

# 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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## LIMITED ATONEMENT

**F**or a proper understanding of any subject it is important to understand the meaning of the terminology under consideration. The definition of the word **atonement**, according to Strong’s Greek dictionary, is *restoration to favor, or reconciliation*. **Reconciliation** means to *atone for, or be propitious or merciful*. **Redemption** is defined as *ransom or deliver; to purchase back*.

The Doctrines of Grace are expressions of man’s understanding of God’s plan of salvation. One point of this doctrine cannot stand alone; all of the points must accompany each other or the system will fall apart like a human body without a skeleton. For a good understanding of *limited atonement*, it should be considered in the light of *unconditional election*.

From all eternity God purposed to deliver his elect from their sins, and for his people to ultimately reside with him in eternal glory. For this portion of humanity, Jesus Christ sacrificed himself on the cross. This precious doctrine is also called *particular redemption*.

This powerful truth was considered so important to the saints of old that the Baptists of England went under the name of Particular Baptists. The Old School Baptists in America were also called by this name, being the descendants of the English Baptists. In the *Black Rock Address*, the orthodox Baptists present at that meeting were recorded as Particular Baptists of the old school. This was in direct reference to particular redemption.

Limited atonement is a term that expresses the scope and range of the satisfaction made for the sins of God’s elect. It in no way limits the power and effectiveness of the finished work of the Lord Jesus Christ. Christ himself stated the extent of his work of redemption, and whom it would embrace. “I am the good shepherd: the good shepherd giveth his life for the sheep (John 10.11).”

It is important for followers of the truth to understand that the Scriptures of Eternal Truth are written to a particular people. In the context of the Scriptures you will find God addressing specific individuals or groups. There are few general statements made in the Bible. This is especially true of the New Testament writings.

In the epistles it is clear that they are addressed to certain people, churches, and groups. “Paul, a servant of Jesus Christ...To all that be in Rome, beloved of God, called to be saints...that your faith is spoken of throughout the whole world...(Romans 1.1, 7, 8).” “Unto the church of God which is at Corinth, to them that are sanctified in Christ Jesus, called to be saints...(1 Corinthians 1.2).” Many other examples could be given, but these should be sufficient to show that the scriptures clearly identify the persons addressed.

We should understand that Christ did not die to purchase all humanity. Jesus told the unbelieving Jews emphatically, “But ye believe not, because ye are not of my sheep, as I said unto you (John 10.26).” “I am the good shepherd, and know my sheep, and am known of mine (John 10.14).”

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Therefore, the power of the satisfaction rendered by the Lord Jesus is not limited. However, the number is limited to those particular individuals predestinated and elected from eternity. The mediatorial work of Jesus Christ is only for his church and none other. Not one of them shall perish or be lost; all are covered by the blood atonement of our great High Priest. Christ died for every sin of every child given to him in the Covenant of Grace. "Who gave himself for us, that he might redeem us from *all iniquity*, and purify unto himself a peculiar [special or particular] people, zealous of good works (Titus 2.14)." "So Christ was once offered to bear the sins of many; and unto them that look for him [expect him] shall he appear the second time without sin unto salvation (Hebrews 9.28)." "Even as the Son of man came not to be ministered unto, but to minister, and to give his life a ransom for many (Matthew 20.28)."

It is for the express purpose of fulfilling the work that the Father gave him that Christ came into this world and tabernacled among men. "And the Word was made flesh, and dwelt among us...(John 1.14)." This work was to secure the eternal redemption of the elect children of God. "...Behold I and the children which God hath given me...Forasmuch then as the children are partakers of flesh and blood, he also himself likewise took part of the same; that through death he might destroy him that had the power of death, that is, the devil (Hebrews 2.13-14)."

Eternal redemption was purchased for the elect of God by Christ alone and no other. Man could not, and does not contribute anything to the work of the great High Priest of the church. In the work of salvation, Jesus Christ stood alone as the representative and embodiment of his people before a righteous God. "Neither by the blood of goats and calves, but by his own blood he entered in once into the holy place, having obtained eternal redemption for us (Hebrew 9.12)." Again, "Who gave himself for us, that he might redeem us from all iniquity, and purify unto himself a peculiar people, zealous of good works (Titus 2.14)." The expression Paul uses is "us" indicating himself, Titus, and those that Titus was serving at the time.

Evidently, from the testimony of Scripture, Christ did not die for every individual of the fallen race of Adam. The Bible states that he died for a particular people. Expressions of endearment used

in the Scriptures for these people should indicate the relationship that Christ has to them. "Greater love hath no man than this, that a man lay down his life for his friends (John 15.13)." "I am the vine, ye are the branches...(John 15.12)."

To the faithful saints at Ephesus Paul wrote, "In whom we have redemption through his blood, the forgiveness of sins, according to the riches of his grace (Ephesians 1.7)." These to whom Paul wrote were predestinated and elected from the foundation of the world to be holy and blameless before him in love. "Not by works of righteousness which we have done, but according to his mercy he saved us, by the washing of regeneration, and renewing of the Holy Ghost; Which he shed on us abundantly through Jesus Christ our Saviour (Titus 3.5)." "...the church of God, which he hath purchased with his own blood...(Acts 20.28)." "Husbands love your wives, even as Christ also loved the church, and gave himself for it; That he might present it to himself a glorious church, not having spot, or wrinkle, or any such thing; but that it should be holy and without blemish...For the husband is the head of the wife, even as Christ is the head of the church: and he is saviour of the body...(Ephesians 5.23, 25-27)." "My sheep hear my voice, 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. My Father, which gave them me, is greater than all; and no man is able to pluck them out of my Father's hand (John 10.27-29)."

From these powerful statements found in the Holy Scriptures, it should be concluded, that Christ died for a certain people. Therefore, the atonement made by the active and passive obedience of the Son of God was for a limited number of particular people. God has loved these people from all eternity. "...Yea, I have loved thee with an everlasting love: therefore with lovingkindness have I drawn thee (Jeremiah 31.3)." "...having loved his own which were in the world, he loved them unto the end (John 13.1)."

The Apostle Peter writes to the elect pilgrims of the dispersion in several nations. "Elect according to the foreknowledge of God the Father, through sanctification of the Spirit, unto obedience and sprinkling of the blood of Jesus Christ: Grace unto you, and peace be multiplied. Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, which according

to his abundant mercy hath begotten us again unto a lively [living] hope by the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead. To an inheritance incorruptible, and undefiled, and that fadeth not away, reserved in heaven for you. Who are kept by the power of God through faith unto salvation ready to be revealed in the last time (1Peter 1.1-5)." The Triune God has accomplished salvation for his eternally chosen people.

Many of the worldly religionists of all ages have declared that Christ died for all men; that he might make possible a way for them to be saved. This line of thinking and false doctrine is prevalent in the majority of Christendom today. The Bible does not teach this doctrine. This is a lie of Satan, and is perpetuated by the natural minds of men in their desire to have "a form of godliness" while "denying the power thereof (2 Timothy 3.5)."

Jesus Christ took the place of the elect on the cross to bear the sins of his people in their place. This is called a *vicarious* atonement. The word *vicarious* is defined by Webster as, *performed, received, or suffered in place of another; taking the place of another*. Surely no one that has experienced a hope in Christ will deny this fact. Surely Jesus suffered in the place and for the sins of the elect, bearing in his body the just recompense of their reward. "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)." "For Christ also hath once suffered for sins, the just for the unjust, that he might bring us to God, being put to death in the flesh, but quickened by the Spirit (1 Peter 3.18)."

In his most excellent letter to the saints at Rome, Paul writes, "For when we were yet without strength, in due time Christ died for the ungodly. For scarcely for a righteous man will one die: yet peradventure [perhaps] for a good man some would even dare to die. But God commendeth his love toward us, in that, while we were yet sinners, Christ died for us. Much more then, being now justified by his blood, we shall be saved from wrath through him (Romans 5.6-9)."

It should be clear that if Christ died for his people in their stead [place], then those people are saved from wrath. "And she shall bring forth a son, and thou shalt call his name Jesus: for he SHALL save

his people from their sins (Matthew 1.21).” The prophet Isaiah spoke of this long before the birth of the blessed Saviour, “He shall see of the travail [suffering] of his soul, and shall be satisfied: by his knowledge shall my righteous servant justify many; for he shall bear their iniquities (Isaiah 53.11).” Man contributes nothing to his justification or standing before God. Man’s justification before a holy, righteous, and perfect God is completely dependent on what Jesus Christ did two thousand years ago on the cross at Calvary. “Who was delivered for our offences, and raised again for our justification (Romans 4.25).” “For if, when we were enemies, we were reconciled to God by the death of his Son, much more, being reconciled, we shall be saved by his life. And not only so, but we also joy in God through our Lord Jesus Christ, by whom we have now received the atonement (Romans 5.10-11).”

Simply put, all those for whom Jesus died are actually and really saved from their sins. They appear righteous and sinless in the eyes of God because of what his Son did. Jesus did not die for all mankind because all mankind will not be saved. “Enter ye in at the strait gate: for wide is the gate, and broad is the way, that leadeth to destruction, and many there be which go in thereat (Matthew 7.13).” “And he shall set [put] the sheep on his right hand, and the goats on the left. Then shall the King say unto them on his right hand, Come, ye blessed of my Father, inherit the kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the world...Then shall he say also unto them on the left hand, Depart from me, ye cursed, into everlasting fire, prepared for the devil and his angels...And these shall go away into everlasting punishment: but the righteous into life eternal (Matthew 25.33-34, 41, 46).” Again, Christ came to do the will of his Father; to save all that the Father had given him. “...I pray not for the world, but for them which thou hast given me; for they are thine (John 17.9).”

Worldly religionists cannot stomach this doctrine even though it comes straight from the word of God itself. They claim that it does not give everyone an *opportunity* to be saved. No opportunities are found in scripture concerning salvation. If not for the finished work of the Son of God none could be saved. Thanks be to God that because of the sufferings of Jesus, all for whom he died are saved

without exception. There are no chances with God, and there is no chance that even one of his chosen and foreknown will ever be lost.

“Therefore if any man be in Christ, he is a new creature: old things are passed away; behold, all things are become new. And all things are of God, who hath reconciled us to himself by Jesus Christ, and hath given to us the ministry of reconciliation. Now then we are ambassadors for Christ, as though God did beseech you by us: we pray you in Christ’s stead, be ye reconciled to God. For he hath made him to be sin for us, who knew no sin; that we might be made the righteousness of God in him (2 Corinthians 5.17-21).” The terms *reconciliation* and *atonement* mean the same thing. By the infinite grace and mercy of God, the elect who were once alienated from him are brought back to God by the blood of Jesus Christ. “Neither by the blood of goats and calves, but by his own blood he entered in once into the holy place, having obtained eternal redemption for us (Hebrews 9.12).”

Redeemed by the blood of the Lamb, they are ransomed from the curse of the law by the infinite value of the blood of Christ. The Apostle Paul writes to the churches of Galatia, “For as many as are of the works of the law are under the curse: for it is written, Cursed is every one that continueth not in all things which are written in the book of the law to do them. But that no man is justified by the law in the sight of God, it is evident: for, The just shall live by faith. And the law is not of faith: but, The man that doeth them shall live in them. Christ hath redeemed us from the curse of the law, being made a curse for us: for it is written, Cursed is every one that hangeth on a tree (Galatians 3.10-13).”

Peter sends this epistle to the elect scattered abroad, “Forasmuch as ye know that ye were not redeemed with corruptible things, as silver and gold, from your vain conversation received by tradition from your fathers; But with the precious blood of Christ, as of a lamb without blemish and without spot (1 Peter 1.19).” “...Unto him that loved us, and washed us from our sins in his own blood...(Revelation 1.5).” This book of the Bible was addressed to the servants of God. What a sense of humility and gratitude the children of grace feel, when enlightened of the Lord, toward their Saviour and redeemer.

To the saints at Ephesus Paul writes, "Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who hath blessed us with all spiritual blessings in heavenly places in Christ: According as he hath chosen us in him before the foundation of the world, that we should be holy and without blame before him in love: Having predestinated us unto the adoption of children by Jesus Christ to himself, according to the good pleasure of his will, To the praise of the glory of his grace, wherein he hath made us accepted in the beloved. In whom we have redemption through his blood, the forgiveness of sins, according to the riches of his grace (Ephesians 1.3-7)."

"But we see Jesus, who was made a little lower than the angels for the suffering of death, crowned with glory and honor; that he by the grace of God should taste death for every man [*man* is not in the original text]. For it became him, for whom are all things, in bringing many sons unto glory, to make the captain of their salvation perfect through sufferings. For both he that sanctifieth and they who are sanctified are all of one: for which cause he is not ashamed to call them brethren, Saying, I will declare thy name unto my brethren, in the midst of the church will I sing praise unto thee. And again, I will put my trust in him. And again, Behold I and the children which God hath given me. Forasmuch then as the children are partakers of flesh and blood, he also himself likewise took part of the same; that through death he might destroy him that had the power of death, that is, the devil; And deliver them who through fear of death were all their lifetime subject to bondage. For verily he took not on him the nature of angels; but he took on him the seed of Abraham. 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 2.9-17)."

The above portion of scripture should be enough to convince any child of grace, quickened from above, that Jesus Christ died for a particular people. In verse 9, the word man does not appear in the original language, but was added by the translators. From the context it is clear that the Holy Spirit is speaking of a certain people. Verse 10 speaks of "many *sons*"; verse 11 states that the sanctifier and the sanctified are all of one and calls them *brethren*;

verse 12 declares them again to be *brethren*. In verse 13 they are called *children given by God*; verse 14 speaks of the Redeemer becoming like *them* to deliver *them*. The Word of God was made flesh and dwelt among men as one born of the seed of Abraham. He became their high priest to reconcile them to God. A high priest represents a certain people.

"Know ye therefore that they which are of faith, the same are the children of Abraham (Galatians 3.7)." Jesus was born in the flesh from the line of Abraham. However, "...they are not all Israel, which are of Israel: Neither, because they are the seed of Abraham, are they all children: but in Isaac shall thy seed be called. That is, They which are the children of the flesh, these are not the children of God: but the children of the promise are counted for the seed (Romans 9.6-8)."

Christ died for the elect as eternally purposed. If he had died for anyone else, or everyone else, they would be saved. We have seen from the Scriptures of Eternal Truth that this is simply not the case. The world may hate this doctrine, but in so doing they reject the word of God as the only source of truth. Those who have tasted that the Lord is good and gracious know in some measure that this is the truth of Scripture. The Lord blesses his people to take great comfort, at times, from these precious truths. Christ Jesus has obtained and secured the eternal salvation, and all the blessings that accompany it, of all for whom he came to save. The enemies of truth cannot comprehend the depth and power of the Doctrines of Grace; unless the Lord begins a work of grace in them, they never will. The Scriptures teach that by the power of *irresistible grace* he can and does bring spiritually dead sinful men to their knees before him. As God wills I shall address this another time.

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### PSALM 100.3

**Know ye that the LORD he is God: it is he that hath made us, and not we ourselves; we are his people, and the sheep of his pasture.**

## SUNDAY SCHOOLS AND EVANGELISTIC CAMPAIGNS

**A**mong the issues that Christians do have to consider from time to time are Sunday Schools and Evangelistic Campaigns or Crusades. Now, contrary to what some brethren may think, these issues are, in essence, the same, because the objective is the same and the thought process involved is the same. Arguments or criticisms put for one are equally valid for the others. In these issues the arguments proposed in favour are usually:

- 1) There is a great need for people to hear the gospel.
- 2) We believe that God has used and blessed these activities in the past; we cannot ignore what God has done previously.
- 3) We know that Godly brethren have supported and promoted these practices in the past; we must honour the memory of our Godly forefathers.
- 4) You are not succeeding at present, your church membership is declining, and many other churches are actually closing down.

And, very convincing are these arguments too; in fact, they cannot be argued against.

Some of the textual arguments presented from Holy Scripture usually include:

- 1) "Train a child in the way he should go; and when he is old he will not depart from it (Proverbs 22.6)."
- 2) "The harvest is truly great, but the labourers are few; pray ye therefore the Lord of the harvest, that he would send forth labourers into his harvest (Luke 10.2)."

The first of these texts is excellent advice and should be heeded by all parents, for that is essentially the direction in which it is given. It is not a 'church teaching.' The second is exceeding important and set in the context of the entire passage, including, "I send you forth as lambs among wolves. Carry neither purse, nor script, nor shoes." Without that caveat the first text has no force. It will be seen that these texts

have other applications and to use them in a way that God has not intended does not enhance Scripture. Indeed the practice of preaching from a text without reference to context is a distinct failing in many pulpits, particularly among *devotional* and *experimental* preachers. Whatever their doctrinal bent, *expository* preachers tend to get closer to the meaning of the message.

These, however, are all circular arguments that can be used to support any project, good bad or indifferent. This type argument can be used in favour of state religious systems, with their infant christening rituals and baptismal regeneration practices, etc.

Putting the issue another way, every argument for or against Sunday Schools could be used for or against evangelistic campaigns, and these can then be duplicated for such schemes as "Christian Rock," "Christian Drama," "Choreographic Worship," etc. Now we do not suggest, for a minute, that all believers who have come from any of these systems are false believers; we know that this is not so. However, as far as we can see (and we do not profess to have perfect sight), the main effect of these schemes is to introduce dead carnal professors and frivolous shallow converts into congregations. As a result, we have seen gatherings that had once been doctrinally sound and spiritually alive becoming totally legalistically pharasaical, doctrinally wayward, and spiritually dead.

Much has been written on these subject, both for and against the propositions, and we see no reason to repeat any of it.

Many of the writings about these schemes that we have seen have been based on texts out of context, anecdotes, and emotions, rather than the sure Word of God.

We shall seek to pursue **The REGULATIVE PRINCIPLE**, which is "**Whatever God has not commanded in His Word for His worship is not allowable in divine worship.**" This was in keeping with John Knox's dictum: "**All worshipping, honouring, or other service invented by the brain of man in the religion of God, without His own express command, is idolatry.**" That principle is, to put it simply, "**Scripture Alone.**" This principle is stated in The Nonconformist's Catechism of 1741:

36. Q. Is nothing to be required in the worship [or service] of God but what is commanded in Scripture?

A. Nothing but what is either expressly commanded, or necessarily implied in a command.

The apostle Paul, and Apollos also, encouraged the Assembly, Congregation, or Gathering at Corinth, “not to think above that which was written (1 Corinthians 4.6).” If this principle is offensive, then, so be it.

But, first, let us look at some practices.

Recently my wife and I were in Canterbury, the ancient English Cathedral city, and while walking through the market place we heard the distinctive sound of someone preaching in the open air. Turning a corner I discovered that my ears had not deceived me. There, among the peddlers of cloth and vendors of cabbages stood a youngish man, and he was preaching. He was alone, he had no supporting musical group, he had no pulpit, not even a box to stand on; nor did he wear clerical clothes. He was alone save for the well-used Bible nestled in his right hand. Now, his theology was a bit defective and his terminology left something to be desired, at least in my opinion, and I don’t claim perfection of knowledge on these matters. But, he was preaching the gospel as he knew it, with conviction, and he was backing up his statements with Scripture. Now, and I want you to think about this for a moment, a hundred paces away there was a great cathedral, the oldest in England, dating back to Bishop Augustine (also known as Austin), with its many sub-organisations such as Sunday School and Mother’s Union, many ordained incumbents and so many rituals that I would not wish to number them, plus much other religious paraphernalia besides, including *The Year Of Evangelism*. By contrast here, within hailing distance of the great religious establishment, was a man preaching, **just preaching**. Which of these, we should ask, was the New Testament pattern?

The best known English open air preacher was, probably, George Whitefield. (However, there were special circumstances pertaining to his open air preaching which do not exist today.) “The step which gave a turn to the whole current of Whitefield’s ministry was his adoption of the system of open-air preaching. After much prayer he one day went to

Hannam Mount, **and standing upon a hill began to preach**. He writes, *‘I preached in Moorfields — and after five went and preached at Kennington Common.*’ In Hackney Fields, Mary-le-bone Fields, May Fair, Smithfield, Blackheath, Moorfields and Kennington Common, there went Whitefield **and lifted up his voice for Christ.**”

Indeed there was a time wherever an opportunity to preach occurred it was done. John Bunyan preached “in Mr. Ainger’s barn on a farm just off the village street (where Mr. Spurgeon subsequently preached).” Learned, Episcopal clergy from the Church of England opposed the humble itinerant metal worker from Bedford. They harassed him and eventually landed him in prison. Read Mr. Bynyan’s *Pilgrim’s Progress* and find out where Evangelist and Help were. Were they safely ensconced in a pulpit, (sometimes known as the ‘Coward’s Castle’) or sat in the splendid isolation of a Sunday School? Or, were these two characters drawing near to the pilgrim in need, waist deep in the mire of the Slough of Despond, with a hand outstretched to help the floundering soul?

History records that Waldenses and Lollards went about the land speaking to individuals and preaching wherever an opportunity occurred, risking ridicule, arrest, torture and even death itself. But even the example of such godly servants is not sufficient pattern. We must search the Scriptures to see whether these things are so.

So, just what did the early Christians do? That is the pertinent question. If there is any record of the early Christians arranging Evangelistic Crusades, complete with civic dignitaries, aspiring politicians, and self seeking entrepreneurs, then we should find it. If first century congregations started Sunday Schools then that will be in the Divine Record.

Well, we read in Acts of the Apostles several instances for our learning, and it isn’t necessary to examine each such incident here, provided we can discover the salient points.

Philip went down to Gaza and, under the guidance of the Spirit, he approached a traveller and took the opportunity to explain the good news of Jesus to him, including the teaching of immersion. Philip then immersed the traveller, when water in sufficient quantity was encountered. Having completed this mission, Philip then travelled through the country

announcing the Gospel of Jesus Christ (Acts 8.26-40). But how many present-day ministers would be so willing to engage a traveller in a gospel discourse, then dip the recipient of the gospel in the first available water?

Paul, while he was in Athens, reasoned with those in the synagogue, spoke with people in the market place, and preached at Areopagus, the Hill of Mars (Acts 17.16-34). This latter was an extempore address, starting with the situation that existed there. Can we hear some of our ministering brethren, seeing the state of things in any of our cities, thundering out to a crowd, “Ye men of Athens,” or “Citizens of Birmingham!”?

Apollos arrived in Ephesus preaching the gospel as he knew it and was welcomed by Aquila and Priscilla (Acts 18.24-28). This young man went preaching in the synagogue because there were people there to hear. The local brethren did not freeze him out, they did not ostracise him. They welcomed him and sought to instruct him further in the truth; this was no doubt a mutually beneficial two-way intercourse, because they very soon engaged him in the ministry of the word. Apollos was then, without undue delay, commended into the ministry of the gospel by letter from the Congregation at Ephesus to the Gathering at Achaia, where he helped the Lord’s people. Now this raises an important question: How long would it have taken for Apollos to have got on to any of the denominational ministers’ lists that exist today, or by what process? Would Apollos, who watered where Paul had planted, have been allowed to go out ministering in any denominations today? Now that is a very interesting question, and those who organise ‘denominational ministers lists’ must need address it.

Paul called at Troas (Acts 20.5-12). “And upon the first day of the week when the disciples came together to break bread.” This is recorded so simply and naturally that it is apparent that the disciples came together for the purpose of remembering their Lord in the breaking of bread. And Paul took the opportunity to discourse with, not sermonise at, the brethren. The word used here is *dialegomai* which is *discourse*, *converse*, etc. Paul sat down with his brethren and spoke with them about divine truth. By contrast, I recall one well known ‘Reformed Baptist Minister’ being asked a question by an enquiring

brother and replying, “I’ll give you a sermon on that sometime.” This man was, apparently, afraid when outside of his ‘coward’s castle’! He simply had to get back to his study and read up Hengstenberg, then get a few well chosen synonyms from his *Roget’s Thesaurus*!

So why is it that so many among us are anxious to run Sunday Schools or evangelistic campaigns but will not, like Philip, speak to a seeking soul, will not, like Paul and Apollos, stand up and preach in the marketplace? And why do they avoid discoursing with their brethren? The truth is, we know the answer in our own hearts. What we lack is the courage to face up to the question honestly.

Not many of us have the gift of holy opportunism as did Philip or have the bold sanctified eloquence of Apollos. We cannot preach like Peter, or pray like Paul; but, perhaps, we can tell of the love of the Saviour to lost sinners. Yes, we are fearful; but let us remember that the bold and fearless Peter was once a craven coward who shrank from the challenge of a serving maid!

### The Cross

It makes the coward spirit brave,  
And nerves the feeble arm for fight;  
It takes the terror from the grave,  
And gilds the bed of death with light.

—Thomas Kelly

But, to return to the question of Sunday Schools, sometimes called ‘Junior Church,’ and Evangelistic Campaigns, or Crusades. There is another aspect to this question. It can be shown that both Sunday Schools and Campaign Evangelism are big business, really **very big business**. Publishers of Sunday School material are reaping considerable profits from book sales. Several “Evangelists,” of various doctrinal hues, have become exceedingly rich, some even becoming multimillionaires. No wonder they go to great lengths—to protect their incomes!

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## WHAT THE BIBLE TEACHES ABOUT THE LORD'S BIRTH AND WHY

*And he (the Lord Jesus) saith unto them, Whose is this image and superscription [on a coin]? They say unto him, Caesar's. Then saith he unto them, Render therefore unto Caesar the things which are Caesar's; and unto God the things that are God's (Matthew 22.20-21).*

**W**hile there is certainly a valid and important reason why we have a gospel account of the Lord's birth on earth, it has *nothing* to do with what is commonly believed and taught: that believers in Him should observe a particular day, or season of the year, as the actual time of His birth.

My primary motive for writing this article is closely related to the lesson found in the Lord's words quoted above, that we might render to our Savior God only *that which rightly belongs unto Him*. In order to do that we cannot worship or praise Him in ignorance, as did the Athenians to whom Paul preached on Mars Hill. We must rather do so "in *spirit and in truth*," as the Lord told the Samaritan woman at Jacob's well (see John 4.24).

With that in mind, it shall be my design to totally discount everybody's opinions and prejudices—including my own—concerning this subject, and to deal strictly with *what the Scriptures actually teach* about it. I have no "ax to grind" with anybody that I know of; my one desire and intent is simply to present the truth concerning this matter because so much error has become entangled with it. Should the Lord in His wisdom and mercy see fit to direct my efforts, I trust the outcome will be to the reader's gain rather than to his loss.

As one good writer pointed out in this magazine some time ago, there are *six things* we need to know about any given subject in order to arrive at a proper understanding of it: who, what, when, where, how and why. I cannot think of a better way of presenting the subject than by following that outline. As I endeavor to do so, may the Lord enable me to "rightly divide the word of truth."

First: WHO is the proper subject of this inquiry?

"Therefore the Lord himself shall give you a sign; Behold, a virgin shall conceive, and bear a son, and shall call his name *Immanuel* (Isaiah 7.14)."

His name "Immanuel" has an important meaning; it not only tells us *who* He was, but also in part *what* He was. The writer Matthew identified Him a bit more distinctly when quoting this Old Testament prophecy.

"Now all this was done [i.e., the angel of the Lord appeared to Joseph in a dream and told him the meaning of his espoused wife's condition], that it might be fulfilled which was spoken of by the prophet, saying, Behold, a virgin shall be with child, and shall bring forth a son, and they shall call his name Emmanuel, which being interpreted is, *God with us* (Matthew 1.22-23)."

Of course, this same son had several other names given unto Him because He would have a number of roles to fulfill in His Father's will and purpose. Therefore, I will mention some of His other names, given in the Scriptures.

"For unto us a child is born, unto us a son is given: and the government shall be upon his shoulder: and his name shall be called Wonderful, Counsellor, The mighty God, The everlasting Father, The Prince of Peace (Isaiah 9.6)."

"...Joseph, thou son of David, fear not to take unto thee Mary thy wife: for that which is conceived in her [the child she is expecting] is of the Holy Ghost. And she shall bring forth a son, and thou shalt call his name JESUS: for he shall save his people from their sins (Matthew 1.20-21)."

And so, by His name Jesus (Jehoshua, in Hebrew) was He called, following His circumcision eight days after His birth (Luke 2.21). But there was *one other name* given unto Him of which we need to take notice.

"...that holy thing which shall be born of thee [Mary] shall be called *the Son of God* (Luke 1.35)."

Now, let me pause long enough to raise this question: have I dealt with *who* He was strictly *from the Scriptures*? If so, let us move on to the next issue we proposed to discuss.

Second: WHAT was He born to be and to do, or to accomplish? We have already answered this question in part from Matthew 1.21, but let us take the matter a few steps further.

"And the angel said unto them [the shepherds of Bethlehem], Fear not: for, behold, I bring you good tidings of great joy, which shall be to all people [that is, people of all nations]. For unto you is born this

day in the city of David *a Saviour*, which is *Christ the Lord* (Luke 2.10-11).”

“And he [Simeon] came by the Spirit into the temple: and when the parents brought in the child Jesus, to do for him after the custom of the law [to have Him circumcised, in other words], Then took he him up in his arms, and blessed God, and said Lord, now lettest thy servant depart [die] in peace, according to thy word: For mine eyes have seen *thy salvation*, which thou hast prepared before the face of all people; a light to lighten the Gentiles, and *the glory* of thy people Israel (Luke 2.27-32).”

Third: WHEN was He born into the world? Sound Bible *chronologists* (such as Philip Mauro) tell us He was born in the year 3 BC. *Tradition* (and that’s all it is) has long taught us to believe that He was born on the date of December 25th. *But what saith the word of God?*

“But *when the fulness of the time was come*, God sent forth his Son, made [conceived and born] of a woman, made under the law, to redeem them that were under the law, that we might receive the adoption of sons (Galatians 4.4).”

“For Christ is not entered into the holy places made with hands [the Jewish tabernacle and temple], which are the figures of the true; but into heaven itself, now to appear in the presence of God for us: nor yet that he should offer himself often, as the high priest [of Israel] entereth into the holy place every year with blood of others; for then must he often have suffered since the foundation of the world: but now once in the *end of the world* [Greek: *aion*—age] hath he appeared to put away sin by the sacrifice of himself (Hebrews 9.24-26).”

Are there any Scriptures *other than these two* which have reference to *when* the Lord Jesus was born? Do they mention any particular season, any certain month or date of the year? If so, I wish the reader would inform me where *in the Bible* I might find such information. Also, I should like to know *when, where* and *if* the Lord ever told any of His believing followers to “Observe *my birth* until I come again.” What difference do these issues make? They amount to this: Either we believe the record God gave us of His dear Son, or we believe some man-made fairy tale.

Now, it is true that, under the Law Covenant, the Lord did teach Israel *to observe*—in types and

shadows—the *death* of His Son: namely, via *the Passover*. With respect to that observance, the Lord did name the very season (the first full moon after the Spring equinox), the month (Nisan) and the exact date (the 14th day). Moreover, He prescribed the exact manner in which Israel was to keep this observance, and He allowed *no deviation* from His instructions. However, do we find any corresponding instructions for the observance (in types and shadows, or otherwise) of *the birth* of His Son? I am afraid not. Consider this: if the *actual date* on which the Lord was born really mattered to His dear children, would not the God of all wisdom and knowledge *have said something about it* in His word?

What shall we say, then, to these things? My own conclusion is this: while there is very definitely *some good reason* for the record of our Lord’s birth being in the Bible, it has *nothing to do* with observing a so-called “Christmas” holiday. Stay with me, dear reader, and in due course, we shall see what *the real reason* is.

Fourth: WHERE was the Lord born on earth? The Bible clearly tells us.

“But thou, Bethlehem Ephrathah, though thou be little among the thousands of [the land of] Judah, yet *out of thee* shall he come forth unto me that is to be ruler in Israel; whose goings forth have been from of old, from everlasting (Micah 5.2).”

“And when he [Herod the king] had gathered all the chief priests of the people together, he demanded of them where Christ should be born. And they said unto him, *In Bethlehem of Judaea*: for thus it is written by the prophet, ‘And thou Bethlehem, in the land of Judah, art not the least among the princes of Judah: for out of thee shall come a Governor, that shall rule my people Israel (Matthew 2.4-6).’”

Fifth: HOW was the Lord born into the world? This question is particularly important because Jesus was *the only* child ever born on earth who had *no earthly father* [but who very definitely had *an earthly mother*]. For the answer, we must go back to the angel Gabriel’s mission to Mary, recorded in the Gospel According to Luke.

“And the angel said unto her, Fear not, Mary: for thou hast found favor with God. And, behold, thou shalt conceive in thy womb, and bring forth a son, and shalt call his name JESUS. He shall be great, and shall be called the Son of the Highest: and the

Lord God shall give unto him the throne of his father David: And he shall reign over the house of Jacob for ever; and of his kingdom there shall be no end. [Note: See Daniel 2.44.]

Then said Mary unto the angel, *How shall this be*, seeing I know not a man? And the angel answered and said unto her, *The Holy Ghost shall come upon thee, and the power of the Highest shall overshadow thee*: therefore also that holy thing which shall be born of thee shall be called the Son of God (Luke 2.30-35)."

Sixth: WHY was the Lord Jesus Christ born into this world? We have now come to the most critical part of this article. Part of the answer is, of course, well known; whereas another part is but little known and perhaps little understood. We must first address this question from *God's vantage point* since it is tied so closely to His eternal purpose; and then, we will attempt to consider why and how the Lord's earthly birth is so important to us.

"And all things are of God, who hath reconciled us to himself by Jesus Christ, and hath given to us the ministry of reconciliation; to wit, that *God was in Christ, reconciling the world unto himself*, not imputing their trespasses unto them; and hath committed unto us the word of reconciliation (2 Corinthians 5.18-19)."

"Be it known unto you all, and to all the people of Israel, that by the name of Jesus Christ of Nazareth, whom ye crucified, whom God raised from the dead, even by him doth this man stand here before you whole. This is the stone [See Isaiah 28.16 and 32.2] which was set at nought of you builders, which is become the head of the corner. Neither is there salvation in any other: for *there is none other name under heaven given among men, whereby we must be saved* (Acts 4.10-12)."

According to the inspired word of God, in order for any lost sinners to be eternally saved there are certain truths *they must believe* in their hearts. And in order to insure that His chosen people *do believe* these things, God has given them (i.e., to their faith) *the strongest forms of evidence* upon which to base their beliefs in the validity of His precious word and promises. Hearken!

"Beloved, believe not every spirit, but try the spirits, whether they are of God: because many false prophets are gone out into the world. Hereby know

ye the Spirit of God: Every spirit that confesseth that *Jesus Christ is come in the flesh* is of God (1 John 4.1f)."

"And without controversy great is the mystery of godliness: *God was manifest in the flesh* (in Jesus Christ), justified in the Spirit, seen of angels, preached unto the Gentiles, believed on in the world, received up into glory (1 Timothy 3.16)."

"And as they [Philip and the Ethiopian eunuch] went on their way, they came unto a certain water: and the eunuch said, See, here is water; what doth hinder me to be baptized? And Philip said, If thou believest with all thine heart, thou mayest. *And he answered and said, I believe that Jesus Christ* [the "man of sorrows" Who had just been preached unto him from Isaiah 53.1-12] *is the Son of God* (Acts 8.36-37)."

In other words, to believe in the Lord Jesus is to believe that *He was God, manifest on earth in a body of flesh*. And in order to believe in His humanity, what better evidence of that truth could anyone desire than that the word of God verifies He was conceived in the body of a woman, carried to term, born as a babe, lived as a child and grew to become a man *just like any other living Man*?

Ah, but that is not all! Here is where this truth is brought home to us. "Seeing then that *we have a great high priest*, that is passed into the heavens [the Most Holy Place], Jesus the Son of God, let us hold fast our profession. For we have not an high priest which cannot be touched with the feeling of our infirmities; but was in all points tempted [as *the man Jesus Christ*] like as we are, yet without sin (Hebrews 4.14-15)."

Dear reader, for our sakes God gave us a record of the earthly birth of His dear Son, that *we might believe* unequivocally that He who knew no sin became sin for us, that we might be made the righteousness of God in Him. God, strictly as a divine being, could not weep, could not suffer, could not die or be buried; but *as a man*, He could—and did—do all these things. And, by means of His human birth and earthly life, He proved to all who believe in His name that He is both God *and* man, united together.

"Jesus saith unto him, Thomas, because thou hast seen me, thou hast believed: blessed are they that have not seen, and yet have believed. And many

other signs truly did Jesus in the presence of his disciples, which are not written in this book. But *these are written, that ye might believe that Jesus [the man] is the Christ, the Son of God; and that believing ye might have life through his name (John 20.29-31).*”

As the Apostle Paul wrote so sweetly, “I know *whom I have believed*, and am persuaded that he is able to keep that which I have committed unto him against that day (2 Timothy 1:12).”

I trust the Lord will give the reader “an ear to hear” and a heart to understand the message in what I have written.

—Elder John T. Wingfield  
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faithful to my objectives. As much as possible, I have tried to avoid leaving any reader in the dark as to *what I believe* about doctrinal issues, and *why I believe* these things. I have attempted in the strongest possible terms to *encourage every reader* to examine whatever is set forth in this paper in the light of “Thus saith the Lord,” and to inform me when and if they find errors.

The truth of God has nothing to fear from a close examination. The brighter the light that shines upon it, the more clearly its permanency and purity can be seen and observed. Moreover, the *one true faith* of God’s elect is an ancient faith. It was *once* (i.e., one time only) *delivered* unto the saints by the revelation of God. It has never needed—and will never need—any changes or modifications. All the Old Testament saints and patriarchs lived by it, and died in it (See Heb., chap. 11), and all New Testament saints either have, or will, do likewise.

...While I have made no conscious attempt to stir up controversy, I trust the reader has discerned that controversy has not been altogether avoided where the truth is at stake. I have heard it said that “God will defend His own truth,” and I do not deny it; but a careful perusal of some of Paul’s epistles to the churches make it clear that *He often uses men* as His instruments to accomplish it. I know of no reason to conclude He will not do so continually.

I trust a solid foundation of sound doctrine has been laid hitherto, and I hope to continue building upon it...

Judging from the comments of some dear brethren and sisters to me, many of the prevalent “signs of our times” are being virtually avoided or ignored even *by many of our present-day ministers*. It is an historical fact that our Old Baptist forefathers seized this “bull by the horns,” and grappled with it diligently and courageously; and it is our duty and responsibility to God *to do likewise*. As someone has so aptly observed, “To be *forewarned* is to be *forearmed*.” Again, the Apostle Paul was as

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**Editor’s Note:** In past years, Elder Wingfield has written several articles for *The Remnant*, the last of which we printed in September, 1998. In March of that year, he produced the first issue of *Zion’s Sentinel*, an excellent magazine he edits and publishes. He has since been devoting his writing time and efforts to producing *Zion’s Sentinel*.

I trust I am both humbled and made thankful beyond words for Elder Wingfield’s continued friendship, his ongoing support of *The Remnant*, and now, for the fact that the Lord has given Elder Wingfield the unction to send the above article for your spiritual benefit, encouragement, and enjoyment.

In an editorial closing out last year (*Zion’s Sentinel*, Volume 4, Number 6, for November-December, 2001, pages 21f), Elder Wingfield wrote the following sentiments as part of a longer editorial:

...I intended to pursue these goals by the presentation of evangelical truth, clearly defined, plainly stated and adequately supported by the written word of God. While I am confident my human weaknesses have caused me to fall short in many particulars, and will continue to do so, nevertheless I have strived with whatever ability God has given me to be

strong a predestinarian as any of our modern “hardshell” preachers, but *he never hesitated* to warn his beloved brethren of dangers both within and without the flock. By God’s grace, neither will I.

“Therefore we ought to give the more earnest heed to the things which we have heard, lest at any time we should let them slip (Heb. 2:1).”

We would hope that, by the grace and providential leadership of God, the sentiments expressed by Elder Wingfield would be our own; that in the coming year, if the Lord blesses us to that end, we at *The Remnant* might likewise contend earnestly for that ancient faith of God’s elect. Nothing less than that is worthy of your consideration and mine.

Readers interested in learning more about *Zion’s Sentinel* may contact Elder Wingfield at his address given above.

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## THE TWO SUPPERS

**T**here are two entirely different parables about two “suppers.” They are found in Matthew 22 and Luke 14. Yet, these parables are sometimes indiscriminately mixed together to the confounding of sound doctrine. Few who hear them so used ever examine the Scriptures to see if God’s word sustains what they have heard. Fewer still are graced to distinguish the difference. May the Lord God give us to see these two parables with spiritual eyes, the eyes of our understanding being enlightened (Ephesians 1.18), and to see the doctrine of Christ as compared with and contrasted to the doctrines of men.

### I. THE PARABLE IN MATTHEW 22.1-14

*And when the chief priests and Pharisees had heard his parables, they perceived that he spake of them. But when they sought to lay hands on him, they feared the multitude, because they took him for a prophet (Matthew 21.45f).*

This is part of Matthew’s account of events that took place during Christ’s final day in the temple. On this day He confronted and confounded every group of His enemies: Pharisees, Sadducees,

Herodians, scribes, and lawyers. Single-handedly He publicly shamed them all. The result, in human terms, was that they redoubled their efforts to destroy Him, which they were able to do (in the purpose and providence of God) by delivering Him to Pontius Pilate for crucifixion within a week.

*And Jesus answered and spake unto them again by parables, and said, **The kingdom of heaven is like unto a certain king, which made a marriage for his son, and sent forth his servants to call them that were bidden to the wedding: and they would not come (Matthew 22.1-2).***

This is one of Jesus’ many parables about the **kingdom of heaven**. It is generally understood, and no doubt rightly so, that the king in this parable represents God the Father, the king’s son represents the Lord Jesus Christ, the Son of God and God the Son; and the marriage the Father “made” is that of Christ and His bride, the church, His elect body, chosen in Him “before the foundation of the world (Ephesians 1.4).”

Truly, the marriage of Christ and His bride is “a marriage made in heaven,” because this union was predestinated by the three-one God from all eternity. God has never viewed her as being separate from Him. This bond has been called “eternal vital union”: *eternal* because of God’s eternal decree establishing its certainty; *vital* because it is a living, organic relationship; and *union* because she has always been and always will be one with Him.

*Then in His love and His decrees  
Christ and His bride appeared as one  
Her sins by imputation His  
While She in spotless splendor shone.  
—Kent*

This being so, that the parable involves the salvation of Christ’s elect bride, then the servants sent to call them that were bidden are a general picture of the prophets, apostles, and ministry sent to proclaim the gospel message. The Old Testament prophets must be included in this sending forth because they were sent by God to His elect in Old Testament times. This is evident because of what follows later in this parable: a second and a third group of servants who portray the New Testament apostles, evangelists, elders, and ministry.

In this parable, two things stand out about the Old Testament prophets and their ministry: (a) They were to **call** them (with what proved to be only an external and ineffectual call) that were bidden (national Israel), and (b) the bidden ones would **not** come. Although the servants who called in both the Old and New Testaments were empowered by the Holy Spirit, the bidden ones are possessed of a double depravity: They neither **will** nor **can** come unto God. The twofold rule is, “**No man can come** to me (John 6.44),” and “**Ye will not come** to me (John 5.40).” They cannot come even if they would, and they would not come even if they could. The exception to this rule, provided by grace, is the Father’s drawing His chosen ones to Christ: “**No man can come to me, except the Father...draw him,**” and “**Every man** therefore that hath heard, and hath learned of [or *from*] the Father, **cometh unto me** (John 6.45).”

*Again, he sent forth other servants, saying, Tell them which are bidden, Behold, I have prepared my dinner: my oxen and my fatlings are killed, and all things are ready: come unto the marriage. But they made light of it, and went their ways, one to his farm, another to his merchandise: And the remnant took his servants, and entreated them spitefully, and slew them (verses 4-6).*

This second group of “other servants” probably represents the ministry of the ones sent out during the time of the earthly ministry of the Lord Jesus Christ as recorded in the gospel accounts (Matthew, Mark, Luke, and John). Again, this seems warranted by what follows: the destruction of the city of Jerusalem in AD 70, followed by a third group of servants being sent into the “highways” or “all the world (Matthew 24.14, Mark 16.15)” to preach the gospel. Of this there is more said, below.

The message during the era encompassed by the four gospel writers is this: **God has prepared His dinner**, in and by the person and work of Jesus Christ the Lord. The dinner is not *being* prepared, or *going* to be prepared, but it has been prepared from eternity. “Then shall the King say unto them on his right hand, Come, ye blessed of my Father, inherit the kingdom **prepared** for you from the foundation of the world (Matthew 25.34).” The prepared dinner is Christ Himself, and the saints feed upon Him as the life-sustaining food of their spirits. “Whoso

eateth my flesh, and drinketh my blood, hath eternal life; and I will raise him up at the last day. For my flesh is meat indeed, and my blood is drink indeed. He that eateth my flesh, and drinketh my blood, dwelleth in me, and I in him. As the living Father hath sent me, and I live by the Father: so he that eateth me, even he shall live by me. This is that bread which came down from heaven: not as your fathers did eat manna, and are dead: he that eateth of this bread shall live for ever. (John 6.54-58)”

The servants representing this second group (the twelve apostles and the seventy whom He sent out in Luke 10) were instructed to *tell* them that were *bidden*, national Israel, “Behold, I have prepared my dinner: my oxen and my fatlings are killed, and all things are ready: come unto the marriage.” The gospel is a telling, a proclamation. It was understood by the ones sent out that they were to confine their ministry to the nation of Israel: “These twelve Jesus sent forth, and commanded them, saying, Go not into the way of the Gentiles, and into any city of the Samaritans enter ye not: but go rather to the lost sheep of the house of Israel (Matthew 10.5f).” The ones sent understood these words to mean literal Gentiles, literal Samaritans, and literal Israel, not a “spiritual Israel.” (How could they have known who was “spiritual Israel” and go only to them? And would not “spiritual Israel” be found among the Samaritans and the Gentiles as well?) All evidence proves that the apostles confined their ministry to the country and people of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob.

They were to tell that “my oxen and my fatlings are killed”: All the Old Testament sacrifices (represented by the oxen and fatlings) are fulfilled in the bloody death of the Lord Jesus Christ. The law was satisfied against sinners in the death of God’s Son.

The servants were to tell that “all things are ready.” There is nothing left undone. For His bride, Christ met every demand of the Father and His law. Nothing can be added to His finished work.

The servants were to say, “Come unto the marriage.” They were to say this, not to the entire Adamic race, but to them that were bidden, which means those who had been invited previously, the nation of Israel. “For I am not ashamed of the gospel of Christ: for it is the power of God unto salvation to every one that believeth; **to the Jew first**, and also to the Greek (Romans 1.16).”

The reply of those bidden was to mock the servants, the king who sent them, and the marriage of his son. Not content with mockery, some of them killed some of the servants. The Old Testament Israelites and the Jews of Christ's day persecuted and martyred their own God-sent prophets. "...**it cannot be that a prophet perish out of Jerusalem.** O Jerusalem, Jerusalem, which killest the prophets, and stonest them that are sent unto thee...(Luke 13.33f)." Details abound in the Old Testament accounts of how apostate Israelites tortured, imprisoned, and killed the prophets God sent to them (see Hebrews 11.36f).

Not only did they kill their prophets; they also persecuted Jesus and His disciples. After crucifying Him, they threatened (Acts 4.17), imprisoned (Acts 5.18), and beat (Acts 5.40) His apostles, stoned Stephen to death (Acts 7.58), persecuted the church (Acts 8.1), even to distant cities (Acts 9.2). They encouraged Herod when he killed James and imprisoned Peter (Acts 12.1-5). They persecuted Paul wherever he preached (Acts 13.50, etc.).

"Woe unto you, scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites...behold, I send unto you prophets, and wise men, and scribes: and some of them ye shall kill and crucify; and some of them shall ye scourge in your synagogues, and persecute them from city to city...(Matthew 23.29-34)."

*But when the king heard thereof, he was wroth: and he sent forth his armies, and destroyed those murderers, and burned up their city (verse 7).* This was fulfilled literally when the Roman army destroyed Jerusalem in AD 70, burning it to the ground and killing multitudes of the Judaeans. Estimates vary, but the Romans probably killed around one million people in and around Jerusalem.

Those who were spared were taken into slavery in faraway corners of the Roman Empire. Secular history says that over 30,000 Jewish slaves, taken at this time, worked for several years on one Roman project near the city of Corinth in Greece.

*Then saith he to his servants, The wedding is ready, but they which were bidden [national Israel] were not worthy. Go ye therefore into the highways [Gentile nations], and as many as ye shall find, bid to the marriage (verses 8-9).* This is the third group of the king's servants, representing the spread of the gospel of Christ throughout the world: "...ye shall

be witnesses unto me both in Jerusalem, and in all Judaea, and in Samaria, and unto the uttermost part of the earth (Acts 1.8)."

*So those servants went out into the highways, and gathered together all as many as they found, both bad and good: and the wedding was furnished with guests (verse 10).* "Gathering" means they did more than "tell" and "bid to the marriage." In their "gathering" during the last 1,900 years, the false church "servants" have brought in many to warm their pews who are not the children of God.

*When the king came in to see the guests, he saw there a man which had not on a wedding garment (verse 11).* It has been said that the custom of that day was for the host to furnish special party-going clothes for his guests on such occasions. If this is so, it is a perfect picture of the robe of Christ's righteousness provided by God for His people, that they might stand without fault, spotless, and blameless before Him at the marriage supper of the Lamb.

*And he saith unto him, Friend, how camest thou in hither not having a wedding garment?* This is a valid question to which there is no adequate answer.

*And he was speechless (verse 12).* "Now we know that what things soever the law saith, it saith to them who are under the law: that every mouth may be stopped, and all the world may become guilty before God (Romans 3.19)." "They are without excuse (Romans 1.20)."

*Then said the king to the servants, Bind him hand and foot, and take him away, and cast him into outer darkness; there shall be weeping and gnashing of teeth (verse 13).* Another parable explains that the angelic hosts are the servants who will execute judgment on Christ's enemies at the time of the marriage supper and the clothing of God's children in robes of white: "...**the tares are the children of the wicked one**; the enemy that sowed them is the devil; the harvest is the end of the world [eon, age]; and **the reapers are the angels**. As therefore the tares are gathered and burned in the fire; so shall it be in the end of this world [eon, age]. **The Son of man shall send forth His angels, and they shall gather out of his kingdom all things that offend, and them which do iniquity**; and shall cast them into a furnace of fire...**Then** shall the righteous shine forth as the sun **in the kingdom** of their Father. Who hath ears to hear, let him hear (Matthew 13.30-43)."

### Many Called, Few Chosen

*For many are called, but few are chosen* (verse 14). Called to what, and chosen to what? Is this the so-called “gospel call”? Or is it a “call to service”? This must refer to the external call made by the **servants**, because:

(a) in Matthew 22.3 the king “sent forth **his servants to call**,” etc. In this parable, it was the **servants** (plural) who **called** and brought someone in who did not have the proper wedding garment (Christ’s righteousness). It is in *this* context the Lord says, “Many are called but few are chosen.”

(b) It is sometimes said that “many are called to salvation but few are chosen to service.” That is true so far as it goes, but this parable is not about service, other than that of the servants who were sent to call them who were bidden. There may be many *applications* of a text, but there is *only one interpretation*, and the interpretation of a text must be determined by its context.

This parable is not about service, then, neither about calling wedding guests *because* they are servants nor calling them *to become* servants. Such playing with words destroys the entire picture of the parable. When someone invited to a free supper has arrived, they are not conscripted to work in the kitchen (“service”). This parable is about supper-guests in proper attire, not workers in the galley.

In this case, **chosen** is not to service, but rather to **salvation** and feasting on the gospel: “But we are bound to give thanks alway to God for you, brethren beloved of the Lord, because God hath from the beginning **chosen** you to **salvation** through sanctification of the Spirit and belief of the truth (2 Thessalonians 2.13).”

(c) There is a vast difference between **God’s call**, which is always effectual, and a **man’s call**, which is flawed, incomplete, and faulty. John Cargill, the author of the article beginning on page 6 of this issue, expressed it extremely well:

“In some cases there is a conflict of terminology, but in the most it is a case of recognising that *the ‘dead in sin’ cannot respond to the ‘call of grace.’* Those who are quickened by the Holy Spirit do recognise the call and respond to it. As I see it we simply *present, as distinct from offering*, the Lord

Jesus Christ and the claims of the Gospel, then leave the Work of God to God. This will seem very elementary, but I do not see any virtue in complicating matters, and there is no handbook on the subject except the Bible....” [Emphases supplied—Ed.]

The gospel minister **never** “offers” Christ, salvation, the forgiveness of sins, or anything else to anyone, because God offers the sinner nothing. There is no scriptural warrant, from Genesis to Revelation, and no biblical example of any apostle, prophet, or minister ever preaching “Christ died for *you*” indiscriminately to a general audience. Those who are blessed to proclaim the gospel preach the finished work of Christ in behalf of His people. Those whom the Father has chosen, and the Son has redeemed, and the Holy Spirit has quickened and called believe the gospel when they are blessed to hear it. Those who do not believe the gospel thereby manifest the fact that, until that time at least, they have not been brought to life in Christ by the Holy Spirit.

(d) God makes no mistakes. In comparing this parable in Matthew with the one recorded in Luke 14 (which we propose to do next), it should become increasingly clear that His Spirit does not **call** anyone but His **chosen** ones, and He does not bring anyone into the wedding supper without the wedding garment, the robe of Christ’s righteousness. Proof: “He is Lord of lords, and King of kings: and they that are with Him are **called, and chosen**, and faithful (Revelation 17.14).”

## II. THE PARABLE IN LUKE 14.15-24

*And when one of them that sat at meat with him heard these things, he said unto him, Blessed is he that shall eat bread in the kingdom of God (Luke 14.15).*

In Luke’s gospel, the Lord used the occasion of this man’s comment to introduce a parable about the **kingdom of God**, which is distinct from the **kingdom of heaven**. Remember, the parable in Matthew concerned the kingdom of **heaven**. These terms are different for a reason, and so are the two parables.

*Then said he unto him, A certain man made a great supper, and bade many. And sent his servant at supper time to say to them that were bidden, Come; for all things are now ready (verse 16f).*



Here, a **man** made a **great supper** and bade many, and sent his **servant** to say to them that were bidden, "Come; for all things are now ready." From the very beginning, differences between these two parables abound. Here it is a man, not a king. The man sent his servant, one only, and not many **servants**, as the king in Matthew sent. The man made a great supper, but there is no mention of either a **son** or a **marriage**. Why are there all these differences? Because Matthew's parable was of the kingdom of heaven, but Luke's is about the kingdom of God. Here is perhaps as good a place as any to address the differences between the two.

Like the two parables themselves, the kingdom of heaven and the kingdom of God are two different kingdoms. They have certain overlapping characteristics, but *they are not the same, any more than heaven and God are the same*. The differences between these two kingdoms are important, but what are the differences? To be brief and to the point:

**The Kingdom of Heaven:** Psalm 103.19 says, "The Lord hath prepared His throne in *the heavens*; and *His kingdom* ruleth over all." God rules over all creation without exception: all mankind—good and evil, the elect and the reprobate; the starry heavens, the animal, vegetable, and mineral "kingdoms"; the angelic hosts and the demonic hordes. He rules by His predestination and providence over everyone and everything in all creation. **This He calls the kingdom of heaven**, and it contains both wheat and tares, good ground and inferior ground, good fish and bad fish (Matthew 13.1-50). His kingdom, the kingdom of heaven, ruleth over all, *all, all*.

**The kingdom of God**, on the other hand, is a part of the kingdom of heaven. God rules over the kingdom of God, of course; but it is a smaller group than, and contained within, the kingdom of heaven. Even as Ohio is in the USA, but everyone in the USA is not in Ohio, so everyone who is in the kingdom of God is in the kingdom of heaven, but not everyone in the kingdom of heaven is in the kingdom of God.

Proof of this is in what Jesus told Nicodemus: "Except a man be born again, **he cannot see the kingdom of God**...except a man be born of water and of the Spirit, **he cannot enter into the kingdom of God**." That which is born of the flesh is flesh. If the natural fleshly birth is the only birth a person ever experiences, he remains only in the kingdom of

heaven. God rules over him nonetheless, but he lives and dies a reprobate.

A person born from above, however, as Jesus said, both sees and enters into the kingdom of God, exactly as He told Nicodemus. God still rules over that person who, being born of God, is a subject of both the kingdom of heaven and the kingdom of God (even as Ohio's residents are citizens of both Ohio and the USA; but remember: not all US citizens are citizens of Ohio).

*And they all with one consent began to make excuse. The first said unto him, I have bought a piece of ground, and I must needs go and see it: I pray thee have me excused. And another said, I have bought five yoke of oxen, and I go to prove them: I pray thee have me excused. And another said, I have married a wife, and therefore I cannot come (verses 18-20).* Those born of God's Spirit into the kingdom of God are no better than the reprobates who populate large areas of the kingdom of heaven. "Hath not the potter power over **the clay, of the same lump** to make one vessel unto honour, and another unto dishonour (Romans 9.21)?" God's own elect "with one consent began to make excuse." It is worthy of notice that in the kingdom of heaven the one without a wedding garment was speechless, while here, in the kingdom of God, they *all* made excuses. What does this prove if not the fact that God's children are "*by nature* the children of wrath, even as others (Ephesians 2.3)"? But mark you well: although they are "*by nature* the children of wrath," they never were and never will be children of wrath.

*So that servant came, and showed his lord these things. Then the master of the house being angry said to his servant, Go out quickly into the streets and lanes of the city, and **bring in hither the poor, and the maimed, and the halt, and the blind** (verse 21).*

The **Servant**, who represents the Holy Spirit, is not sent merely to bid or to invite as the **servants** did, but He is sent to **bring in** the poor, maimed, halt, and blind (something the servants in Matthew's gospel were never told to do), by His sweet, irresistible grace. Being poverty-stricken sinners, they have no money with which to buy their way in, nor is money necessary. "Ho, every one that thirsteth, come ye to the waters, and he that hath no money;

come ye, buy, and eat; yea, come, buy wine and milk **without money and without price** (Isaiah 55.1).”

*And the servant said, Lord, it is done as thou hast commanded, and yet there is room (verse 22).* Human servants could never truly answer that they had done “as Thou hast commanded,” i.e., exactly as the Lord had said. “As Thou hast commanded” implies perfect obedience and perfect compliance with the Lord’s command, something no earthly man-servant could accomplish. Yet this Servant immediately replies, “**It is done, as Thou hast commanded.**” “For He spake, and it was done; He commanded, and it stood fast (Psalm 33.9).” There is no delay when the Spirit acts upon the alien sinner, dead in sins: “Thy people shall be willing in the day of thy power...(Psalm 110.3).”

*And the lord said unto the servant, Go out into the highways and hedges, and compel them to come in, that my house may be filled (verse 23).*

It is here that the Arminians’ doctrine goes farthest astray in their “application” of this parable, for here they insist it is the **servants** (preachers, “soul winners,” etc.) who are to “Go out into the highways and hedges, and **compel** them to come in.” Nothing is further from the truth of this parable. The Lord God NEVER said that the **servants**—the prophets, apostles, or any other ministers—were to **compel** anyone to come in. This is exclusively the work of the Servant, the Holy Spirit, the divine administrator of irresistible grace.

*For I say unto you, That none of those men which were bidden shall taste of my supper (verse 24).* Not one, even among the elect saints of God, is worthy, yet they are there at the supper, brought into the kingdom of God, not by the *servants* of the Most High, but by the irresistible grace of God in Jesus Christ the Savior as effectuated by the Holy Spirit. Those who were merely *bidden* by the external call of *the servants* but not *compelled* to come by *the Servant* shall never taste of this supper.

There is much more that could be said about the differences between the kingdom of heaven and the kingdom of God, but that must wait for another time, if the Lord so wills. May He bless His truth, and may He and His people pardon any error in my prayer.

—C. C. Morris

## BOOK ADVERTISEMENTS

*He that sweareth to his own hurt, and changeth not (Psalm 15.4).*

### ELDER TROTT’S WRITINGS HALF-PRICE SPECIAL REPEATED

**I**n the last (September-October 2002) issue we inadvertently printed an expired advertisement from an issue of *The Remnant* published about a year ago, which said that the book, *Select Works of Elder Samuel Trott From 1832 to 1862*, would be available “**Through December 2001, \$10.00 post-paid with any other book(s) at regular price.**”

A reader asked if we meant to say, “through December 2002.” The answer is, we did not mean to reprint the special at all. It was printed in error; but, **since we have reprinted it, we are extending this special price again, through December 31, 2002.** For those who are interested (and we hope there are many), those who order any book or books at the regular price, as advertised on page 19, may also order a copy of Elder Trott’s book for \$10.00 instead of the regular price of \$20.00. As always, our prices include packaging and postage costs.

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## **A STATEMENT OF PRINCIPLES:**

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 condemnation; 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.