

The Remnant

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

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PREDESTINATION FROM GENESIS TO REVELATION No. 22 II KINGS

NAAMAN THE LEPER

Now Naaman, captain of the host of the king of Syria, was a great man with his master, and honourable, because by him the Lord had given deliverance unto Syria: he was also a mighty man in valour, but he was a leper (II Kings 5.1.)

This has been a captivating chronicle for the family of God for centuries. Few can read it without realizing with God all things are possible. With the exception of one quotation in Luke, Naaman is mentioned only in II Kings 5. If the narrative were viewed only as the history of a miracle performed by Elisha it would still be interesting reading, but the reader will miss much without knowing something of the spiritual content.

The aim of this article, and one to follow, should the Lord enable, is to go beyond bare history to view the story as a positive and blessed landmark in the path of the just to truth in Jesus. “But the path of the just is as the shining light, that shineth more and more unto the perfect day (Proverbs 4.18).” May our path shine brilliantly as we approach our perfect day.

Each individual introduced in this remarkable account fit their position precisely as the Lord had

predestinated they fill it. We believe that after a careful reading, the spiritual child of God cannot fail to see, not only the beauty and marvel this episode portrays, but the necessity of every element unfolding with exacting precision. If that sounds somewhat akin to predestination, then our humble goal has been at least partially accomplished.

THE INVOLVED

Naaman

“Now Naaman, captain of the host of the king of Syria....” Naaman was a man of considerable prominence. He occupied a position few dream of obtaining. However, God had singled him out to endure a horrible disease. He also prepared for him a marvelous cure.

Even casually reviewing the Word of God one sees persons appointed beneficiaries of a miracle or special dispensation from Jehovah coming from every rank of society. The rich, the poor, the wise, the foolish, young and old, the infirm from all walks of life; each was specially called by God. Especially true is the case of Naaman. He was the leading general in the Syrian army, a position not easily obtained. The lives of multitudes hung on a simple whim from this exalted captain. Whatever favors and rewards were afforded a man in his position, they were his for the asking. His was a station of luxury, preferment, reverence, splendor, fame, and just about anything else a man of his rank might desire. Not knowing his leprous affliction, it would be easy to admire, even covet, his station in life.

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Elder C. C. Morris
Editor and Publisher
P O Box 1004
Hawkins, Texas 75765-1004
Phone 1-903-769-4822

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Address all correspondence to:

THE REMNANT PUBLICATIONS
P O BOX 1004
HAWKINS, TX 75765-1004

E-mail: cc2morris@aol.com
ccmorris@juno.com
jfpoole@dmv.com

Visit our Web site at:
www.the-remnant.com

May our Lord teach us to be contented with whatever our lot in life may be.

“[Naaman] was a great man with his master.” How unusual! Rarely did kings allow themselves to have emotional ties with those under their authority. There was always the risk (in their minds) of mutiny, plots or subterfuge of some sort, capable of wresting the king from his throne. Of most potentates it could be said their position was tenuous at best. Nevertheless, the working arrangement between the Syrian king and Naaman was such that even an unhumiliated Arminian might pause to see if the hand of God was in the matter. (They may even admit that *perhaps* God even planned it that way.) A thought to keep in mind is the king’s eagerness to send Naaman to Samaria for a cure based solely on

the brief utterance of a captive little maid. Under different circumstances this might well have been impossible. With God all things are possible.

Naaman, the captain of the Syrian host was, as well, described as “honourable.” The word honourable here should not be understood as a particular inherent quality inclining him to noble deeds or practices worthy of praise. Rather it seems to mean his honour was chiefly a result of “...because by him the Lord had given deliverance unto Syria.” History compels the reader to acknowledge the Syrians gave honor to Naaman rather than the Lord, by whom deliverance had come to them. These people cared nothing for the God of Israel. Naaman was an instrument in the hand of God to bring deliverance to Syria.

This deliverance was not for any change of mind by God towards these heathens. Rather, it was to elevate Naaman in their eyes and his master, the king of Syria. Consider: leprosy abounded in that day. Had Naaman been a mere soldier of lower rank or station the wheels of progress would not have budged in his favor. (What a joy for the saints of God to see here His handiwork in each event.) Naaman gains favor with the king. But it was of the Lord for Naaman to bring deliverance to Syria. Naaman at some point became a leper. What should have been a source of much anguish, shame and sorrow is actually the means to bring Naaman to know the God of Israel. All these things were working together for good.

“But he was a leper.” This leprosy, the dreaded plague, cast a shroud of darkness and grief over the life of Naaman and his family. But, praise God, it was this very affliction that would impel him to seek out the prophet of the Lord in Samaria. May we then be not hasty in concluding the sorrows of life serve no good purpose. How sweet to join with the poet and say:

Resistless Sov’rign of the skies,
Immensely great! Immensely wise!
My times are all within thy hand,
And all events at thy command.

His great decree, who form’d the earth,
Hath fixed my first and second birth:
My parents, native place, and time,
Were all assign’d to me by him.

A Little Maid

“And the Syrians had gone out by companies, and had brought away captive out of the land of Israel a little maid; and she waited on Naaman’s wife (II Kings 5.2).” It was common for companies from warring armies to send out bands to plunder, lay waste, create panic and also take a few captives to serve their foreign masters. Such was the lot of this little maid, taken from among Israel’s families. Pitiless and cruel, these raiders cared nothing for the grief and anguish this would bring the parents and others who perhaps knew and loved this little maid. Swift as a striking bolt of lightning she was wrested from her family. Her happy home slipped away into the distance as she was carried off like a cheap trinket derived from the spoils of victory.

The wretchedness resulting from this cruel act cannot be stressed enough. It could be nothing less than an episode filled with terror for the little girl. No doubt it was a time of extreme helplessness for her parents. What could they do in the face of certain death should they resist or plea to the annoyance of the maid’s captors? A parent’s worst nightmare had just doomed the family circle. A worse happening cannot be imagined; it can only be dreaded. The sweet smile of a beloved daughter was now but a bittersweet memory. And for what? We shall, the Lord willing, see.

“His providence unfolds the book,
And makes his counsels shine;
Each opening leaf, and ev’ry stroke
Fulfills some deep design.”

“A little maid.” What could she do? Powerless to resist, unable to escape, she could only submit to her merciless captors. For a little maid accustomed to a loving home this had to be an extremely confusing time. That she was not ravaged and ruined by her ruthless abductors was nothing less than a miracle. Tramping farther from home with each step, having nothing with which to plead, and as pleading could only anger her captors, she was simply merchandise in the market of an evil world. It is just here that we begin to see the unfolding providence of our God. Remember Joseph, years before, in similar straits? What an astonishing chain of events transpired, all resulting from the cruel banishment from his family and then his subsequent captivity.

Even so, this unnamed little maid fulfills her role among the events comprising the unsearchable riches of God’s eternal purposes in all things and for every son and daughter of Adam. Those who may read this episode and who do not believe God had a plan worthy of Himself in the captivity of the little maid, by eliminating other options must believe she was dispatched out into a merciless world, through no fault of her own, and left to flounder on her own. (In the meanwhile God looked on, from time to time, to see what might take place next.) Is it any wonder Predestinarians consider Arminians and assorted other Conditionalists little more than blasphemers? May the blessed Name of the Lord be praised, this little maid, despite her dark trials, had been appointed spokesman for the only hope Naaman the leper would have. We may safely, and with joy, identify her among the many other women throughout the Scriptures whom God was pleased to raise up to extol His glory and power under extreme circumstances.

“And she waited on Naaman’s wife.” Dare the infidel Conditionalist lay this to chance? Had the whimsical breezes of the fates wafted her safely into the home of Naaman? Perhaps, according to the notion of the blinded world, she had beaten the odds? No, the sure purposes of God led this little maid to the home of Naaman where she was at the side of his wife, secured from the rabble which usually make up the numbers of an army. Should any of us then fear the strange vicissitudes of life while we are blessed to trust in the God of this little maid? This little maid had come to the place where, sent of God, she would reveal to the wife of Naaman a simple truth. That truth was, there was a prophet of God in Samaria with heavenly power and authority to work a miracle heretofore unknown to these heathen people.

“Would God my lord were with the prophet that is in Samaria! For he would recover him of his leprosy.” Considering the appalling circumstances in which this little maid found herself she remarkably evidenced tender feelings towards her captors. She manifested no bitterness. Displaying emotional kindness of an extraordinary nature, the little maid laments her master’s dreaded condition. Moreover, she believes he would be cured if only he were in Samaria where the prophet of the Lord resided. Her astonishing statement certainly had the characteris-

tics of prayer: “Would God my lord were with the prophet that is in Samaria.” Without a trace of either shame or resentment she conducted herself in a manner worthy of all those that profess a hope in Christ. Surely those things that are hid from the wise and prudent have been revealed to babes. The reason? “Even so, Father: for so it seemed good in thy sight (Matthew 11.26).”

How did this little maid know the old prophet in Samaria would, or even could, cure Naaman of his leprosy? She certainly had never seen him rid a leper of his leprosy. Neither had anyone else that might have been able to tell her if it was so. She was not speaking from first hand knowledge, or even hearsay. She could only be speaking from *the voice of faith*; God would empower the prophet to do what had never been done before. Remember the only other place besides II Kings 5 where Naaman is mentioned in the Bible? “And many lepers were in Israel in the time of Eliseus [Elisha] the prophet; and none of them was cleansed, saving Naaman the Syrian (Luke 4.27).” Notice this! *None of them was cleansed, saving Naaman the Syrian.* Leprosy abounded, but cures were conspicuously absent. Surely God had reserved this great healing to serve His own glory, both then and at the time of Christ when the Lord recounted the incident. Yet for all this the little maid could say the prophet in Samaria would recover Naaman of his leprosy. *The eye of faith saw what had never yet been seen.*

An unnamed witness

Next came a miracle equally as great as the forthcoming healing of Naaman. The little maid was not put to shame! Nor was she rebuked for commenting on so touchy a subject. No ridicule was heaped upon her for this “fanatical concoction.” Her brief but daring comment might have brought severe beatings and even death under other circumstances. Imagine this little maid, boldly affirming to her captors about unheard of powers in Samaria. Yet for all this, *she was believed*, and that without a scrap of evidence or proof. Clearly, the Lord impressed upon their minds the force of the little maid’s assertion.

Concern for Naaman then led some unnamed person to take the fascinating testimony of the little maid directly to the king of Syria. “And one went

in, and told his lord, saying, Thus and thus said the maid that is of the land of Israel.” This has to be one of the more striking incidents in the Bible. Who this “one” was we are not told. Why he or she went in to the king with so extraordinary a message defies logic. Who listens to the babblings of little maids, especially those taken captive from the land of enemies? Even if this unnamed person personally believed what the little maid said, would they risk their own hide to go before the heathen king and promote so wild a tale? And that without a shred of proof.

Did this little maid possess some strange power to clothe her testimony with authenticity? No, but her God did! It appears just here we are at the crossroads of opinions. The first is, defying all odds, doing what had never been done before, the little maid got her story of a leprosy healer in Samaria, a baffling tale if one was ever told, to be believed by a succession of individuals, all the way up to the throne. The little maid’s tale reached the ears of the king. (Bookmakers and gamblers would never give favorable odds on such a daring fabrication.)

The other opinion is, God willed for this to take place—all of it—just like it transpired. Now, if it be admitted that God willed the end of the matter, that the king would believe the little maid’s story, then would not God have had to will all the other components of the incident for the last one to take place as it did? Moreover, if God willed for the king of Syria to believe the story of the little maid then the leprosy of Naaman would have to be as certain as his future recovery. Brethren, may we draw the line. It is all or nothing; Absolute Predestination or absolute chance. If even one aspect of this drama developed by chance, free will, luck, or fate then the possibility of predestination failing would exist. Imagine that God would predestinate Naaman to be recovered of his leprosy but not predestinate the king to believe the little maid’s tale. Or, even more likely, the little maid was afraid to tell what had been revealed to her. What then of Naaman’s recovery? Let the Conditionalists worry over that one. Our God commands and it stands fast.

The King of Syria

“And the king of Syria said, Go to, go, and I will send a letter unto the king of Israel. And he departed, and took with him ten talents of silver, and

six thousand pieces of gold, and ten changes of raiment (II Kings 5.5).” Potentates have a strange way of looking at matters. Common sense would dictate the king’s calling in the little maid and getting whatever intelligence she may possess on the matter since, after all, she initiated the notion of a healing. No; he thinks in the strategic terms of governments dealing with governments, not knowing the government of the God of Heaven would direct the matter consistent with His eternal purposes. Off to the king of Israel he sends Naaman, flush with talents of silver, pieces of gold, and luxuriant raiment. The Syria king was eager to pay well for this proposed cure for Naaman, his captain of the host. How blind has human nature ever been! The gifts of God can neither be bought nor sold; yet men ever try.

The king of Syria had become occupied in a major way to deliver Naaman to Elisha for the recovering of his leprosy, just as the little Israelite maid had told. But the king remained as ignorant of the grand plan of God unfolding before him as if he had been a courtyard dog. Again, “These things are hid from the wise and the prudent and revealed unto babes.”

Naaman before the king of Israel

“And he brought the letter to the king of Israel, saying, Now when this letter is come unto thee, behold, I have therewith sent Naaman my servant to thee, that thou mayest recover him of his leprosy (II Kings 5.6).” Despite the many evidences we constantly see, it still staggers the mind to observe the full-blown ignorance of those in authority. With nothing more than a parchment and a few earthly trinkets, the king of Syria dispatches his captain to an appointment with the king of Israel, an inveterate foe, soliciting him to recover Naaman of his leprosy. This series of activities was about as poorly thought out as can be imagined. But wait! Do we see these events with the naked eye or are we blessed to see, by faith, this was all ordered of the Lord? Neither of these vile kings will be turned from their self-conceit to worship the God who rules over the hearts of all men. “The election hath obtained it, and the rest were blinded.” Dear Lord, open our eyes to see thy handiwork. Surely we will remain blind otherwise.

Naaman took his journey. Little did he know he would never be the same; that he would be humbled,

embarrassed, angered, rebuked, but finally delivered of his cursed disease. Moreover, he would be brought to know the source of his blessing, the greatest of all possible blessings.

The king of Israel

“And it came to pass, when the king of Israel had read the letter, that he rent his clothes, and said, Am I God, to kill and to make alive, that this man doth send unto me to recover a man of his leprosy? Wherefore consider, I pray you, and see how he seeketh a quarrel against me (II Kings 5.7).” This king was Jehoram, the last of the line of Ahab and Jezebel. The relations between Jehoram and the Syrians were bad. They were bad when his father reigned and they would be worse in days to come. Rather than regarding the letter Naaman brought as an honest overture, albeit an ill informed one, he was filled with rage and imputed vile motives to the king of Syria. So, again, a man of high standing among the people is brought into direct contact with the unfolding events emanating from the throne of God but absolutely blinded to the will and purpose bringing them all to pass. It is a sure truth; the lowliest babe in the kingdom of God is far wiser than all the kings of the earth who trust in their own understanding.

“Am I God, to kill and to make alive, that this man doth send unto me to recover a man of his leprosy?” What this king utters in his rage is fully indicative of the mentality of unhumiliated mankind. However, there is a kernel of truth in his bushel of error. With God alone rests the power to kill and make alive. God may use many instruments; nevertheless, He alone exerts the power to bring these matters to pass. The king of Israel sees (with a natural sight) the power of cleansing a leper to reside with God as well.

Witness the brief desire stated by the little maid to her mistress, Naaman’s wife. It appeared casual enough, yet events were set in motion by her brief statement affecting kings and nations. We suppose the unhumiliated Arminian would attribute all this to the simple out-workings of free will. We may pity the poor soul in a great floral garden with no sight. Far worse it would be to have the mind of an Arminian, blinded to the beauties of God’s handiwork. For all this, from the words of the little maid

to the actual deliverance of Naaman, only a certain few would be blessed to see the wonderful hand of God directing every fleeting thought and every bold action to bring to pass His purpose. The purpose was to recover Naaman of his leprosy, and further, lead him into the way of truth. May we lift up our voices in adoration if the Spirit of God has revealed to us the glorious meaning behind all this series of proceedings. As a dear departed Predestinarian Elder used to say while preaching, "It looks like this is going to lead us right into predestination." Amen!

Elisha

"And it was so, when Elisha the man of God had heard that the king of Israel had rent his clothes, that he sent to the king, saying, Wherefore hast thou rent thy clothes? Let him come now to me, and he shall know that there is a prophet in Israel (II Kings 5.8)." Strange indeed! We have seen the simple testimony from the little maid believed at each juncture with the exception of the wicked king of Israel. Despite all Jehovah was doing around him, the king had no more ability to take comfort in it than an ox would. How humbling to realize, neither could we see the smallest part of the wonderful plan of God unless given spiritual sight. But now enters Elisha. Diplomacy would suggest silence until the king settled down somewhat, but Elisha was no diplomat. He had been through the fires. He feared not the fuming of the king at this time. Remember the description in the text above, Elisha *the man of God!* Elisha marched under divine orders. How can he fail with such authority?

"Wherefore hast thou rent thy clothes?" It seems this is a *not so subtle* rebuke of Israel's carnal king. Elisha *knows* God has a plan. He also *knows* the king does *not know*. All the king could see was a stinging insult. He thinks the king of Syria has injured his pride. Elisha could see the glory of God unfolding in a manner heretofore unknown. Elisha had raised the dead but he had never recovered a man of his leprosy. Not even once. Consider then: the king of Israel did not believe anything near a recovery was possible. Thus, it follows; he did not believe the recovering of a leper was ordered of God. On the other hand, Elisha was prompt to summons the leper and at the same time rebuke the king. Though he had never accomplished such a miracle it

was clear to him that as God's prophet he was about to fulfill God's will for the leper. Elisha then believed God would accomplish His will (he was a predestinarian) and the king did not so much as think about God in the matter (He was an Arminian).

"Let him come now to me, and he shall know that there is a prophet in Israel." So speaks Elisha. Bold, fearless, confident, the great prophet challenges Naaman to venture forth. What Elisha meant by "he shall know that there is a prophet in Israel" was that the question of recovering Naaman's leprosy would certainly be resolved to the glory of God. The time would come that Naaman would testify there was no God but in Israel.

We conclude this chapter in Naaman's recovery with the hope of returning to it in another issue. It has been shown thus far that these human events, from the least of them to the greatest, were all details to bring the end to pass. If the reader can offer any explanation how came all these events to fit together, from first to last, apart from the predestination of God, we offer them space to prove it. For those content to take comfort in the power and purpose of God, rejoice; the best is yet to come.

—Elder James F Poole
30233 Mallard Drive
Delmar, MD 21875
jfpoole@dmv.com

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REGENERATION WITHOUT MEANS

Part III. A.: “Means of Grace”

INTRODUCTION

We left off our last installment referring to “the means of grace,” the Romish doctrine that says God must use some earthly means—the Bible, baptismal water, the bread and wine of the communion supper, prayer, last communion, or a combination of these and many other earthbound mechanisms—to save the objects of His love.

The term *means of grace* might be defined as any means God has (supposedly) given to man to use in order to make effectual the grace of God in uniting men with the grace of God. A nail would be the means used to join two boards together, and a hammer would be the means employed to drive the nail. Men’s religion says God cannot join His grace together with men without our employing “the hammer and nails” He has put at our disposal. To carry this illustration home, we say God Himself supernaturally fuses the boards together without using subcontractors, child labor, or hired help.

As far as we have ever been able to ascertain, the Old School or Primitive Baptists are the only people who *as a people* insist that God needs absolutely nothing. He requires no earthly means to regenerate and save His elect for time or eternity. Without exception, as far as I can tell, all other denominations (if I may use this term; *denomination* means a name, designation, or identity) resolutely insist there is something man must do to save himself or to save others, and the *something* “we must do” always involves the use of means that God has placed at our disposal. Why addressing this question is so important is that whatever the *means* might be that are preached, this doctrine of means undermines the doctrine of the saving efficacy of the blood of Jesus Christ and His finished work on behalf of His people.

In order to discuss means of grace, we must also first look at (i) the general confusion of terms relating to regeneration, salvation, and the Word or word of God; and (ii) the specific confusion caused by Conditionalist Primitive Baptists, and how in our day they have confused and alienated untold multitudes who seek Old Baptist truth.

I. CONFUSION OF TERMS

By reason of the heresies introduced into Baptist ranks by both the Missionary and Conditionalist Baptists, the terms **Regeneration/born again, salvation/saved**, and **Word/word** have been rendered ambiguous. Confusion has reigned.

We begin by defining our terms as we understand them. The position of *The Remnant* is this:

A. Regeneration is the imparting of spiritual life to the spiritually dead sinner by the direct operation of God, apart from any human means or instrumentality. “It is the spirit that quickeneth; the flesh profiteth nothing (John 6.63a).”

B. Being born again is the manifesting of the God-given spiritual life in the experience of the child of God which may take place either simultaneously with or at some time after their regeneration.

As it is in nature, so it is in grace, or else Christ Jesus would not have used this term. Man is totally passive in both regeneration and the new birth. He has no input in either his natural or spiritual generation and birth. And, as in nature generation and birth are plainly two distinct events, even so in the spiritual realm regeneration is an event quite separate and distinct from a spiritual rebirth.

C. Salvation as referring to what Christ has done for His people is the entire scope of His atonement, their regeneration by His Spirit, their salvation from sin and hell; their sanctification, His providential keeping and leading them, their growth in grace and the knowledge of the Lord, all they experience, and their final glorification at the resurrection of their bodies. In view of the finished work of Christ, God’s elect are as certainly “saved” as if they were already in their glorified bodies, in the presence of God, in the eternal state: The apostle said, “Moreover whom He did predestinate...them He also glorified (Romans 8.28f),” and not, “some future day He will glorify.”

When Paul says we are, were, or have been saved as an accomplished fact, as in 2 Timothy 1.9, he is speaking of salvation as the eternally finished work of Christ Jesus. He is not saying the work is complete as far as their life in this world is concerned. Salvation as the child of grace experiences it is an ongoing work, performed by Jesus Christ in His people from the time He begins His work in them until their final glorification at His second coming.

Objection: Jesus said to some, “Thy faith hath saved thee.” True enough; He said it twice (Luke 7.50 and 18.42), but

(a) It was Jesus who said it, and not you or me;

(b) In the case of the woman who washed His feet with her tears, His statement was designed as an object lesson to answer the Pharisees’ self-righteous position. This is borne out in the immediately preceding verses (48-49): “And he said unto her, Thy sins are forgiven. And they that sat at meat with him began to say within themselves, Who is this that forgiveth sins also?”

In the case of the blind man of Jericho, this statement concerned salvation from an immediate and pressing difficulty, that of the man’s blindness (Luke 18.35-43);

(c) The ones to whom Jesus said this did not begin to tell everyone, “I know I’m saved,” or the like.

D. Salvation as referring to the saints’ earthly lives is their ongoing experience from regeneration until the grave. There is nothing “conditional” about it. From cradle to grave their every step, breath, thought, word, and action is predestined, governed by the sovereign will and providence of God in everything that occurs. This is also called *experimental* salvation—not experimental in the sense of experimenting to see what happens, but experimental in the sense of what they *experience*.

In the Greek New Testament text, experimental salvation—salvation as the believer experiences it—is almost always referred to in a progressive tense, as an ongoing process, and not as a one-time experience. Thus, no one in the Scripture ever says, “I know I’m saved,” “He is not saved,” “We had several people saved last Sunday,” “Are you saved?” and similar unscriptural expressions. Acts 2.47 in the King James Version (KJV) says, “...And the Lord added to the church daily such as should be saved (Acts 2.47).” A translation closer to the original expression is, “And the Lord added to the church daily **such as were being saved.**” This is typical of many texts that, in the original language, make it quite clear that salvation is an ongoing experience for God’s children while they live here below.

E. The term “shall [*or* shalt] be saved” in Romans 10.9, 13, and similar texts does not indicate a one-time “I know I’m saved” transaction. (*Transactional* or *contractual* salvation—“God did his part

and I did mine; therefore I know I’m saved”—is always, invariably, Arminian in principle.) *Shall be saved* in this text indicates that the one who truly believes and genuinely calls upon the name of the Lord shall be glorified in Christ and gathered with all saints around God’s throne to praise Him eternally. The work has already been begun (“The word is nigh thee, even in thy mouth, and in thy heart,” Romans 10.8), and the evidence of its being in them is that they believe and call upon Him.

Paul said he was “confident of this very thing, that He which hath begun a good work in you will perform it until the day of Jesus Christ (Philippians 1.6).” If it were the gospel preacher who began this good work in you by preaching the gospel, then he has an impossible task set before him, that of performing that good work in you until the Final Day. This entails, “your whole spirit and soul and body be[ing] preserved blameless unto the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ. Faithful is he that calleth you, who also will do it (1 Thessalonians 5.23f).” The text allows no substitution: Whoever called you—the gospel minister?—must be the same one who also faithfully preserves your body, soul, and spirit blameless until our Lord returns. This is scarcely a job for the poor gospel minister who cannot even preserve himself. Those who are taught by the Father know it is Christ Jesus the Lord who does the saving, the calling, and the preserving.

F. Conversion is part of this experience of God’s children, the change that comes in their lives when, by virtue of the life of Christ within them, they are made to grow in grace and in the knowledge of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ. (2 Peter 3.18). Specifically, they are made to hate the things of this world and its worldly vices and religions they formerly loved, and to love the things of God’s pure holiness, righteousness, absolute sovereignty, and the grace of Christ they formerly hated. “For the time past of our life may suffice us to have wrought the will of the Gentiles, when we walked in lasciviousness, lusts, excess of wine, revellings, banquetings, and abominable idolatries: Wherein they think it strange that ye run not with them to the same excess of riot, speaking evil of you (1 Peter 4.3f).”

G. Finally, is it the **Word Christ**, or **the word, Bible**, that regenerates? “Being born again, not of corruptible seed, but of incorruptible, by the word of

God, which liveth and abideth for ever (1 Peter 1.23).” The “word of God” here is the Greek *logos*, the Lord Jesus Christ.

“In the beginning was the Word [*logos*], and the Word [*logos*] was with God, and the Word [*logos*] was God. The three uses of *logos* in this text imply the triune Godhead, the Father, Son, and the Holy Spirit, manifested in Jesus Christ the Lord. He is God, all of God, manifest in the flesh (1 Timothy 3.16). “He that hath seen me hath seen the Father (John 14.9)”; “I and my Father are one (John 10.30).” “But when the Comforter is come, whom I will send unto you from the Father, even the Spirit of truth, which proceedeth from the Father, he shall testify of me (John 15.26).” He is not only the child born and the Son given, but He is the Everlasting Father (Isaiah 9.6). If Jesus is not the Everlasting Father in regeneration, pray tell us when and how He is the Everlasting Father?

We value the Scriptures most highly, but something must be done for the dead sinner before the Scriptures make any sense to him: “But the natural man receiveth not the things of the Spirit of God: for they are foolishness unto him: neither can he know them, because they are spiritually discerned (1 Corinthians 2.14).” The something that must first be done for him is this: He must be born from above, born of God’s Spirit, as Jesus told Nicodemus.

A TYPICAL EXAMPLE

In considering these things, a friend, asking for comments, sent a long excerpt from an article entitled, “Jesus Saves,” by a writer identified as C.R.B. Briefly, I will try to oblige. Space and time constraints prohibit my giving more of the article than I do. I have extracted three of his statements which are representative of the problem we are discussing, that of the Arminians’ saying one thing when they mean another, thereby confusing biblical terms.

1. In one place, **Mr. B. says:** “In Genesis 1 it is seen that God created the world by speaking it into existence. Again and again Genesis 1 says, ‘and God said...and it was so’ (Genesis 1:3, 9, 11, 14-15, 24, 29-30). This is the same way that salvation comes to individuals. God speaks new life into our souls through the Word of God, the Bible, so that we become a new creature. That is, God creates life in us by His Word as it is applied by the Holy Spirit just

as He created life at the beginning of time by His Word.”

COMMENTS: Mr. B. confuses God’s actual speaking with our quoting Him. If one’s quoting God is the same as God’s speaking, you and I could quote “Let there be light” and never again need a flashlight on a moonless night.

In this extract, Mr. B. also confuses the Word of God, Jesus Christ (John 1.1), with the written word, the Scriptures. We at *The Remnant* always strive to use the initial capital W (Word) to designate the Lord Jesus Christ, the living Word, and we use the lower-case w (word) to refer to the Bible (as wonderful as the Bible is, it is not alive). Why this technicality? Because, if all writers and publishers followed this practice, and everyone had always done so, it would have tended to minimize the heresy that says the Bible regenerates people. We know no one will adopt this *Word/word* practice on our say-so; nevertheless, we will try to follow this practice for clarity’s sake.

2. **Mr. B. says again,** “Salvation came to Cornelius’ household as Peter preached the Gospel unto them. This is why the believers are called to send forth the Gospel into the world - that those whom God plans to save will become saved through the hearing of the Word. Jesus said, My sheep hear my voice [God’s Word], and I know them, and they follow me: and I give unto them eternal life; and they shall never perish, neither shall any man pluck them out of my hand. [John 10:5,27-28]” (NOTE: The two bracketed inserts are C.R.B.’s—Editor)

COMMENTS: More confusion. I would not object to saying, “**Salvation** came to Cornelius’ household as Peter preached the Gospel unto them.” When they *say* “salvation,” however, Mr. B. and his like-minded friends mean “**regeneration** came to Cornelius’ household as Peter preached.” Furthermore, they mean that neither salvation nor regeneration (to Mr. B., these are one and the same) would have or indeed could have come without Peter’s (or someone’s) preaching. Likewise, when he says, “...those whom God plans to save will become saved through the hearing of the Word,” he means for us to understand that they will become **regenerated** when they hear **the Bible**. In his quote from John 10, he plainly equates Christ’s voice with the preached word, while *we* say all of God’s sheep do truly hear the voice of Christ (spiritually, not audibly) to the

exclusion of all other voices, exactly as Jesus said they would.

3. Mr. B. says, “Likewise, James 1:18, 21 speak of the Word of God as the means through which we are saved: Of his own will begat he us with the word of truth, that we should be a kind of firstfruits of his creatures...lay apart all filthiness and superfluity of naughtiness, and receive with meekness the engrafted word, which is able to save your souls.”

COMMENTS: By “Word of God” he means the Bible. By “saved” he obviously means born again or regenerated, one or the other. He understands “engrafted word” to mean the Bible. He equates “save your souls” with “regenerate your spirits.”

(a) The soul has nothing to do with *spiritual* life.

(b) Even if this “engrafted word” surely were the Bible, this text still does not say, “...the engrafted word which is able to regenerate your spirits.” Reading this text as it is recorded in the KJV certainly is different from the Missionary’s understanding of it, if they would only say what they mean in plain English: “...receive with meekness the engrafted Bible, which is able to regenerate your spirits.”

(c) Who does the engrafting—the preacher, or God?

II. SEEKERS AND CONFUSION

In various denominations outside the Old School or Primitive Baptist ranks, there are many earnest seekers for truth whom God has led to a belief in the principles of His free and sovereign grace. Thousands, seemingly, are completely dissatisfied with the drab, lifeless, formal, ritualized mainstream denominations on the one hand and the giddy rock-band mentality of the grinning, sweating, back-slapping, hand-shaking, soul-winning, bugle-blowing, “Smile, God loves you” crowd on the other.

A large portion of these seeking souls long for fellowship with those of like precious faith but do not know where to find it. They are sincerely seeking more of the truths of God’s sovereignty: the all-sufficiency of Jesus Christ as Savior and Lord, election, predestination, irresistible grace, the effectual atonement limited exclusively and effectually applied to the elect only, and related principles; but they do not know where to find the information.

In hope of finding church fellowship with those of like precious faith, these dear friends and brethren

are seeking more information as to what church or churches have historically held to and advocated these principles. Eventually in their seeking, they providentially are led to the name of *Primitive Baptist*. They then begin to research what Primitive Baptists stand for doctrinally.

Since the development of computers and the ability to share computerized information (true or false) via telephone lines in the late twentieth century, a prime research tool available to virtually all is the Internet or World Wide Web.

(For those of our readers who do not have computers and Internet access, and who may not have any interest in such things, please bear with us for a few moments. Even if you have no interest in computers, this field has a major bearing on the subject at hand, as you will shortly see.)

Multitudes of sincere seekers have turned to the Internet for information about “Primitive Baptists.” What they find is disturbing to *any* genuine believer of sovereign grace.

CONDITIONALISTS AND THE INTERNET

Nowadays, anyone with a few dollars to spend may gain access to the Internet and obtain a “Web site,” a place on the Internet where they may display their beliefs, whatever the field—science, health, family life, entertainment, hobbies, politics, and religion, to name only a few categories—on the Internet. Every religion in the world is most likely represented by at least one Web site. Once there, a Web site may be viewed by literally anyone in the world with a computer and access to the Internet.

At this very moment there are untold thousands of people seeking information about free grace principles on the Internet. There, they can find much good, solid and sound truth freely available. Thousands of sermons, articles, and entire books by sound writers are there for the reading. What they find, however, is tainted by two major errors:

1. Web sites sponsored by Calvinistic, Sovereign Grace churches: Their roots are largely grounded in historic Presbyterianism, Calvinism, and ancient Baptist principles. While for the most part publishing heart-warming gospel truths and solid doctrine, including absolute predestination, these Web sites *almost* without exception advocate regeneration by human means and instrumentality; and,

2. “Primitive Baptist” Web sites: The great majority of these are sponsored by Conditionalist (or *limited predestinarian*) churches and are therefore infected with subtle, free-will teachings.

These sites do present much good material, we freely admit: sermons and articles by excellent writers from the past and present. But the truth presented is undermined by free-will conditionalism. It is much like when Jim and Bill were eating dinner. Bill asked Jim to pass the black pepper. Jim asked, “You like pepper?” “Yes,” Bill replied. “Great,” Jim said. “This is good, fresh-ground, black pepper. I ground up only one dead fly in it.”

How much ground housefly does it take to ruin a shaker of pepper? How many dead flies does it take to cause the ointment of the apothecary to send forth a stinking savour (Ecclesiastes 10.1)? How much conditionalism does it take to ruin a Web site, a church, or the name of “Primitive Baptist”?

It is sad but true, when it comes to the name “Primitive Baptists,” the Conditionalists dominate the Internet. I recently spent the better part of an afternoon searching the Web for **Absolute Predestinarian Primitive Baptists**. (I do know of a very few such sites; *The Remnant* maintains one.) One search generated 5,080 “hits” where the words “Primitive Baptist” were found. True, some of these were as far removed from what we sought as to be genealogical references to where someone was buried in a Primitive Baptist graveyard. The point is, however, that *in all my searching, I did not find a single site that was both absolute predestinarian and Primitive Baptist*.

The Conditionalists or *limited predestinarians* call themselves “Old Line Primitive Baptists,” representing themselves as being the original Primitive Baptists in doctrine and practice. They are not. We categorically deny their pretense.

For them to establish some semblance of their historicity, the Limited Predestinarian Conditionalists have been asked to produce one document, sermon, article, or book with the following two characteristics. The required document must:

(1) predate the War Between the States in the United States of America (1861-1865); and,

(2) use their term, “conditional time salvation.”

To date they have not done so. Surely, if such a document exists, they would have produced it. They have not done so because they cannot.

The truth is, under their surface appearance of doctrinal orthodoxy and the guise of their historic ties with the Old School Baptists, the Conditionalists are Arminian to the core, and by rights they are a part of those excluded by the Primitive or Old School Baptists at Black Rock, Maryland, in 1832. It just took them another generation or two to surface and to make their error manifest.

Meanwhile, many of those seeking sovereign grace principles are too quick to reject anything bearing the **Primitive Baptist** name because they have been misled by the Conditionalist wing of the Primitive Baptists into thinking all Primitive Baptists believe our sanctification is left up to us and our own free will. The Conditionalists’ sad perversion of the doctrine of Christ is, “God the Father elected His people, Christ redeemed them, the Holy Spirit regenerates them, and after that, it’s up to them to do right...” *Anyone* who has a God-given understanding of the gospel of Christ Jesus knows that earning blessings and avoiding chastisements and punishments is *not* left up to the individual. One’s religious “denomination” has nothing to do with it.

We know of “sovereign grace” believers and seekers who reject the name of Primitive Baptist because of the Conditionalism they found presented in the Primitive Baptist name. Part of what they are rejecting is the doctrine we herein advocate, that of *regeneration by the direct operation of the Holy Spirit without human means and instrumentality*. The sovereign grace believers reject this truth because they find the Conditionalists advocate it as does the Old School; but, not being blessed to discern otherwise, the seekers mistakenly conclude this truth somehow goes together with Conditionalism.

Here are three examples taken from an Internet discussion group that exactly illustrate the problem. (“The text in Mark 16” referred to below is verse 16, “He that believeth and is baptized shall be saved; but he that believeth not shall be damned.”)

1. “...there is some question about the text in Mark 16... by claiming that the condemnation there refers only to ‘time destruction’ as the PB’s call it, then what do they do with Romans 8:34 where Paul challenges all of creation by stating: ‘Who is he who condemns?’”

COMMENTS: (a) “time destruction” is a Conditionalist term by which they mean an unfaithful

child of God might be destroyed in this time-world but be saved eternally, suffering both temporal and eternal loss of rewards. This is typical of their false, misleading doctrine, and a prime example of the conditionalism we abhor.

(b) “as the PB’s call it”: The writer is unable to distinguish between Conditionalists and the Old School, because evidently all “PBs” (Primitive Baptists) are the same to him. Nothing could be farther from the truth. This is further borne out by his “what do **they** do with Romans 8:34....” as though the Old School predestinarians are required to defend the repugnant conditional system.

2. “...None of God’s elect can possibly be condemned yet according to them [By “them,” he means the Primitive Baptists—Editor] one can be regenerated and not believe the gospel which leaves him or her open to the sentence of condemnation in Mark 16:16.”

COMMENT: The writer is saying that a regenerated child of God may yet be damned if he does not believe the gospel, thus basing salvation on the creature’s action, including the *means of grace*, rather than the electing love of the Father, the shed blood and imputed righteousness of Christ, and the sanctifying work of the Holy Spirit which, in God’s own time, will bring every heir of grace to know the only true God, and Jesus Christ, whom He has sent (John 17.3).

3. “If they [By “they,” he means the Primitive Baptists—Editor] wish to blunt the edge of this by stating that there is an elect within the elect (Very elect as they might call it) and this condemnation refers to a “time destruction” then how do they do harmonize that with the other Scripture...?”

COMMENT: (a) The Conditionalists have a widespread view that the “faithful” children of God are the “**very elect**” (taken from Matthew 24.24), but the “unfaithful” ones are only **elect**. The Conditionalists I knew in Springfield, Missouri, believed in a **split rapture** before the end of this age, during which they taught that the “unfaithful” or “disobedient” elect would be left to go through the great tribulation, while the “faithful, obedient” (“very elect”) would be raptured and thus spared that horror. They taught that the “unfaithful” ones would be eternally saved, because they were elect and redeemed; but they would suffer tremendous loss in this

life (the “time destruction” to which our undiscerning critic, above, refers) and the loss of their eternal rewards. I know of no Missionary Baptist that would abide such blatant Arminianism!

(b) It is obvious the writer of this quote knows utterly nothing of Old Baptist doctrine, if he can honestly believe conditional free-willism has anything to do with the doctrine of Christ as preached by the Absolute Predestinarian Old School Baptists. He has imbibed poison at the wrong fountain and believed that this lie is held in common by all who are known as Primitive Baptists.

(c) Using faulty reasoning, the above writer condemns the doctrine of direct regeneration by the Holy Spirit, without human instrumentality or means, possibly because he heard it or saw it in company with the Conditionalists’ falling-from-grace heresy. His logic, rooted in his belief in “means,” is exactly that of the one who throws the baby out with the dirty bath-water.

SATAN IMITATES AND OPPOSES

And he showed me Joshua the high priest standing before the angel of the LORD, and Satan standing at his right hand to resist him (Zechariah 3.1). Whenever and wherever the truth of God is proclaimed, Satan will be there opposing it as the adversary of God and His people. Satan is also the great imitator. “For such are false apostles, deceitful workers, transforming themselves into the apostles of Christ. And no marvel; for Satan himself is transformed into an angel of light. Therefore it is no great thing if his ministers also be transformed as the ministers of righteousness; whose end shall be according to their works (2 Corinthians 11.13ff).”

Under the providence of God (for without Him Satan can do nothing), Satan gave the world the Missionary Baptists to usurp the **Baptist** name. They grew, in the nineteenth and twentieth centuries, into the megalomaniacal monstrosity it is today, most notably represented by the Southern Baptist Convention. For the most part, thanks to their Nashville propaganda machine, almost anyone who casually thinks of the word “Baptist” thinks of them.

It stands to reason, then, that Satan would in like manner devise a highly visible, successful imitation of **Primitive** Baptists, usurping this name and passing itself off as authentic Primitive Baptists. It has been

done. This counterfeit entity is the Conditional element of all that is known as Primitive Baptist.

The Conditionalists delight in calling themselves “Old Line,” and we agree with them that they are indeed “old line,” but only to this extent: Their *old line* may be traced back to Satan’s old line in the garden of Eden when he told Eve, “Ye shall be as gods, knowing good and evil (Genesis 3.5).” Their old line is the exact same old line extolled by Eliphaz, Bildad, and Zophar: “If you will do good, and you can do it if you will, then God will bless you for it.”

The Arminian influence among “Baptists” has produced its fruit. In the last fifty years, we have seen many of the Missionary Baptist churches degenerate into little more than charismatic entertainment centers. Catering to the fleshly appetites of children, they provide them with everything from bowling alleys and chili-dogs, baseball uniforms and scout troops, to dances and rock bands in their efforts to “win them for Christ.”

The Conditionalists are also reaping the bitter fruit of their departure from the faith. They are not all that far behind the Missionary Baptists. It is sad to behold their problems, even from afar. Some of their old heads bow in sorrow as they behold a new generation among them, advocating and practicing things they would not have dreamed of fifty years ago: Sunday Schools, youth camps, mission programs, theological seminaries, public dedication of infants, a salaried ministry, tithing, and the ordination of novices, are among other things that are now being practiced or advocated by some of their churches. Still, the ones who bemoan this sorry state of affairs are not given the eyes to see their plight grows directly from the poisonous roots of free-willism their forefathers planted in the latter decades of the nineteenth century and fertilized and watered in the twentieth.

In one sense, this is not our affair. In another, it is, because they yet profess the Primitive Baptist name before the world; and, in the minds of many who seek Old Baptist truth, the Old School Absolute Predestinarian Primitive Baptists are wrongly associated with all the errors Conditionalism promotes.

SUMMARY

In this section, which may to some seem to have been a digression from the main subject, we have

looked at the confusion brought about by professed “Baptists” carelessly muddying biblical terms; terms from a Bible they think can regenerate a reprobate. Yet they will not or cannot search that Bible to see if it will sustain their position. We’ve also seen a little about how error is being spread on the Internet, thereby confusing many who are seeking the truth.

Before we are through, we hope to address the subject of “Calvinism,” say a little about what Old Baptists have in common with John Calvin, and what he and the historic forerunners of *all* varieties of Baptists had to say about *regeneration without means*.

(To be continued, Lord willing)

—C. C. Morris

BOOK NOTICE

Writings of Elder H. M. Curry

It has been our pleasure to advertise the books being published by Brother Marc Jacobsson. He is actively bringing back to us many of the old writers whose works were found in the “Signs of the Times.” They include T. P. Dudley; J. F. Johnson; Wilson Thompson; William Smoot and others. These are works we would gladly recommend to anyone who loves the doctrine of free grace. (Conditionalists will be far less pleased.)

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CONDITIONAL TIME SALVATION IS IT THE TRUTH?

The above title is the same as the title of a book written by Elder R. H. Boaz of Fulton, Kentucky, in 1897. Elder Boaz lived when and where much of the conditional doctrine first made its early inroads among the Primitive Baptists. Most importantly, he documented this strange new doctrine introduced during the last two decades of the nineteenth century, just a little over one hundred years ago. On his opening page, Elder Boaz says:

The Church of God has, in all ages, had to contend with this self-righteous spirit, which is the spirit of anti-Christ, which supposes that God is desirous to bestow the rich blessings of His grace upon the sons and daughters of Adam, but that He cannot, or will not, unless they first become obedient to the supposed terms.

Of late years this belief has developed among Primitive Baptists to an alarming extent, that is, that salvation of God's children after regeneration, during this life, depends on their obedience to God's commands. And that their obedience wholly depends upon the volition of the will of the children of God. The advocates of this theory assert that God in regeneration gave His children power to do all of His commands, and promised to bless them, both with temporal and spiritual blessings if they would obey Him, and that these blessings are offered to them through the Gospel. Those that advocate this belief are careful to assert that eternal salvation is entirely of the Lord, but there is a time salvation that is produced, or procured, by our works. Now, I must say that I have not so learned of Christ. The term 'Time Salvation' does not occur in the Bible, and why any lover of the truth should so forget himself, as to make a hobby of terms that are not once used by our Heavenly Father in 'the record He hath given us of His son,' I cannot tell....

This dear patriarch continues, but we cannot reproduce his work in its entirety in *The Remnant*, nor is there any need for us to do so. The work has already been accomplished by Brother Marc Jacobsson. We are more than happy to publish his advertisements in hope of spreading the truths con-

tained in Elder Boaz's book as widely as the Lord, in His kind providence, sees fit.

Suffice it to say, if the contents of *Conditional Time Salvation, Is it the Truth?* were more widely known, fewer seekers for free-grace truth would be misled by the self-styled "Old Line Primitive Baptists" into thinking Primitive Baptists are all a pack of extreme free-will Arminians. *Some Primitive Baptists are not!*

After my last remark, some of the *Limited Predestinarians*, as the "Old Liners" are also known, might delight in telling us, "According to your doctrine, it is predestinated that we believe exactly the way we do, and that we mislead those who inquire about the Primitive Baptists."

We cordially agree, insisting as ever that, indeed, it *is* all predestinated. God has a purpose for error being introduced into His church, and He tells us plainly what that purpose is: "For first of all, when ye come together in the church, I hear that there be divisions among you; and I partly believe it. For there must be also heresies among you, that they which are approved may be made manifest among you (1 Corinthians 11.18f)." It should almost go without saying, but we will say it anyway: God, by His grace, gives some brethren to earnestly contend for the faith which was once delivered unto the saints. These brethren are brought head-to-head with heresies to contend against, that the light of God's truth, as it is in Christ Jesus, might shine the brighter against the black backdrop of man's heresy. Truth and error will always separate between those who are lovers of the truth and the apostate lovers of themselves. "They went out from us, but they were not of us; for if they had been of us, they would no doubt have continued with us: but they went out, that they might be made manifest that they were not all of us (1 John 2.19)." In Jehovah's own time and manner He will demonstrate who is the heretic and who is approved.

In ten thousand ways truth and error are contrasted. Predestination versus free will, and sanctification of God's children by the finished work of Christ versus so-called "free-will" acts of the creature in order to earn blessings and escape chastisement, are only two of those myriad areas of contention. Those whom the Lord will lead into truth, He gives eyes to see it (Proverbs 20.12); the rest are blinded. "He hath blinded their eyes, and hardened

their heart; that they should not see with their eyes, nor understand with their heart, and be converted, and I should heal them (John 12.40).” “...the election hath obtained it, and the rest were blinded (Romans 11.7).”

We *all* believe just exactly what the Lord has given us to believe, including those to whom “God shall send [them] strong delusion, that they should believe a lie: that they all might be damned who believed not the truth, but had pleasure in unrighteousness (2 Thessalonians 2.11f).” Those who are blinded to the truth nevertheless adamantly think they have the truth.

Elder Boaz names people and places, giving ample descriptions of events and quotations of participants from both sides in the rising struggle between the free grace Primitive or Old School Baptists on the one hand and the free will Conditionalist preachers on the other. Anyone seriously interested in discerning the difference between the Absoluters and the Conditionalists cannot afford to be without this valuable little book.

The following, then, is another short portion of the Boaz book:

Part VIII

OF OUR SERVICE TO GOD AND THE RESULTS THEREFROM

It is taught by some who claim to be Primitive Baptists, that if you obey all the commandments, (which they affirm we have power to do if we but would), that God will bless us and so we would earn happiness. They teach us that those harassing fears, those troubled disputations of mind, those hungerings and thirstings, those mournings and bitter complainings, and those sighings and groanings that are common to the children of God can be dissipated by our loving obedience and this all depends upon the volition, or freedom, of our own will. Now because I deny this, some have accused me of being opposed to good works. I am opposed to their system, for I do not believe that anything is a good work when your faith is in yourselves, or any other man for “cursed is man that trusteth in man, or that maketh flesh his arm.” (Jer.12:5) I believe that God’s children should serve God; not themselves, their flesh, or any man.

They should “love the Lord their God with all their heart, with all their soul, with all their mind and Him only should they serve.” It is indeed very wicked in men, whether they are regenerated or not, to persist in rebellion against God. But because this is so, it is no argument that men can of their own volition go into the service of God; nor is it any reason why we shall believe that God has offered to hire His children to enter His service in order to receive His blessings. I know that it is denied that this system of which I am speaking offers to hire God’s children to serve Him, but this only amounts to a denial – that is all. If I offer one of my children a penny if he will shut the door, I have offered to hire him to shut the door. I have seen some instance of this in parents in dealing with their children and the children soon learn to have no respect for the parents and will only obey them for a reward – will only serve their selfish interest. If I should teach one that if he would be more devoted to God, do all His commandments, that God would bless him with better crops, and get him through winter, with this belief, would I have any evidence that he, in his heart, was serving God? No! Why? Because it would be a plain case that the increase of his crop was what he was after. He would only serve for the profit that was in it, “thinking that gain was godliness.” This is conditional time salvation teaching. I believe and try to teach that we should serve God willingly, from a principle of love to Him, not to ourselves, and that this is the work of the Holy Ghost wrought in us. “We love Him because He first loved us.” (I John 4:19) Our service, I think, is always because of, not in order to. As to happiness, we are not promised much of it through this life. Happiness during this life is not an incentive offered to get us to serve God. Happiness is a state of peacefulness, complacency, and submission to God’s will which works contentment of mind and spirit; it is not a reward for labor. Therefore the principles from which Time Salvationists act is false. Jesus promised His servants tribulation in this life. “In the world ye shall have tribulation.” (John 21:33) “If in this life only we have hope in Christ, we are of all men most miserable,” (I Cor. 15:19), was Paul’s belief. “I have chosen thee in a furnace of affliction,” (Isaiah 48:10) said God by Isaiah. “These are they which come out of great tribulation,” (Rev. 7:14), said the angel to John. “Yea, and ALL that shall live godly in

Christ Jesus SHALL suffer persecution,” (I Tim. 3:12), said Paul to Timothy. From these statements, and many more of similar import could be given, it is clearly to be seen that the life of God’s true children in this time world is a life of sufferings, of sorrows and afflictions. And it also appears from the Scriptures that those who serve God most, were the ones that suffered most. I admit that this is a strange conclusion from a carnal standpoint, and human reason is ready to condemn it as false, but this doesn’t change the truth of it in the least.

Abel was killed because he served God BY FAITH, not by his works, you will observe. The prophets were hated and maltreated, and went in sorrow and grief all their lives because they served God by faith, rather than works. Job, of whom it was said, “In all the earth there is none like him” for patience and piety, none so devoted to God in His service, yet he was tortured as never man was, all because he served God by faith, and not by works. Moses forsook Egypt, esteeming the reproach of Christ greater riches than all the treasures there, “by faith” “when he was come to years, refused to be called the son of Pharaoh’s daughter; choosing rather to suffer affliction with the people of God, than to enjoy the pleasures of sin for a season,” or enjoy his Egyptian wrought time salvation. (Heb. 12:24-25) The apostles served God by faith, yet their lives were full of sorrows and grief, and they were finally killed because they served God, rather than themselves. Jesus had promised them before that they should be hated by all men and some of them should be killed. Oh, what an inducement to serve God in the Spirit, and how different to the Conditional Time Salvation being preached by vain men today! God promised sorrow, affliction and distress in this time life to His servants. Conditional Salvationists offer happiness, joy, prosperity, and peace if we will serve God and earn our blessings by our obedience (works). May I ask here, dear child of God, which of these have you found to be true in your experience? If you say the latter, then I say that you are a “bastard” and not a son; “for if any be without chastisement, whereof all are partakers, then are ye bastards and not sons.” (Heb. 12:8) Therefore Conditional Time Salvation is not the truth.

*

Elder Boaz’s book is supplemented with three articles by writers with whom most of the readers of *The Remnant* are by now quite familiar: “What are the Conditions of Salvation,” by Elder Samuel Trott, 1847; “A Dialogue,” by Elder Thomas Barton, 1852; and “Time Salvation,” by David Bartley, 1905. Order *Conditional Time Salvation* directly from:

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APPROACHING GOD: THE CAUSE

At the same time, saith the LORD, will I be the God of all the families of Israel, and they shall be my people. Thus saith the LORD, The people which were left of the sword found grace in the wilderness; even Israel, when I went to cause him to rest. The LORD hath appeared of old unto me, saying, Yea, I have loved thee with an everlasting love: therefore with lovingkindness have I drawn thee (Jeremiah 31.1-3).

The elect of God are a wilderness-wandering people, presented to the beholding eye in many figures. Sometimes the saints are spoken of collectively as Israel, sometimes they are viewed as individuals; sometimes, again collectively, as a bride. “Who is this that cometh up from the wilderness, leaning upon her beloved (Song of Solomon 8.5)?” She is always coming up from the wilderness, but never in this life will she claim she has arrived. She never travels in her own strength. She is always leaning upon her beloved, travelling in the greatness of His strength (Isaiah 63.1).

Taught by the Lord, the saints are keenly aware that they have been spared from the sword of His wrath. They have found grace, not to get out of the wilderness, but grace for their sojourn while in the wilderness.

God Himself went. He said He went, with the express purpose of causing Israel to rest. In their entirety, the Lord’s Israel is yet but one. “My dove,

my undefiled is but one; she is the only one of her mother, she is the choice one of her that bare her... (Song of Solomon 6.9)." She has no earthly father or mother. God is her Father, and of her mother Paul says, "Jerusalem which is above is free, which is the mother of us all (Galatians 4.26)."

The rest Christ gives them is not a case of "some do and some don't." They are all, as one, caused to rest. Jesus said, "Come unto me, all ye that labour and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest (Matthew 11.28)." A universal invitation? Hardly. Not all labor, not all are heavy laden. Only the laboring, heavy-laden souls are addressed here. And to *them* He says, certainly, without a shadow of a doubt, "**Ye shall** find rest unto your souls." Find one who does not enter into the rest Christ has provided, and you will have found someone who neither labors, nor is heavy laden, nor is embraced in Christ's irresistible, gracious "Come."

Wherein does the rest lie? Our Lord had just said in the presence of His hearers, "I thank Thee, O Father, Lord of heaven and earth, because Thou hast hid these things from the wise and prudent, and hast revealed them unto babes. Even so, Father: for so it seemed good in Thy sight. All things are delivered unto me of my Father: and no man knoweth the Son, but the Father; neither knoweth any man the Father, save the Son, and he to whomsoever the Son will reveal him." This rest lies in God's sovereign revelation of Himself to His own.

Jesus was a man of sorrows and acquainted with grief. There is no record in the gospel accounts of His laughing or even smiling. There is only one place where it is recorded that He rejoiced. It was when He spoke the above-mentioned truth. "In that hour Jesus rejoiced in spirit, and said, I thank thee, O Father, Lord of heaven and earth, that thou hast hid these things from the wise and prudent, and hast revealed them unto babes: even so, Father; for so it seemed good in thy sight. All things are delivered to me of my Father: and no man knoweth who the Son is, but the Father; and who the Father is, but the Son, and he to whom the Son will reveal him (Luke 10.21f)." This is a closed circuit which no person voluntarily enters in. All who enter are brought in by God's sovereign pleasure.

Does God cause things? Indeed He does. He is the first cause of all causes, and without him nothing

would exist. Existing as we do by His creative will and power, we cannot act without Him. "He giveth to all life, and breath, and **all things**...in Him we live, and move, and have our being (Acts 17.26, 28)." Least of all could we approach Him, or even *think* about Him. "The wicked, through the pride of his countenance, will not seek after God: God is not in all his thoughts (Psalm 10.4)."

Does God cause things? In the previous chapter of Jeremiah's writings, verse 21, the Lord says: "I will **cause** him to draw near, and he **shall** approach unto me: for who is this that engaged his heart to approach unto me? saith the Lord."

Does God cause things, even causing us to approach unto Him? How else would we come—lame, helpless, dead in sin—were it not for His irresistible power, giving us life and causing us to approach? We hear David saying, "Iniquities prevail against me: as for our transgressions, thou shalt purge them away. *Blessed is the man whom thou choosest, and causest to approach unto thee, that he may dwell in thy courts*: we shall be satisfied with the goodness of thy house, even of thy holy temple (Psalm 65.3-4)." First and foremost, it is God's choice, not man's. Eternally chosen by His matchless grace, his iniquities prevailing against him, he is nevertheless given the sweet hope that his sins are purged away in the blood of God's Lamb. The poor, trembling sinner is caused to draw nigh unto Him and dwell in His courts.

Nor will there be any dissatisfaction in the heart of such a blessed one who has been caused thus to come. *We shall be satisfied with the goodness of thy house, even of thy holy temple*. We shall be satisfied while here below, in God's house, the church. How blessed is the lonely deacon who, on freezing winter mornings, goes alone on the Lord's day, hours early, to the meeting house to build a fire or light a heater for the comfort of the saints who will later gather to sing the old hymns of Zion in praise of their Redeemer. "...I had rather be a doorkeeper in the house of my God, than to dwell in the tents of wickedness (Psalm 84.10)." Lonely? No, "...for Thou art with me (Psalm 23.4)." Lonely? They are only lonely in the minds of worldlings who know nothing of the God of Israel or of His infinite grace that causes His people to come and rest in Christ Jesus.

—C. C. M.

JUST IN TIME FOR XMAS?

There are many sincere people who do not like the term “Xmas,” fearing that it somehow shows a lack of respect toward Jesus Christ. They urge upon us that we should “put Christ back in Christmas.”

Others think the origin of the word “Xmas” has its roots in the original Greek form of the word **Christ** itself, which is *Christos* (**Χριστος**). In that alphabet, the CH in “Christ” is shown by the initial letter **Chi** (**X**), written like our X, as is easily seen. These equally sincere people see no problem using Xmas as an abbreviation.

But if it is an abbreviation, what does it abbreviate? *Christmas*, of course, but what is *Christmas* supposed to mean? The word Christmas is itself an abbreviation, a short form of “Christ Mass,” or “Christ’s Mass,” the Mass of Christ, which points us immediately and directly to the ritual of the Mass of the Roman Catholic church. Christmas, then, is a Roman Catholic celebration supposedly centered in the birth of Christ.

Entirely without any Scriptural warrant, the Roman church has set aside December 25 to observe as the day Jesus Christ was born. Is it more than a coincidence that this date corresponds (within a few days) with the winter solstice when the sun, having reached its southernmost extreme, begins its journey back to the north?

Is it more than coincidental also, that the ancient Roman sun-worshippers set aside this day as the day to worship the sun god, which had left them cold, having gone south for the winter, when old Sol was beginning his return? What, then, has all this to do with the birth of Jesus Christ? Nothing!

There is another school of thought, then (this writer’s position—CCM); that since this unbiblical holiday came to us only by the “Christianizing” of the pagan sun-god festival, it has no place in the lives of worshippers of the living and true God.

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The following is an outline of principles the readers of *The Remnant* may expect to see maintained in this publication. Under no circumstances do the publishers or writers for *The Remnant* seek to delineate herein a standard of doctrine or views to be imposed upon the readers. Rather, we set these principles before the readers that they may know what general principles guide our efforts. All attempts at declaring articles of faith will be marred by prejudices and frailty, and ours are by no means any exception.

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.

1—The eternal existence, sovereignty, immutability, omnipotence, and perfections of Jehovah God; He has revealed Himself as the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit, and these sacred Three are One; Jesus Christ was and is God manifest in the flesh, and in Him dwelleth all the fullness of the Godhead bodily;

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-

tion; their utter inability to recover themselves from this fallen state;

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;

7—The sovereign, irresistible, effectual work of the Holy Spirit in quickening the elect of God; the new birth is by the direct operation of the Holy Spirit without the use of any means;

8—The final preservation, perseverance, and eternal happiness of all the sons of God, by grace alone;

9—No works are good works other than those which God Himself has so designated; none of the works called good are left up to men to perform or not, at the creature's discretion; nor do the works of the creature, either before or after regeneration, result in merit accruing to his account in God's sight;

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.