

# 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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## THE PRESERVATION AND PERSEVERANCE OF THE SAINTS

**H**aving considered the first four points of the Doctrines of Grace, I will now come to the final point in this series. A thorough consideration of the preceding points in the TULIP is important to the understanding of the last. As salvation is from first to last, in time and eternity, all of the Lord, so is the preservation and perseverance of the elect of God to ultimate glory.

The Doctrines of Grace as expressed in the acronym TULIP are:

Total Depravity,  
Unconditional Election,  
Limited Atonement,  
Irresistible Grace, and  
Preservation/Perseverance of the saints.

These must necessarily stand or fall together. They cannot be divided, because each is necessary for the other. As stated previously, I do not presume to know the mind of God as to the order in which these decrees were made. No man can know these things. I certainly believe that with God all knowledge is ever present, and all His works eternal. This is a concept totally alien to and beyond the understanding of finite man.

According to Strong's Greek Dictionary, the term **preservation** means: To guard from loss or injury by keeping the eye upon; to holdfast or watch.

The definition of **persevere** is: To persist or continue with diligence. This is closely related to the word **endurance** which means: to remain, abide, bear, or **persevere**.

Considering then the foregoing points of doctrine, it should be understood that God, having given grace to his elect people, never takes it from them. “The gifts and callings of God are without repentance (Romans 11.19).” For God never, ever changes as the prophet says, “For I am the Lord, I change not; therefore ye sons of Jacob are not consumed (Malachi 3.6).” Saving grace is the free gift of God given to his children in Christ. The Almighty has loved them with an eternal love that shall have no end. “...Yea, I have loved thee with an everlasting love: therefore with lovingkindness have I drawn thee (Jeremiah 31.3).”

With love Jehovah has drawn his precious ones to himself as Jesus said, “No man can come to me, except the Father which hath sent me draw him: and I will raise him up at the last day (John 6.44).” Those with ears to hear listen to the Saviour say that he will raise them up at the last day. Notice the absence of any conditions placed upon those drawn. The Lord has spoken it, and those with faith believe what he says. “All that the Father giveth me shall come to me; and him that cometh to me **I will in no wise cast out**. For I came down from heaven not to do mine own will, but the will of him that sent me. **And this is the Father's will which hath sent me, that of all which he hath given me I should lose nothing, but should raise it up again at the last day. And this is the will of him that sent me, that every one which**

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seeth the Son, and believeth on him, **may have everlasting life; and I will raise him up at the last day** (John 6.37-40)." Hark, 'tis the Saviour's voice I hear. Have you ever heard it, dear reader, as the Scriptures of Eternal Truth speak to you by the power of the Holy Spirit?

Various and assorted Conditionalists detest this doctrine. It totally destroys their free-will teachings. From the beginning, sovereign grace has divided the sheep from the goats. It shall continue to do so as long as time endures. There are some that cannot tolerate sound Bible doctrine. "...I told you, and ye believed not: the works that I do in my Father's name, they bear witness of me. But ye believe not, because ye are not of my sheep, as I said unto you. 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.** I and my Father are one (John 10.25-30)."

Many of the Lord's people experience seasons of doubts and fears. They see in themselves blackness and corruption as it rises up, or even bursts forth on occasion. They are made to question their spiritual condition, and wonder sometimes if perhaps they have been deceived. Yet none stand more sure or safe than those who feel such weakness and infirmities. It has been the experience of many a trembling child of grace that these very doubts, fears, and spiritual troubles are the very things that have driven

him back to the One who is able to comfort and sustain him. "And not only so, but we glory in tribulations also: knowing that tribulation worketh patience; And patience, experience; and experience, hope: And hope maketh not ashamed; because the love of God is shed abroad in our hearts by the Holy Ghost which is given unto us (Romans 5.3-5)."

By nature man depends upon his own abilities and those things of the world he considers sufficient for his needs. "But God hath chosen the foolish things of the world to confound the wise; and God hath chosen the weak things of the world to confound the things which are mighty; And base things of the world, and things which are despised, hath God chosen, yea, and things which are not, to bring to nought things that are: That no flesh should glory in his presence. But of him are ye in Christ Jesus, who of God is made unto us wisdom, and righteousness, and sanctification, and redemption: That, according as it is written, He that glorieth, let him glory in the Lord (1 Corinthians 1.27-31)."

The children of God are taught of the Spirit that they have no strength, wisdom, or righteousness of their own. They discover the world contains no elements of security in which they may trust. However, "Happy is the man that feareth always...(Proverbs 28.14)." Again, "And I will give them one heart, and one way, that they may fear me for ever, for the good of them, and of their children after them: And I will make an everlasting covenant with them, that **I will not turn away from them, to do them good; but I will put my fear in their hearts, that they shall not depart from me** (Jeremiah 32.39-40)."

The true believer is indwelt by God the Holy Spirit. "Wherefore, my beloved, as ye have always obeyed, not as in my presence only, but now much more in my absence, work out your own salvation **with fear and trembling. For it is God which worketh in you both to will and to do of his good pleasure** (Philippians 2.12-13)."

Again, "But ye are not in the flesh, but in the Spirit, if so be that the Spirit of God dwell in you. Now if any man have not the Spirit of Christ, he is none of his. And if Christ be in you, the body is dead because of sin; but the Spirit is life because of righteousness. But if the Spirit of him that raised up Jesus from the dead dwell in you, he that raised up

Christ from the dead shall also quicken your mortal bodies by his Spirit that dwelleth in you (Romans 8.9-11)."

Thus God works in the elect all that is needful for their salvation in time and eternity. The proof of this work is made manifest in the conversation, or manner of life, of the Christian. This work, once begun by the Lord, continues until they safely arrive upon the shores of eternity. "Being confident of this very thing, that he which hath begun a good work in you will perform it until the day of Jesus Christ (Philippians 1.6)." Nothing is able to overcome or frustrate this work of God in the elect. "Ye are of God, little children, and have overcome them: because greater is he that is in you, than he that is in the world (1 John 4.4)."

The Pelagian advocates of free-will and ability have always mistakenly asserted that man's salvation is in his own hands. Thus they would make the perseverance of the saints independent of their preservation by the Triune God, and dependent on their own strength. The perseverance and preservation of the children of God go hand in hand, and cannot be separated.

The elect are preserved by the sovereign power of Jehovah so they may continue in faith for his glory. Free-willers greatly err when they contend that eternal life depends upon their own strength and faithfulness. The Bible states otherwise. "Who shall also confirm you unto the end, that ye may be blameless in the day of our Lord Jesus Christ (1 Corinthians 1.8)."

Free-will religionists fail to understand that the saints are actually the children of Jehovah. From all eternity God has set his affection upon them to do them good. "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 to 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)." Through their **eternal union** with Christ,

the Church awaits with earnest expectation (hope) the inheritance promised them. "In whom also we have **obtained an inheritance**, being predestinated according to the purpose of him who worketh all things after the counsel of his own will (Ephesians 1.11)."

"For as many as are led by the Spirit of God, they are the sons of God. For ye have not received the spirit of bondage again to fear; but ye have received the Spirit of adoption, whereby we cry, Abba, Father. The Spirit itself beareth witness with our spirit, that we are the children of God: And if children, then heirs; heirs of God, and joint-heirs with Christ; if so be that we suffer with him, that we may be also glorified together (Romans 8.14-17)."

"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 (Hebrews 2.11-15)."

Though the saints are subject to all manner of trials and temptations in this life, none of these are able to remove them from the rock upon which they are established by grace. "There hath no temptation taken you but such as is common to man: but God is faithful, who will not suffer you to be tempted above that ye are able; but will with the temptation also make a way to escape, that ye may be able to bear it (1 Corinthians 10.13)."

Not only are temptations ordered of the Lord for our good, but the deliverance from them is assured by the Word of God. "And the very God of peace sanctify you wholly; and I pray God your whole spirit and soul and body be preserved blameless unto the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ. Faithful is he that calleth you, who also will do it (1 Thessalonians 5.23-24)."

If it were required of the saints to continue in their own strength to resist all the snares which the

devil employs against them, they would be hopeless indeed. Thanks be to the all gracious God that it is not so. "But the God of all grace, who hath called us unto his eternal glory by Christ Jesus, after that ye have suffered a while, make you perfect, stablish, strengthen, settle you. To him be glory and dominion for ever and ever. Amen (1 Peter 5.10-11)."

The Almighty God that spoke the universe into existence, himself keeps his people. "For whom he did foreknow, he also did predestinate to be conformed to the image of his Son, that he might be the firstborn among many brethren. Moreover whom he did predestinate, them he also called: and whom he called, them he also justified: and whom he justified, them he also glorified. What shall we then say to these things? If God be for us, who can be against us (Romans 8.29-31)?"

If God could not keep his own, for whom he gave his only begotten Son, his very glory would be diminished. It is blasphemous to even think that such could be possible. "He that spared not his own Son, but delivered him up for us all, how shall he not with him also freely give us all things (Romans 8.32)?"

The Lord Jesus Christ came to seek and to save that which was lost. He was delivered for our offenses and raised again for our justification. What foolish mortal can claim that God leaves his chosen ones to persevere in their own strength?

"Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, which according to his abundant mercy hath begotten us again unto a lively 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. Wherein ye greatly rejoice, though now for a season, if need be, ye are in heaviness through manifold temptations: that the trial of your faith, being much more precious than of gold that perisheth, though it be tried with fire, might be found unto praise and honor and glory at the appearing of Jesus Christ (1 Peter 1.3-7)."

The Scriptures are clear on the subject of God's care for his covenant people. "And we know that all things work together for good to them that love God, to them who are the called according to his purpose

(Romans 8.28).” This actually means **all** things that occur in the life of the children of God. Conditionalists may deny this clear declaration of the Holy Spirit by the Apostle Paul, but those who have experienced the Lord’s mighty power to deliver do not.

The salvation and preservation of the elect is the sovereign work of the Three-In-One God. “The LORD will perfect that which concerneth me: thy mercy, O LORD, endureth for ever: forsake not the works of thine own hands (Psalms 138.8).”

The Holy Scriptures of Truth declare clearly for all who have been enlightened by the Spirit to hear, that absolutely nothing is able to defeat the purpose of God in the salvation of his elect. It is impossible that anything should separate the love of God from his chosen ones.

The children of grace have a great High Priest who intervenes on their behalf for their good. “And now I am no more in the world, but these are in the world, and I come to thee. Holy Father, keep through thine own name those whom thou hast given me, that they may be one, as we are (John 17.11).”

Not of themselves, but through their union with Christ their head, they continue to endure and overcome all the troubles of this life. “Nay, in all these things we are more than conquerors through him that loved us. For I am persuaded, that neither death, nor life, nor angels, nor principalities, nor powers, nor things present, nor things to come, nor height, nor depth, nor any other creature, shall be able to separate us from the love of God, which is in Christ Jesus our Lord (Romans 8.37-39).”

All of what has been stated should be sufficient to prove beyond a shadow of a doubt, to those possessed of the faith of God’s elect, that from everlasting God has purposed, predestinated, ordained, and determined that his elect shall reside with him in glory.

“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).”

How sad it would be that after preparing a kingdom for a people it should remain uninhabited. This is the picture that the worldly religionists paint. Thanks be to God that this **is not** the truth as it is presented in Scripture.

Finally, it may be shown that the continued perseverance of the saints in faith is underscored by the statement of the Lord Jesus a little before his offering up of himself upon the cross. “Let not your heart be troubled: ye believe in God, believe also in me. In my Father’s house are many mansions: if it were not so, I would have told you. I go to prepare a place for you. And if I go and prepare a place for you, I will come again, and receive you unto myself; that where I am, there ye may be also (John 14.1-3).” Surely the Lord’s veracity is not to be questioned by puny man. This is a positive statement made by the God of Truth himself, that as he returned to glory from whence he came, he would make preparations to accept his people into the dwelling place of the Godhead.

As the saints live their life by the grace and providence of God, they will experience much pain, and pass through the fires of affliction many times. If the Lord blesses with insight and understanding, they shall learn that every temptation they fall into, every affliction they endure, and every heartache they experience is ordered by their God for their ultimate good and his great glory. These things strengthen them in the faith of Christ and decrease their trust and dependence on themselves and the things of this world.

“If ye then be risen with Christ, seek those things which are above, where Christ sitteth on the right hand of God. Set your affection on things above, not on things on the earth. For ye are dead, and your life is hid with Christ in God. When Christ, who is our life, shall appear, then shall ye also appear with him in glory ( Colossians 3.1-4).”

Behold the promise of the Lord. Therein lies our hope. “For we are saved by hope: but hope that is seen is not hope: for what a man seeth, why doth he yet hope for? But if we hope for that we see not, then do we **with patience wait for it** (Romans 8.24-25).” May the Lord continue to bless his little ones with the patience that only he can grant.

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## THE GODHEAD

### Part 2

by Elder David Mattingly  
(Continued from last issue)

**A**nother attribute of God's nature is His self-existence. In this not only is He seen to be eternal, but immutable as well. By virtue of His immutability it is shown that His perfect nature has always been and always shall be. When the Lord told Moses he was being called to bring forth the Israelites out of Egyptian bondage Moses asked for God's name. He desired to be able to tell the people who it was that had commanded their deliverance. The Lord replied: "I AM THAT I AM." The Hebrew is "*Eheveh asher eheveh.*" The Lord continued: "Thus shalt thou say unto the children of Israel, I AM hath sent me unto you (Exodus 3.14)." He is the great Jehovah.

A parent often has a problem answering his child's inquiry, "but Dad, where did God come from?" It is a reasonable question to ask. After all, everything else has come from something outside of itself. But in the case of God, He did not come forth from something else, and as He is, He has always been, and always will be. He is the basis for His own existence.

Now, look at Jesus' dialogue with the Jews. Abraham and the prophets were being discussed. The Jews said to Christ: "Abraham is dead, and the prophets; and thou sayest, If a man keep my saying, he shall never taste death. Art thou greater than our father Abraham, which is dead? and the prophets are dead: whom makest thou thyself?" In other words, the Jews thought Jesus was overstating His own case by making Himself greater than Abraham and the prophets. After all, they were dead; yet He was promising His people life.

Jesus further upset the Jews by telling them: "Your father Abraham rejoiced to see my day: and he saw it, and was glad." They responded, "Thou art not yet fifty years old, and hast thou seen Abraham?" In short, they are asking, "how can a man not yet age fifty be seen by Abraham who had been dead for many generations?" To this, the Lord replied by identifying Himself in the same way the great Jehovah had identified Himself to Moses: "Verily,

verily, I say unto you, Before Abraham was, I am." The Jews understood what He was saying. They knew He not only was identifying with the name but also the very attributes of God, so they took "up stones to cast at him (John 8.52-53, 56-59)." By these words it should be proven the Son is God.

Another proof that the Son is God is found in Jeremiah 23. 5-6. In these verses it is shown not only that He has God's name but He also has God's righteousness to impute to His people. The text says: "Behold, the days come, saith the LORD, that I will raise unto David a righteous Branch, and a King shall reign and prosper, and shall execute judgment and justice in the earth. In his days Judah shall be saved, and Israel shall dwell safely: and this is his name whereby he shall be called, THE LORD OUR RIGHTEOUSNESS." It should go without saying this prophesy concerns Christ. That Christ is the Branch raised unto David is clear from many passages. Matthew, in the Gospel, calls Him "the son of David" (Matthew 1.1).

That He is righteous is likewise plain from many verses. In Hebrews, He is described as being "holy, harmless, undefiled, separate from sinners, and made higher than the heavens (Hebrews 7.26)."

That He is righteous not only in Himself but that He is our righteousness is also shown many places in scripture as in Paul's words: "But of him are ye in Christ Jesus, who of God is made unto us...righteousness (1 Corinthians 1.30)." That He is a King is proven by the fact He is the "King of the Jews" as well as the fact He is "Lord of lords and King of kings" (Matthew 27.11; Revelation 17.14). The prophetic language of Jeremiah fits the New Testament's words concerning the Son of God. Yet, He also carries the name of God. According to the Hebrew text He is called "Jehovah our righteousness." By these words it is also proven the Son is God.

Only a few more attributes will be noted to prove the Word is God:

One, God is immutable. In Malachi it is written: "For I am the LORD (Jehovah), I change not; therefore ye sons of Jacob are not consumed (Malachi 3.6)." The Hebrew writer found this same attribute in Christ's nature when he wrote: "Jesus Christ the same yesterday, and to day, and for ever (Hebrews 13.8)."

Two, God is Almighty. Jehovah identified Himself to Abram. When Abram was ninety-nine years old the LORD appeared unto him, saying, "I am the Almighty God; walk before me, and be thou perfect (Genesis 17.1)." Christ declared His absolute power when He told the disciples, "All power is given unto me in heaven and in earth (Matthew 28.18)." This was not a power given unto Him by delegation; it was a power given unto Him by right of nature. Thus, John, in the Revelation speaks of Christ as "the Almighty" (Revelation 1.8). Some have tried to argue this name belongs only to God the Father. However, this argument cannot hold up. The subject from verse 5 through verse 8 definitely identifies the Son of God. He is Jesus Christ, the Faithful Witness, the First Begotten of the Dead, the Prince of the kings, the One who loved and washed His people from their sins by His blood, the One who made the saints kings and priests to God, and the One who will come in the clouds so that every eye will see Him; even those who pierced Him. Can there be any doubt this language identifies the Son of God? Then, verse 8 says: "I am Alpha and Omega, the beginning and the ending, saith the Lord, which is, and which was, and which is to come, the Almighty." Should more scripture be needed to prove the point, turn to Revelation 22.11-12: "Behold, I come quickly, and my reward is with me, to give every man according as his work shall be. I am Alpha and Omega, the beginning and the end, the first and the last." As in chapter 1, He speaks of Himself as the "Alpha and Omega." To whom is it the people of God are called upon to look for a quick coming? Is it not Christ? By the very use of words the One called the Almighty can be none other than the blessed Son of God.

Three, to God is attributed perfect knowledge so James declared: "Known unto God are all his works from the beginning of the world (Acts 15.18)." Simon Peter confessed this same truth of Christ when he, in frustration, after Christ persisted in asking him about his love, exclaimed: "Lord, thou knowest all things; thou knowest that I love thee (John 21.17)." This could be passed off as an idle, exaggerated statement by the apostle were it not for the fact the Lord did not give him the slightest rebuke for having made such a remark. He is the God of all knowledge.

### **Christ's nature proves He is God**

The Scriptures also prove the Son is Deity by what they say concerning His offices and His works.

Nothing is more plainly taught in the Bible than the teaching God is the Creator of all things. Indeed, the first thing revealed about God in the very first verse of the Bible is: "In the beginning God created the heaven and the earth." Remember, the word for God here is Elohim. This word is the plural of the Hebrew word "*Eloah*." That the Son is manifested as the Creator is clear from various verses of scripture. John wrote: "All things were made by him; and without him was not any thing made that was made," and "He was in the world, and the world was made by him, and the world knew him not (John 1.3, 10)." In Hebrews the writer refers to the Son by whom God spoke by quoting Psalm 102.25: "And, Thou, Lord, in the beginning hast laid the foundation of the earth; and the heavens are the works of thine hands (Hebrews 1.10)." Thus, it is shown by virtue of the fact He created all things that He is God.

It is equally plainly taught in the Bible that God is a Savior. Mary, the mother of Jesus, declared her spirit "hath rejoiced in God my Saviour (Luke 1.47)." Thus, salvation is attributed to God. In the Old Testament, Jehovah tells Israel: "For I am the LORD thy God, the Holy One of Israel, thy Saviour" and "I, even I, am the LORD; and beside me there is no saviour (Isaiah 43.3, 11)." Is it true that there is no Savior but Jehovah God? If the Lord Jesus Christ is not the same as Jehovah God, then there must be more than one Savior because Christ is definitely set forth as a Savior in the New Testament. Joseph was told, "he shall save his people from their sins (Matthew 1.21)." The angel of God told the shepherds: "For unto you is born this day in the city of David a Saviour, which is Christ the Lord (Luke 2.11)." Paul spoke to Timothy about God, "Who hath saved us, and called us with an holy calling, not according to our works, but according to his own purpose and grace, which was given us in Christ Jesus before the world began, But is now made manifest by the appearing of our Saviour Jesus Christ, who hath abolished death, and hath brought life and immortality to light through the gospel (1 Timothy 1.9-10)." John said: "And we have seen and do testify that the Father sent the Son to be the

Saviour of the world (1 John 4.14).” Can anything be clearer than the fact the blessed Son of God fills the role of the only Savior?

Consistent with His role as a Savior, it is through the blessed Son of God that sins are forgiven. When Jesus said to the man sick of the palsy who was brought to Him while He was in Capernaum, “Son, thy sins be forgiven thee,” the scribes who heard this pronouncement thought He spoke blasphemies as they reasoned “who can forgive sins but God only?” Believers cannot fault the scribes for their question. Clearly, forgiveness is attributed to God alone. Only the one offended can provide forgiveness. If someone commits an evil against my neighbor, I cannot be the one who forgives the offender for what he has done to the guy next door. In this case forgiveness must come from my neighbor.

Likewise, since sin is committed against God, God alone has the right to forgive the transgressor. What fault the scribes had is seen in the fact they failed to recognize who Christ was. Jesus replied to the scribes, “Whether is it easier to say to the sick of the palsy, Thy sins be forgiven thee; or to say, Arise, and take up thy bed, and walk? But that ye may know that the Son of man hath power on earth to forgive sins, (he saith to the sick of the palsy,) I say unto thee, Arise, and take up thy bed, and go thy way into thine house.” When the man immediately took up his bed and walked, Christ had not only demonstrated He could heal but that He also had power to forgive sins (Mark 2.1-12). Paul taught it is in this beloved Son that the saints “have redemption through his blood, the forgiveness of sins, according to the riches of his grace (Ephesians 1.6-7).” The fact Christ has the power to forgive sins should be another evidence He is God.

Consider a couple of other roles attributed to God. Jehovah is a shepherd. The most quoted of all of David’s psalms states: “The LORD is my shepherd; I shall not want (Psalm 23.1).” Christ answers to this when He said, “I am the good shepherd; the good shepherd giveth his life for the sheep (John 10.11).” Also, Jehovah is Israel’s King. He declared: “I am the LORD, your Holy One, the creator of Israel, your King (Isaiah 43.15).” Christ answers to this designation as well. When Pilate asked the Lord, “Art thou the King of the Jews,” Jesus replied, “Thou sayest (Matthew 27.11).” This

reply is a Jewish idiom that essentially stands as a confirmation of what had previously been asked. In other words, He is agreeing He is the King of the Jews. Thus, in this statement the Son is shown to be Jehovah, Israel’s King.

Although more scriptures and evidences can be presented, I will at this point take leave of providing further proofs that the Word is God. He is declared to be God. He is shown to have the nature of God. And by both His offices and works He is proven to be God. If these will not convince the reader that He is God, nothing further that I can present will do so. Well did Paul write of Him that He is “the image of the invisible God,” and “in him dwelleth all the fullness of the Godhead bodily (Colossians 1.15; 2.9).”

### C. THE HOLY SPIRIT

I have no idea how much opposition there is to the view the Holy Spirit is God. The battleground has historically been fought on the issue of the Son of God. So much effort is made trying to prove or disprove Christ Jesus is God that it appears both sides are exhausted by the time the subject of the Holy Spirit is brought up. I would not be too surprised to find that a lot of people who use the phrase, “God the Father, God the Son, and God the Holy Spirit” do so without giving a lot of thought to what they are saying. Based upon the Headship of the Father, I confess the Spirit is often set forth as One who accomplishes certain designs of the Father, but I totally reject the notion the Spirit is no more than a “thing” that is in the Father’s hands to do with “it” as He sees fit. However, it would not surprise me to find this is the way many people think of the Spirit. Yet, whether or not the matter is given much thought, as most Old School Baptists believe the Word is God, so do most also confess the Holy Spirit is God. Since there is more lack of thought on the subject than there is real debate, I will not spend as much time proving the Holy Spirit is God; but, due to a general lack of thought on the subject, some texts need to be examined to show the Spirit is, in fact, God.

There are a couple of places in the book of Acts that plainly teach the Holy Spirit is Deity. First, when Ananias and Sapphira did not lay at the apostles’ feet the total portion of the price of land



they had sold, but contrary to their agreement, they kept a portion for themselves, Peter asked Ananias, “why hath Satan filled thine heart to lie to the Holy Ghost?” and to Sapphira he asked, “How is it that ye have agreed together to tempt the Spirit of the Lord?” Yet, in confronting Ananias with his lie, Peter declared, “thou hast not lied unto men, but unto God (Acts 5. 3, 4, 9).” Second, when Paul was confronted by unbelievers among the Jews he quoted from the Old Testament prophet and said: “Well spake the Holy Ghost by Esaias the prophet unto the fathers, Saying, Go unto this people, and say, Hearing ye shall hear, and shall not understand; and seeing ye shall see, and not perceive: For the heart of this people is waxed gross, and their ears are dull of hearing, and their eyes have they closed; lest they should see with their eyes, and hear with their ears, and understand with their heart, and should be converted, and I should heal them (Acts 28. 25-27).” This quote is taken from Isaiah, chapter 6, and by comparing the two places it will be evident it is the Lord Jehovah that spoke the words that Paul attributed to the Spirit. So, from these texts it is clear God, the Holy Ghost, heard the lying tongue; and He who was identified in the words of the prophet as the Lord Jehovah is identified by the apostle as the Holy Ghost.

From the verses quoted in Acts it should also be quite plain the Spirit is not a “thing.” Lies are told to Him. He was tempted. He Himself prophesied. I admit there are a few places in the scriptures that speak of the Spirit using the pronoun “it,” as though He is a “thing.” For example, there is the verse: “The Spirit itself beareth witness with our spirit, that we are the children of God (Romans 8.16).” There is a simple reason for this. The word “spirit” in the Greek language is a neuter noun. This word is not exclusively used with reference to the Spirit of God. For example, the Bible often speaks of the spirit that is in man. In such cases the spirit is appropriately described as an “it.” Likewise, consistent with the noun, the pronoun “it” will sometimes be used, even when the Spirit of God is under consideration. However, many passages that speak of the Spirit will rise above the neuter and speak of Him rightfully in the masculine gender.

Other verses show He is not a “thing.” He speaks, and calls His ministers, and sends them out

(Acts 13. 1-4). He can be blasphemed (Matthew 12.31-32). Saints are admonished not to grieve Him (Ephesians 4.30). He quickens (John 6.63). He testifies of Christ (John 15.26). He searches the hearts of the saints and helps them in their infirmities by making intercession for them when prayers are made (Romans 8.26-27). Then, there is the powerful statement of Christ: “Howbeit when he, the Spirit of truth, is come, he will guide you into all truth: for he shall not speak of himself; but whatsoever he shall hear, that shall he speak: and he will shew you things to come. He shall glorify me: for he shall receive of mine, and shall shew it unto you. All things that the Father hath are mine: therefore said I, that he shall take of mine, and shall shew it unto you (John 16. 13-15).” He guides, He speaks, He hears, He shows, He glorifies, and He receives. In short, saints are to think of Him as something other than an “it.”

As Paul’s reference to the Holy Spirit when he quoted from Isaiah, chapter 6 proves the Spirit and God are one and the same, so also do the words of Simon Peter. Repeatedly, throughout the prophets they prefaced their words with “the word of the LORD came unto me, saying,” as in Ezekiel 3.16; or “Thus saith the LORD,” as in Amos 3. 11. But Peter showed plainly that the “holy men of God spake as they were moved by the Holy Ghost (2 Peter 1. 21).” So, whether it is said that Jehovah moved them to speak or it was the Spirit that moved them to speak there is no contradiction as the two are the same.

By an examination of the Holy Spirit’s nature it should be clear He is God. Indeed, Jesus taught the very essence of God is Spirit when He told the Samaritan Woman, “God is a Spirit” (John 4.24). Consider also Jehovah is holy. Saints readily embrace the words of Hannah when she prayed, “There is none holy as the LORD” (1 Samuel 2.2); and consistent with God’s nature, repeatedly, throughout the New Testament the Spirit has adjoined to Him the adjective “holy.” He is the “Holy Ghost” as in Matthew 28.19. Further, one of God’s attributes is, He is eternal. So, Moses declared, “The eternal God is thy refuge, and underneath are the everlasting arms (Deuteronomy 33.27).” The Spirit of God has this attribute. In Hebrews 9.14, He is referred to as “the eternal Spirit.” Also, omnipresence is attributed to God. David showed this was the nature of the Spirit when he wrote in the Psalms:

“Whither shall I go from thy spirit? Or whither shall I flee from thy presence? If I ascend up into heaven, thou art there: if I make my bed in hell, behold, thou art there. If I take the wings of the morning, and dwell in the uttermost parts of the sea; Even there shall thy hand lead me, and thy right hand shall hold me (Psalm 139.7-9).” In all of these ways He is shown to be Deity.

I shall not tarry further on this matter. Hopefully, not only will the reader be convinced the Holy Spirit is not a mere “thing” to be employed as an instrument, but, He is in fact, Jehovah God.

### III. THE DISTINCTIONS BETWEEN THE THREE PERSONS

The third point is the Three Persons of the Godhead are distinct from one another. By this I mean in manifestation the Father is not the Son or the Holy Spirit; the Son is not the Father or the Holy Spirit; and the Holy Spirit is not the Father or the Son. In the essence each Person is God, but in the revealing of the Three each has a different identity.

**A. DEFENSE OF THE USE OF THE TERM “PERSONS”:** Some object to the use of the term “Person” when speaking of the Godhead. For my part I have no problem with the word. Our English translators took the meaning of the Greek word “hupostasis” used in Hebrews 1.3 to be “person.” There, in speaking of the Son being a reflection of Deity the text says: “Who being the brightness of his glory, and the express image of his person.” There are many places in the scriptures where God is pictured as a Person. Although Moses could not behold the face of God the scripture infers God has a face when it says: “And the LORD spake unto Moses face to face, as a man speaketh unto his friend.” There, the Deity is even compared to a man. Further, Jehovah tells Moses, “Thou canst not see my face: for there shall no man see me, and live.” Still further, God says: “And it shall come to pass, while my glory passeth by, that I will put thee in a clift of the rock, and will cover thee with my hand while I pass by: And I will take away mine hand, and thou shalt see my back parts: but my face shall not be seen (Exodus 33.11, 20, 22-23).” So, God is presented as having a face, a hand, and a back part. He is also presented as having eyes: “For the ways

of man are before the eyes of the Lord (Proverbs 5.21).” Further, in Psalm 18, He is presented as having ears, nostrils, a mouth, and feet. David, in distress, said, “my cry came before him, even into his ears (verse 6)”; and: “There went up a smoke out of his nostrils, and fire out of his mouth devoured (verse 8)”; and: “He bowed the heavens also, and came down: and darkness was under his feet (verse 9).”

There is more. The prophet speaks of His arm in Isaiah 53.1: “Who hath believed our report? And to whom is the arm of the LORD revealed?” Add to these things the fact that in the Godhead there are both the Father and the Son. In human experience a father is a person and so is a son. Consistent with the language of the Bible, it should be easy to think of both the Father and Son as Persons.

It has already been proven the Spirit is a someone; not a “thing.” Should it be pointed out the Bible is simply using *anthropomorphic* language when it speaks of the various body parts of God, and when it uses masculine pronouns to speak of God, I have no objection. However, that being the case, it appears to me completely consistent with anthropomorphic expressions to speak of the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit as Persons. Human language may often be found weak as a vehicle in describing God but the Lord has revealed some things about Himself in the written word, and if He is pleased to describe Himself sometimes like a man we ought not to object to using language that is in line with that description.

I realize the London Confession of Faith does not have the weight of authority that the Bible does, but the term was acceptable to our Baptist forefathers when they spoke of the Son of God as “the second person in the Holy Trinity” (Chapter 8, section 2). This suggests to me they also recognized a First Person as well as a Third Person. But anyone who continues to object to the term, I say use what words you will; only this do I require: be sure to distinguish between the three different manifestations. Because God so clearly manifests Himself differently when He presents Himself as the Father than He does when He presents Himself as the Son, and when He presents Himself as the Holy Spirit, it is easy to see how Arians fall prey to their error; but to mix the Three into some indistinguishable lot as Unitarians do makes absolutely no sense at all in light of what

the scriptures teach. To conclude from such passages as “I and my Father are one (John 10.30)” and “He that hath seen me hath seen the Father (John 14.9)” that there is no difference between the Father and the Son is to fail to see that even in the Oneness stated in these passages there is also a distinction made between two separate Personalities: the Son who spoke the words and the Father of whom He spoke. The Arians may need a lesson in basic arithmetic for inserting the article “a” before God in John 1.1, but the Unitarians need the same lesson if they cannot see that the Father is One Person and the Son is Another Person. One plus one equals two. And if there is no difference one wonders why Jesus did not simply command His disciples to immerse in the name of God rather than in the separate names of Father, Son, and Holy Ghost when He told them to baptize (Matthew 28.19). If Unitarians believe there are no differences in manifestation they ought to stop trying to support their position with scriptures that clearly teach the opposite. For my part it makes more sense to explain the Godhead in this manner: He is One God who has revealed Himself in Three distinct Personalities. Again, this position is consistent with what our earlier Baptist brethren set forth in the London Confession of Faith. In chapter 2, section 3, they spoke of the “three subsistences” as being “distinguished by several peculiar relative properties and personal relations.”

**B. GENERAL DISTINCTIONS BETWEEN THE THREE PERSONS:** Let me now note several places in the scriptures where the Persons of the Godhead are plainly distinguished from each other. First, concerning the time of the Lord’s baptism, the scripture says: “And Jesus, when he was baptized, went up straightway out of the water: and, lo, the heavens were opened unto him, and he saw the Spirit of God descending like a dove, and lighting upon him: And lo a voice from heaven, saying, This is my beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased (Matthew 3.16-17).” Christ, the Son of God, is distinctly the One who was baptized. Neither the Father nor the Spirit went down into or came up out of the water. Distinct from the others, the Father was not seen but His voice commended His Son. It was not the voice of the Spirit. Distinct from the others, the Spirit descended like a dove and lit upon the Son. It was

not the Father that lit upon Christ. When Jesus was baptized each had His own distinct role.

Second, concerning Christ’s words to His disciples, the scripture says: “And I will pray the Father, and he shall give you another Comforter, that he may abide with you for ever; Even the Spirit of truth (John 14.16-17).” It is Jesus, the Son, who said He would pray. The speaker is not the Father or the Holy Spirit. The Son does not say He will pray to Himself. He will pray outside Himself to His Father. The prayer concerns not the giving of the Father or the Son but the giving of the Holy Spirit. Again, in this text, each Person has His own identity.

Third, concerning the subject of blasphemy, Jesus draws a distinction between Himself and the Holy Spirit when He said: “whosoever speaketh a word against the Son of man, it shall be forgiven him: but whosoever speaketh against the Holy Ghost, it shall not be forgiven him, neither in this world, neither in the world to come (Matthew 12.32).” So it is that there is a provision made for pardon for speaking out against Christ, as the Jews often did, but there is none made for speaking out against the Holy Spirit.

I can go on and on with examples of this sort, but I hope these are sufficient to show that each Person in the Godhead is separate from the others. These are the words of the Bible, and we should have no problem acknowledging the differences between the Three.

At this time I may need to make another pause. I want to be sure that the doctrine I have presented is one that makes sense. I hope that at each step along the way what has been said has been shown to be consistent with the scriptures. The first point has been to show there is but One God. The second point has been to show that although there is but One God, He is manifested in Three Persons. The third point has been to show these Three Persons are revealed differently from each other. Yet, I realize, as plain as this may have seemed as I have laid out the case for each point, if you take a step back and look rationally at all of the points together, you may be saying to yourself, “this does not make any sense.” How can God be but One and yet Three? And if each Person is distinct from the others, isn’t this tantamount to saying God is different from God? At first, what I have put together may sound like mumbo

jumbo. Well, let me try to take the senselessness out of all of this. I shall do so with a simple example. It is something that we know about through daily contact. Yet, when the one thing appears to us in its various forms it is so common we do not consider it to be strange. I have reference to the chemical compound, H<sub>2</sub>O. We come into contact with water all the time. We know it to be in three different forms. It sometimes appears to us as a liquid. At other times it appears to us as a solid. Still, at other times, it appears to us as a gas. It does not matter what form it is in. It is no more and it is no less of the same, one essence, no matter what form it takes. Yet, we have no trouble at all making distinctions between each of the forms. When we see it in a bucket in a frozen state we call it "ice." When we see it in a glass in a liquid state we call it "water." When we see it rising in the air above a pan of boiling water we call it "steam." Even though there is but one essence, our minds readily separate between the three different forms. It does not even come into our minds to think this does not make sense. Now, substitute the same principles of water and apply them to the Godhead and you should see there is nothing gibberish about the case that I have made.

(To be continued, as the Lord wills)

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## THE PARABLE OF LEAVEN HID IN THE MEAL MATTHEW 13.33

*Another parable spake he unto them; The kingdom of heaven is like unto leaven, which a woman took, and hid in three measures of meal, till the whole was leavened (Matthew 13.33).*

**T**his is the fourth and central parable of the seven Christ gives in this chapter. In one sense, this could well be the most important parable in the Bible. When one considers its underlying principle, there is an application to every phase of the entire creation.

Note that Christ does not say the kingdom of heaven is like (unto) leaven, *period*.

He did not say it was like a baker and her recipe. The kingdom of heaven is not like sourdough.

The kingdom of heaven, then, is neither the leaven, nor the woman, nor the meal, nor the hiding of the meal. Christ said the kingdom of heaven is like the whole parabolic picture of *leaven-which-a-woman-took-and-hid-in-three-measures-of-meal-until-the-whole-was-leavened*. This parable tells those who have ears to hear it that the corrupting principle of leaven, a scriptural figure of sin, will prevail until the whole kingdom of heaven is corrupted by it.

What, then, is the kingdom of heaven? For practical considerations, it is the entire creation and everything in it as we know, experience, and understand it. It is Solomon's "under the sun." "The LORD hath prepared His **throne** in the **heavens**; and His **kingdom ruleth over all** (Psalm 103.19)." The kingdom of heaven is *the powers of heaven ruling over the earth*.

What is *not* in the kingdom of heaven? In the sense of the corrupting principle of leaven/sin, which is the point of this parable,

1. God is not in it in this sense, because He is **over** it, and God cannot be corrupted; also,
2. The saints cannot be corrupted in their God-given, new nature (they are made "partakers of the divine nature," 2 Peter 1.4), the divine nature being placed within them: "Whosoever is born of God doth not commit sin; for his seed remaineth in him: and he cannot sin, because he is born of God (1 John 3.9)." The children of God, however, because of their fallen Adamic nature, do experience every phase of corruption in their natural lives while in this natural world. Not *every* saint experiences *every* fault, weakness, failing, and vice, but every saint experiences enough of these infirmities to be made to know from whom and from where their deliverance must come. Paul said, "Know ye not that the unrighteous shall not inherit the kingdom of God? Be not deceived: neither fornicators, nor idolaters, nor adulterers, nor effeminate, nor abusers of themselves with mankind, nor thieves, nor covetous, nor drunkards, nor revilers, nor extortioners, shall inherit the kingdom of God. And such **were some of you**: but ye are washed, but ye are sanctified, but ye are justified in the name of the Lord Jesus, and by the Spirit of our God (1 Corinthians 6.9ff)." Not all had been thieves, but some had been. Not all were extortion-

ists, but some had been; and so on. (See Elder Atkisson's article on **The Preservation and Perseverance of the Saints** in this issue.)

In this parable there are three elements (leaven, a woman, and three measures of meal) and a conclusion (the whole was leavened).

### The Leaven

In the Scriptures leaven *always* represents sin. In *The Remnant* for January-February, 2002, I addressed the subject of "The Leaven of the Pharisees and of the Sadducees," but it might be useful here to summarize the subject of leaven again, as it is presented in the Bible.

1. The Bible first refers to leaven in Exodus 12-13, where it is mentioned ten times in connection with the sacrifice of the Passover. The Israelites were instructed to remove all leaven not just from their bread, but even from their homes. This is a strange command indeed, if leaven is (as the postmillennial theory says) a picture of the gospel's permeating and converting the world. It is the more strange when it is weighed and measured by *the law of first mention*: The first biblical use or reference to a word is significant, in that it sets the precedent for all future uses of that word in the Scriptures.

2. Generally, leaven was not to be offered with the bloody sacrifices of the Levitical law because Christ our sacrifice was sinless. There were some offerings where leaven was included (for example in Leviticus 7.13 and 23.17), but this was because it was so closely associated with the sinners themselves. We cannot go beyond this for now.

3. From Moses' writings, we must jump forward to the prophets for the next mention of leaven: Hosea links *baking with leaven* with *adultery*: "They are all adulterers, **AS** an oven heated by the baker, who ceaseth from raising after he hath kneaded the dough, until it be leavened (Hosea 7.4)."

One way of telling if something is to be understood figuratively or not is to notice when the biblical speaker or writer says something is **as** or **like** something else. In grammar this is known as a **simile** (same root as *similar*). Bible similes or similitudes raise the question, **JUST HOW IS** "a baker who ceases raising his kneaded, leavened, risen dough and bakes it in a heated oven" **LIKE** or **AS** adulterers? **JUST HOW IS** the kingdom of heaven **LIKE** or

**AS** "leaven a woman took and hid in three measures of meal, till the whole was leavened"?

Amos is the last who mentions leaven in the Old Testament. In chapter 4, he tells Israel to "Come to Bethel, and transgress; at Gilgal multiply transgression; and bring your sacrifices every morning, and your tithes after three years: And offer a sacrifice of thanksgiving with leaven."

The rebellious ten tribes of Israel had perverted Bethel to open idolatry. Bethel, whose very name means the *house of God*, was that sacred spot where Jacob saw the vision of the ladder typifying Christ Jesus (Genesis 28, John 1.51). Gilgal, where Joshua and the nation of Israel first camped after crossing the Jordan River into the promised land (Joshua 4.19f), was likewise another sacred or holy place.

Exactly because Bethel and Gilgal were holy places, they drew idolatry to themselves like magnets, and they became centers for idol worship. This is part of the very sin principle to which this parable calls our attention: "till *the whole* was leavened."

Bethel and Gilgal were wholly given over to idolatry in Amos' day. The prophet's sarcastically advising them to mix leaven into their "sacrifice of thanksgiving" was the least of their problems. In mockery, Amos is telling them they might as well go ahead and mix leaven (as a picture of their sin) into their worship, since their entire idolatrous worship system was sinful anyway.

4. The first New Testament mention of leaven is our text, Matthew 13.33. Since this text is our focal point, we pass on to

5. Matthew 16, where Jesus identifies leaven with **the doctrine** of the Pharisees and of the Sadducees (verse 12) and warns His disciples to beware of it. In Mark 8.15, He adds "the leaven of Herod" to His warning. In Luke 12.1 Christ refines His definition to include hypocrisy: "Beware ye of the leaven of the Pharisees, which is hypocrisy." There is no contradiction between these verses (doctrine in one place and hypocrisy in the other), but only an ongoing refinement. We are to understand that the leaven of the Pharisees is *hypocritical doctrine* or a *doctrine of hypocrisy*.

6. For the next reference to leaven, we must go to Paul's letters to that most carnal of churches, the church in Corinth. He says, "Your glorying is not good. Know ye not that a little leaven leaveneth the

whole lump?” (Their *Glorying* or boasting, is a clue to why leaven is “not good,” and a picture of sin.) “Purge out therefore the old leaven, that ye may be a new lump, as ye are unleavened. For even Christ our passover is sacrificed for us: Therefore let us keep the feast, not with old leaven, neither with the leaven of malice and wickedness; but with the unleavened bread of sincerity and truth (1 Corinthians 5.6ff).”

Glorying, here, is boasting. Boasting reflects *pride* in the heart of the boasters. Such boasting, if left unchecked by God, spreads through the whole church congregation, as it did in Corinth, until all members are affected in one way or another.

7. In Galatians 5.9, Paul repeats “A little leaven leaveneth the whole lump.”

The above seven points summarize what the entire Bible has to say about leaven. Everywhere it is a picture of sin’s pride; puffing up, hypocritical, manifesting itself as both false doctrine and the fruit of it.

### Why does God hate the sin of PRIDE?

The origin of the sin of pride is directly traceable back to Lucifer, or Satan, in his pre-Adamic fall (Isaiah 14.12-15; Ezekiel 28.13-18).

To see what pride does to a person or to a congregation, look at what leaven does to a mass of flour: First it swells it and puffs it up. Next, if the bread is not fired promptly (fire being associated with God’s judgment), the entire mass of puffed-up dough will fall(!), sour, and eventually ruin.

Leaven is typical of teachings that corrupt: free-will and Conditionalist doctrines are the immediate offspring of pride, and they produce yet more pride, which is the fountainhead of all such ever-expanding, self-feeding corruption. G. H. Lang summarizes the leaven as Christ exposed it in the gospels:

Thus leaven stands in the Gospels for

That of the Pharisees—hypocritical formalism,

That of the Sadducees—rationalistic materialism,

That of Herod—debasement sensualism.  
(*The Parabolic Teaching of Scripture*, G. H. Lang, p. 97)

Leaven was to be purged out of Israel’s houses and the sacrifices during Passover, and from almost all other sacrifices except the bread that was associated with the feast and sacrifices of Pentecost (Leviticus 23.16f).

The bread of the feast of Pentecost was an exception precisely because it typified the Gentile church. To national Israelites, Gentiles were considered first and foremost to be SINNERS. Even Paul, the apostle to the Gentiles, said: “We who are Jews by nature, and not **sinner of the Gentiles**...(Galatians 2.15).”

Paul wrote more about leaven to the Corinthians: “Your glorying is not good. Know ye not that a little leaven leaveneth the whole lump? Purge out therefore the **old leaven**, that ye may be a new lump, as ye are **unleavened**. For even Christ our passover is sacrificed for us: therefore let us keep the feast, not with **old leaven**, neither with **the leaven of malice and wickedness**; but with the **unleavened** bread of sincerity and truth. (1 Corinthians 5.6-8).” Leaven is corrupt teaching. In the face of the uniform teaching of the Scriptures, it is unthinkable to say (as the postmillennial missionaries of bygone days used to teach) that leaven is *the gospel* and that the whole world will eventually be leavened or converted by it.

### The Woman

The leaven, sin, was hid in three measures of meal by a woman.

Babylon is pictured as a woman (Jer. 50.42, 51.2-7, Rev. 17). She represents the weaker element of man and typically all false religion. Women were not allowed to teach men because Eve was deceived. Women are not to usurp authority over a man for the same reason. “But I suffer not a woman to teach, nor to usurp authority over the man, but to be in silence. For Adam was first formed, then Eve. And Adam was not deceived, but the woman being deceived was in the transgression (1 Timothy 2.12-14).”

We have forgotten that they two shall be one flesh, and as such the man and the woman are incomplete without the other. They are one. God designed the male and female to be one and to think as one. Not that the woman should be a carbon-copy rubber-stamp imitation of her husband or vice versa. Men and women think differently. This should not be a cause for arguing and spiteful hatefulness. The

two ways of thinking are supplementary and complementary, not contradictory. Woman has thought processes designed by God to supplement her husband's way of thinking. Working and thinking together, a man and his wife can accomplish far more than they could as two separate individuals.

Nevertheless, we fallen sinners want to maintain our individuality and distinctness, our privacy and possessions. Man wants to keep things from his wife, and the woman wants to keep things from her husband. This is only getting worse in these final days of apostasy, when women are demanding complete independence and equality with men. If only they knew, they are equal, but in a way far different from the way many women are seeking "equality."

**Jezebel** is linked with women teachers in churches: "...I know thy works, and charity, and service, and faith, and thy patience, and thy works; and the last to be more than the first. Notwithstanding I have a few things against thee, because thou sufferest that woman Jezebel, which calleth herself a prophetess, to teach and to seduce my servants to commit fornication, and to eat things sacrificed unto idols... as many as have not this doctrine, and which have not known the depths of Satan, as they speak; I will put upon you none other burden. But that which ye have already hold fast till I come (Revelation 2.18-29). Part of the leaven Jezebel has introduced into the churches is an **ever-increasing works system**: "...thy works; and the last to be more than the first." **Salvation by works** is a seductive trap. Some who profess to be Primitive Baptists have fallen for Jezebel's leaven, claiming they can harmonize their works schemes with the doctrines of grace.

### The Three Measures of Meal

What are the three measures of meal? They are not, as some have thought,

A. *Jew, Gentile, and the church of God*: "Give none offence, neither to the Jews, nor to the Gentiles, nor to the church of God (1 Corinthians 10.32)." We do not eat "Jews, Gentiles, or the church of God." Some might say, "People eat their doctrines, *spiritually*." No; it is their doctrines, corrupt and varied as they are, which are consumed, and not the Jews, Gentiles, and churches themselves.

B. *The Eastern Orthodox church, the Roman Catholic church, and Protestantism*: The same

argument holds true here. We do not eat the various branches of Churchianity. It is only their various corrupt doctrines which men swallow.

Since by Christ's own words [point #5, page 13] leavened bread is corrupt teaching, then the unleavened meal is good, solid, doctrinal teaching, the doctrine of our Lord and of His Christ.

There are three measures of this meal. Since three is associated with the Godhead (Father, Son, and Holy Spirit), and the Godhead is so intimately connected to the salvation of God's people (see Eph. 1.1-14, for example), then the doctrine represented by the meal is the doctrine of the Godhead as it relates to the salvation of His people.

Meal is something we feed on; it is the basic building-block of bread.

Jesus is the bread of life: "...Jesus said...my Father giveth you the true bread from heaven. For the bread of God is He which cometh down from heaven, and giveth life unto the world... **I am the bread of life**: he that cometh to me shall never hunger; and he that believeth on me shall never thirst... **I am that bread of life**... This is the bread which cometh down from heaven, that a man may eat thereof, and not die. **I am the living bread** which came down from heaven: if any man eat of this bread, he shall live for ever: and the bread that I will give is my flesh, which I will give for the life of the world (John 6.31-51)."

Why *three* measures of meal? What is represented here is the doctrine of the three-in-one Godhead: God the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit, primarily as each divine Person of the three-one God is involved in the salvation of His people. (See Elder Mattingly's article on the Godhead, elsewhere in this issue.)

The Godhead's being associated with the three measures of meal first surfaces in Genesis 18 and 19. The three "men" or "angels" who appeared to Abraham and Sarah were a divine manifestation or appearance of God Himself, and nothing less.

Sometimes God is represented *by* an angel, as when He sends Gabriel or Michael to do His bidding.

Other times God is represented *as* an angel; that is, God Himself appears as an angel called *the Angel of the Lord*. For now, only one case must suffice to illustrate: when Jehovah appeared to Manoah in Judges 13. Manoah's wife told him, "A **man of God**

came unto me,” **but** “his countenance was like the countenance of an **angel of God**, very terrible [frightening, dreadful].” Was this personage a *man*, an *angel*, or someone else—*God Himself*?

Manoah prayed, “O my Lord, let the **man of God** which thou didst send come again...” “And God hearkened to the voice of Manoah; and the **angel of God** came again unto the woman... And the woman made haste, and ran, and showed her husband, and said unto him, **Behold, the man....**” (compare this with Pilate’s statement in John 19.5). Manoah “came to **the man**, and said unto him, Art thou **the man** that spakest unto the woman?” “And **the angel of the LORD** said unto Manoah...”

The record goes on, using **angel** and **man** interchangeably. When Manoah asked his name, however, still thinking he was speaking to a man, the **angel-man** replied, “Why askest thou thus after my name, seeing it is *secret* [Hebrew, *pil’iy* = *remarkable, wonderful*]?” This comes from the exact same root word, *pala’*, as the name Isaiah used when, speaking of Jesus Christ, he said, “And His name shall be called Wonderful [*pele’*]...” By comparing spiritual things with spiritual (1 Corinthians 2.13), we are given to see that **the Being** who appeared to Manoah and his wife as an **angel** and as a **man** was none other than the second Person of the Godhead, Jesus Christ, the Son of God and God the Son.

*Angel* (Hebrew, *mal’ak*; Greek, *aggelos*) in its strictest sense means a *messenger*, whether a spirit-being or a human. The incarnate God, Jesus Christ, is called “the Messenger (*mal’ak*) of the Covenant” in Malachi 3.1.

In like manner, it would appear that the angel-men in Genesis 18 and 19 were an appearance of the Godhead. Consider:

“And the LORD appeared unto him [Abraham]... (Genesis 18.1).” In the King James Version (KJV), when LORD is spelled in all capital letters as it is here, it is the KJV translators’ way of saying that the name for God in the original Hebrew is (what we call) *Jehovah*. Genesis 18.1 says “JEHOVAH appeared unto” Abraham.

“...and, lo, **three men** stood by him: and when he saw **them**, he ran to meet **them** from the tent door, and bowed himself toward the ground, and said, My Lord [*Adonai, master*], if now I have found favour [grace] in thy sight...” The title *Adonai* was given

to God and to men. Its use here, of itself, is inconclusive.

“Abraham hastened into the tent unto Sarah, and said, Make ready quickly **three measures of fine meal**, knead it, and make cakes...(verse 6).” Here is the first time three measures of meal are mentioned in the Bible; the only other two places this is found is in our text (Matthew 13.33) and the parallel passage in Luke (13.21).

“And **they** said unto him, ‘Where is Sarah thy wife (verse 9)?’” Note: **THEY** said. **They** spoke as one. Abraham answered, “Behold, in the tent.”

“And **he** [God] said, ‘I will certainly return unto thee according to the time of life; and, lo, Sarah thy wife shall have a son.’” The **they** of verse 9 is the **he**—God—of verse 10, showing the tri-unity of the Three-One God.

Only God could be the one who, by “returning” according to the time of life (the gestation period of nine months), could cause barren Sarah to have a son. If this were a mere man speaking, his words would imply that this traveling stranger would father Sarah’s son Isaac! No holy man or angel-messenger having come from God would dare imply such a thing, nor would Abraham have tolerated such language from a mere man.

“And **the LORD [Jehovah]** said unto Abraham, ‘Wherefore did Sarah laugh...?’” Now, the “They-He” personage is again identified as Jehovah. “Is any thing too hard for the LORD? At the time appointed **I** will return unto thee, according to the time of life, and Sarah shall have a son.” The *He-They* manifestation of Jehovah, the one who controls the birth of all children (it is not “men” or “angels” who do!) says **I** will return to thee at the appointed time, resulting in the predestinated birth of Isaac.

“Then Sarah denied, saying, I laughed not; for she was afraid. And **HE** said, Nay; but thou didst laugh.” This is **the omniscience of the all-knowing, three-one Jehovah God**; it was not merely that one of three travelers *heard* Sarah laugh. Abraham didn’t hear Sarah, nor did he reply to God’s question, “Wherefore did Sarah laugh?”

But immediately, it was “**the men**” again who “rose up from thence, and looked toward Sodom: and Abraham went with **them** to bring **them** on the way.”

“And the LORD said, Shall I hide from Abraham that thing which I do; seeing that Abraham shall



*surely* become a great and mighty nation [that is predestination], and all the nations of the earth *shall* be blessed in him? For **I know him** [hardly the words of a stranger], that he will command his children and his household after him, and they shall keep the way of **the LORD**, to do justice and judgment; that **the LORD** may bring upon Abraham that which he hath spoken of him.” It is the three-one God standing and speaking thus with Abraham. It is neither three men nor three angels, although **He** appeared as both men and angels interchangeably.

“...the LORD [Jehovah] said, Because the cry of Sodom and Gomorrah is great, and because their sin is very grievous; **I** [this is Jehovah who is speaking, not two or three men or angels] will go down now, and...I will know.”

This is too emphatic to be mere mortal men speaking. Yet in the very next verse it is two of “**the men**” who turned ...and went toward Sodom: but Abraham stood yet before the LORD [in this case, God the Father].” We must skip over Abraham’s intercessory prayer other than to make a few brief points: Abraham says to **the man** standing beside him, “Wilt **thou** also destroy the righteous with the wicked?...Shall not the Judge of all the earth do right?”

Each time **the man** answers Abraham, it is God speaking. “And he [Jehovah] said, If **I** [Jehovah] find there forty and five, **I** [Jehovah] will not destroy it.” Yet this one who stood with Abraham did not physically go in person; *He went in the person(s) of the other two angel-men*, the Son and the Holy Spirit. Nevertheless, He [Jehovah] knew both the future of the city and the number of the righteous in it.

We hasten on: “And there came **two angels** to Sodom at even...(19.1).” *Men* left Abraham, but they arrived in Sodom as *angels*.

The Sodomite men “called unto Lot, and said unto him, Where are **the men** which came in to thee this night?” bring them out unto us, that we may know them.” The **angels** (verse 1) only *appeared to be men* to the Sodomites.

But **the men** put forth their hand [not *hands*], and pulled Lot into the house to them, and shut to the door. And they smote the men that were at the door of the house with blindness....”

The two angel-men who came to Sodom were the second and third Persons of the Godhead: God the

Son and God the Holy Spirit manifested in a visible form. It is the Son and the Spirit who came to earth to save His people: the Son by ransom and redemption, and the Spirit by regeneration, sanctification, and indwelling those whom the Father chose and the Son redeemed with His own precious blood. The precedent set here in Sodom by God Himself in the salvation of Lot and His family by irresistible grace (see 19.16) speaks of the salvation provided for His people in every age, including this wicked and evil generation (Luke 17.28-30!) in which we live.

We have indulged this lengthy side-trip because the Three-One God, who manifested Himself to demonstrate in that early day His love, mercy, grace, and power in the salvation of unworthy sinners (specifically, in this case, Lot and his family), *as the God of salvation associates Himself with three measures of meal*. The importance of this precedent, established by the principle or *law of first mention*, cannot be overemphasized.

This is the first but not the only place we have the picture of salvation in Christ as food. In John 6, Jesus identified Himself as the Bread of Life, given by God the Father, and effectuated by the Holy Spirit: “...**my Father** giveth you **the true bread from heaven**. For **the bread of God** is He which cometh down from heaven...(verses 32f)... **I am the bread of life**: he that cometh to me shall never hunger (verse 35)... No man can come to me, except **the Father** which hath sent me draw him (verse 44)... Every man therefore that hath heard, and hath learned of **the Father**, cometh unto me (verse 45)... **I am that bread of life** (verse 48)... **I am the living bread which came down from heaven**: if any man eat of **this bread**, he shall live for ever: and the bread that I will give is **my flesh**, which **I will give** for the life of the world (verse 51)... It is **the Spirit** [the S in Spirit should be capitalized to represent the Holy Spirit] that quickeneth; the flesh profiteth nothing: the words that I speak unto you, they are **Spirit**, and they are life (verse 63).” In this extended passage of Scripture, **the Father**, **the Son**, and **the Holy Spirit** are again linked with (a) bread (which is of course made of meal) and (b) the salvation of God’s people.

We trust we do not need to further establish the link between the three measures of meal and the Triune God as He relates to the salvation of His people.

### Till the Whole Was Leavened

Someone may possibly be still thinking, "If leaven is a figure of sin, then *how is God leavened?*"

It is not that God is leavened. We have before shown by the words of Jesus Himself that leavened bread is a picture of the *corrupt doctrine* (Matthew 16.12, Mark 8.15) of the Pharisees, Sadducees, and Herodians. In the course of this present age, from Christ's first advent until now, and to the end of what He calls "the times of the Gentiles" (Luke 21.24), our subject parable tells us *the entire doctrinal system about God and the salvation God provided in Christ* will be corrupted. The corruption of doctrine therefore includes what "part" (if we dare oversimplify by speaking thusly) the Father has in the salvation of His people (*i.e.*, election and preservation); that of the Son (ransom and redemption); and that of the Holy Spirit (regeneration and sanctification). Religious men everywhere deny

- ◆ the Father's sovereign choice of the elect bride of Christ and His blessing her with all spiritual blessings;

- ◆ the Son's effectual redemption of and atonement for the bride the Father had given Him; and,

- ◆ the Holy Spirit's effectual regeneration, sanctification and preserving her from grace to glory.

The entire created universe has been corrupted by the leaven of sin. This is why darkness floods the night sky instead of its being filled with light, the light of the glory of God. It is why "evil men and seducers shall wax worse and worse, deceiving, and being deceived (2 Timothy 3.13)."

This universal corruption throughout the creation has been true in every age mankind has been here. It was true of Adam, even before the fall. It was true of the Adamic race at the time of Noah. It was true of Noah's descendants after the flood. It was true of Abraham and his descendants. It was true of Israel under the Mosaical legal covenant. It was true of the period of the judges. It was true of the theocracy. It was true of the kingdoms of Israel and Judah. It was true of the gospel era. It is true of the church age.

To hear some people tell it, God couldn't do any better than to have an endless string of failures. Did it ever occur to these critics of God that He has an eternal purpose in demonstrating that, in every age,

**without Him even His own people can do nothing** (John 15.5)?

Jesus asked rhetorically, concerning His second advent, "Nevertheless when the Son of man cometh, shall he find faith on the earth (Luke 18.8)?" We must answer "Yes," not because of anything good in His people, but only because of the preserving power of our sovereign God and the Lord Jesus' promise that the gates of hell shall not prevail against His church.

In the next issue of *The Remnant*, if the Lord has so willed, I hope to have some concluding remarks about this parable and its implications.

—C. C. Morris

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### IN MEMORY OF SISTER PEGGY POOLE

**O**ur heartfelt sympathy and love goes to Elder James F. Poole, the Founder and first Editor and Publisher of *The Remnant*, at the passing of his wife. Sister Peggy Poole passed away suddenly on January 6, 2003. Their son, Matthew Poole, who maintains *The Remnant's* web site, notified us of their loss later that same evening.

Sister Peggy was Elder Poole's loving companion and mainstay, faithfully helping and caring for him in his afflictions that have beset him of late.

Sister Poole was a wonderful, invaluable friend to all who knew and loved her, but especially to her family and to the household of faith. She spent untold hundreds of hours typing the manuscripts of many of the books we offer for sale. She also assisted Elder Poole in packaging and mailing the book orders of our readers.

Her loving husband and family, who have expressed such sorrow and grief at their loss, will surely miss her; but her being called home leaves a vacuum that we all will feel for years to come.

Our consolation is that we sorrow not even as others which have no hope. "For if we believe that Jesus died and rose again, even so them also which sleep in Jesus will God bring with him."

As the Lord gives you the utterance, please remember Elder Poole and his family before the throne of grace.

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**T**he 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.