

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 ONE REDEEMER

The Lord Jesus Christ is the one and only redeemer of the elect of God. “And she shall bring forth a son, and thou shalt call his name JESUS: for he shall save his people from their sins. Now all this was done, that it might be fulfilled which was spoken of the Lord 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 1.21-23).”

The Lord of glory became man and thus dwelt with his people that he might redeem them from the curse and penalty of the law. “And the Word was made flesh, and dwelt among us, (and we beheld his glory, the glory as of the only begotten of the Father,) full of grace and truth (John 1.14).” Believers of old professed that Jesus was truly God and truly man. They understood that two distinct natures dwell in one person, the Lord Jesus Christ.

This man Jesus is the eternal Mediator between God and his people. “For there is one God, and one mediator between God and men, the man Christ Jesus (1 Timothy 2.5).” He assumed the office of Mediator from eternity that he might redeem for himself a particular people that love good works. “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 writer of the Hebrew letter explains this teaching very clearly. “God, who at sundry times and in divers manners spake in time past unto the fathers

by the prophets, hath in these last days spoken unto us by his Son, whom he hath appointed heir of all things, by whom also he made the worlds; Who being the brightness of his glory, and the express image of his person, and upholding all things by the word of his power, when he had by himself purged our sins, sat down on the right hand of the Majesty on high: being made so much better than the angels, as he hath by inheritance obtained a more excellent name than they.

“For unto which of the angels said he at any time, Thou art my Son, this day have I begotten thee? And again, I will be to him a Father, and he shall be to me a Son?

“And again, when he bringeth in the first begotten into the world, he saith, and let all the angels of God worship him. And of the angels he saith, who maketh his angel’s spirits, and his ministers a flame of fire. But unto the Son he saith, Thy throne, O God, is forever and ever: a sceptre of righteousness is the sceptre of thy kingdom. Thou hast loved righteousness, and hated iniquity; therefore God, even thy God, hath anointed thee with the oil of gladness above thy fellows (Hebrews 1.1-9).”

The good and gracious King of Saints condescended to the lowly position of his children that he might deliver them from bondage. “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. For it became him, for whom are all things, and by whom are all things, in bringing *many sons* unto glory, to make the captain of their salvation perfect

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

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to all interested persons.

Address all correspondence to:

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

E-mail: ccmorris@the-remnant.com
ccmorris@cox-internet.com
Web sites: www.the-remnant.com
www.primitive-baptist.com

Phone 1-903-769-4822

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through sufferings...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...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. For in that he himself hath suffered being tempted, he is able to succor them that are tempted (Hebrews 2.9-10, 14-15, 17-18)."

We understand that as God never, ever changes, even so Jesus Christ as the Mediator, Savior, and Redeemer of the chosen people of God does not change. In his office of High Priest, representing Jehovah's people, he remains forever the eternal God-Man filling forever the position of the Mediator between God and man. "Jesus Christ the same yesterday, and today, and forever (Hebrews 13.8)." Christ abides forever to make intercession for his brethren. "But this man, because he continueth ever, hath an unchangeable priesthood. Wherefore he is able also to save them to the uttermost that come unto God by him, seeing he ever liveth to make intercession for them (Hebrews 7.24, 25)."

There is not a single human being that has ever been born into the world that has not been in need of the redemption found in the Lord Jesus. Thanks be to God that before creation he purposed and planned

all things to demonstrate his glorious power and wisdom.

Not only did he design the fall of man, but he mercifully provided the redemption of those chosen in Christ from eternity, thereby displaying to those objects of grace his mercy and eternal love for them.

“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 (Ephesians 1.4ff).” “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).”

The Lord Jesus Christ is the prophet, priest, and king of his people. “The LORD thy God will raise up unto thee a Prophet from the midst of thee, of thy brethren, like unto me; unto him ye shall hearken (Deuteronomy 18.15).”

Christ is that prophet. “And there came a fear on all: and they glorified God, saying, That a great prophet is risen up among us; and, That God hath visited his people (Luke 7.16).” “Then those men, when they had seen the miracle that Jesus did, said, This is of a truth that prophet that should come into the world (John 6.14).”

Because of the great spiritual darkness and ignorance in which the children of God dwell, due to their depravity and corruption, it is necessary that any spiritual wisdom which the elect require be imparted to them freely by grace. This knowledge comes to them by the revelation of Jesus Christ through his Spirit. “But I certify you, brethren, that the gospel which was preached of me is not after man. For I neither received it of man, neither was I taught it, but by the revelation of Jesus Christ (Galatians 1.11f).”

The revealed will or written word of God is a great blessing to the children of grace. The Bible is a wonderful gift that God has preserved and provided for his people that they might know his will as he blesses and reveals it to them. It is the Spirit of Christ, which is the Spirit of Prophecy that enables the children of grace to learn from the Scriptures of Eternal Truth, which Jehovah has so mercifully furnished for his children. “...for the testimony of Jesus is the spirit of

prophecy (Revelation 19.10).” It is Christ that reveals the Father to his people. “...for all things that I have heard of my Father I have made known unto you (John 15.15).” All things pertaining to their salvation that are necessary for the elect to know are taught to them by the Lord Jesus.

As the great High Priest of the people of God, Jesus offered himself to God as the sacrifice for the transgressions of his people. The justice of God was fully and completely satisfied by the work of Christ. The result of this awesome act of mercy and compassion was the reconciliation of a separated people to a just and loving God.

“All we like sheep have gone astray; we have turned every one to his own way; and the LORD hath laid on him the iniquity of us all. He was oppressed, and he was afflicted, yet he opened not his mouth: he is brought as a lamb to the slaughter, and as a sheep before her shearers is dumb, so he openeth not his mouth. He was taken from prison and from judgment: and who shall declare his generation? for he was cut off out of the land of the living: for the transgression of my people was he stricken. And he made his grave with the wicked, and with the rich in his death; because he had done no violence, neither was any deceit in his mouth.

“Yet it pleased the LORD to bruise him; he hath put him to grief: when thou shalt make his soul an offering for sin, he shall see his seed, he shall prolong his days, and the pleasure of the LORD shall prosper in his hand. He shall see of the travail of his soul, and shall be satisfied: by his knowledge shall my righteous servant justify many; for he shall bear their iniquities (Isaiah 53.6-11).”

The High Priest and Mediator of God’s elect continues forever to make intercession for the sins of his people. “Who is he that condemneth? It is Christ that died, yea rather, that is risen again, who is even at the right hand of God, who also maketh intercession for us (Romans 8.34).”

The Old School Predestinarian Baptists are, to my knowledge, the only people who believe consistently that all salvation is by free grace without the contribution or mixture of man’s works whatsoever. However, they do concede that the works of one man were absolutely essential and necessary for God’s plan of redemption to be completed and to succeed. This one man is, of course, the man Jesus Christ.

The one and only Mediator between God and man is the Lord Jesus (1 Timothy 2.5). “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...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 5.18f, 21).”

Whereas the high priest of the old covenant of works was one of the people and represented the nation of Israel, when he entered into the Holy of Holies to make an offering for the transgressions of the people, he was a mere figure of the one true High Priest that was to come in due time.

The annual sacrifices and numerous offerings for sins did not truly remove those sins, but pointed to and looked ahead to the true offering for sin.

“But Christ being come an high priest of good things to come, by a greater and more perfect tabernacle, not made with hands, that is to say, not of this building; 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 9.11f).”

As the high priest of old bore the names of the children of Israel upon the ephod which he wore when he entered the inner sanctum, so the great Mediator of the elect entered into that holiest of places bearing the names of all the children of God in himself; none were forgotten. “So Christ was once offered to bear the sins of many; and unto them that look for him shall he appear the second time without sin unto Salvation (Hebrews 9.28).”

Those who have looked for him and hoped in him, and all of those who do now, and those who in the future shall look for that great deliverance from this sinful world and from this corrupt body of death, these are the ones whose sins were borne and put away by the sufferings of the Lord Jesus Christ and his triumphant victory over death, hell, and the grave.

When he shall appear the second time it shall not be as the suffering, sin-bearing servant, but the glorious, victorious, reigning King of Kings and Lord of Lords.

“That at the name of Jesus every knee should bow, of things in heaven, and things in earth, and things

under the earth; and that every tongue should confess that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of God the Father (Philippians 2.10,11).”

Hopefully it is evident to all of God’s experientially living children that Christ is ruling and reigning now from his heavenly throne where he sits at the right hand of the Father. Christ spiritually governs his Church and rules in the hearts and lives of his people; all created things, whether visible or invisible, good or evil, are under the exercise of his mighty power and authority. All power rests in the hands of the great King of Saints. “...All power is given unto me in heaven and in earth (Matthew 28.18).”

When all things are ready according to God’s immutable purpose, the Lord Jesus shall return to present his kingdom to his Father. “Then cometh the end, when he shall have delivered up the kingdom to God, even the Father; when he shall have put down all rule and all authority and power. For he must reign, till he hath put all enemies under his feet. The last enemy that shall be destroyed is death (1 Corinthians 15.24-26).”

Christ shall return to glorify the Father before all creation and to rule and reign with his ransomed saints. “When he shall come to be glorified in his saints, and to be admired in all them that believe (2 Thessalonians 1.10).”

All sufficiency for time and eternity is to be found in one person, which is the Lord Jesus Christ, in whom rests our hope of eternal life. “When Christ, who is our life, shall appear, then shall ye also appear with him in glory (Colossians 3.4).” He is all in all to the elect. Without him we are nothing and can do less than nothing.

“But thanks be to God, which giveth us the victory through our Lord Jesus Christ (1 Corinthians 15.57).”

Lest through the lusts of the flesh and the pride of life we forget, “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 1.30,31).”

—Elder Bruce Atkisson
P. O. Box 982

Talladega, AL 35161-0982
E-mail: RBAtkisson@CS.COM

OBJECTIONS CONSIDERED REGARDING THE DIFFERENCES BETWEEN THE KINGDOM OF GOD AND THE KINGDOM OF HEAVEN

In the last six months or so, some of our readers have said that before the series on Matthew 13 began, they had not considered the distinction between the **kingdom of God** and the **kingdom of heaven**, and they have expressed an appreciativeness that they had been given to see the scriptural difference between them.

Although some few have expressed disagreement, most have not been disagreeable; the more so in light of the major world events that have taken place in the Middle East this year, coupled with the fact that, for all practical purposes, those who advocate the idea that “both kingdoms are the same thing, and they are a spiritual kingdom that is going on now” are not addressing Bible prophecy relating to the second coming of the Lord Jesus Christ. Indeed, their system *cannot* well address the hundreds of prophecies of Christ’s second coming, because by “spiritualizing” them, *i. e.*, applying them “in a spiritual sense” to the present church, they cut away their own prophetic legs. Having misapplied the prophecies of Christ’s triumphant, glorious, *future return* to the *present church*, they simply have no prophetic structure left. All this has a direct bearing on the parables of Matthew 13, the difference between the *kingdom of God* and the *kingdom of heaven*, and the thousand years mentioned in Revelation 20.

The doctrine that these two kingdoms are the identical same thing is the doctrine of Rome and goes back to the time of the emperor Constantine and before. As a Roman Catholic doctrine, it fits well with nearly all Arminian and Conditionalist schemes.

At one time or another, almost all of us have heard this Romish idea advanced. Many have not taken the time and effort to examine the Bible to see what our only textbook actually says about these two kingdoms. Consequently, some who believe these two are the same kingdom have some questions that are often presented as objections. In this regard, I am reminded of something Elder Gilbert Beebe wrote in his introductory remarks on a subject he well knew was controversial:

It is rather a thankless undertaking to set forth our views upon a subject on which we must necessarily come in collision with the long established opinions and deep-rooted traditions of others, among whom are to be found some friends for whose opinions and feelings we entertain sentiments of the greatest regard. When called upon, as in the present case, however, we feel bound to set before our readers such views as we have. (Elder Gilbert Beebe, Alexandria, D.C., January 15, 1840)

Elder Beebe here expresses my thoughts and feelings exactly.

To reexamine ideas that one has taken for granted for a lifetime is unsettling and disruptive to any person’s way of thinking. It is of the utmost importance to reexamine our beliefs every once in a while, however, if for no other reason than to be more familiar with them, “Rooted and built up in Him, and stablished in the faith”; the more so if we are not fully aware of the sources of ideas alien to the Scriptures, what these alien ideas imply, how they contradict the uniform testimony of the Bible, who advocates these ideas, and what is to be gained (and lost) by believing a misleading doctrine.

All we desire for anyone in this regard (whatever their persuasion on the kingdoms of God and of heaven, or on any biblical subject) is for them to be as the Berean Jews (Acts 17.10f) who “were more noble than those in Thessalonica, in that they received the word with all readiness of mind, and searched the scriptures daily, whether those things were so.” Other “religions” and belief systems may have their prayer books or Sunday school quarterlies to depend upon, with their priests and clergy to interpret all things for them; but for anyone naming the name of Baptist nothing less than a personal, diligent searching of the Scriptures will do.

Before addressing objections to what I have presented, there is one Conditionalist or “Old Line” Elder I must mention. He devoted at least one sermon to my efforts and then sent me a copy of his tape. Earlier (in the May-June issue, page 12), I proposed to answer his objections in a future issue. Most of the objections he voiced are easily found in print in “Old Line” periodicals, expressed far more concisely and clearly than they were on his tape. Rather than quoting from his tape, then, or from others’ correspondence and the like, for now I will confine my remarks to

answering objections and views that are on written record in magazines. They are easy enough to quote accurately. I will address their objections as ably as the Lord will bless me to do.

Objection: *We don't need any prophecies for any future age. When Christ returns, He will raise the dead, destroy the world, have a judgment, send the reprobates to hell, take His elect to heaven, and that will be it.*

Reply: While such a one is talking of "when time shall be no more," Paul is talking of "the ages to come" and "throughout all ages, world without end": "That in *the ages to come* he might show the exceeding riches of his grace in his kindness toward us through Christ Jesus (Ephesians 2.7)." "Unto him be glory in the church by Christ Jesus throughout *all ages, world without end*. Amen (Ephesians 3.21)."

Ages, plural, means at least *two*. *Ages to come* means at least two ages are yet future. If not, *what?* We ask, what are these two coming ages, and what *world without end* means, if the world or earth is supposed to come to an *end*. Honesty demands that our objector explain what ages Paul says are to come. The present "church age" cannot be one that was "to come," as Paul was well into it when he wrote these words. And what does he mean by "world without end"? Isaiah also says the world will not end: "But Israel shall be saved in the LORD with an everlasting salvation: ye shall not be ashamed nor confounded **world without end** (Isaiah 45.17)."

Objection: *Christ came from heaven and went to heaven and is in heaven; Christ came from God and went to God (John 13.3), and is in God (John 14.10-11). So the kingdom of heaven and the kingdom of God are the same.*

Reply 1: First of all, **God is not heaven**. God is a *person*; heaven is a *place*. Heaven is a place up to which one can ascend, from which one can come down, and a somewhere one can be in. We might ascend up to the attic, come down from the attic, or be in the attic. That is not so mysterious. The same is true about heaven: "And no man hath ascended up to heaven, but he that came down from heaven, even the Son of man which is in heaven (John 3.13)." One major difference between *us and the attic* on the one hand and *Christ and heaven* on the other is, we cannot be up in the attic and downstairs at the same time, since

we are not omnipresent; but Christ could be in heaven and down here at the same time, and was, and He said He was in John 3.13, because being God, Christ is omnipresent.

Reply 2: Although God is omnipresent, He is represented in the Scriptures as being in Heaven. There is no contradiction anywhere in the Bible to the distinction between God being God and heaven being His place of abode. The one simply does not mean the other. God does not casually use one word or another, haphazardly. The Scriptures are verbally inspired. There is a genuine difference between the kingdom of God and the kingdom of heaven, or else God would not have introduced two different terms.

When my parents were living, I'd sometimes tell someone, "I'm going to see my parents." I'd tell others, "I'm going to Alabama," where my parents lived. There is no contradiction. The kingdom of my parents was an acre or so on the south side of Geraldine, Alabama. The kingdom of Alabama is considerably larger, taking in the kingdom of my parents and much more. Using the Conditionalists' ill-defined reasoning ("The kingdom of God and the kingdom of heaven are the exact same thing"), they would have to conclude that Alabama is the exact same thing as my parents. Who but a Conditionalist would think the State of Alabama is my parents and my parents are the State of Alabama? My *Parents* are *who* they are (or who they were, while they were living), and Alabama is *where* they were.

One can come from or go to one's family, and one can come from or go to where one's family is. Even a little child knows there is a difference between "Daddy" and "home." To deliberately muddle a plain distinction like this, so elementary a difference that a grade-school child can understand it, remains the property of willful deceivers and unreliable religious amateurs.

Objection: *When Christ said, "...even the Son of man which is in heaven (John 3.13)," He meant that He and Nicodemus were spiritually 'seated in heavenly places,' like Paul speaks of in Ephesians 1.20, 2.6, and 3.10.*

Reply: *Heaven* does not mean the same as *heavenly*; **heavenly** is not **heaven**. When Christ spoke of being in heaven, He was not saying He and Nicodemus were having a "heavenly good time." The word "heavenly," as misused as it is nowadays, has

come to be misapplied to everything from a teen-ager's first date to a turkey dinner with all the trimmings.

"In heavenly places," or, as Paul really said, "in *the heavenlies*" (see the marginal rendering in just about any reference Bible), literally means "above the sky." It does not mean sitting on a hard wooden bench in an Old Baptist meeting-house with a funeral-parlor fan in one hand and a Lloyd hymnbook in the other. Now, all of that is fine, and, personally, I'd far rather be in an Old Baptist meeting-house with a fan in one hand and a hymn book in the other than to be in the Oval Office, on **either** side of the desk; but, no more and no less than the bench, fan, and hymnbook, none of that has anything to do with what "seated in heavenly places" means.

Heaven is above the sky, according to the best-understood definitions from the Scriptures. Specifically, heaven is somewhere above the north pole (see Job 26.7, Psalm 75.6, and Isaiah 14.13), which is the only true *up* from the earth. Paul calls *heaven* and all that pertains to it *the heavenlies*. This heaven is both spiritual and physical, and at least two living humans are there now, Enoch and Elijah, who were taken or translated there while yet alive.

The kingdom of God, though, is spiritual, having to do with being spiritually born from above, born of Christ's Spirit, born of God. John 3.3, 5.

On the other hand, *the kingdom of heaven* is physical, having to do with the manifestation of God's rule over the entire created universe, including His rule over this earth—past, present, and future.

Like anything else of a spiritual nature, one either sees this, or he does not. If he sees it, it is only because he has been given to see it by the grace of God.

There are two ways of reading the Bible: One person reads *into* the Bible his preconceived notions, hunting for proof-texts to justify his own beliefs. Another reads the Bible to get *out of it* what God has said and put therein. There are many who cannot tell the difference between these two approaches. Jesus said, "If I have told you earthly things, and ye believe not, how shall ye believe, if I tell you of heavenly things (John 3.12)?" Before arguing about spiritual things, objectors should have a rudimentary grasp of a few earthly things, like word definitions and grammar.

Objection: *What is said in one place of the kingdom of heaven is said in another of the kingdom of God.*

Reply 1: Many things about the two kingdoms are held in common, but that does not make them the same. A bicycle and a Mack truck have many things in common: They are both made of metal, they both have round wheels and rubber tires, and both can be used to haul groceries. But a bicycle is not a truck and a truck is not a bike. It is the differences, not the similarities, that count. The same is true for the kingdom of God and the kingdom of heaven: It is the differences, not the similarities, that count.

Reply 2: The President of the United States of America is also the President of any one of the States; he is the President of Nebraska, for example, but Nebraska is only a small part of the United States. In like manner, the kingdom of God is a part of the kingdom of heaven, consisting of *only* those within the kingdom of heaven who are born from above, as Jesus said (John 3.3, 5).

The kingdom of heaven, however, "ruleth over all (Psalm 103.19-22)": "The LORD hath prepared his throne in the **heavens**; and **his kingdom ruleth over all.**"

For brevity's sake, we have previously only cited verse 19 of Psalm 103 to prove the point that the kingdom of heaven ruleth over all. Now, consider the remaining verses of this psalm: "Bless the LORD, ye his angels, that excel in strength, that do his commandments, hearkening unto the voice of his word. Bless ye the LORD, all ye his hosts; ye ministers of his, that do his pleasure. Bless the LORD, all his works in all places of his dominion: bless the LORD, O my soul (Psalm 103.20-22)." This passage shows that the kingdom of heaven also includes angels, all of God's hosts (animate and inanimate, for the sun, moon, stars, and planets are called the host of heaven; see Deuteronomy 4.19 and 2 Kings 23.5), His ministers, and His works in all places of His dominion. Find a place that is not part of the Lord's dominion where He works, and you will have found a place that is not in the kingdom of heaven.

What, we ask, can be excluded from "His works in all places of His **dominion**," seeing that His "**dominion** is an everlasting **dominion**, and his **kingdom** is from generation to generation: and **all the inhabitants of the earth** are reputed as nothing: and he doeth according to his will in **the army of heaven**, and among **the inhabitants of the earth**: and none can stay his hand, or say unto him, What doest thou?"?

This was Nebuchadnezzar's comment on the kingdom of *heaven*.

More objections: A Conditionalist or Progressive Elder has published a well-written but doctrinally-challenged article. It is designed both to advance "conditional time salvation" and to oppose the millennial kingdom of Christ. For both of these reasons, I quote at length from his article. He says:

But there **are** certain things that, once God has given life, we must do **in order to enjoy the life** that we possess. There are certain things that we **must do** in order to enjoy the fellowship and the close communion with God.

This is where the word, "**saved**" becomes so important! The word **saved means deliverance**. We are eternally saved, delivered, by the blood of Christ! But, also, there are certain **conditional** deliverances, or salvations, that are taught in the Bible. We need to be **saved**, or delivered, to the Kingdom of God (or kingdom of Heaven, as both are the same). Anytime [*sic.*] in scripture you see it saying that **you must do something** in order to be saved, you can rest assured that it is **not** speaking about getting into eternal heaven, but entering the kingdom, the peace and joy of Jesus Christ and His righteousness! Eternal salvation is not "conditional" on the works or obedience of man. But there are many ways we as God's children need to be saved while we live in this world which are based on our obedience to God. This is what we mean by "conditional" or "time" salvation. [All bold emphases, wording, punctuation, grammar, and capitalization are as printed in the man's original article—Ed.]

I almost apologize for giving this man so much space, but I have quoted him because I have been asked again, "*What is a Conditionalist?*" It is always good to have one of their own say and prove, in plain and simple words, exactly what they are and believe. By quoting them directly and at length, no one can say that anyone is putting words in their mouth, or they were misquoted, or their words were taken out of context.

Notice first that he says,

"We need to be **saved**, or delivered, to the Kingdom of God (or kingdom of Heaven, as **both are the same**)."

That is essential to his doctrine, the only way those who believe in a "conditional" or "time" salvation can say the fowls and the thorny, rocky, barren, unfruitful ground of Matthew 13:3-9 represent "unfaithful children of God." (N. B.: See how he gladly embraces the terms, "conditional" or "time" salvation, applying them to himself in his last paragraph that we have quoted.)

The man then says,

"Thy kingdom come. Thy will be done in earth, as it is in heaven."

This is saying that in order to experience the kingdom, here on earth, as we live, God's will **must be done** in our life. There is no other way. Jesus was saying in Matthew 7:21-23, you can call on me, you can call my name all you want, **but**, until you become submissive, obedient and do the things God would have you do, you cannot, **you will not** enter into the **joys** of the Lord. It will be as though you're in complete darkness, wandering about; not having the **assurance** that you're a child of God. (This does not mean that you are not a child of God, but that **you do not realize it!**)

Did *you* know that *this* was what Jesus was saying when He said, "Thy kingdom come. Thy will be done in earth, as it is in heaven"? Neither did I, and I still don't.

We hope those who wonder what *Conditionalism* means are beginning to see why we stand unalterably opposed to such a man-centered doctrinal system.

Later (bear with us a while longer, please), he says:

Some of His children are closer to being a Christian than others (more obedient). Others seem to be just as far away as possible (disobedient). He loves every one of them with a perfect love! Every one for whom Christ died will be in heaven, and conformed to the image of Christ Jesus, eternally.

Some believe that Jesus is going to come back to this earth and set up a visible kingdom. They believe that he will sit upon a visible throne, with a visible, physical body, reigning in this kingdom.

I believe that God's word teaches that Jesus is **at this time reigning in that Spiritual Kingdom, not a visible one!** That kingdom is within us! It is within our hearts!

God's Kingdom was prophesied: "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. Of the increase of his government and peace there shall be no end, upon the throne of David, and upon his kingdom, to order it, and to establish it with judgment and with justice from henceforth even for ever. The zeal of the Lord of hosts will perform this." (Isaiah 9:6, 7).

Here, it is spoken about in the future tense. The children of Israel were looking for this king to come and to sit upon the throne. If we go back to Luke 17:20, 21, we will see they wanted to know **when** the kingdom of God should come. Jesus said, it comes not with observation; you cannot see it with natural eye, because the kingdom of heaven is **within you!**

His objections to what I have set forth appear to be:

- a) *The kingdoms of heaven and of God are the same;* b) *I believe that God's word teaches that Jesus is at this time reigning in that Spiritual Kingdom, not a visible one!* And,
- c) *"That kingdom is within us! It is within our hearts!"*

Since we have addressed his first objection already (above, on page 6), and we will again (page 15), we will now look at the other two.

Reply: As we join the Elder, he is discussing the percentages of the relative obedience or disobedience of those whom Christ loves perfectly; and, based on their obedience, what the odds are of how close these beloved ones are (or are not) to being Christians.

Then, evidently as a natural-*vs.*-spiritual contrast to his odds-making in the spiritual realm, he abruptly changes his subject to denying the prophecies of Christ's future earthly kingdom. Since he cannot give one biblical proof against Christ's earthly kingdom, he rests his entire argument on saying that this is *what he believes!* Jesus is definitely reigning in that Spiritual Kingdom, and not a visible one," he avers, because *he believes* that is what God's word teaches.

With all due respect, what he, or I, or anyone else does or does not believe has no bearing on correct biblical interpretation. One's beliefs should not impress anyone if they are not supported by the Scriptures. Nothing is biblically true because we believe it; we believe it because it is biblically true.

He next quotes from Isaiah 9, which confirms, rather than denies, Christ's future earthly reign—

on the throne of God, but on the throne of David. Isaiah prophesied,

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).

No one calling himself an Old Baptist denies the truths of this verse. But Isaiah continues in the same context, next verse:

Of the increase of his government and peace there shall be no end, upon the throne of David, and upon his kingdom, to order it, and to establish it with judgment and with justice from henceforth even for ever. The zeal of the LORD of hosts will perform this.

Now this same objector-writer must gather all his wits to prove that **this** verse is *not* true, that Isaiah did *not* mean what he said. The writer must try to prove somehow that the throne of David really means the throne of God; he *must deny* that David's throne on earth will endure eternally, no less than God's throne in heaven, and he must *deny* that the King of Glory of whom this same David writes (Psalm 24.6-10), the Lord Jesus Christ, *ruling at all levels* of God's creation, material as well as spiritual, will forever occupy *both thrones simultaneously*. "And the angel said unto her, Fear not, Mary: for thou hast found favour 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 (Luke 1.30-33)."

The angel Gabriel announced that Mary's son Jesus would be both (1) "The son of David," so He is the rightful heir to David's throne, and as such He will rule over *the house of Jacob eternally*; and, (2) "The Son of the Highest," and therefore He is the rightful heir to the throne of God.

The man's last paragraph quoted is noteworthy enough to examine point by point.

He says, "*Here [In Isaiah 9.7], it [the kingdom] is spoken about in the future tense.*"

Reply: Of course it is, and it is spoken of in the present tense also. "Henceforth" means at present and from now on. That doesn't mean it began with Isaiah's prophecy; the kingdom of heaven, already existing in Isaiah's day, will never cease to be.

He says, "*The children of Israel were looking for this king to come and to sit upon the throne.*"

Reply: Christ rebuked no one for this; it is so prophesied. The church would make an equally wrong mistake today by *not* looking for Him to come again, *this time* to sit in glory upon the throne of David, as Isaiah and the angel Gabriel prophesied.

The problem of the children of Israel in Christ's day was that they "were looking for this king to come and to sit upon the throne," as the man says, but at the wrong time. In the predestinating providence of God, their misunderstanding was the occasion of the Lord's atoning death on the cross as the Lamb slain from the foundation of the world.

The objector says, "*If we go back to Luke 17:20, 21, we will see they wanted to know when the kingdom of God should come.*"

Reply: Again, Christ rebuked no one for this. The problem was only in the timing, not in the fact itself. When His disciples asked Him immediately before His ascension from the Mount of Olives, "Lord, wilt thou **at this time** restore again the kingdom to Israel?" they were asking about the earthly kingdom of heaven. He did not tell them, "I am never going to ever restore the kingdom to Israel." He told them, "It is not for you to know the times or the seasons, which the Father hath put in his own power." There would be an intervening age between His ascension and His return, in which "ye shall receive power, after that the Holy Ghost is come upon you: and ye shall be witnesses unto me both in Jerusalem, and in all Judaea, and in Samaria, and unto the uttermost part of the earth." Men read into His words a denial of the future kingdom, but He did not deny it at all. He only evaded giving direct answers to their questions about God's timing of it.

We come now to the most common, most erroneous, and most outrageous objection of all:

Objection: "*Jesus said, it comes not with observation; you cannot see it with natural eye, because the kingdom of heaven is within you!*"

Reply: **HE DID NOT!** Get a Bible and read the text for yourself. I will give this man any brand-new, leather-bound King James Version (KJV) Bible he

chooses if he can find any unaltered verse in it that says, "The kingdom of heaven is within you." (Other versions don't count; they may say *anything*.)

There is only one verse in the entire KJV that says *anything* "is within you." That verse is Luke 17.21: "Neither shall they say, Lo here! or, lo there! for, behold, **the kingdom of God** is within you." You can see why these people *desperately* need to say the kingdom of God is the same thing as the kingdom of heaven. The widespread misunderstanding of these two kingdoms is because of such slipshod misrepresentation of what the Bible says.

Reply 2: Jesus said the *kingdom of God* is within you, *within* meaning in the sense of *among*. The full text says, "And when he was demanded of the Pharisees, when the kingdom of God should come, he answered them and said, The kingdom of God cometh not with observation: Neither shall they say, Lo here! or, lo there! for, behold, the kingdom of God is within you (Luke 17.21)."

The kingdom of God comes not with observation; Christ likens those born into it to the wind (John 3.8), invisible in itself, but the effects thereof are observable to those given eyes to see them.

The kingdom of heaven, however, is quite observable to the natural eye, because it is everything and everywhere.

Jesus told the wicked Pharisees the kingdom of God was *within* the crowd of which they were a part, *within* in the sense of *among*. *Within*, meaning the king and His subjects were there, at that very time, within the crowd. To whom was he talking??? The *Pharisees*. See again verse 20; the man who is objecting cited the verse himself. If pressed, he would probably say those Pharisees had the kingdom in their hearts but were merely "unfaithful children of God."

If this man is so worried about being a "faithful child of God," then perhaps he should start by being more faithful to God's word, reading it more carefully, and quoting it properly. His doctrine is that he can do it, if he but will.

Christ certainly would not have said or implied that the kingdom of God was "within the hearts" of those vile, hypocritical Pharisees whom He elsewhere told, "Ye are of your father the devil." *Among* the Pharisees and the crowd that day were the King Himself (there is no kingdom without a king) and many of His subjects who were born of His Holy Spirit; but

the Pharisees could not *observe* that spiritual kingdom **of God** among them, because “The kingdom of God cometh not with observation.”

Objection: *The kingdom of heaven is spiritual. Christ reigns spiritually in the kingdom of heaven, which is the church.*

Reply: To be taken seriously, such writers should note and publicly acknowledge that Matthew is the only writer in the entire Bible that speaks of the *kingdom of heaven*, by that very name and in those exact words. Matthew writes in regard to national Israel, beginning his gospel with the words, “The book of the generation of Jesus Christ, the son of **David**, the son of **Abraham**.” It doesn’t take much to understand the words, but it does take the Holy Spirit’s light and leadership to understand the truths that **the kingdom of heaven** is directly related to **the kingdom Israel, the kingdom of David, that earthly kingdom** to which many spiritualizers object, and to **the earthly throne of David**, of which Jesus is the rightful heir.

Why should it be thought a thing incredible that Jesus should rule the world visibly and literally? It is His to do with as He sees fit, isn’t it? “A Psalm of David. The earth is the LORD’S, and the fulness thereof; the world, and they that dwell therein (Psalm 24.1).” It is bad enough to have atheists trying to rid the earth of God and of His Christ, but what can you say to preachers and Bible expositors who try to do the same?

Objection: *Christ is spiritually reigning over His enemies right now.*

Reply: Of course He is. Wouldn’t it be something, though, if *His enemies* knew it! What do the enemies of the **Lord** Jesus Christ and of His righteousness care if you and I say “He is ruling now,” as long as they, unrestrained (supposedly!) and unhindered, can still riot, rape, murder, prostitute their bodies and the bodies of others, indulge in dope and sell drugs, reap billions of dollars from the poor of the land, calling it “inflation”; send the nation’s youth to die on foreign battlefields, publicly announcing that this is “good for the economy” because “unemployment is down”; destroy the environment; pave millions of acres of farmlands and wheat fields, turning them into concrete and asphalt parking lots, merchandise centers, and housing additions; dispose of hazardous, carcinogenic, chemical wastes by putting them into farmers’

fertilizer, thereby permanently poisoning the nation’s food-chain and what farmland is left; kill off whole species of wildlife, irreversibly upsetting the balance of nature, calling it “sport”; replace the finest of the world’s art, music, and poetry in the history of the world with pornography, smut, human excrement smeared on canvas, dadaism, jungle rhythms, jangling discord, and anarchistic nonsense called free verse; turn God’s rivers, streams, and lakes—from which men and animals drank freely and safely, from the time of Adam until the Industrial Revolution—into sewage ditches and cesspools; oppress the widows and orphans; unmercifully beat their wives and children into submission and death, and indulge every foul appetite they can invent or imagine? “Because that, when they knew God, they glorified him not as God, neither were thankful; but became vain in their imaginations, and their foolish heart was darkened. Professing themselves to be wise, they became fools, and changed the glory of the uncorruptible God into an image made like to corruptible man, and to birds, and fourfooted beasts, and creeping things. Wherefore God also gave them up to uncleanness through the lusts of their own hearts, to dishonour their own bodies between themselves: who changed the truth of God into a lie, and worshipped and served the creature more than the Creator, who is blessed for ever. Amen. For this cause God gave them up unto vile affections: for even their women did change the natural use into that which is against nature: and likewise also the men, leaving the natural use of the woman, burned in their lust one toward another; men with men working that which is unseemly, and receiving in themselves that recompense of their error which was meet. And even as they did not like to retain God in their knowledge, God gave them over to a reprobate mind, to do those things which are not convenient; being filled with all unrighteousness, fornication, wickedness, covetousness, maliciousness; full of envy, murder, debate, deceit, malignity; whisperers, backbiters, haters of God, despiteful, proud, boasters, inventors of evil things, disobedient to parents, without understanding, covenantbreakers, without natural affection, implacable, unmerciful: **who knowing the judgment of God, that they which commit such things are worthy of death, not only do the same, but have pleasure in them that do them** (Romans 1.21ff).” What difference does it make to **them** if we tell a few people here and there that “He

is reigning now, ‘*spiritually*’? Make the myth stick if you can, that “Satan is bound **now**, and we’re in the thousand year reign of Christ **now**.” The one who really believes that is blinder than the blind.

Yes, He is indeed reigning now. I believe that. He is in control of it all, it is going exactly according to His predestinated will and purpose, and most of those who say “He is spiritually reigning over his enemies right now” do not really believe it. They openly deny that a *benevolent God* (and who, to suit themselves, defines what a “benevolent God” is?) has predestinated everything to be exactly the way it is, and for a purpose. That purpose is to demonstrate once, and for all eternity, all creation’s need of free, sovereign effectual, sustaining grace, and to show all creation’s momentary dependency upon our Creator God: “Without me ye can do *nothing!*” He must eternally and constantly preserve us by His unearned, unsought, unaided grace, from the smallest creature among us to the highest angelic being, or we would all be gone, totally and eternally.

His purpose involves demonstrating His righteousness, holiness, and glory in the destruction of the destroyer, Apollyon, and his followers. “**And I will punish the world for their evil, and the wicked for their iniquity**; and I will cause the arrogance of the proud to cease, and will lay low the haughtiness of the terrible. I will make a man more precious than fine gold; even a man than the golden wedge of Ophir. **Therefore I will shake the heavens, and the earth shall remove out of her place, in the wrath of the LORD of hosts, and in the day of his fierce anger** (Isaiah 13.11-13).” Spiritualize that, if you can.

As a diamond sparkles the more against a dark background, so God’s glory will illuminate this sin-darkened universe with the blinding flash that destroys that Wicked one with the brightness of Christ’s coming. “*Then* the moon shall be confounded, and the sun ashamed, when the LORD of hosts shall reign in mount Zion, and in Jerusalem, and before his ancients gloriously (Isaiah 24.21ff).” Spiritualize that, if you can.

“And it shall come to pass in that day [the Day of the Lord], that the LORD shall punish the host of the high ones that are on high, and the kings of the earth upon the earth (Isaiah 24.21ff).” One says, “*The host of the high ones that are on high.*’ *Oh. That’s the kings and wicked dictators on earth.*” No, it’s Satan and his

evil spirits and demons, whom Paul calls “spiritual wickedness in the heavenlies (Ephesians 6.12).” The kings of the earth are in the next phrase. Read it: “**AND the kings of the earth upon the earth.**”

“And they shall be gathered together, as prisoners are gathered in the pit [Revelation 19.20f], and shall be shut up in the prison, and after many days [How many days? 1,000 years of them, to be exact] shall they be visited [Revelation 20.7-10].”

Objection: “*If it’s as you say, once God has got Satan penned up and has had all this peace on earth for a thousand years, then why would God let him out again?*”

Reply: First, “My thoughts are not your thoughts, neither are your ways my ways, saith the LORD. For as the heavens are higher than the earth, so are my ways higher than your ways, and my thoughts than your thoughts (Isaiah 55.8f).” So do not presume to advise God on how He is to conduct His affairs.

Second, The rebellion after the *temporary and final* release of Satan before his eternal destruction will demonstrate before all, once and for all, that Adam’s fallen race, even after having lived under the direct, beneficent rule of Christ Jesus Himself for a thousand years, yet if left without the inner workings of the Spirit of grace, is, every one, still an incurably depraved rebel and always will be. “Let favour be showed to the wicked, yet will he not learn righteousness: in the land of uprightness will he deal unjustly, and will not behold the majesty of the Lord (Isaiah 26.10).”

Third, the release of Satan will demonstrate that our wickedness and incurable hostility toward God and His righteousness is only because of our depraved, rebellious, godless nature and not because of a bad environment, being born on the wrong side of the tracks, a lack of education, keeping bad company, poverty, dope, alcohol, late-night TV smut, malnutrition, or psychological maladjustment because someone’s mother dressed him funny. All of that will have been taken care of by the King Himself when He fully manifests the **kingdom of heaven** here on His footstool, when “the earth shall be full of the knowledge of the LORD, as the waters cover the sea. And in that day there shall be a root of Jesse, which shall stand for an ensign of the people; to it [HIM] shall the Gentiles seek: and his rest shall be glorious (Isaiah 11.9f).” “For the earth shall be filled with the knowledge of the glory of the LORD, as the waters

cover the sea (Habakkuk 2.14).” God’s truth is much better than the imagination of those who would *spiritualize* the kingdom away, saying “Satan is bound now,” this present evil age—look all around you!—is Christ’s “spiritual reign,” and *this* that surrounds the world is the best He can do with His rod of iron!

Objection: *You say the kingdom of heaven is the whole creation and the kingdom of God is only the born again children of God. You say the children of God cannot be corrupted, the leaven is sin, and in Matthew 13.33 the whole kingdom of heaven is leavened. Yet in Luke, Christ says, “Whereunto shall I liken the kingdom of God? It is like leaven, which a woman took and hid in three measures of meal, till the whole was leavened (Luke 13.20f).” How do you explain this contradiction?*

Reply: It is not a contradiction. The truth of the God-inspired, God-given doctrine and practice of His children *cannot be corrupted in its essence*. It can be and is corrupted in man’s presentation, teaching, and application of it in the name of “religion.”

For a moment, think of where the Primitive Baptists were, in doctrine and in practice, say in 1832, for one point in time as an example. Compare the doctrine nowadays with that of the Elders of the 1830s and before—Elders Beebe, Trott, and others; Gadsby, Philpot, Gill...these are only representative. Should these warriors of the faith be too strong for them, the Conditionalists might compare their doctrine with that of Elder Sylvester Hassell (who himself was Premillennial in belief, by the way).

In contrast, consider that those calling themselves “Primitive Baptists” nowadays include no-hellers, Conditionalists, Missionaries, non-resurrectionists, Preterists, and those who, Mormon-like, believe the elect are incarnations of preexistent beings who used to live with God in eternity. Others calling themselves “Primitive Baptists” believe in *two eternal principles*, which is to say that Satan and evil are as eternal as God and righteousness. Satan is the great imitator who said, “I will be like the Most High (Isaiah 14.14).” He wants to be worshiped as God. “And no marvel; for Satan himself is transformed into an angel of light. Therefore it is no great thing if his ministers also be transformed as the ministers of righteousness; whose end shall be according to their works (2 Corinthians 11.14f).” These are in part the tares, or imitation wheat, who infiltrate the little flock of

God, trying to pass themselves off as true believers. The decline from Philadelphia in the 1800s to Laodicea now, today, may be measured in decades as well as centuries. Thank the Lord who giveth, that among the Old School Baptists of today are the soundest of ministers who are still contending for the faith once delivered to the saints.

Objection: *Christ said, “My kingdom is not of this world (John 18.36).*

Reply 1: Of course it is not of this world. Christ’s kingdom (whether the kingdom of heaven or the kingdom of God) comes down from God, its originator. “Of” means *source*. The kingdom did not originate in the world. The kingdom of heaven originated in heaven, not earth; but it rules over the earth.

The kingdom of God originated with God. But to say this text means the Lord Jesus Christ cannot or will not rule on this earth literally and physically is going beyond the Scriptures to the point of denying them. Before we are ever haled before the Great White Throne, the kingdoms of men are going to be forced to pay their dues. Remember: The text, “That at the name of Jesus every knee should bow, of things in heaven, and things in earth, and things under the earth; and that every tongue should confess that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of God the Father (Philippians 2.10f)” includes knees and tongues of things on **earth** (Greek, *epigeios*: *epi*, upon; *geios*, **geography**, **geology**. Upon the **earth**). Spirits do not have knees. Men on earth do.

Reply 2: Those who advance this objection, *i. e.*, the idea that “My kingdom is not of this world” somehow means “I cannot *really* reign as king in any tangible way over my own creation,” might as well say that God cannot rule on the earth at all, even spiritually or providentially. Ruling is ruling, and a kingdom is a kingdom.

Some think that for Christ to rule visibly and personally would somehow be beneath His dignity, but their own argument would work against God’s ruling either “spiritually” or providentially, doing His will among the inhabitants of the **earth** (Daniel 4.35).

Why must the Lord Jesus Christ be limited to only “spiritually” ruling, and doing it so slyly that no one knows or cares anything about it except some of His saints? It is not beneath His dignity; rather, it will manifest His dignity before all sentient beings.

Objection: Another man writes: *The teaching of a literal millennium on earth is a reemergence of the doctrine of the Ebionites, those Judaizers who opposed the teachings of the Apostle Paul. A study of the history of Christian doctrine shows that this error has been with us from the very beginning, and had been marked by unchecked imagination as with the Montanists of the second century, the Munster Anabaptists of the sixteenth and the dispensationalists J. N. Darby and C. I. Scofield of the last two centuries.*

Reply: They used to call a man a “crank” who disbelieves things simply because they are believed by others. I thank this gentleman for saving me time and space by documenting for me that “a literal millennium” was the doctrine of the apostolic age and before, “*from the very beginning,*” and that a literal millennium has been advocated by some of the saints in every age. I have here neither the time nor space to prove the historical validity of the doctrine of the literal, future, earthly, millennial reign of Christ; and this objector—a fit representative, we suppose, of the ones who published him—nor need I do so, as he concedes that the millennial reign of Christ was indeed believed by the early church and others long before them. The truth is, as he all but admits, Premillennialism was **the** doctrine of the first three centuries of the church age. During that period, when millions of martyrs died for the cause of God and truth, their unflinching hope and unvarying doctrine regarding the second coming of Christ was that (a) the human governments of this world were antichrist, and the Emperor was **the** Antichrist; and (b) Jesus Christ would return, put down all His foes, and rightly govern this world as the Second Adam; He will do so by His ruling in the midst of His enemies (Psalm 110.2) with a rod of iron (Psalm 2.9; Revelation 2.27, 12.5, and 19.15).

With their dying breaths the martyrs would have laughed to scorn anyone who would have insulted either their intelligence or their blood, pain, and martyrdom by telling them, “Satan is bound **now**, and Christ is **now** reigning over His enemies with a rod of iron for a spiritual, figurative, thousand years....”

Three men are perhaps the most responsible for introducing this “spiritualizing interpretation” of Scriptures into Roman Catholicism, who passed it on to the Reformers, from whom many Primitive Baptists got it.

We only briefly mention these men for those who

would research this subject further. They were:

a) **Origen** (AD 185-254), who tried to merge Greek philosophy with the Hebrew Old Testament and apostolic Christianity. The result was a figurative, spiritualizing, allegorical, hyperbolic mess, with which, as the succeeding centuries have proved, anyone, without successful contradiction, could make a Scripture verse mean whatever he wants it to mean;

b) **The Emperor Constantine** (AD 280-337), who loved the idea that God was “spiritually” ruling the Roman Empire through him. It was not until Emperor Constantine’s time, when he made “Christianity” the state religion of the Roman Empire (and the persecutions relaxed somewhat, or perhaps more accurately, they took a different turn), that the errors of Origen could plausibly replace the hope and doctrine of Christ’s imminent return. It was only then that the literal view of the first three centuries of the church was supplanted by the doctrines of Origen; and,

c) **Augustine** (AD 354-430), who followed Origen’s lead in “spiritualizing” and allegorizing the Scriptures.

Reply 2: It is rare to find any individual or group that is 100% correct or 100% wrong. While it is true that the Ebionites (and the other groups named) held to many errors, grant if you will that they also held to some biblical truths. *The future earthly reign of Christ is one of those truths.*

Let’s say there is a group who believes an error about *doctrine A* but they believe the truth about *doctrine B*. If we must reject the truth of B because of their error on point A (to do so is making the mistake sometimes called “throwing out the baby with the bathwater”), we would have practically no doctrine left, because **any true doctrine may be taught by some heretical group**. For example, if we must reject *all* of Rome’s doctrines because of their errors, then *we could not preach Christ’s virgin birth or His resurrection*, because Rome teaches these doctrinal truths.

Likewise, then, just because the Ebionites, the Montanists, the Anabaptists, or others held to some errors does not mean we must reject whatever truth of “*The teaching of a literal millennium on earth*” they advocated.

*

At the last moment a magazine arrived with an article on whether the kingdom is spiritual or physical.

Its author says he is “just a concerned church member wanting to find and share the true meaning in the scriptures.” We pray him well in that regard. “I hope you will enjoy this article and share it with others,” he says. So we are sharing it.

He says, “The phrase ‘kingdom of heaven’ is found in the Bible **thirty one** times, all in the book of Matthew. The phrase ‘kingdom of God’ is found in the Bible **sixty eight** times.” [Bold emphasis supplied.]

He could have gotten the *correct* counts from my article in the January-February 2003 issue of *The Remnant* on page 12.

Christ said to Nicodemus, “If I have told you earthly things, and ye believe not, how shall ye believe, if I tell you of heavenly things?” In paraphrase, we might ask this man, if you cannot count to **thirty-two** and to **sixty-nine** in natural numbers, then how can we *count on you* for anything spiritual?

First and foremost, he makes the same fatally flawed assumption they all do, that, because superficially some things said about one kingdom seem to be the same as something said of the other, then the kingdom of heaven and the kingdom of God must be the identical same thing. His proof? In Matthew 4.17 Jesus preached “the kingdom of heaven is at hand,” and in Mark 1.15 He preached “the kingdom of God is at hand.” By the same (lack of) reasoning the objector could say, “My car is in the driveway; your boat is in the driveway; therefore, your boat is my car.” “California is in the Western Hemisphere; Pennsylvania is in the Western Hemisphere; *ergo*, California is the exact same thing as Pennsylvania.” “G. W. Bush is the President of the USA; G. W. Bush is the President of Ohio; *ergo*, the USA is the exact same entity as Ohio.” “All dogs are mammals; all cats are mammals; *ergo*, all dogs are cats,” etc.

For those who are interested, this error is known in formal logic as **the Fallacy of the Undistributed Middle**. Reference any first-year textbook on logic. I will not further discuss any of these people’s erroneous conclusions based on this fallacy other than to close out this article after I say this: Those who insist “the two kingdoms are the same” **all** start here with this fallacy, and here is where they **all** err. **Any** argument they advance based on this fallacy has an erroneous underlying premise. Therefore, **any conclusions they draw from this faulty premise may be in error**. Therefore again, **no one is obligated to**

address any argument based on the faulty argument that “the kingdom of God is the same thing as the kingdom of heaven.”

Having said that, I will examine a few more of his statements.

Objection: “*One of the most powerful verses of scripture I have read in my studies on this subject is Romans 14:17 which reads: “For the kingdom of God is not meat and drink; but righteousness, and peace, and joy in the Holy Ghost...I believe this scripture is telling us that the kingdom is not something you can touch or see with our physical eyes, but a wonderful feeling we receive when we are righteous, peaceful, and joyful in the Holy Ghost.”*

Frankly, I do not care *what you believe* this Scripture is telling us or how wonderful your feeling is. The kingdom of God is not meat and drink, but the kingdom of heaven *is*. Remember, the King, in His resurrection body, ate real food on at least three occasions with His disciples, and He said He would drink of the fruit of the vine with them in “His Father’s kingdom” (Matthew 26.29), which He said is “the kingdom of God” (Mark 14.25).

Also, there will be fruit on the tree of life in the eternal state (Revelation 22.2), the same tree of life that was in the garden of Eden before the fall (Genesis 2.9). Please do not try to *spiritualize* this into “spiritual fruit.” There is no reason to believe fruit trees and their fruit do not mean the exact same thing in Revelation as in Genesis, as that was the order God set in motion (Genesis 1.29-30) before Adam’s transgression. It was a good idea then (Genesis 1.31); why should He change it? This objector will have a bad problem with real vines and real fig trees in the kingdom of heaven (Micah 4.1-4), when God “will remove the iniquity of that land [Israel] in one day (Zechariah 3.9-10).”

What does the text in Romans 14.17 mean, then? Read the context. Read all of Romans 14, and see what Paul is discussing: judging one another, putting stumblingblocks in a brother’s way, offending and misleading a weak brother. Would you eat a steak dinner if you knew a weak brother would be confused and disillusioned by your actions? “For meat destroy not the work of God. All things indeed are pure; but it is evil for that man who eateth with offence. It is good neither to eat flesh, nor to drink wine, nor any thing whereby thy brother stumbleth, or is offended, or is made weak. Hast thou faith? have it to thyself before

God. Happy is he that condemneth not himself in that thing which he alloweth. And he that doubteth is damned if he eat, because he eateth not of faith: for whatsoever is not of faith is sin (Romans 14.20ff).” Do you honestly believe it was so carnal, or so offensive, or so “not *spiritual* enough” to suit you, O objector, for the resurrected Christ to eat fish and bread and have honeycomb for dessert?

Objection: Our objector says of the kingdom’s being “at hand,” “*Do we mean that it will be here in a few thousand years? Of course not! It means that it is here now. If you look at this as a physical kingdom that is ‘at hand’, then the belief of the thousand year reign on earth would not fit. The kingdom would have come and gone by now, and all the people who are here today would not be the children of God. That is not possible.*”

Reply 1: At last this man uses a fresh approach to his denying the Scriptures. The thousand years, which GOD MENTIONS SIX TIMES in Revelation 20, is not all there is to the kingdom of heaven, and no one we know of thinks it is. This kingdom existed in Nebuchadnezzar’s time: “...I praised and honoured him that liveth for ever, whose dominion is an everlasting dominion, and his kingdom is from generation to generation.” It existed in Isaiah’s time (Isaiah 9.7); it is an everlasting kingdom (Psalm 145.13; Daniel 4.3, 7.27; 2 Peter 1.11). Only our objector, and no one else, suggests it would be confined to the earthly millennium of Revelation 20.

Reply 2: What then of “at hand”? The King Jesus Christ, the Son of David and Son of Abraham, was there, at hand; that is sufficient to justify such a statement. God’s predestinating and providential working in the affairs of men to bring about the King’s crucifixion as the Lamb slain from the foundation of the world, *that* would justify the statement of the kingdom’s being at hand. His fulfilling all the prophecies of His first coming down to His presenting Himself exactly as Zechariah 9.9 said He would, *on the precise day foretold by Daniel 9.25* (“If thou hadst known, even thou, at least in **THIS THY DAY**, the things which belong unto thy peace! but now they are hid from thine eyes—Luke 19.42.”) justifies His saying it. The kingdom’s being preached throughout the land of Israel and John the Baptist’s introducing the King of the Jews justifies its being said that the kingdom of heaven is at hand.

Objection: “...*the scriptures back up a spiritual kingdom better than a physical one,*” he says. “*What I would do before I conclude this article is to show that the Bible shows movement of the kingdom. This movement is not possible with a physical kingdom. Matthew 12.28, ‘But if I cast out devils by the Spirit of God, then the kingdom of God is come unto you.’...the kingdom is coming upon someone, not someone is coming upon the kingdom.*”

Reply: Please answer, *Yes or No*: (1) Did the “kingdom” of the USA “come upon” Iraq earlier this year? (2) Is the USA a “physical kingdom” or a “spiritual” one? (3) Did the USA “show movement”?

Most of the remainder of this man’s arguments either fail because of his dependence upon the Fallacy of the Undistributed Middle term, or they fade away into the usual freewillism of the Limited Predestinarians. He says: “*You have to do God’s will because you want to* in order to enjoy the true kingdom in fullness. There are different depths of the kingdom *you can* experience. *The harder you try* to be Christ-like, the deeper into the kingdom and spiritual blessings *you will get*. [Italic emphasis supplied—CCM] Will-worship! What does the man know of salvation in the blood of the everlasting covenant, the blood of the Lord Jesus Christ? Of salvation, and that of God (Philippians 1.28)? Of “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 1.30f)”)? If he knew of such things, would he not say a little about *what the Lord has done* and not talk only of *what man must do to enjoy the kingdom*? “YOU have to do, because YOU want to, YOU can, the harder YOU try, YOU will,” etc. The one asking “What is a Conditionalist?” can no doubt see what Conditionalists are from their own mouths and pens.

*

In closing this series, a few remarks on principles of interpretation might be appropriate.

First, it should be obvious to any and all that there are more views than one of what the Scriptures mean. It is equally true but not so obvious, everyone is entitled to what he believes the Lord has given him. “Everyone” includes those with whom we most disagree. Anyone can only believe what God has given him.

Biblical study and searching the Scriptures is not something to be done lightly, hurriedly, or casually.

It is too common a failing that brethren may walk in love, peace, and harmony for decades, knowing and admitting that no two people ever see everything exactly alike; and then they bitterly split over a difference of opinion, not in principle, but in their understandings of details. Remember: **There are many applications of texts, but there is only one interpretation that is in harmony with the entire Bible.** May God give us to understand the difference.

It has been a Baptist principle in all ages that the Lord's children individually are to search the Scriptures prayerfully, depending not on man but on the Holy Spirit's leadership, to understand what God says.

Another Baptist principle in all ages is, when man's teachings contradict God's word, "We ought to obey God rather than men," as He enables, even unto death.

Each and every child of God is entitled to what he believes the Lord has given him to see. If one's view is not a verifiable heresy, and if it can be sustained from Scripture and from history, it should be respected by others, even though others do not understand a subject in the same way.

Remember: The current popular view may not be the earliest historical view. The current popular view may not necessarily be the Scriptural view. "Let every man be fully persuaded in his own mind (Romans 4.21, 14.5)."

Remember too, there is both a literal and a figurative understanding of Scripture. Correctly understood, these *do not* contradict each other.

We cannot do better here than to quote Elder Kenneth R. Key, Editor of the *Signs of the Times*, who in a recent notice said:

On behalf of all the staff of the "Signs" we again pledge to hold fast to the prospectus the paper was built upon. I believe all are pledged to hold fast to the basics and principals [*sic*] of the prospectus. However we realize that there are subjects that different ones have different views. Sometimes their views are not the views of all. Paul says let them be persuaded in their own minds and we respect that. I believe we are in unity of those things upon which our hope rests, with one eye single toward God. The Lord has placed the same laws in each of our hearts and minds and so indelibly written they will never be changed, and by the grace of God we will hold fast to the end. (*Signs of the Times*, March, 2003, page 55)

I mention these things knowing there are some lovely brethren who do not see some things as I have presented them. Again I fall back on something Elder Beebe said that expresses my hope: "We are aware that there is a difference of opinion among even our most enlightened brethren in regard to the application of this, as well as many other portions of the book of Revelation, particularly in regard to the period to which these portions refer... But while these differences have been held and expressed without giving the least offense, or disturbing the fellowship of brethren... Without any design to controvert the view of any brother, we will simply present such views, imperfect though they may be, as the subject suggests to our mind, and leave our readers to examine and receive or reject them, as their judgment may dictate (Gilbert Beebe, From *Signs of the Times*, Dec. 1, 1855).

I trust that it has been in this spirit I have felt free to share my views on the twin subjects of the parables of Matthew 13 and the Kingdoms of God and of Heaven. I pray that the Lord's saints may be given to receive them in the same spirit, and may God and His people be forgiving of any error.

—C. C. Morris

WEBSITES, OLD AND NEW

For those who have access to the Internet, we have news about our web site, <http://www.the-remnant.com>, and also about another new web site.

Elder Poole's son, Matthew Poole, has been maintaining *The Remnant's* web site, adding new material as it becomes available. We are thankful to the Lord and to Matthew for his ongoing help.

Now, Brother Mark Rhoades, deacon at Providence Primitive Baptist Church near Mt. Vernon, Texas, has graciously made a new web site available to us. This new site, which is still under construction, is www.primitive-baptist.com.

Sister Sheryl Jackson, member of Saints Rest Primitive Baptist Church in Dallas, Texas, and the original designer of www.the-remnant.com, continues to assist behind the scenes. She has arranged a new e-mail address for me, Ccmorris@the-remnant.com,

and she continues to assist regularly with the details of keeping my computer running. Some of her latest help has involved helping me recover from a June lightning storm which destroyed several major parts of my main computer's equipment (the modem and the C:\ drive. Thank the Lord for backup files.)

REMNANT BACK ISSUES ARE NOW ON THE WEB: Again we thank Matthew at the Remnant site, and brother Mark (How about that? *Matthew and Mark!*) at the Primitive Baptist site, for putting back issues of *The Remnant* on these two web sites. Not all back issues of *The Remnant* are on line yet, but we hope to eventually make all of them available world-wide on these two Internet locations. With scanning technology that is available, before we are through, if the Lord is pleased to bless us to that end, we may be able to put every issue, from the first to the latest, on the Internet.

Without the help of these three friends, Sheryl, Matthew, and Mark, *The Remnant* magazine and web sites would not be possible. These three beloved friends have helped and donated their time and expert assistance without cost to us. Each is an accomplished computer technician and web site designer. For anyone who is interested in their technical services, their companies' names and web addresses are:

Sheryl M. Jackson: **TypeC Productions**, found at www.typec.com. Send e-mail to her at ladyjack@typec.com.

Matthew Poole: **Crossbow Images**, found at www.crossbowimages.com. You may e-mail him at mattyp@crossbowimages.com.

Mark Rhoades: **Rhoades Consulting**, found at www.rhoades-consulting.com. His e-mail address is mrhoades@rhoades-consulting.com.

This note is unsolicited by any of the three but is furnished here, if I am not deceived, only because we love and appreciate each one of them.—CCM

TWO-FOR-ONE BOOK SALE

Since 1998, when Elder Poole asked me to edit and distribute *The Remnant*, we have continued to offer for sale the books he has on hand. Elder Poole's (*The Remnant's*) inventory consists of all the books advertised on page 19 of each issue of *The*

Remnant, with the exception of "Absolute Predestination" by J. Zanchius, which I mail from Texas.

In the last few years, we have sold many of the books in spite of the fact that we are over a thousand miles from Brother Poole's home. Notwithstanding his illness, he still stores the books in Maryland and mails them from there.

The facts are: (a) To move the books from Maryland to Texas is unfeasible, either by shipping or by hauling them in a personal vehicle or a rented van or trailer. The costs involved for such a move would cut drastically into our limited finances, which are dedicated in their entirety to the ongoing printing and distribution costs of *The Remnant*. (b) Book sales are off this year. It seems that most of our readers who want Elder Beebe's editorials have already ordered them, or for one reason or another have been postponing their orders. (c) Elder Poole's physical condition is such that we wish to ease him however possible in his faithful care of the books and mailing.

Therefore, we propose an inventory-reduction sale of **two complete seven-volume sets of Elder Beebe's Editorials plus two of Elder Trott's Works, 16 books in all, for \$160.00**—that is \$10.00 per volume, postpaid, through the end of this year.

"What will I do with *two* complete sets?" you might ask. May we suggest: Give one set to your church, to your pastor, or to a public library (City, County, or State), or to any other institution, public or private, where in God's providence you might consider the placing of these books to be a worthwhile investment in the cause of God and truth.

If you donate a set to a public library, you might make the gift in the name of your local church. Libraries have labels that can be put inside the front cover giving credit by name to either individuals or organizations (such as churches) who make such gifts and donations. Also, donations to non-profit entities may be tax-deductible. Check with the institution itself, and your tax advisor, if such is of interest to you.

Please note: **This is not a half-price sale.** No individual books are available at half their listed price. Only orders of complete sets as stated above, as a two-for-one sale, will be honored at this, what we consider to be a tremendous sale price, the best yet.

All net proceeds from the sale of our books, as always, go entirely toward the ongoing expenses of printing and distributing *The Remnant*.—CCM

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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 deprav-

ity, 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.