wrath, and His immortal purity are yet unknown to man and must remain so as long as man remains in his state of innocence. He can love man just the same in his upright as in his fallen state, but love cannot be manifested in its fullness so as to glorify God in this attribute. "If ye love them that love you what reward have ye: do not even the publicans the same?" So God's love could not be manifested in its fullness on them that loved Him. "Peradventure for a good man some would even dare to die," so if Christ had died for a good man it would have manifested no more love than perhaps some men would have done, so then it must be true that for God's love to be manifested in its fullness man must fall from his good and upright state. Man fell, and it is said that "God commendeth His love toward us, in that while we were yet sinners Christ died for us," also, that "God, who is rich in mercy, for his great love wherewith he loved us, even when we were dead in sins, hath quickened us together with Christ." Here we have His great love most gloriously manifested on fallen man.

Next we come to mercy. The above text says, "But God, who is rich in mercy...." Yes, He is rich in mercy, but how can mercy be bestowed on one who is not a sinner?

How could the great richness of God's mercy ever have been manifested without a transgressor?

But man transgressed and now God can make known the riches of His glory on the vessels of mercy, which He had afore prepared unto glory. Yet notwithstanding the greatness of God's love, and the richness of His mercy, they must have been forever unknown and unappreciated if man had not become a sinner.

These two most glorious attributes, however, could not reach the case of, nor benefit, a sinner at the expense, or exclusion, of justice. Justice, in its greatness could not be manifested in a world of sinless, upright beings, but when man transgressed, she laid her iron hand upon him; love nor mercy cannot reach him only through justice. Behold what unrelenting justice. Before she will swerve one jot or one tittle she will take the heir of heaven, the only son of the supreme judge, who sits upon the great white throne, and slay him for the crime.

Love and mercy, guided by wisdom, offers him as a ransom. Justice, guided by wisdom, accepts him in behalf of all for whom he became surety. But God continues to show His wrath and make His power known on the vessels of wrath fitted to destruction. Through all of this we can see God in His true character. His attributes are most gloriously manifested in the creation of the world and His dealings with sinners, and I feel sure that this course has been no second choice with Him.

Man may determine to do a thing and seeing that it will not work out as he desired it should, make some subsequent arrangements to meet and rectify in measure this foreseen, yet undesirable event. But the all-glorious eternal "I AM" has never been so hard-pressed as that. But this is exactly the light He must be held in by all who hold that He did not purpose that sin should exist. They must divide His purposes into two sets, anterior and posterior.

His anterior purpose being His purpose to create all things, which purposes would be absolutely free from, and independent of, and in no way influenced, or hampered by, any unpleasant foreseen event, which was coming up outside of His purposes. His posterior purposes being all such as relate to man as a sinner. The covenant of redemption. The punishment of sin. In fact, all of His dealings with man as a sinner from the morn of transgression to the eve of eternity would come under the head of His posterior purposes, being made as the result of, and to meet and deal with, an unpleasant foreseen event, which was

coming up outside of, and in no way attributable to, His purpose.

Such a petty God may do to speculate upon, but it is not the God before whom the four and twenty elders fell down in wonder and admiration, and cast their glittering crowns before His throne, shouting, "Thou art worthy, O Lord, to receive glory and honor and power: for thou hast created all things, and for thy pleasure they are and were created." The man who believes that the transgression was a foreseen event not embraced in God's eternal purpose, and that the covenant was made to meet this exterior foreseen event, must admit that God has anterior and posterior purposes. And that His anterior purposes are based on an interior cause (the counsel of His will), and His posterior purposes are based on an exterior cause (an unpurposed foreseen event). We are all bound to admit that in the order of thought God's knowledge of man's transgression was based on His determination to make man, for had there been no determination to make man there would have been no knowledge that there would be a man to transgress, and if there had been no knowledge that there would be a man to transgress there would have been no covenant made to redeem man for transgression. So we are forced to either take the position that it was all from start to finish embraced in God's eternal and unchangeable purpose, or that He has anterior purposes based upon interior causes, and posterior purposes based upon exterior causes. The latter is Arminianism straight, so you can see at a glance that I believe in the predestination of all things. I shall not try to add to the strength of this doctrine by the use of the term "Absolute," nor diminish its force by the use of the term "Permissive."

I have neither time nor inclination at present to enlarge upon this subject, for my article has grown too lengthy already. But I will say this much more, if the logic contained herein is true with reference to the first transgression, it is also true with reference to every other event of time. This is my first, and may be my last, upon this subject, but I desired to record my views upon it before I go hence. With me it is either an Almighty God who works all things after the counsel of His will, or no God at all. I fail to find any standing room between this and atheism.

If this scribble should help any poor, halting child to a better understanding of this profoundly deep and

mysterious subject I would be glad to hear from them. With love to all the household of faith I remain a poor, unworthy sinner, saved by grace if saved at all.

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We believe these principles are, in the main, harmonious with the articles of faith published by predestinarian associations and churches of the old order of Baptists known as Primitive, Particular, or Old School Baptists the world over.

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2—The Old and New Testaments in their original languages are the verbally inspired word of God, and they are the complete and only valid guide of faith and practice; the King James Version is the preferred English translation;

3—The will of the eternal God is the first cause of all causes;

4—The absolute predestination of all things;

5—The eternal personal election of the redeemed in Christ, before the world began, and their eternal, vital union with Him; their number is fixed, certain, and sure, and can neither be increased nor diminished; their fall in their federal head Adam into spiritual death, total depravity, and just condemna-

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6—The blood atonement and redemption by Jesus Christ are for the elect only, and are both efficacious and effectual in accomplishing the will and purpose of God to reconcile His people unto Himself;

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10—The peaceable fruits of righteousness are the certain result of God's working in His people both to will and to do of His good pleasure, and His people will be found walking in paths of righteousness for His name's sake;

11—The separation of church and state;

12—The principles outlined in the Black Rock Address of 1832;

13—The bodily resurrection, first of Christ, and also that of all the dead;

14—The final and eternal judgment; and,

15—The bliss of the redeemed and the torment of the wicked are both eternal and everlasting.