

# 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. 24 SECOND KINGS**

### **NAAMAN THE LEPER Part Three**

*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).*

Naaman the leper was healed! The dreadful disease that tormented him was gone. “...And he was clean (2 Kings 5.14).” Whatever Naaman knew at that time regarding Jehovah, His glory or sovereign grace, we cannot say. He appeared rather ignorant of heavenly things. One thing he could know, however, was the servant of the God of Israel told him the way of deliverance. Elisha informed him all that was needful to be free from his uncleanness. Naaman alone was informed. Think of it! Lepers abounded, but Naaman only was healed. It was a miracle of the immense proportions and Naaman alone was the beneficiary.

Returning again to the reference in Luke 4.26, 27; our Lord makes this astounding reference to the deliverance of Naaman as follows: “But unto none

of them was Elias sent, save unto Sarepta, a city of Sidon, unto a woman that was a widow. And many lepers were in Israel in the time of Eliseus the prophet; and none of them was cleansed, saving Naaman the Syrian.” Jesus introduced to them a historical fact having great bearing on God’s sovereignty.

“And he [Naaman] was clean.” Among the wretched and pitiful lepers living out their miserable lives with this plague, and the Lord said there were many, Jehovah cleanses Naaman only. This point is beyond dispute. Both the Old Testament and New Testament records are completely clear; Naaman alone was made whole. So then, what may we learn by all this? First and foremost, it should be admitted by all who reverence the record we know as the Bible, that it positively was God’s will and purpose to cleanse the leper, Naaman. Since no man on earth possessed the power to remove leprosy from another, any such removing must have been conducted by God’s direction alone. The little maid in captivity could tell Naaman’s wife of the prophet in Samaria, but there was no healing power in her testimony. She could only relate the bare facts of Elisha being the prophet of God. The king of Syria could gather all the gold and silver he could muster: lade asses with royal raiment, send the whole bounty to the king of Samaria to pay for this hoped-for healing of Naaman, and yet God alone possessed the power to cleanse. None but frothing fools could dare deny such.

The several disappointments Naaman suffered in the presence of the King of Samaria, and the apparent

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## Contents

Naaman, Part III, by Elder J. F. Poole.....	1
Psalm 89, by Elder C. C. Morris.....	6
'Twas Sov'reign Mercy, by Josiah Conder (1789-1855).....	17
O.T. History in a Nutshell, Editor.....	18
Books for Sale.....	19
A Statement of Our Principles.....	20

## Proverbs 16.11, 33

**A** just weight and balance are the Lord's:  
All the weights of the bag are His  
work... The lot is cast into the lap; but the whole  
disposing thereof is of the Lord.

scruffy treatment dished out to him by Elisha is enough for us to see, "It is not in man that walketh to direct his steps."

After considerable encouragement by his servants, Naaman dipped seven times and he was made whole. He was clean. The saving deed was done! Naaman could once again walk among the living unashamed, no more filled with self-loathing. The profound question, then: Was there any way possible Naaman might not have been cleansed? Was there at any moment in time, from the time Naaman contracted leprosy until he dipped in Jordan, for anything to be different than it was? Should even one little link in the chain of events fail some might boast that free will was on the throne and random events only fell together because God permitted them. May God in His mercy forgive us that we might even think such a blasphemous notion. Bow then to the Dagon of Arminianism if this is so. But no link failed! *Naaman was cleansed*. That fact cannot be argued if you believe the dear Lord was telling the truth in Luke 4. Pity the poor soul that could conceive such ignorance.

We come again then to the words of the Lord in Luke 4: "And many lepers were in Israel in the time of Eliseus the prophet; and none of them was cleansed, saving Naaman the Syrian." When Jesus spoke these words He had shortly before come down from the mountain where He was sorely tempted of Satan. He then entered the synagogue at Nazareth where "there was delivered unto him the book of the prophet Esaias." He opened the book and read from Isaiah, "The Spirit of the Lord is upon me, because he hath anointed me to preach the gospel...." And then: "And he began to say unto them, "This day is this scripture fulfilled in your ears." Jesus was not telling them that these things were *now fulfilled*, but that this day is this scripture *fulfilled in your ears*. This was the beginning of His gospel ministry, and they were hearing of it and all to come until all was fulfilled. And He introduced the singular account of Naaman the leper.

Jesus believed Naaman was cleansed. Why? For one thing, the Bible recorded the affair, and too, Jesus knew all things, being God in the flesh. A question then? How long had Jesus known of Naaman's healing? Since He read in the sacred Scriptures? Or, from all eternity? "Known unto God are

all his works from the beginning of the world (Acts 15.18).” Since this work of the leper’s cleansing was God’s work, then Jesus must have know from eternity, yea, even before the deed took place, Jesus was fully aware of its certainty. 1. It transpired. 2. It was God’s work. Thus, God knew it as a certainty from the beginning of the world. God surely did not know that which *would not* come to pass. ***It was certain!*** Thus it must have been the will of God for it to come to pass. Predestination assured its certainty.

Jesus would never have told those in the synagogue Naaman had been cleansed of leprosy unless it had certainly been so. In His infinite wisdom He had known it from eternity as sure as He knew the rising of the sun or the four seasons that bring variation to all creation.

All this has been said to emphasize the necessity of seeing all things that took place in the Old Testament as predestinated events, conceived by the will of God and brought to pass by His power over all events of time and eternity.

#### **Naaman’s reaction.**

“And he returned to the man of God, he and all his company, and came, and stood before him: and he said, Behold, *now* I know that there is no God in all the earth, but in Israel: now therefore, I pray thee, take a blessing of thy servant (2 Kings 5.15).”

We know not how far along Naaman and his company traveled prior to reaching the banks of Jordan. It is of no real importance to us as it certainly was not to him when he arose from Jordan after the seventh dip. With no other information afforded us, we are told “And *he returned* to the man of God.” One might think his first priority would be to hasten home to his wife, his friends, his beneficent king and with all the exuberance within him relate his seeming impossible deliverance from leprosy. What joys were contained within his heart at that moment we cannot know. They must have been many, each arousing him to give account of them all before those who may be interested. That was a wonderful day in Naaman’s life. Deliverance had come.

It must have been startling, both to Naaman and to his company, to see renewed flesh where only moments before the dreadful decay of death had its

grip. For most of us, deliverance such as Naaman’s would surely stir our emotions to the highest pitch. Think, if you will. Naaman daily lived with this death sentence called leprosy. Now it was gone. Naaman was a whole man again. What then, was his first order of business?

“And he returned to the man of God.” Remember, Naaman had never actually seen Elisha, the seer, nor had he conversed with him. His contact was limited to a brief word from Elisha’s servant Gehazi. “Go and wash seven times in Jordan.” Suddenly, Naaman is drawn back to Samaria, to the man of God. Who may dare doubt Jehovah was ordering the general’s priorities at this moment? Naaman must converse with this heavenly representative, Elisha, the man sent from God in heaven. He must see the man with power and authority. This power could only come from God, the God previously unknown to Naaman. Is this all speculation on our part? Hardly! Let us all think back to the great moments in our own spiritual lives when blessings from God’s throne were conferred upon us. At such time what company did we seek? With whom were we eager to relate our experiences? Was it the Arminians? The Conditionalists? No, never! We went to our own company.

The Sanhedrin first apprehended Peter and John then thundered terrible warnings and dire imprecations at them for speaking in the name of Jesus. After what the Sanhedrin thought was sufficient abuse, they finally let them go. “And being let go, they went to their own company...(Acts 4.23).” To the child of God, comfort and solace is found among, and with, those *of their own company*, those who also know somewhat of those things each have experienced. Even so, Naaman was compelled to return to the man of God, his newfound company. Naaman had been turned.

“Behold, now I know that there is no God in all the earth, but in Israel: now therefore, I pray thee, take a blessing of thy servant (2 Kings 5.15).” ***Now I know!*** Where darkness once prevailed in the mind of Naaman, relative to the true and the living God, light now shined. This was not community knowledge. Naaman could not have learned this from all the wise men on the earth combined. Nor could he have dug it out of a thousand libraries. No! “Blessed

art thou, Simon Bar-jona [Naaman], for flesh and blood hath not revealed it unto thee, but my Father which is in heaven (Matthew 16.17).” Deliverance, and the knowledge of it, both derive from the eternal purpose of God to make whom He will whole. In this case, not one single leper, from the river unto the ends of the earth, had been favored with what Naaman had experienced and subsequently knew in his heart. **Now I know!** Blessed be the name of our God who both blesses His chosen and as well reveals Himself unto them.

**Now I know!** Almost anyone, from a near imbecile to a genius, can say, “Now I know” something. It may only be some little scrap of intelligence or perhaps vast amounts of particulars. However, until the Lord opens his heart, none, positively none, can say, “*Now I know that there is no God in all the earth but in Israel.*” “Well,” some self-esteeming Arminian may say, “Naaman did not have to go to Israel and then Jordan to find out God. God is everywhere,” say they. “Just reach out to Him and he will reach out to you.” Even so thought Naaman when he said, “Are not Abana and Pharpar, rivers of Damascus, better than all the waters of Israel?” Was not his view at that time essentially the same as the Arminian?

“God can be found anywhere.” Is this the word from the Lord or simply foolish notions dredged up out of the blinded heart? “I am found of them that sought me not (Isaiah 65.1).” How often have fools said, “I found Jesus”? Moreover, do not the self-serving false prophets pervert the word of the Lord when they plead with dead sinners to “Seek the Lord while He may be found”? Can an honest soul find anything in our subject that suggests Naaman was seeking the Lord, or that he longed for fellowship with the Ruler of the universe? Or, was Naaman simply looking for a cure for his leprosy? Whatever Naaman was seeking, we feel certain the Lord had a plan for him, and it included every event that transpired, from the beginning to the end. If this is not so, then we beg the objectors to inform us what might have been left out of the whole series of events.

The message from the prophet of the Lord was as good as a message from God. In fact, it was a message from God. It can be safely believed that if God had given a message to Elisha for Naaman’s

ears, then it was eternally certain, unless God whips out declarations and decrees on the spur of the moment according to what He newly discovers these earthly creatures doing. This we must firmly reject! “Remember the former things of old: for I am God, and there is none else; I am God and there is none like me. Declaring the end from the beginning, and from ancient times the things that are not yet done, saying, My counsel shall stand, and I will do all my pleasure (Isaiah 46.9, 10).” If you are numbered among them that fear God, you will bless the Lord for the passage quoted from Isaiah. We need not fear or dread, come what may, if God has truly declared the end (of all things) from the beginning (as far back as you can go) and determined the washing of a leper as well as the downfall of a nation that forgets God.

Naaman was the lone leper to be healed of leprosy in his day. This was a miracle of the utmost magnitude, yet it took place at an unspecified and lonely spot on the river Jordan. Only a handful of servants and traveling companions witnessed the magnificent scene. It should remind us that the great work of God for each of us often goes unnoticed and uncared for by the world in general. Even today, as we witness the blessed benefits from heaven in our behalf it is noticeable how often the blessing only redounds in our own souls, along with perhaps a few others that also love the Lord. A casual observer would soon dismiss it as he would all other things to which he holds no affections.

To our continual shame we confess, even those few who love Jesus as Lord and Redeemer need refreshing reminders of our exalted Physician and eternal Benefactor. A classic example is the following: “Now when John had heard in the prison the works of Christ, he sent two of his disciples. And said unto him, Art thou he that should come, or do we look for another? Jesus answered and said unto them, Go and shew John again those things which ye do hear and see: The blind receive their sight, and the lame walk, the lepers are cleansed, and the deaf hear, the dead are raised up, and the poor have the gospel preached to them. And blessed is he, whosoever shall not be offended in me (Matthew 11.2-6).” Such an array of wonders ought never be dismissed or thought lightly of, yet they are. Even poor John

needed a refresher lesson. The healing of Naaman was an unique and singular event in his day, but in the Lord's brief ministry healing lepers was a frequent manifestation of His authority and Godhead. This is obviously another of those dim figures of the Old Covenant days that shined brighter in the holy effulgence of Jesus, the Light of the World. With every miracle Jesus was bringing the shadows and types of the former days to full view. In a popular hymn it says: "The dying thief rejoiced to see that fountain in his day." We may paraphrase and say, "Naaman rejoiced to see that cleansing in his day." And, that was centuries before the thief was brought to the fountain filled with blood.

Our God is the same yesterday, today, and forever. From everlasting, before He spoke forth the universe with all its vast expanse; before He summoned the world from nothing and left it to lay void until He called forth all it contains, His eternal plans were formulated, sealed by His eternal power with everlasting and unlimited wisdom. In simple terms, God planned everything! Nothing is going to change. He planned what He sees and sees what He planned. Conditionalists, free-willers, do-gooders and assorted other Arminian rabble may murmur like the Egyptian magicians at the miracles of Moses, but that is the way the Bible relates it.

### The test

Since this is a continuing series of articles on predestination from Genesis to Revelation, it seems to be in order to examine the whole of the incidents in 2 Kings 5 so that we may determine if the proposition has been carried to the extreme or not. One thing of which we may be sure: The Old School Baptists will discover considerably more predestination in this context than will the Conditionalist foxes who would spoil our vines if possible. Those young foxes would, if given leave by the Lord, make havoc of our heritage before the tender vines could bring forth the ripened fruit. They cannot drink of this cup of joy when the fruit is pressed into it so they had rather see it all spoiled than admit its value. We shall, therefore begin before Naaman became a leper.

As we have before noticed there must be a fixed chain of events prior to any specific event we may

desire to examine. There is no exception to the proposition. In the healing of Naaman's leprosy, and spoken of by our Lord as a certain historical fact, nothing could have prevented its occurrence or the Scriptures would certainly have been broken. "For ever, O Lord, thy word is settled in heaven (Psalm 119.89)." Reader, do you believe this truth? *For ever*, O Lord, *thy word is settled* in heaven. Perhaps you say that only means the Bible and not the speech of Jesus. Is it not so that the account of Naaman is in the Bible? Then it is *settled for ever* as God's word. Naaman must have leprosy or it could not be a part of the word of God. "Then possibly," says the nay sayer, "Psalm 119 is speaking of the words of Jesus and not the record we call the Bible." Now, you who clutch free will to your breast as your darling idol, you have been gored by the other horn of your dilemma. If Jesus spoke of it as a certainty, and He surly did, then it would be impossible that it had not taken place. Jesus did not make this up. He drew from the absolutely predestinated facts of the 39 books we call the Old Testament. What a joy to be a babe in Christ, to be blessed to simply believe by grace what is taught everywhere in the word of God. On the other hand it must be a miserable lot to attempt to twist and turn the truth of God as an ironmonger would his twisted creation.

One of the simplest tests of predestination is to trace the previous generations that must, without fail, have given birth to the next in line for a David, an Abraham, a Solomon or a Naaman to come into the world. Should one person in any genealogical line fail to bring to birth the next in line, the chain would be broken. Say, for instance, Naaman's great-great grandfather (to be) had fallen in battle before giving seed to his wife, pray tell, how could Naaman ever be born? We are perfectly aware of the law of the brother (in Israel's law) taking up the widow so that the deceased would have seed but it would not be *that seed*; it would be another. Anyone that does not have sufficient understanding of common biological facts should certainly not aggravate their brain trying to disprove predestination.

All we have said about Naaman's birth line applies equally to the little captive Samaritan girl, the unknown person who carried this wisdom to the King of Syria, the King of Israel, the servant of Elisha,

Elisha himself, and the servants of Naaman who begged him to at least give the proposed remedy a try. Each of these persons must have had an unbroken line from Adam and Eve to exist then, to carry out their predestinated role. The varied multitude of events and circumstances necessary to bring them all together would defy examination with any instrument but faith. But so it was. At the proper time for each, their little role in Naaman's recovery must be fulfilled.

On the darker side, it must be admitted that for this miracle to come to pass and Jesus give His striking lesson on its purpose, Naaman's leprosy must have existed. Had Naaman done anything, more or less, to bring this dreaded malady upon him than others had? If, as some believe, leprosy is a type of sin, then where sin abounded, grace did much more abound.

Suppose this little maid of Israel had been so strikingly beautiful and fair and her captors, having been away so long from home and the obvious comforts it would afford, had some dark evening led her to a suitable place and maliciously mauled her for their carnal pleasure. The prospects of death at that time would be great; and if not death, her disposition would no doubt have been so warped against these and all other Syrians that she would never have suggested the cure that awaited Naaman in Samaria. Remember, this was the time of war; the opponents were bitter enemies. Our proposed scenario is not at all a stretch of loose ideas to gain a point. She was living out her days in the real world, a world filled with unfettered passions abounding.

Enough proper examples have been given. Those who love free and sovereign grace will have no trouble at all in seeing the wisdom in them. Gainsayers will continue trying to tear the God we love from His throne to a position of servitude to their beloved free will. They shall fail and soon, like the chaff in a windstorm they, with all their God-hating notions, will be blown away, leaving the good seed to serve its purpose in the hand of the Master.

Should the Lord bless, the subject will be taken up again with hope of finishing this chapter.

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## PSALM 89

*Title: Maschil of Ethan the Ezrahite.*

**T**itles are given to the Psalms in some King James Version Bibles but not in others. The title of Psalm 89 tells the reader that this particular Psalm is a "Maschil" of Ethan the Ezrahite. The Hebrew word *Maschil* means *instructive*. It is a song which instructs, or teaches sound doctrine.

Ethan was known for his wisdom, which was excelled only by that of Solomon. Ethan is singled out as the first of five men internationally known in their days for their wisdom: "And Solomon's wisdom excelled the wisdom of all the children of the east country, and all the wisdom of Egypt. For he was wiser than all men; than **Ethan the Ezrahite**, and Heman, and Chalcol, and Darda, the sons of Mahol: and his fame was in all nations round about (1 Kings 4.30f)." Only Jesus Christ, who is "the power of God and the wisdom of God (1 Corinthians 1.24)," and who is therefore infinite wisdom incarnate, was wiser than Solomon: "The queen of the south shall rise up in the judgment with the men of this generation, and condemn them: for she came from the utmost parts of the earth to hear the wisdom of Solomon; and, behold, **a greater than Solomon is here** (Matthew 12.42, Luke 11.31)."

With these things in mind, Ethan the Ezrahite, of the tribe of Judah, the tribe of David and Solomon, the tribe from whence Jesus Christ sprang after the flesh, was possibly the third wisest man who ever lived. Who, then, might be the better equipped, even from an intellectual standpoint, to instruct God's people in the sound doctrine of Christ? Yet, in all of this, we do not appeal to earthly or natural wisdom. The wisdom with which Ethan writes is part of the Scriptures inspired by the Holy Spirit of God, because "...the prophecy came not in old time by the will of man: but holy men of God spake as they were moved by the Holy Ghost (2 Peter 1.21)."

### Fourteen Items of Praise

In the Sermon on the Mount, Jesus taught His disciples to pray "after this manner (Matthew 6.9)." He did not tell them to pray "using these exact words." "After this manner therefore pray ye."

The manner He taught them to pray was **worship before asking, praise before petition**. It was, “*Our Father* which art in heaven, Hallowed be *thy name*. *Thy* kingdom come. *Thy* will be done in earth, as it is in heaven.” This came before there was any “Give us,” “Forgive us,” or “Lead us.” It is all a matter of priorities. God is first. As much as within you lies, then, consider to whom you address your petitions, and worship Him before the actual asking.

Ethan, in this manner, begins his hymn with seven statements of worship and adoration of Jehovah:

1. I will sing of the **mercies** of the Lord for ever:
2. With my mouth will I make known thy **faithfulness** to all generations.
3. For I have said, **Mercy** shall be built up for ever:
4. Thy **faithfulness** shalt thou establish in the very heavens.
5. I have made a **covenant** with my chosen,
6. I have **sworn** unto David my servant,
7. **Thy seed will I establish for ever**, and build up thy throne to all generations. *Selah*.

*Selah* means the music of the Psalm (for the Psalms are indeed Hebrew hymns) is to be stopped for a moment to let the thought expressed by the words sink in. It is a pause for pondering, for meditation, for worship.

Twice, alternating, he refers to Jehovah’s mercies, His faithfulness, His mercies, and His faithfulness. Then, the last three statements present a sworn covenant that is eternal. Psalm 89, then, presents an eternal covenant, sworn to by God on His oath, and the thrust of this covenant is faithfulness on the part of Jehovah and mercies toward His people.

Even in this opening statement Jehovah overrides the writer as if taking the words away from Ethan, one who can only speak about Him, and inserting God’s own words as the one speaking for Himself: “I have made a covenant with my chosen, I have sworn unto David my servant, Thy seed will I establish for ever, and build up thy throne to all generations.” This is no longer the Psalmist speaking; or, to the extent he still is, he is only quoting God by inspiration; for it was certainly not Ethan who established an eternal oath-bound covenant with David.

8. And the heavens shall praise thy wonders, O Lord:

9. thy faithfulness also in the congregation of the saints.

10. God is greatly to be feared in the assembly of the saints, and to be had in reverence of all them that are about Him.

These three points are separated by four rhetorical questions in verses 6 and 8:

11. *For who in the heaven can be compared unto the Lord?* 12. *Who among the sons of the mighty can be likened unto the Lord?* 13. *O Lord God of hosts, who is a strong Lord like unto thee?* 14. *or to thy faithfulness round about thee?*

Rhetorical questions are questions designed to provoke thought and for which an answer is not expected or demanded. There is no positive answer to any of these questions. None in heaven (populated by the angelic hosts and the spirits of just men made perfect) can be compared to the Lord in His deific glory. None on earth, among the sons of the mightiest of men, can be compared to Him in His humanity. There is no strong Lord like Him, and there is nothing round about Him to be compared with His faithfulness.

#### **Fourteen more attributes of God**

The writer in verses 9-14 now addresses fourteen more observations that further reveal the sovereign majesty and power of our God:

1. *Thou rulest the raging of the sea*, and 2. *When the waves thereof arise, thou stillest them*. Although there is far more than nature before us in this psalm, we are nevertheless reminded here that Jehovah rules in all of nature. The oceans of the world respond to His sovereign will. “Fear ye not me? saith the Lord: will ye not tremble at my presence, which have placed the sand for the bound of the sea by a perpetual decree, that it cannot pass it: and though the waves thereof toss themselves, yet can they not prevail; though they roar, yet can they not pass over it (Jeremiah 5.22)?”

“They that go down to the sea in ships, that do business in great waters; these see the works of the Lord, and his wonders in the deep. For he commandeth, and raiseth the stormy wind, which lifteth up the waves thereof. They mount up to the heaven, they go down again to the depths: their soul is melted because of trouble. They reel to and fro, and stagger like a drunken man, and are at their wit’s end. Then they cry unto the Lord in their trouble, and he bringeth them out of their distresses. He maketh

the storm a calm, so that the waves thereof are still. Then are they glad because they be quiet; so he bringeth them unto their desired haven (Psalm 107.23ff).”

Who else, other than our God, can so control the mighty bodies of water that cover most of this planet? Who else could part the Red Sea so His people could cross on dry land? Who else can walk on the waves of Galilee or rebuke a stormy sea with the words, “Peace, be still,” and have it instantly obey?

3. *Thou hast broken Rahab in pieces, as one that is slain*; and 4. *Thou hast scattered thine enemies with thy strong arm*. These two statements stand together. The term **Rahab** here (Strong’s Hebrew Dictionary, #7294) is not the same as the name of the woman of Jericho, Rahab (Strong’s Hebrew Dictionary, #7343), who was an ancestor of David and of Christ. Here in this psalm and elsewhere, this word *Rahab* means *boaster*, a name sometimes used for Egypt, that boastful nation typified and represented by their ruler who said, “Who is the Lord, that I should obey his voice to let Israel go? I know not the Lord, neither will I let Israel go (Exodus 5.2).”

What the Lord did to Egypt and the boastful Pharaoh king was for a specific purpose: “For the scripture saith unto Pharaoh, Even for this same purpose have I raised thee up, that I might show my power in thee, and that my name might be declared throughout all the earth (Romans 9.17).”

Did the Lord accomplish His purpose? He certainly did! Forty years later, Rahab of Jericho said, “I know that the Lord hath given you the land, and that your terror is fallen upon us, and that all the inhabitants of the land faint because of you. For we have heard how the Lord dried up the water of the Red sea for you, when ye came out of Egypt; and what ye did unto the two kings of the Amorites, that were on the other side Jordan, Sihon and Og, whom ye utterly destroyed. And as soon as we had heard these things, our hearts did melt, neither did there remain any more courage in any man, because of you: for the Lord your God, he is God in heaven above, and in earth beneath (Joshua 2.9ff).” Such is the result of a God-given consideration of His mighty power.

5. *The heavens are thine*: There are literal heavens, more than one, in the scriptures.

**A. The atmosphere**: God called the firmament heaven, and the waters of the earth were under it

(Genesis 1.8f). This is the *atmospheric heaven*, or the *air* we breathe, in which the clouds are formed (Daniel 7.13), and in which the fowls fly (Genesis 1.20). the same word is translated “air” in Genesis 1.26, 28, and 30, 2.19, and other places. The term *heaven* is here contrasted with the earth and is considered as distinct from it (Genesis 14.19).

**B. The starry heaven**: This is where the stars, planets, and galaxies are placed (Genesis 1.14f), known generally to man as the entire created universe.

**C. The third heaven**: This is the present location of *paradise*. The apostle Paul, speaking of himself in the third person, said: “I knew a man in Christ above fourteen years ago, (whether in the body, I cannot tell; or whether out of the body, I cannot tell: God knoweth;) such an one caught up to the third heaven. And I knew such a man, (whether in the body, or out of the body, I cannot tell: God knoweth;) How that he was caught up into paradise, and heard unspeakable words, which it is not lawful for a man to utter (2 Corinthians 12.2ff).”

The heavens, any and all of them, belong to our God, and He doeth according to His will in the army of heaven (Daniel 4.35).

“Thou, even thou, art Lord alone; thou hast made heaven, the heaven of heavens, with all their host, the earth, and all things that are therein, the seas, and all that is therein, and thou preservest them all; and the host of heaven worshippeth thee (Nehemiah 9.6).”

6. *The earth also is thine*: The earth is the planet upon which we live: the rocks, dirt, mountains, and seas, as contrasted to its inhabitants, known generally as the **world**.

7. *As for the world and the fulness thereof, thou hast founded them*. Not only does the earth belong unto Him, but its inhabitants—the plants, animals, mankind, and all other living creatures—as the fulness of the earth, are His to dispose of as He sees fit.

8. *The north and the south thou hast created them*: The north and south poles are the delimiters of this oblate spheroid we occupy, giving us starting points for our measurements. Men can measure how far the north pole is from the south pole. There is no east or west pole from which or to which to measure, however. God has removed the sins of His people, He says, “As far as the east is from the west, so far



hath he removed our transgressions from us (Psalm 103.12).” How far is that? It is immeasurable, an infinite distance.

It is interesting to note a special attribute of the *north*: “For promotion cometh neither from the east, nor from the west, nor from the south (Psalm 75.6).” That only leaves north as the direction from which promotion comes. North is the only direction which can be truthfully considered *up* from the earth; and *up* is the only direction we earthbound mortals are given to think of as being the direction toward the abode of God. “He stretcheth out the north over the empty place, and hangeth the earth upon nothing (Job 26.7).”

9. *Tabor and Hermon shall rejoice in thy name.*

**Tabor** is a mountain at the northeast edge of the Jezreel Valley (the valley also known as the Plain of Esdraelon or the Valley of Megiddo), almost due east of Nazareth, sixty-five or so miles northeast of Jerusalem, rising to 1,843 feet above sea level. It was at Mount Tabor that Barak gathered his army for the battle against Sisera (Judges 4). In Hosea’s time, its summit was the site of an idolatrous shrine (Hosea 5.1). This mountain men smugly think of as “dead matter”; nevertheless, in some sense (how, in our limited knowledge of God’s power and relationship to His inanimate creation, we presently neither know nor understand), it has some God-given capacity to rejoice in the name of Jehovah. Perhaps this will be made more clear in that day when the battle of Armageddon is fought in the broad valley at its foot.

**Hermon**, meaning *sacred* or *sanctuary*, is the magnificent mountain at the south end of the mountain range northeast of the Sea of Galilee, at the extreme northern limit of the territory conquered by Moses and Joshua east of the Jordan. The entire mountain range is about eighteen miles long. Hermon is separated from the rest of the range by the gorge of the River Abana, mentioned in the account of the healing of Namaan the Syrian leper (2 Kings 5.12). Hermon’s highest peak rises 9,232 feet above sea level, making it easily the tallest mountain in Palestine. The runoff from its snow-covered peaks provides a major source of water for the Sea of Galilee and the Jordan River. Because it is so near to Caesarea Philippi (Matthew 16.13), Mt. Hermon is believed to have been the probable site of the Transfiguration of Christ (Matthew 17). Is it not

significant that these two mountains are mentioned together here, the one being the probable site where Jesus was transfigured, showing His resplendent and eternal glory, the other the certain site where Christ will destroy the armies of the Antichrist at His second coming?

10. *Thou hast a mighty arm: 11. Strong is thy hand, and 12. High is thy right hand.* The arm of the Lord, and His hand, are expressions of the strength of God as often expressed in Jesus Christ as His hand and the Holy Spirit as His arm. His arm, the Holy Spirit, is mighty enough and long enough to reach His children in the ends of the earth. His hand, the Lord Jesus, is strong enough to grasp them, and His strength is sufficient to bring them to Himself and to keep them safely. “And I give unto them eternal life; and they shall never perish, neither shall any man pluck them out of my hand. My Father, which gave them me, is greater than all; and no man is able to pluck them out of my Father’s hand. I and my Father are one (John 10.28ff).”

Further, His arm and His hand are more than mighty enough to conquer the strongest of enemies. “And the Lord brought us forth out of Egypt with a mighty hand, and with an outstretched arm, and with great terribleness, and with signs, and with wonders (Deuteronomy 26.8).” God says, “I have made the earth, the man and the beast that are upon the ground, by my great power and by my outstretched arm, and have given it unto whom it seemed meet unto me (Jeremiah 27.5).”

13. *Justice and judgment are the habitation of thy throne: 14. Mercy and truth shall go before thy face.* “Mercy and truth are met together; righteousness and peace have kissed each other (Psalm 85.10).” Two pairs of seemingly contrasting attributes of God—mercy versus truth, and righteousness versus peace—are brought together in the cross of Christ.

Truth and righteousness move vertically. They strike downward, crushing untruth and unrighteousness, chopping down as a sword upon their foes, and they then return upward to God their source: “Truth shall spring out of the earth [upward]; and righteousness shall look **down** from heaven (Psalm 85.11).”

Mercy and peace, however, move horizontally, from the river to the ends of the earth, reaching His people wherever they are. The one pair moves up and

down, the other, left and right; and where they meet, they form a cross. Where they meet together and kiss each other, they *cross*. The crossing place is in the cross of Jesus the Savior. He is the Truth (John 14.6) and not only God's righteousness but the righteousness of His people (Jeremiah 23.6). "And if any man sin, we have an advocate with the Father, Jesus Christ the righteous (1 John 2.1)."

But He is also the merciful: "Wherefore in all things it behoved him 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 (Hebrews 2.17)." Merciful and faithful? Yes, He is both, just as this psalm's first two verses say. The writer of Hebrews links these same two attributes. He is merciful to His people, and He is also faithful, not only to them, but also to the truth and righteousness of God, and faithful to the covenant to which He bound Himself by eternal oath. Neither mercy nor faithfulness is compromised for the sake of the other!

And peace kissed righteousness also (Psalm 85.10). "For He is our peace, who hath made both one, and hath broken down the middle wall of partition between us (Ephesians 2.14)." The **us** who had a wall between them has a double reference. In Ephesians 2, the **us** were the Gentiles and Israel (verses 11-12); Jews and Gentiles had a *vertical wall* between them, separating them left and right, horizontally. "Having abolished in his flesh the enmity, even the law of commandments contained in ordinances; for to make in himself of twain [Jew and Gentile] one new man, so making peace (verse 15)."

But in an even greater sense, there also was a *horizontal wall* separating **us**, both Gentile and Jew, below, from God above. This wall, too, Christ demolished on the cross: "And that he might reconcile both [Jew and Gentile] unto God in one body by the cross, having slain the enmity thereby (verse 16)." Again, these vertical and horizontal walls form a cross, the cross of Christ.

Those who read these verses in Ephesians with discernment will see that it was Christ Himself and not an underling who "came and preached peace to you which were afar off, and to them that were nigh (verse 17)." This is one more of scores of texts which show that Christ not only regenerates by His Holy Spirit but also He calls His sheep with His own voice.

### Christ's People: Seven Reasons for Joy

The psalm-writer next presents seven reasons for joy in those who have been given a hearing ear to recognize the joyful sound of the gospel. "Blessed is the people that know the joyful sound":

1. *They shall walk, O Lord, in the light of thy countenance.* They are a walking people, on a pilgrimage, all of which implies progress. They are not stagnant. "But the path of the just is as the shining light, that shineth more and more unto the perfect day (Proverbs 4.18)." The picture is that of a traveler in the darkness just before daybreak, his path obscure, his way, both before and behind, hard to discern. As the day dawns and the sun rises, the light makes his way more clear. As the children of God travel through life, the puzzling experiences of their earlier years are understood in the light of Christ, the Light of the world, who, as the Sun of righteousness, "shall arise with healing in his wings (Malachi 4.1)."

2. *In thy name shall they rejoice all the day:* "The name of the Lord is a strong tower: the righteous runneth into it, and is safe (Proverbs 18.10)." It is never the unrighteous ones who run into His name in order to be made righteous. These runners are righteous by eternal decree; yet, knowing their desperate need for shelter, they run to Him for safety and protection. "Thou shalt call His name JESUS: for He shall save His people from their sins (Matthew 1.21)." This, the name Jesus, is the name into which the righteous ones run for shelter, safety, and salvation.

3. *In thy righteousness shall they be exalted.*
4. *For thou art the glory of their strength: and*
5. *In thy favour our horn shall be exalted.*
6. *For the Lord is our defence; and*
7. *The Holy One of Israel is our king.*

Each of these seven thoughts expresses a distinct relationship between Christ and His people. There is nothing in the gospel message that is more plain than the fact that the righteousness of Christ is imputed to His people who have no righteousness of their own.

In these last five points, it is Christ's righteousness, glory, favor (grace), power to defend, and lordship as king that abound and accrue to their benefit. In the Scriptures, five is the number of grace. In the grace of His righteousness, glory, favor, defense, and lordship His people are exalted, strengthened,

defended, protected, and eternally glorified by Him as their king.

### The Voice of the Father

To bring about their salvation, His people are for the moment set aside and ignored, as it were, during this divine conversation of the Godhead, as the Father and Son in covenant deal directly with one another. God the Father, then, next speaks about His only begotten Son in whom He is well pleased: *Then thou spakest in vision to thy holy one, and saidst:*

1. *I have laid help upon one that is mighty.* There is none mightier. Not only is He the mediator-man Christ Jesus, “His name shall be called... **The mighty God...** (Isaiah 9.6).”

2. *I have exalted one chosen out of the people.* Never forget God’s sovereign election of His people in Christ Jesus. They were chosen in Him before the foundation of the world (Ephesians 1.4). He is identified with them by election to the extent that He, being one with them, is called God’s *elect*: “Behold my servant, whom I uphold; **mine elect**, in whom my soul delighteth; I have put my Spirit upon Him: He shall bring forth judgment to the Gentiles (Isaiah 42.1).” The doctrine of sovereign election is not an obscure, hidden mystery to be discussed in hushed tones only among those initiated into the deeper realms of theology. Election is foundational to the gospel, an essential part of it.

3. *I have found David my servant:* In the Scriptures, the descendent of and heir of a king is sometimes called by his ancestor’s name. This is especially true when there were covenant promises made to the ancestor—in this case David—that were to be fulfilled in his descendent, Jesus the Christ. Promises were made to David: “The Lord hath sworn in truth unto David; he will not turn from it; Of the fruit of thy body will I set upon thy throne (Psalm 132.11).” The nation of Israel assumed that this was fulfilled in Solomon, and in a measure it was: “And Solomon the son of David was strengthened in his kingdom, and the Lord his God was with him, and magnified him exceedingly (2 Chronicles 1.1).” But in the larger sense, it was to be fulfilled in Jesus the greater Son of David. “The book of the generation of Jesus Christ, the son of David, the son of Abraham (Matthew 1.1).” “...behold, a greater than Solomon is here (Matthew 12.42).”

4. *With my holy oil have I anointed Him:* Oil in the Scriptures is always a figure of the Holy Spirit, who is the only true anointing of God. Oil is never merely “the grace of God” or any other single gift or grace as is sometimes said, because grace and all else are secondary gifts, tokens, and evidences of the Holy Spirit who brings them. When Jesus read from Isaiah in the synagogue of Nazareth, “The Spirit of the Lord God is upon me; because the Lord hath anointed me to preach good tidings unto the meek... (Isaiah 61.1),” He told His hearers, “This day is this scripture fulfilled in your ears (Luke 4.21).” “Jesus, whom thou hast anointed,” the disciples said, in Acts 4.27.

John the Baptist, who baptized Jesus, said of Him: “I saw the Spirit descending from heaven like a dove, and it abode upon Him (John 1.32).” “For He whom God hath sent speaketh the words of God: for God giveth not the Spirit by measure unto Him (John 3.34).” “God anointed Jesus of Nazareth with the Holy Ghost and with power,” Acts 10.38. The anointing was the Holy Spirit, and the Holy Spirit is the anointing. See again Isaiah 42.1.

5. *With whom my hand shall be established:* A person’s hand is that with which he accomplishes his work. We have before seen that the hand of the Lord is Jesus Christ, because God does His works by Him.

6. *Mine arm also shall strengthen Him.* Comments upon the hand and the arm of the Lord are above. God here repeats this reference to His hand and His arm for emphasis. It is not the hand or arm of man that fulfills the eternal covenant of God. “The zeal of the Lord of hosts will perform this (Isaiah 9.7).” “This is the word of the Lord unto Zerubbabel, saying, Not by might, nor by power, but by my Spirit, saith the Lord of hosts (Zechariah 4.6).”

7. *The enemy shall not exact upon Him:* That is, according to the root Hebrew word, His enemies shall not lead Him astray or delude, deceive, seduce, or beguile Him. They tried to get an *exact* answer from Him. “Then went the Pharisees, and took counsel how they might entangle him in his talk (Matthew 22.15).” “Master, we know that thou art true, and carest for no man: for thou regardest not the person of men, but teachest the way of God in truth: Is it lawful to give tribute to Caesar, or not? Shall we give, or shall we not give (Mark 12.15f)?” His one sentence answer amazed them. “Render to Caesar

the things that are Caesar's, and to God the things that are God's." They left, frustrated.

"The same day came to him the Sadducees, which say that there is no resurrection, and asked him...(Matthew 22.23)." His answer is sufficient to answer any and all who say there is no bodily, physical resurrection (and anything short of a bodily, physical resurrection is no resurrection at all), whether then or now: "Ye do err, not knowing the scriptures, nor the power of God."

"Then one of them, which was a lawyer, asked him a question, tempting him, and saying, Master, which is the great commandment in the law (Matthew 22.35f)?" Without hesitation, he not only quoted the answer from Moses, He elaborated upon it.

Then, since the Pharisees, Sadducees, Herodians, and lawyers delighted in tricky questions, He gave them a couple of questions of His own. With two or three questions Jesus, the Power and the Wisdom of God, silenced them all:

"What think ye of Christ? whose Son is He?"

"They say unto him, The Son of David."

He saith unto them, "How then doth David in spirit call Him Lord, saying, 'The Lord said unto my Lord, Sit thou on my right hand, till I make thine enemies thy footstool'? If David then call Him Lord, how is he His son?"

"And no man was able to answer Him a word," Matthew tells us, "neither durst any man from that day forth ask Him any more questions."

8. *Nor [shall] the son of wickedness afflict Him.* Do not be deceived. In the last analysis it was not Judas who afflicted Him, nor was it Pontius Pilate, or Caiaphas the high priest, or the Roman soldiers, or Satan himself who afflicted Jesus Christ. The afflictions He endured were at the hand of the Father. "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)." Judas, Pilate, and the others were only God's sword (Psalm 17.13), and they were gathered—passively; they did not "gather" themselves—"For to do whatsoever thy hand and thy counsel **determined before** [προωρισεν, *proorisen*, elsewhere translated by *ordained* and *predestinated*] to be done (Acts 4.28)." The enemies of the doctrine of absolute predestination continue to say, "Prede-

stination is only of people, not events." They are willingly ignorant of the fact that events—"whatsoever God's hand and counsel determined before (predestinated) **to be done**"—are also clearly predestinated to come to pass.

Quibbling over predestination, such men overlook and obscure what was predestinated. Jesus was predestinated to be an offering for the sins of His people. **Christ's crucifixion was not a transaction between God and men, but it was between God the Father and God the Son.** Jeremiah, lifted far above his own suffering, was given meditations divinely fit to describe the suffering Savior on the cross: "Is it nothing to you, all ye that pass by? behold, and see if there be any sorrow like unto my sorrow, which is done unto me, wherewith the Lord hath afflicted me in the day of his fierce anger. From above hath He sent fire into my bones, and it prevailed against them: He hath spread a net for my feet, He hath turned me back: He hath made me desolate and faint all the day (Lamentations 1.12f)."

As the Lamb, the Son was **the offering** to our offended God. An offering must be made by a priest fit for the office, so He was also the **High Priest** who took the blood of the sacrifice into the Holy of Holies, into the very presence of God to make the atonement.

Do not think for an instant that the Roman cross was the altar, for it is "the altar which sanctifieth the gift (Matthew 23.19)," and Roman crosses sanctify nothing. There were thousands of wooden crosses upon which men died in those days, and neither the men nor their crosses were sanctified. Nothing less than the perfect, eternal righteousness of Christ was **the altar** upon which the sacrifice of His sinless humanity was offered and by which it was sanctified.

He was also **the mercy seat** upon which the blood was sprinkled, for *mercy seat* is indeed exactly what the word *propitiation* means in Romans 3.25: "Whom God hath set forth to be a propitiation through faith in his blood, to declare his righteousness for the remission of sins that are past, through the forbearance of God." "Whom God hath set forth to be a mercy seat" is the way this text is meant to be understood. This is of utmost importance to all who have a hope of meeting their Creator in peace, because it was of the mercy seat in the old tabernacle that God said, "And *there* I will meet with thee (Exodus 25.22, 30.6)." It is only in Jesus Christ, the

fulfillment of all the Old Testament types, where Jehovah meets with His people.

Jesus is also **the God** to whom the sacrifice was offered. Remember Isaiah 9.6: "His name shall be called...The mighty God, The everlasting Father...."

He was and is, then, the all in all of His people: their offering, their High Priest, their altar, their mercy seat, their way into the Holy of Holies, and their God and Savior.

9. *And I will beat down His foes before His face:* and, 10. *[I will] plague them that hate Him.*

Foes He has, indeed, and they hate Him quite without reason. "They that hate me without a cause are more than the hairs of mine head: they that would destroy me, being mine enemies wrongfully, are mighty (Psalm 69.4):" But they will not survive this "beating down" that God promises. Men have promoted the "meek and lowly Lamb of God" aspect of His person, work, and ministry until scarcely anyone nowadays remembers that He is also "the Lion of the tribe of Judah (Revelation 5.5)." When He comes the second time, it will not be as a Lamb, but as the Lion. "The fear of a king is as the roaring of a lion: whoso provoketh him to anger sinneth against his own soul (Proverbs 20.2)." "For thus hath the Lord spoken unto me, Like as the lion and the young lion roaring on his prey... so shall the Lord of hosts come down to fight for mount Zion, and for the hill thereof. As birds flying, so will the Lord of hosts defend Jerusalem; defending also he will deliver it; and passing over he will preserve it (Isaiah 31.4f)."

At His first coming, the Jews of Jesus' day looked for a conquering king to liberate them from the Roman Empire, but they were wrong. Now, as the nominal church, as a whole, is being drawn to a close, with only a remnant anticipating His second coming, she does *not* look for Him to come as a conquering king; and to what extent she does not, she is just as wrong as were the first century Jews. His return at Armageddon will be as King of kings and Lord of lords (Revelation 19.16), in a most manifest and literal way, to put down all rebellion against our Lord and against His Christ (1 Corinthians 15.24; Revelation 11.15).

For almost two thousand years, Satan and men have thought they have gotten away with crucifying their God and Creator. They have not. "He that sitteth in the heavens shall laugh: the Lord shall have

them in derision. Then shall He speak unto them in his wrath, and vex them in His sore displeasure (Psalm 2.4f)." "The Lord shall laugh at him: for He seeth that His day is coming (Psalm 37.13)."

The first century Jews and their Pharisee and Sadducee leaders were wrong, because they did not understand or believe their prophets. The Laodicean church will find itself just as wrong as the Pharisees were, and it will be for the same reason.

### **He Who Suffered....**

But what of Him who suffered such an ordeal as the crucifixion? The Father continues:

11. *But my faithfulness and my mercy shall be with Him:* The faithfulness and mercy of the early verses of this Psalm (verses 1-8) are specifically promised to Him. He is at once the divine vessel in whom His children were chosen, and the container in whom all their blessings are stored; and

12. *In my name shall His horn be exalted.* An animal's horn is a symbol of its fighting power. See Psalm 18.2, spoken in prophecy of Christ.

13. *I will set His hand also in the sea, and His right hand in the rivers.* His kingdom reaches the uttermost parts of the heavens and the earth. "He shall not fail nor be discouraged, till He have set judgment in the earth: and the isles shall wait for His law (Isaiah 42.4)." Historically, rivers have been boundaries between nations and territories. "By terrible things in righteousness wilt thou answer us, O God of our salvation; who art the confidence of all the ends of the earth, and of them that are afar off upon the sea (Psalm 65.5)." "He shall have dominion also from sea to sea, and from the river unto the ends of the earth (Psalm 72.8)." "Who hath ascended up into heaven, or descended? who hath gathered the wind in His fists? who hath bound the waters in a garment? who hath established all the ends of the earth? what is His name, and what is His Son's name, if thou canst tell (Proverbs 30.4)?"

14. *He shall cry unto me, Thou art my father, my God, and the rock of my salvation.* And, 15. *Also I will make Him my firstborn:* Acknowledging His office of being God's firstborn does not mean He was "born first"; rather, it recognizes His rights as the Prophet, Priest, and King of His people.

16. *[I will make Him] higher than the kings of the earth.* He is King of kings and Lord of lords.

Hebrews 1.5, where it is applied to the Lord Jesus Christ, alludes to this text: "For unto which of the angels said he at any time, Thou art my Son, this day have I begotten thee?" These mighty spirit beings called *archangels* and *angels* (two of whom we know of by their biblical names of Michael and Gabriel) were never addressed as *begotten* sons of God.

And again, "I will be to Him a Father, and He shall be to me a Son (Hebrews 1.5; 2 Samuel 7.14)."

17. *My mercy will I keep for Him for evermore:* The Father provides eternal mercy both to Christ the suffering Savior and to those chosen in Him. "But 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, (by grace ye are saved;) (Ephesians 2.4f)."

18. *My covenant shall stand fast with Him.*

19. *His seed also will I make to endure for ever:* He has a seed, an offspring, because His people are born of Him. Remember, He is not only the Son. His name shall also be called the everlasting Father (Isaiah 9.6).

20. *[I will make] His throne as the days of heaven.* In other words, His throne is eternal.

### The Father Speaks of Christ's People

Verses 30-37 is a text as abused as any in the Bible. This passage has been misused innumerable times to preach that God will punish ("chastise") His children "for their sins." Such a gross misapplication departs from the plain sentiment of this Psalm. Yet, in the last week preceding this writing, we heard this text misapplied by a radio preacher yet again.

Few who speak from this text seem able to read it in its context to see what the Lord is actually saying. Few realize the text is not speaking of chastising the children of God. Few seem to care whether or not they present the proper sense of the words. Few of their hearers seem the least concerned about the blessed truth which is being abused and misrepresented in the name of "a good preaching text."

We do not deny at all that the Bible teaches that the Lord chastises His people; Hebrews 12.5-7 makes it clear that He does. But to try to use Psalm 89.30-32 to teach and to preach a doctrine of chastisement is another sad case of **right doctrine, wrong text.**

To prove that God chastises His people, a preacher clearly needs another text instead of this one.

Consider. The text says, "If His children forsake my law, and walk not in my judgments; If they break my statutes, and keep not my commandments"; so far, God is setting up the predicament of His children. Every single one of them, to their shame, without exception forsake His law, walk not in His judgments, break His statutes, and do not keep His commandments. We know this for a fact and do not need to look beyond our own experience, within our own hearts, to know this is true.

The text continues, "Then will I visit their transgression with the rod, and their iniquity with stripes." This is the point where the unwary go astray. Men committed to "earning their own salvation" and "avoiding chastisement" assume far too quickly it is upon God's children that our Father and our God is raining the rod's blows and the scourge's stripes. Thanks be unto the Lord that this is not so. This text does not at all apply to the children of God. It is plainly Christ on the cross who is in view here, receiving the rod and stripes from His Father.

Jesus the Savior stepped between His bride and the wrath of the Father. Upon His body the chastising blows fell. "Wherefore when he cometh into the world, he saith, Sacrifice and offering thou wouldest not, but **a body** hast thou prepared me (Hebrews 10.5)." "Who His own self bare our sins in **His own body** on the tree, that we, being dead to sins, should live unto righteousness: by whose stripes ye were healed (1 Peter 2.24)." Here Peter quotes from Isaiah 53.5, to which we must now turn for the truth of the matter.

The key words in Psalm 89.32 are *transgression*, *iniquity*, and *stripes*. Did God indeed visit their **transgression** with the rod, and their **iniquity** with **stripes**, as this Psalm says? Yes, He certainly did: "But **He** was wounded for our **transgressions**, **He** was bruised for our **iniquities**: the **chastisement** of our peace was upon **Him**; and with **His stripes** we are healed (Isaiah 53.5)."

Again, the key words in Isaiah 53.5 are *chastisement*, *transgression*, *iniquity*, and *stripes*. There, believer, is your chastisement, the chastisement of Psalm 89.32, endured by the Lord of Glory, Jesus Himself, because the text continues with seven assur-

ances from the Father, not given so much to His children as they are directly to Him, their surety:

1. “Nevertheless my **lovingkindness** will I not utterly take from **Him**.” It is He, then, and not they, who is the recipient of the rod, bruising, stripes, and chastisement, and who is the true subject of the text. We are assured that as bruised, mangled, despised and forsaken as He was, this did not mean God had removed His lovingkindness from His only begotten Son in whom He was so well pleased.

2. “nor suffer my **faithfulness** to fail,” and,

3. “My **covenant** will I not break”: This is the primary thrust of Psalm 89: He is faithful that promised, and the promises were to Christ first of all. The covenant, being eternal, had to be between the eternal personages of the Godhead. The Father and the Son are bound by eternal covenant to each other in faithfulness, and His children are likewise bound to the Father and the Son by the same.

4. “nor alter the thing that is gone out of my lips,” and 5. “Once have I **sworn by my holiness** that I will not lie unto David.” He cannot lie or change, and therefore He will not. The promises Jehovah made to Abraham, Isaac, Jacob, Judah, and David in particular are all fulfilled in the Son of David, Jesus of Nazareth.

6. “His seed shall endure for ever, and his throne as the sun before me.” And,

7. “It shall be established for ever as the moon, and as a faithful witness in heaven.” *Selah*.

*Selah*: Pause, ponder; meditate upon this, for it is worthy of our meditation. Two things are involved in the sworn promise to Christ: His seed, and His throne.

Both are to endure eternally because of Christ’s faithfulness to the Father on the one hand and to His children on the other.

Who is the “faithful witness in heaven”? “**Jesus Christ, who is the faithful witness**, and the first begotten of the dead, and the prince of the kings of the earth. Unto him that loved us, and washed us from our sins in his own blood and hath made us kings and priests unto God and his Father; to him be glory and dominion for ever and ever. Amen. (Revelation 1.5f).” There, we see who the Faithful Witness is, and the salvation of His seed resulting from the suffering He endured as described in this Psalm.

### Christ in View

With the above in mind, the Psalmist comments anew on the sufferings of the solitary Savior (verses 38-45). Speaking as the Son to the Father, he says:

1. But Thou hast cast off and abhorred,
2. Thou hast been wroth with thine anointed.
3. Thou hast made void the covenant of thy servant:
4. Thou hast profaned His crown by casting it to the ground.
5. Thou hast broken down all His hedges;
6. Thou hast brought His strong holds to ruin.
7. All that pass by the way spoil Him:
8. He is a reproach to His neighbours.
9. Thou hast set up the right hand of His adversaries;
10. Thou hast made all His enemies to rejoice.
11. Thou hast also turned the edge of His sword, and hast not made Him to stand in the battle.
12. Thou hast made His glory to cease, and cast His throne down to the ground.
13. The days of His youth hast thou shortened:
14. Thou hast covered Him with shame. *Selah*.

*Selah*. Pause a moment and think on what He has just said. In His final hours of agony and death, no less than fourteen horrors, enumerated above, were heaped upon Him, every one of them having a direct bearing on the sins of His people.

Is the wicked abhorred of God and cast off? Jesus bore the enmity and rejection justly due to His people for them, so that they could and would be loved and protected.

Was wrath due them? He bore that wrath. Were His people covenant-breakers? He bore the penalty while keeping the terms of His covenant. And have His children, before God was pleased to reveal His sovereign grace to them, been guilty of denying God’s sovereign prerogatives? Christ’s crown was profaned, and He wore a crown of thorns, emblematic of the curse, instead of the eternal diadem of glory that is rightfully His.

Did His people, like Job, need a protecting hedge about them? Then, as He bore their guilt, His hedge was broken down, invaded. Did they need a stronghold for safety and shelter? His strong holds were ruined in order to buy for them the promises, “The name of the LORD is a **strong tower**: the righteous

runneth into it, and is safe (Proverbs 18.10)"; and, "Turn you to the **strong hold**, ye prisoners of hope (Zechariah 9.12)."

Were His people taken as spoil by Satan, as Lot was by the kings from the land of Babel? Then Christ Jesus was spoiled; that is, He was *taken as a spoil*, to share in their experience and to buy them back.

Were His people a reproach unto God the Father? Christ saith to His Father in prophecy, "The reproaches of them that reproached Thee are fallen upon me (Psalm 69.9)."

Do His people have an adversary? "Your adversary the devil, as a roaring lion, walketh about, seeking whom he may devour (1 Peter 5.8)." He had adversaries without number, in life and in death, to cancel the power of Satan against His people.

Do the enemies of the people of God rejoice when His children stumble? Yes. David complained, "Yea, they opened their mouth wide against me, and said, Aha, aha, our eye hath seen it (Psalm 35.21)." By the appointment of His Father, Christ bore the jeering mockery of the crowd to buy a better end for them, a crown of rejoicing and a crown of glory that fadeth not away.

Have His children failed in the day of battle, the sword twisting in their hands? Then He must suffer the same and fall before His enemies to purchase for His people the promise, "Thanks be to God, which giveth us the victory through our Lord Jesus Christ (1 Corinthians 15.57)."

Do His children glory unwisely? "Your glorying is not good (1 Corinthians 5.6)." Do they wish to rule over the church and over each other? (See 1 Corinthians 4.8.) He laid aside His eternal glory and everlasting throne, for a time yet appointed, to bring them into His glory and to His throne. "Father, I will that they also, whom thou hast given me, be with me where I am; that they may behold my glory, which thou hast given me: for thou lovedst me before the foundation of the world (John 17.24)."

Do His people yet covet long life in this sin-cursed world of sin and sorrow? Then He was cut off in the prime of life, a young man, his youth shortened, to purchase for them an endless life of joy at His right hand. "Thou wilt show me the path of life: in thy presence is fulness of joy; at thy right hand there are pleasures for evermore (Psalm 16.11)."

Are His elect tainted with the shame of Adam's nakedness, not only that of physical nakedness, but, far more, by a lack of a spiritual garment, the robe of righteousness they need to stand unashamedly in God's presence? Then He was covered, not with clothing, but with shame, that they would all be clothed in His robe of His righteousness.

### The SON Speaks: Seven Questions

1. *How long, LORD?* How long must the sinless lamb of God endure the weight of the sins of His people? Remember, He did not just bear them on the cross; He was bearing them all the days of His earthly life. The blood that the infant Jesus shed at His circumcision was every bit as efficacious and atoning as the blood He shed on Calvary. In an even greater sense, "So he was their Saviour. In all their affliction he was afflicted, and the angel of his presence saved them: in his love and in his pity he redeemed them; and he bare them, and carried them all the days of old (Isaiah 63.8f)." He did not come to "become" their Saviour; He was their Saviour in all eternity.

2. *Wilt thou hide thyself for ever?* Would it not seem for ever, an eternity, to One who was infinitely holy, as He bore the sins of "a great multitude, which no man could number, of all nations, and kindreds, and people, and tongues (Revelation 7.9)," sins which they would have otherwise had to bear for all eternity?

3. *Shall thy wrath burn like fire?* Did He not bear their eternal lake of fire for them? "From above hath He sent fire into my bones, and it prevaieth against them (Lamentations 1.13)."

4. *Remember how short my time is: wherefore hast thou made all men in vain?* Vain in the sense of devastated, ruined, useless. This is the condition from which Christ has redeemed His people and brought them back to God.

5. *What man is he that liveth, and shall not see death?* Be amazed. Even the sinless Son of God and God the Son partook of death, the most hideous death ever devised by man.

6. *Shall he deliver his soul from the hand of the grave?* All other men must answer, "No, I cannot." Only this Man could answer with a resounding, "Yes!" Again the psalmist tells us, "**Selah.**" Ponder this fact well.



7. Lord, where are thy former lovingkindnesses, which thou swarest unto David in thy truth? The answer to this anticipates His bodily resurrection that would follow in but three days. Part of the lovingkindnesses Jehovah swore to David includes the Father's joyful words to our Lord and Christ, "He shall call upon me, and I will answer Him: I will be with Him in trouble; I will deliver Him, and honour Him. With long life will I satisfy Him, and show Him my salvation (Psalm 91.15f)." How long a life? Everlasting, and the heirs of God are joint heirs with Him, even here and now! "Jesus said unto her, I am the resurrection, and the life: he that believeth in me, though he were dead, yet shall he live: and whosoever liveth and believeth in me shall never die. Believest thou this (John 11.25f)?"

In verse 50, the Saviour again addresses the subject of what a reproach His people are and have been in every age. He addresses His own vicarious suffering, bearing in Himself their reproach so that they would never have to face these charges. "Remember, Lord, the reproach of thy servants; how I do bear in my bosom the reproach of all the mighty people; wherewith thine enemies have reproached, O Lord; wherewith they have reproached the footsteps of thine anointed." Reproach is to *blame, find fault, criticize*. In this psalm's companion psalm, the 69th, from which we have already quoted, Jesus says, "the reproaches of them that reproached thee are fallen upon me (Psalm 69.9)."

In verse 52, the psalmist concludes, "Blessed be the Lord for evermore. Amen, and Amen." *Blessed* speaks of happiness, and certainly Jehovah is happy, "well pleased for His righteousness' sake; He will magnify the law, and make it honourable (Isaiah 42.21)." The "Blessed be the Lord" of this verse is reiterated by Paul: "Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who hath blessed us with all spiritual blessings in heavenly places in Christ (Ephesians 1.3)." He is blessed, and they are blessed.

*Blessed* also speaks of the saints' adoration and worship of Jehovah-Jesus, their savior God: "There-with bless we God, even the Father (James 3.9)."

Do not overlook the final words, "Amen, and Amen." *Amen* is not merely a word with which we end a psalm or a prayer. *Amen* means *firm, sure,*

*faithful, true, trustworthy* (Strong). *Amen* is a word said in order to declare that a thing is certain and true, and to express agreement. Above all else, one of the names of Jesus Christ is "**the Amen, the faithful and true witness**, the beginning of the creation of God (Revelation 3.14)."

Whether in the Old Testament or the New, in the Psalms, the Revelation, or anywhere else in the inspired text, our covenant-keeping God is faithful and true, even as Ethan was given to see. Even as the Lord of glory gave him to pen this wonderful hymn of prophecy and praise, may we also be given to join in that praise now and to continue with more perfect words and voices in eternity, around His throne, world without end.

—C. C. Morris

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## 'Twas Sov'Reign Mercy

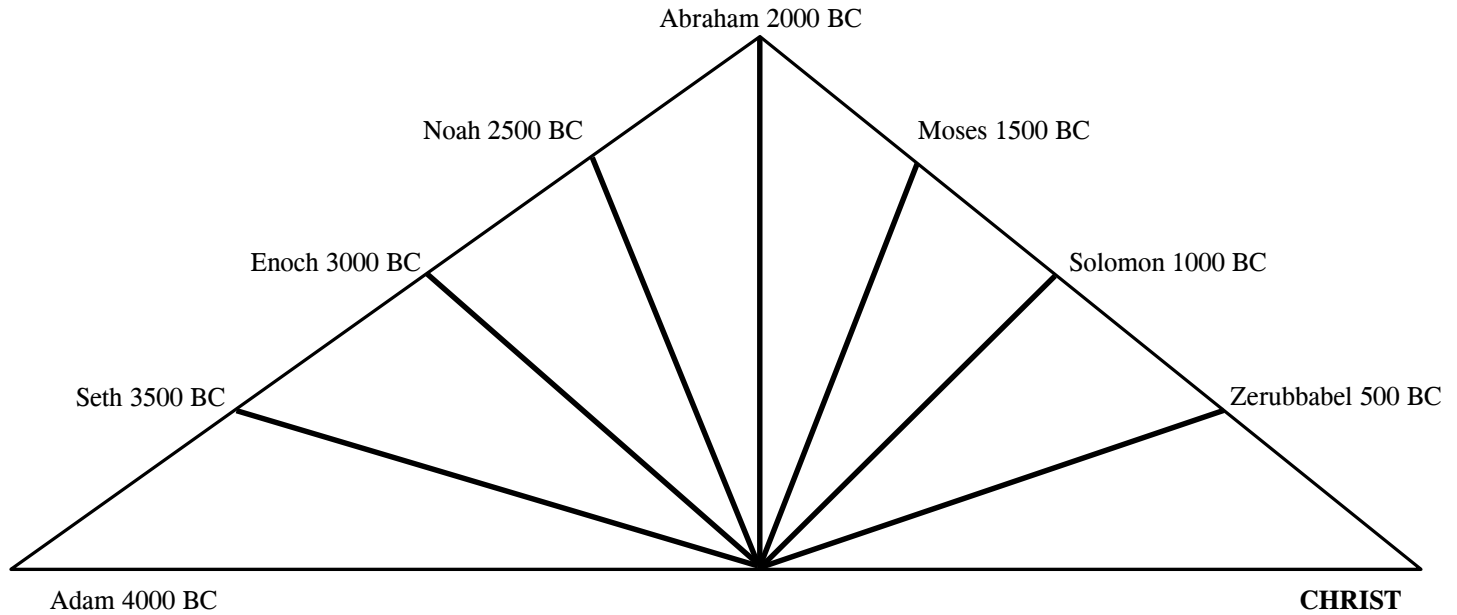
'Tis not that I did choose thee,  
For, Lord that could not be;  
This heart would still refuse thee,  
Hadst thou not chosen me.

Thou from the sin that stained me  
Hast cleansed and set me free;  
Of old thou hast ordained me,  
That I should live to thee.

'Twas sov'reign mercy called me  
And taught my op'ning mind;  
The world had else enthralled me,  
To heav'nly glories blind.

My heart owns none before thee,  
For thy rich grace I thirst;  
This knowing, if I love thee,  
Thou must have loved me first.

Josiah Conder  
(1789-1855)



### OLD TESTAMENT HISTORY IN A NUTSHELL

A picture is worth a thousand words, we are told. However many words it might be worth, the above diagram or chart is valuable because it shows what would otherwise take paragraphs and even pages to explain. It will help you remember the chronology of the Bible, or *who lived when*.

The dates on this chart are based on the work of Dr. Martin Anstey and his book, *The Romance of Bible Chronology* (1913, Marshall Brothers, London), as summarized by Philip Mauro in his little book, *The Wonders of Bible Chronology*.

The chart does not mean that Adam was created exactly 4,000 years before Christ was born, or Noah and Abraham were born exactly 2,500 years BC and 2,000 BC respectively. It means the men associated with those dates were alive at those times.

A word about the abbreviations “BC” and “AD” might be in order. Some casually assume that BC means “Birth of Christ,” and AD means “After Death,” or after the death of Christ. This is incorrect. BC means *Before Christ*, that is, before His birth, and AD means *Anno Domini*, in the year of our Lord.

Anstey begins with Adam’s creation and the genealogy of Genesis 5, and finds a chain of dates that lead from Adam to Jesus Christ 4,046 years later. In Genesis 5, each man’s age is given at the time of his begetting his firstborn son. These ages added together bring us to Noah’s birth in the 1,056th year of Adam and the birth of Shem in the year 1556.

In Genesis 11.10-26, the second divinely preserved genealogy in the Scriptures, the exact same principle gives the number of years from Shem to Abram or Abraham, who was born in the 2,008th year of Adam, a fact easily verified. If Anstey and Mauro are correct about Jesus’ birth being 4,046 years after Adam’s creation (and I believe they are), then Abram was a fifteen-year-old lad exactly halfway between Adam and Christ.

But, just when we think all we have to do is find all the genealogies and add them up, things unravel. From Abraham on, there are no names-and-dates lists like those in Genesis 5 and Genesis 11. The information is there, but it is in a different form and must be dug out from the inspired pages.

One third of all the recorded history of the Adamic race is found in the first eleven chapters of Genesis. From the time of Adam, there have only been three 2,000-year giant steps so far: Adam to Abraham, Abraham to Jesus Christ, and Christ to us today.

As simple as this diagram is, it nevertheless gives us a feel for the passage of time in the Old Testament. Many people have no idea when Adam, Abraham, Moses, or David lived—whether it was a thousand, five thousand, or ten thousand years ago. Modern science and archaeology are of little or no help. We hope you find this chart is worth having.

—Editor

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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.