

The Remnant

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

May-June, 2004

Volume 18, No. 3

THE ETERNAL UNION OF CHRIST AND HIS CHURCH

On page twenty of *The Remnant* article five of the *Statement of Principles* reads, “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.” As the Lord so wills, we shall attempt to express our views upon this profound statement.

We shall endeavor to make use of the Holy Scriptures as much as possible to elucidate this deeply spiritual subject. The writer is fully aware of his tremendous weakness and frailty in his attempt to express himself in print.

Eternal Election

“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 1.4-6).”

As it is at all times best to let the Bible speak for itself we shall take notice from the above quoted text certain evidences. First that God has chosen for

himself a particular people from eternity. Before the beginnings of the universe were ever laid The Father had chosen a people that he would make holy and blameless. These children were chosen or elected in his Son. The Word had assumed the office and position of the Mediator of these chosen people and had become their Federal Head.

God who is the one independent and sovereign being in all existence, which derives nothing from any of his creatures, made this decree within himself from all eternity. He determined to manifest his love for the elect from everlasting totally and completely from his own sovereign will. “...Yea, I have loved thee with an everlasting love: therefore with loving kindness have I drawn thee (Jeremiah 31.3).”

Because God in his sovereignty has chosen to express and manifests his divine love for the creatures he has chosen; this divine love is the nature of that union. “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 8.38-39).” This bond cannot be dissolved by anything or anyone whatsoever for it is upheld by the Omnipotence of Jehovah himself. “But God, who is rich in mercy, for his great love where-with he loved us, even when we were dead in sins, hath quickened us together with Christ, (by grace ye are saved;) and hath raised us up together, and made us sit together in heavenly places in Christ Jesus (Ephesians 2.4-6).” It is all of free and sovereign grace.

The Remnant

published
6 times annually
by
Saints Rest Primitive Baptist Church
of Dallas, Texas
The Remnant Publications
In the interest of
The Old Order of Baptists

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to all interested persons.

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These children given to Christ are accounted as one with him. "...Behold I and the children which God hath given me (Hebrews 2.13)." Because of the great love, which God has for them, they are considered as one with Christ. This relationship can never fail or be dissolved. What wondrous grace is this indeed? Just as the Father loved the Son from eternity, he also loved the elect in Christ from everlasting.

As many of the faithful ministers of old have stated, the elect were loved and chosen in Christ as their Head and representative to the extent that they actually have a standing or being in Christ. Because of this standing in their Head the members of his body receive all the blessings and benefits of the works performed by Jesus Christ on their behalf.

These spiritual blessings are certainly not bestowed upon them because of any virtue or good works performed by them. "Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who hath blessed us with all spiritual blessings in heavenly places in Christ (Ephesians 1.3)."

Eternal Union

All the blessings that the elect receive in time were ordained from eternity because of their union with Christ. "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 (2 Timothy 1.9)."

All of these blessings are awarded because of

the infinite value of the finished work of Jesus Christ and the relation the elect have with him. They flow to God's children in time because of what was accomplished by their Redeemer. "But is now made manifest by the appearing of our Savior Jesus Christ, who hath abolished death, and hath brought life and immortality to light through the gospel (2 Timothy 1.10)."

This eternal union of which we speak is one that finite man can scarcely comprehend due to our fleshly minds with their limited understanding. We must use figures or representations to gain an understanding of the deep things of God.

The scriptures are full of figurative language, which give shape and substance to the spiritual realities that man would otherwise not be able to see. Even then it is only through the illuminating power of the Holy Spirit that we are able to gain any insight into the glorious workings of God's grace.

Christ is described as having all authority over all creation, but with a special relationship to his church. "And hath put all things under his feet, and gave him to be the head over all things to the church, which is his body, the fulness of him that filleth all in all (Ephesians 1.22-23)."

The Bible declares no closer or more intimate relationship than marriage where two become one. The account of Adam and Eve is surely a type and figure of the relationship that Christ has with his church. Christ is one with his bride to the extent that they bare the same name just as Adam and Eve. The first couple were created together, Eve being in Adam before being removed and formed of his substance. There is no closer similitude than this found in the scriptures for an illustration of the union between Christ and his church.

"For the husband is the head of the wife, even as Christ is the head of the church: and he is the savior of the body. For no man ever yet hated his own flesh; but nourisheth and cherisheth it, even as the Lord the church: For we are members of his body, of his flesh, and of his bones (Ephesians 5.23, 29-30)." How close is this union.

"For as the body is one, and hath many members, and all the members of that one body, being many, are one body: so also is Christ (1 Corinthians 12.12)." Christ the head and the children of God are the many members that constitute his

body.

The ancient Jewish people had a marriage custom. The husband was espoused or engaged privately to his bride, and then a period of time would elapse in which the appropriateness for her to be wed would be approved. After certain measures had been taken the couple would be publicly betrothed to one another, but the actual marriage was considered to take place only when it was physically consummated.

The reader will recall the account in the gospels of how Mary, who was great with child, was the espoused wife of Joseph (Luke 2.5). Some may have mistakenly thought that the two were not married, but were living in sin. (The writer has heard some discussion on this by others who have insinuated the same). Mary and Joseph had been wed, but had not yet physically consummated their marriage. "And knew her not till she had brought forth her firstborn son: and he called his name JESUS (Matthew 1.25)."

Before the final marriage actually occurred the father of the groom gave a grand supper. This was the feast or marriage supper. We see then the similitude of the betrothal of Christ (The Husband) to his bride (The Church) from all eternity. All things He does for her are based upon this relationship, founded upon the decree of God and the great love with which he has loved her.

The time here on earth, in which the elect live, agrees with the period of observance of the bride that she might be found worthy of marriage. "That he might present it to himself a glorious church, not having spot, or wrinkle, or any such thing; but that it should be holy and without blemish (Ephesians 5.27)." We know and realize that the only value the church has is to be found in its Head. "But of him are ye in Christ Jesus, who of God is made unto us wisdom, and righteousness, and sanctification, and redemption (1 Corinthians 1.30)."

"And he saith unto me, Write, blessed are they which are called unto the marriage supper of the Lamb. And he saith unto me, These are the true sayings of God (Revelation 19.9)."

These things are highly spiritual and are intended to illustrate to the children of grace the mysterious and profound workings of Almighty God. "This is a great mystery: but I speak concerning Christ and the church (Ephesians 5.32)."

Federal Headship

Adam was the federal head of the entire human race that descended from him by natural generation. He was appointed the natural head of his people. He represented them in his actions and consequently in his disobedience to God. "Wherefore, as by one man sin entered into the world, and death by sin; and so death passed upon all men, for that all have sinned (Romans 5.12)."

The most common objection to this doctrine is that it would be unfair of God to charge people with sin just because Adam disobeyed God. Is not each person accountable to God for his or her own actions?

First, nothing that God does can be judged to be unfair by puny mortals. Secondly, man is indeed accountable for his actions to God because all have sinned and come short of the glory of God (Romans 3.23). Thus humanity is without excuse before a just and holy God.

In the third place, each individual descended from Adam carries the genetic material and make up of the very first sinful man. We now know that genetics is the basis for much of our thought processes and behavior. We are Adam multiplied.

"Nevertheless death reigned from Adam to Moses, even over them that had not sinned after the similitude of Adam's transgression, who is the figure of him that was to come (Romans 5.14)." Man, who is Adam multiplied many times over, is not only counted as a sinner because of the disobedience of his federal head and representative, but he is guilty by actual transgression. Thanks be to God that there was one born in due time without the stain of Adam's sin, conceived by the Spirit of God, and born of a woman.

Jesus, whose very name means Jehovah Salvation, came into this world to save even the worst of sinners. "But God commendeth his love toward us, in that, while we were yet sinners, Christ died for us (Romans 5.8)."

Adam represented all mankind, and made them sinners by his actions and natural generation. Christ made righteous all that he represented and stood for, and all who had a spiritual standing in him. "For as by one man's disobedience many were made sinners, so by the obedience of one shall many be made righteous (Romans 5.19)."

Jehovah gave unto Adam a command, "And the LORD God took the man, and put him into the Garden of Eden to dress it and to keep it. And the LORD God

commanded the man, saying, Of every tree of the garden thou mayest freely eat: But of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil, thou shalt not eat of it: for in the day that thou eatest thereof thou shalt surely die (Genesis 2.15-17)." Man would live and enjoy the garden and all that God had created if he obeyed his creator, but upon disobedience of God's express command he would die.

This command with a promise was given to Adam as the head of the human family. As representative of all mankind his actions carried grave consequences. Well might we say that God considered Adam and his posterity one and the same.

From all eternity the Lord Jesus Christ has been the Mediator of the elect of God. As the spiritual Head and Representative of the children, which God gave to Christ, they are considered one and the same with him. "Behold, I have graven thee upon the palms of my hands... (Isaiah 49.16)."

The spiritual life that the children of God receive is the life of Christ himself. "When Christ, who is our life, shall appear, then shall ye also appear with him in glory (Colossians 3.4)." Again, "Paul, an apostle of Jesus Christ by the will of God, according to the promise of life which is in Christ Jesus (2 Timothy 1.1)." Once more, "For we are his workmanship, created in Christ Jesus...(Ephesians 2.10)."

Just as once a year the high priest entered the Holy of Holies bearing the names of the twelve tribes of Israel upon his breast plate to make atonement for the sins of all the people that he represented, "But into the second went the high priest alone once every year, not without blood, which he offered for himself, and for the errors of the people (Hebrews 9.7)."

Jesus did the same in a much more superior way. "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 9.11-12)."

"Forasmuch then as the children are partakers of flesh and blood, he also himself likewise took part of the same; that through death he might destroy him that had the power of death, that is, the devil (Hebrews 2.14)."

"Wherefore in all things it behoved him to be

made like unto his brethren, that he might be a merciful and faithful high priest in things pertaining to God, to make reconciliation for the sins of the people (Hebrews 2.17).”

When Christ entered once and for all into the most holy place to make satisfaction for the sins of his people, he bore all the children of God in his very being. Not only did he bear their sins in his body, but also their spiritual life was in him.

There is now no more sacrifice for sin because the justice of the Holy God has been satisfied. “By the which will we are sanctified through the offering of the body of Jesus Christ once for all. For by one offering he hath perfected forever them that are sanctified. And their sins and iniquities will I remember no more. Now where remission of these is, there is no more offering for sin (Hebrews 10.10-18).”

The children of God should realize that this union between Christ and his church is the very beginning, the source, and ground from which all blessings flow to them. The process of redemption, justification and sanctification all flow from this eternal and everlasting union.

The firm indissoluble bond that exists between the children of Jehovah and their Mediatorial Head preserves them to such an extent that none can snatch them from their Father’s firm and loving grasp. “And I give unto them eternal life; and they shall never perish, neither shall any man pluck them out of my hand. My Father, which gave them me, is greater than all; and no man is able to pluck them out of my Father’s hand (John 10.28-29).”

We fully realize that there will be some who read this that will cry we have gone too far in our assertions. Undoubtedly there will also be those readers who feel that we have not gone far enough on this important subject.

As many a faithful old writer of the past has stated, “Such views and light as we have we gladly share with others.” We can only speak according to the understanding that we now possess. We have adhered closely to the Scriptures and have diligently attempted to refrain from undue speculation on these points.

Having read others views on the nature of the eternal union that exists between Christ and his church, we have not always agreed with them on all points. We do not expect all readers of this article to completely agree with this writer’s views either. We

only pray that these few words might be used to stir up the minds of our readers, and under the influence of the indwelling Spirit cause serious reflection upon the unsearchable riches of Christ bestowed upon them by pure sovereign grace.

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THE PURPOSE OF GOD

The word “Purpose” is used 36 times in the Bible. The word “Purposed” is used 19 times, and “Purposes” is used 5 times. “Purposeth” is used one time, and “Purposing” is used one time, making a total of 62 times these words are used in the Bible.

Purpose is defined by the original (1828) Webster Dictionary as: “(1) *That which a person sets before himself as an object to be reached or accomplished; the end or aim to which the view is directed in any plan, measure or exertion.* We believe the Supreme Being created intelligent beings for some benevolent and glorious purpose, and if so, how glorious and benevolent must be His purpose in the plan of redemption!...(2) *Intention, design, end in view, established by counsel.* (3) *End, effect, consequence, good or bad...v.t. To determine some end or object to be accomplished.*” Noah Webster used Proverbs 20, Ephesians 1, Matthew 26, Isaiah 46, Eph. 1.11, Acts 19 and Psalm 17 in his definition.

This is a very deep subject, far too deep for my limited spiritual understanding of the scriptures. However, if God will grant me a few thoughts on this subject, I have had a desire to write on it for several months.

Webster’s first definition: “That which a person sets before himself as an object to be reached or accomplished; the end or aim to which the view is

directed in any plan, measure, or exertion” defines the beginning and END of God’s Creation. “Declaring the end from the beginning, and from ancient times, the things that are not yet done, saying my counsel shall stand and I will do all my pleasure (Isaiah 46.10).” There is not a good starting place and there certainly will not be an ending place for this effort. If God had a “Purpose” in creating this universe, then it is certain His “Purpose” will come to pass; if His “Purpose” is to come to pass it will be at His appointed time, and if His “Purpose comes to pass at His appointed time, then it all was by His determinate Counsel and foreknowledge (predestination).

The first use of the word “Purpose” is found in Ruth 2.16. I will only quote verses 15 and 16 of this chapter. Please read this entire book to get the full meaning of what I quote. Verses 15 and 16 read: “And when she was risen up to glean, Boaz commanded his young men, saying, let her glean even among the sheaves, and reproach her not: and let fall also some of the handfuls of **purpose** for her, and leave them, that she may glean them, and rebuke her not.”

If we understand the spiritual meaning of the Scripture, we understand Boaz to be a type of Christ and Ruth to be a type of the Church.

Now what are the handfuls of “Purpose”? This second chapter of Ruth has to do with food. In the ninth verse Boaz commanded (he did not ask or invite) Ruth to go and drink of the vessels when she was thirsty.

I believe, if Boaz is a type of Christ and Ruth a type of the Church, then this water and handfuls of “Purpose” represents the blood and body of Jesus Christ. Christ told His church, “Except ye eat the flesh of the Son of man, and drink his blood, ye have no life in you (John 6.53).”

The next use of “Purpose” I wish to comment on is found in Ecclesiastes 3.1: ” To every thing there is a season, and a time to every purpose under the heaven.” Solomon goes on to name a time appointed for 28 things to come to pass.

Each one has its own “Purpose.” The first time (appointed) is: A time to be born and a time to die,” the fulfillment of our natural life upon this earth. God has a “Purpose” in everything we do and every

thought we think while we pass through this low ground of sin and sorrow. Verse 14 says: “I know that, whatsoever God doeth, it shall be for ever: Nothing can be put to it nor anything taken from it: And God doeth it, that men should fear before him.” If we look at the depth of this verse, “whatsoever God doeth, it shall be for ever,” it tells us that every “Purpose” God has (or had) is complete from the beginning to the end of time as we know time. Also, nothing can be added to or taken from any of His “Purposes.”

Now we come to Isaiah 14.24-27: “The LORD of hosts hath sworn, saying, Surely as I have thought, so shall it come to pass; and as I have purposed, so shall it stand: That I will break the Assyrian in my land, and upon my mountains tread him under foot: then shall his yoke depart from off them, and his burden depart from off their shoulders. This is the purpose that is purposed upon the whole earth: and this is the hand that is stretched out upon all the nations. For the LORD of hosts hath purposed, and who shall disannul it? and his hand is stretched out, and who shall turn it back?”

In these four verses there are five *shalls* and one *will*. There never has been or never will be a “will or shall” that shall not come to pass or be accomplished at the exact appointed time and/or place that God decreed it. In these four verses we have the complete work of God from Genesis to Revelation. In the 24th verse God swore by Himself, because he could swear by no greater, that as he thought so shall it come to pass. God thought this universe into existence. Each and every part of it, from the smallest, most minute object to the greatest accomplishment. The greatest accomplishment was He Himself taking on a body of flesh, coming down into this low ground of sin and sorrow to suffer a death that no man could suffer, to accomplish a mission that no man could accomplish, which was to save his chosen people from their sins. His thoughts covered every thing we have done or ever will do and every thought we have thought or will think. “As I have *purposed*, so shall it stand.”

Notice, “Purposed” is a past tense word. God had a purpose in everything from the beginning time to the end of time. So much of the things in this world and the things that happen, we just accept, or

we think nothing of. However, God had a “Purpose” in each and every thing. We may ask why did this or that happen, why did this person die, or get killed, or have some dreaded illness happen to them? We will probably never know the reason why, but God had a “Purpose” in its happening, and he brought it to pass, verse 27. For the Lord of host hath “Purposed” (past tense), and who shall disannul it? And His hand is stretched out, and who shall turn it back?

God had a “Purpose” in sin coming into this world. We can speculate or ask why, but the real reason is known only to God Himself. We do know we are all sinners, we were when we were born, and we will be when we die. We were made sinners by our Father Adam. Isaiah describes our sinful condition as being full of wounds, bruises and putrefying sores. Also, the Lord tells us our heart is deceitful above all things and desperately wicked. In another place He says “all our righteousnesses are as filthy rags”; so God had a “Purpose” for sin in our lives. However He also had a “Purpose” in bringing us to the knowledge of our sinful condition, and of our not having the ability to do anything about our condition, and He made us to cry unto our God for deliverance from our sinful condition.

When we are brought to this point, then His hand is stretched out, and, as a drowning person, we gladly grasp it. Would a drowning person turn your hand away or push it aside? No, no, no. Neither will any of God’s children, when He bids them “Come unto me, all ye that labor and are heavy laden.”

We now come to the Book of Romans. Romans 8.28-31 says: “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. 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?”

In this natural life we have many trials and tribulations. Some suffer from health problems, even some from birth. Others suffer from loss of loved ones, some from financial problems, and other tribulations

to numerous to mention. In this natural life most of us are not given to understand how suffering or being in some kind of distress can work for our good. It does not say “work for our *natural* good,” but if we are given to understand the Scriptures, it is for our spiritual good. If we lived on top of the mountain all the time, by nature we would soon grow dissatisfied. However, when we have been in the lowest part of the valley, when there seems to be no hope for our sinful, lost condition, and when we are given to hear a beautiful sermon on how Christ came into this low ground of sin and sorrow to save poor wretched sinners, then we are made to experience a few moments on the mountain top. We are not speaking of the natural mountains, but the mountains in our spiritual lives. God had a “Purpose” in bringing us down to the bottom of the pit, to see ourselves dead (with no spiritual life) in trespasses and in sins.

Another use of “Purpose” is found in Romans 9.11-18. “(For the children being not yet born, neither having done any good or evil, that the **purpose** of God according to election might stand, not of works, but of him that calleth;) It was said unto her, The elder shall serve the younger. As it is written, Jacob have I loved, but Esau have I hated. What shall we say then? Is there unrighteousness with God? God forbid. For he saith to Moses, I will have mercy on whom I will have mercy, and I will have compassion on whom I will have compassion. So then it is not of him that willeth, nor of him that runneth, but of God that showeth mercy. For the scripture saith unto Pharaoh, Even for this same purpose have I raised thee up, that I might show my power in thee, and that my name might be declared throughout all the earth. Therefore hath he mercy on whom he will have mercy, and whom he will he hardeneth.”

Once again, God is showing he has a “Purpose” in all things. In this case it is the election of all his people from all eternity to all eternity. It is not of works which we might do, or something else to gain favor from God, but of his own “Purpose” in choosing his elect in Christ Jesus from the foundation of the world .

The last use of “Purpose” I will use is found in Eph. 1.11: “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.” What more can be said about the “Purpose” of God? As I said at the beginning of this effort, there was not a starting place, and there certainly will not be a stopping place. I will close by quoting Eph. 1.4-5. “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.”

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HEBREWS 4.15

For we have not an high priest which cannot be touched with the feeling of our infirmities; but was in all points tempted like as we are, yet without sin (Hebrews 4.15).

In the March-April, 2004, issue of *The Remnant*, on page 19, I said:

Then saith Jesus unto him, “Get thee hence, Satan: for it is written, Thou shalt worship the Lord thy God, and **Him only** shalt thou serve.” In His so saying, the Son of Man conquered Satan for all of eternity. True, they would meet again at the cross, when Christ would effectually remove sin from His people and from all creation; but for now, Christ had endured the same temptations that Adam, Eve, and all His people had endured, and He had won. “Then the devil leaveth Him, and, behold, angels came and ministered unto Him.”

I hope to develop the above thought in this present article. First I would propose to establish that Christ’s temptation had to be a *genuine temptation*, and that it was exactly that. The text says He was in all points tempted like as we are. If He was not so

tempted, then language has no meaning. “For we have not an high priest which cannot be touched with the feeling of our infirmities; but was in all points tempted like as we are (Hebrews 4.15).” Notice, it was “like as we are,” *like* and *as* both being words of comparison and similarity. One could as easily prove that we are not tempted as he could prove Christ was not tempted.

In nature, someone might find eating gooey deserts is a constant temptation, but, to the same person, eating chopped liver might not be any temptation whatsoever. In order for something to be a temptation, then, it must be something that is truly tempting. I point this out because there are some who seem to think that Christ was not really tempted by Satan. They leave the impression they think He was above all that; he was somehow too strong, too spiritual, too much God to be genuinely tempted. They leave us with the notion they believe that Christ’s spiritual power as deity, God manifest in the flesh, was incapable of being tempted; that the “God part,” which *cannot* be tempted (James 1.13), overpowered the “flesh part” or “man part,” thereby enabling Him to win the battle—or more to the point, that, there was really no battle whatsoever, since the temptation was not really a temptation to Him.

Such an approach is wrong in principle, because Jesus was not *part* God and *part* man. He was and IS God, verily God, and man, verily man, totally and completely on both counts. To think Jesus was above temptation entirely misses the point of God’s incarnation, His being manifest in the flesh of the man Christ Jesus. What Jesus did must of necessity have been done by Jesus as the sinless son of Mary, the perfect Son of Man, or else His incarnation was pointless.

“Surely he hath borne our griefs, and carried our sorrows (Isaiah 53.4).” In bearing not only the sins of His people but also their grief and sorrow, He must be tempted as they were, because much of the grief and sorrow that His people endure is brought about by their enduring temptations. Again, in and of themselves, grief and sorrow furnish a temptation to sin, as was the case when Satan moved upon Job through his wife. Through her, Satan suggested to Job that he should “curse God and die” because of his losses and his resulting grief and sorrow. We see in Job’s experience that grief and sorrow provide an avenue for temptations (such as to curse God. How many

people have we all heard of who say they “no longer believe in God” because of the death of their child or some other loved one?). But temptations also cause grief and sorrow, and none can break this vicious circle except God Himself, and that only by His free grace, the Lord intervening in the mind and heart of the sorrowing saint. Into this cycle of grief, sorrow, and temptation Jesus thrust Himself to bear the griefs and to carry the sorrows of His people, to be tempted like as they are, and yet to be without sin.

“Wherefore in all things it behoved him to be made like unto his brethren, that he might be a merciful and faithful high priest in things pertaining to God, to make reconciliation for the sins of the people (Hebrews 2.17).”

“He was *made*...” This is and must be a reference to His incarnation as the *man* Christ Jesus (1 Timothy 2.5), the Christ, and the Redeemer of His people. In contrast to His being “made,” as the God-man, His essential Godhead and deity could not be “made” anything—as God, He was (and is) the Maker of *all things* (John 1.3).

Then, “...in *all things* it behoved him to be made like unto his brethren...” He was not like them merely in an outward appearance, but in all things He was fully like them, except for the sin itself. It is into this arena He came to make reconciliation for the sins of His people; and to do so, where they fail in refusing all temptations, He must succeed. But to do so, He must actually be tempted exactly as they were and are, and He did so, successfully, as the Scriptures say.

Second, we establish that it was necessary that Jesus was indeed tempted. “For we have not an high priest which cannot be touched with the feeling of our **infirmities**; but was in all points tempted like as we are, yet without sin.” Part of being “tempted in all points like as we are” involves temptations that come through our infirmities. Our infirmities are more than bodily sickness; they include *moral frailty* (Strong’s). God cannot be tempted (James 1.13); hence, the necessity of the incarnation: for God in grace to partake of His people’s infirmities, He must be made flesh and dwell among us (John 1.14). Only then was He infirm enough, in the flesh, to consider the temptations; and in the Spirit He was fully strong enough to resist them. “For what the law could not do, in that it was weak through the flesh, God sending his own Son in the likeness of sinful flesh, and for sin,

condemned sin in the flesh (Romans 8.3).” “For though He was crucified through weakness, yet He liveth by the power of God. (2 Corinthians 13.4).”

Next, He must actually *feel* our infirmities in order to be *touched* with the feeling of our infirmities. Of the bodily senses, *touch* and *feeling* go together. But the infirmities under consideration in this text are the infirmities of being tempted. Therefore, to be touched in such a way as to feel their infirmities, He must be tempted exactly as His people are, in order to fully take their infirmities upon Himself.

Then, to be an acceptable sacrifice unto God, He must be truly tried and proved to be perfect. The paschal (or Passover) lamb, which was a picture of Christ, was to be observed from the tenth day of the first month to the fourteenth day (which was the Passover), to be certain the lamb was without blemish (Exodus 12.3-6). That lamb typified the Lamb of God (John 1.29), the Lord Jesus Christ: “Forasmuch as ye know that ye were not redeemed with corruptible things, as silver and gold, from your vain conversation received by tradition from your fathers; but with **the precious blood of Christ, as of a lamb without blemish and without spot**: Who verily was foreordained before the foundation of the world, but was manifest in these last times **for you, who by him do believe in God**, that raised him up from the dead, and gave him glory; that your faith and hope might be in God (1 Peter 1.18-21).”

Third, we establish that Jesus was indeed tempted. The Scriptures say so. Our text says so. He “was **in all points tempted like as we are**, yet without sin.” Matthew said, “Then was Jesus led up of the Spirit into the wilderness to be **tempted of the devil** (Matthew 4.1).”

Mark put it this way: “And there came a voice from heaven, saying, Thou art my beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased. And immediately the Spirit driveth him into the wilderness. And he was there in the wilderness forty days, **tempted of Satan**; and was with the wild beasts; and the angels ministered unto him (Mark 1.11ff).”

Luke described His ordeal thusly: “And Jesus being full of the Holy Ghost returned from Jordan, and was led by the Spirit into the wilderness, **being forty days tempted of the devil** (Luke 4.1f).” Nothing short of this, a genuine temptation from the devil, could suffice and have it still be true that He was made

like unto His brethren. To be an acceptable sacrifice, He must succeed where our first parents, Adam and Eve, failed.

ALL POINTS

We next should look at the points in which Jesus was tempted.

The author of Hebrews tells us that Jesus was tempted in all points like as His people (“we”) are or ever have been. The text does not mean that if one of His people was tempted to steal a candy bar or an automobile, then Jesus was also tempted to steal a candy bar or an automobile. There is an underlying scriptural principle describing how our first parents were tempted and fell, what was involved when Christ Jesus was tempted, and how Jesus resisted those temptations.

It appears from 1 John 2.16 that all sins can be summarized or categorized under three headings: the lust of the flesh, and the lust of the eyes, and the pride of life: “For all that is in the world, the lust of the flesh, and the lust of the eyes, and the pride of life, is not of the Father, but is of the world (1 John 2.16).” It is in this understanding that Christ was tempted in all points as we are.

The lust of the flesh: Although this category of sin is not limited to sexual lust, it is this form of lust that many people think of first when the word *lust* is mentioned, because that is the way the word is usually used nowadays. *Lust*, however, more generally means *to set one’s heart upon; a longing for, rightfully or wrongfully, but especially for that which is forbidden*. The Greek word *epithumeo*, and its related word *epithumia*, are translated into the King James English as *covet, desire, would fain, lust, and concupiscence* (Strong’s Concordance).

The lust of the eyes: The same word for lust, above, as lust of the flesh, is also applied to the things we see with our eyes. Seeing with the eyes is usually the way we are first made aware of something we desire, and then we begin to covet or lust after it. That *covetousness* and *lust* are closely linked is made clearly evident by Romans 7.7: “What shall we say then? is the law sin? God forbid. Nay, I had not known sin, but by the law: for I had not known *lust*, except the law had said, Thou shalt not *covet*.”

The pride of life: This word *pride* comes from

the Greek word *alazoneia*, meaning *braggadocio, i.e., by implication, self-confidence* (Strong’s). It is translated as *boastings* in James 4.16, and as *pride of life* in 1 John 2.16.

These three avenues of temptation are exemplified throughout the Bible. Before looking at the temptation of Christ, we will first look at two biblical examples: Eve and Achan.

EVE

When Eve was tempted by Satan, each of these three areas—the lust of the flesh, the lust of the eyes, and the pride of life—was invaded by the serpent and violated by Eve. Let us look, then, at her experience.

First, Satan attacked God’s integrity, but he did so subtly by asking a seemingly simple question. To this day, the question mark we use is a graphic representation of an upright serpent, like a hooded cobra, poised and ready to strike. “Yea, hath God said, Ye shall not eat of every tree of the garden?”

Eve took the bait and answered, “We may eat of the fruit of the trees of the garden: but of the fruit of the tree which is in the midst of the garden, God hath said, Ye shall not eat of it, neither shall ye touch it, lest ye die.”

Here we should notice several things:

1. While multitudes do what they call “spiritualize” the Garden of Eden, its dirt, trees, rivers, animals, the cherubim, the flaming sword, the serpent (Satan), and nearly everything else, the fact remains that it was truly a literal garden, park, or orchard, as full of trees as any park or orchard ever was or will be, and it came from God complete with a real live snake. The word **paradise**, meaning a **park**, an **Eden**, or a place of future happiness (Strong’s dictionary) is not found in the Old Testament at all; however, it does come from a Hebrew word of Persian origin, *pardec* (pronounced *par-DACE*), meaning an **orchard** or a **forest**. It occurs in the New Testament only three times (Luke 23.43, 2 Corinthians 12.4, and Revelation 2.7).

The Bible record of Eden is not a mystical myth to be scorned by Public Broadcasting specials. We are not discussing some “spiritualization” of a dreamy never-never land that can mean whatever you want it to mean. Eden, paradise, Adam, and Eve are

as real as the sweat of our brows, the briars we hack and hoe all our days, the blood that thorns draw, and the pain they cause. Thorns and paradise are inexorably linked. The thorns and briars that began in Eden (Genesis 3.18) were predestinated to crown Jesus on the cross as a symbol of the curse He bore. The curse, like the **thorns**, began in a timely way in paradise. It was entirely fitting, then, that it was predestinated for Him who wore the thorny crown to tell the thief beside Him, “Verily I say unto thee, To day shalt thou be with me in **paradise**.”

We are born into this world *physically*, we are *physically* infected with sin and its results (death and decay), and the end result, as far as this natural life is concerned, is *physical* death. There is no escaping it, no spiritualizing it away as would be done by a simpering Christian Scientist smelling of rose-water. All of man’s religions, sciences, and philosophies together have never made a dent in Genesis 3.19: “In the sweat of thy face shalt thou eat bread, till thou return unto the ground; for out of it wast thou taken: for dust thou art, and unto dust shalt thou return.”

2. The tree of knowledge and the tree of life were literal trees, not merely figures or representative symbols of something else. They may be *used* as figures or symbols by those who feel the urge to so use, and occasionally misuse, the Scriptures; the tree of life does indeed represent Jesus Christ; but that does not at all militate against the fact that these were real trees. The Hebrew word used in Genesis 2.9 for *tree* is elsewhere rendered as *gallows*, *pine*, *plank*, *staff*, *stalk*, *stick*, *stock*, *timber*, *tree*, and *wood*. That is about as plain as one can make it.

The fruit of the tree of knowledge contained a substance that chemically altered the physical bodies of the ones who ate it. The poison in the fruit did something in their mind/brain/conscience, genes, and chromosomes with the result that from then on Adam, Eve, and their offspring knew good and evil and the difference between them. The poison fruit, however, also rendered them unable either to do the good or to refrain from the evil, even while knowing the difference. Eating the forbidden fruit introduced death into their blood stream and into their genetic code. From then on, the death gene would be passed on to all of Adam’s descendants. Sin is a fatal blood disease inherited by each of us from our parents.

Such a tree was literally there in the garden of

Eden, but now it is no longer on earth. It existed from the time of the creation of the garden, in which God put Adam, until the time of the flood in Noah’s day. Then God removed the tree of knowledge from the earth along with the tree of life that contained the antidote to the noxious fruit of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil. If one raises the question, “How do you know this, since the Bible says nothing of it?” I reply,

(1) where is it now, and when else was it removed? The Bible says more about it than a casual reading will reveal. “And the LORD God said, Behold, the man is become as one of us, to know good and evil: and now, lest he put forth his hand, and take also of the tree of life, and eat, and live for ever: therefore the LORD God sent him forth from the garden of Eden, to till the ground from whence he was taken. So he drove out the man; and he placed **at the east** of the garden of Eden Cherubims, and a flaming sword which turned every way, to keep the way of the tree of life.” From this it is apparent that

(2) After the fall of Adam, the garden, with its trees, was still there. Adam and his descendants could approach its eastern gate—do not overlook the important fact that it was **at the east** of the garden of Eden where God placed the cherubim. In its own way the garden with its eastern gate was a type or foreshadowing of the tabernacle in the wilderness, which God would give centuries later in the time of Moses. The one entrance into the tabernacle’s courtyard was on the east, as was the one entrance into the tabernacle itself. Still later, this layout was perpetuated in Solomon’s temple and in each succeeding temple that was built in Jerusalem.

There is a profound and fundamental reason for the gate and man’s approach to it being on the east from the time of Adam and the garden of Eden onward. Simply put, to worship Jehovah God, one necessarily had to be facing *west* to approach God. To face west, the worshiper cannot help but turn his back toward the sun as it rises in the *east*.

Above all other pagan gods, the sun-god was worshiped more than any other. To face the rising sun from the place of Jehovah’s worship, whether it was the eastern gate of the garden of Eden, the eastern gate of the tabernacle, or of the temple in Jerusalem, one necessarily turns his back upon Jehovah and forsake the worship of the living and true God. If you

want true, biblical symbolism, this is it. Man is placed on the east of Eden, between true worship of our Creator and the most dazzling of all false gods, represented by the sun, the sun-god. Man faces one way or the other; he cannot face both ways.

Was it really that serious? Yes, it was, really! In the time of Ezekiel, when Jerusalem was undergoing the destructive siege and captivity at the hand of the Babylonians, part of the guilt and crime of the nation of Israel was this very sin of turning their backs upon the temple of God to face east and greet the rising sun.

“And he brought me into the inner court of the LORD’S house, and, behold, at the door of the temple of the LORD, between the porch and the altar, were about five and twenty men, **with their backs toward the temple of the LORD, and their faces toward the east; and they worshipped the sun toward the east.** Then he said unto me, Hast thou seen this, O son of man? Is it a light thing to the house of Judah that they commit the abominations which they commit here? for they have filled the land with violence, and have returned to provoke me to anger: and, lo, they put the branch to their nose. Therefore will I also deal in fury: mine eye shall not spare, neither will I have pity: and though they cry in mine ears with a loud voice, yet will I not hear them (Ezekiel 8.16-18—see the entire chapter).”

We still have among us the vestiges of this east-facing sun-god worship in the Babylonish Easter “sunrise services” perpetuated by Roman Catholicism and her harlot protestant daughters.

The tree of life was yet in the garden, and man was now outside it.

Before eating the forbidden fruit, he did not know good and evil. After eating the forbidden fruit, man now knew good and evil.

The fruit of the tree of life, like the fruit of the tree of knowledge of good and evil, was a literal fruit. It was something that Adam, had he been given continued access to it, could have put his hand on and have taken of it, had not God prevented it. I trust I say this only in the manner of man, only in the sense that God said it and meant it: It was God who said, “now, *lest he put forth his hand, and take also of the tree of life, and eat, and live for ever*: Therefore the LORD God sent him forth from the garden of Eden, to till the ground from whence he was taken (Genesis 3.22).” In the predestinated purpose of God, Adam’s eating

of the tree of life was not to be. The next time the human race will have access to the tree of life is described in Revelation 22, verses 2 and 14.

The evidence is that when Adam and Eve fell and were expelled from the Garden, God then and there taught Adam and his family the necessity of the blood sacrifice of an innocent sacrificial animal. The Lord God was the first to shed the blood of an innocent sacrifice when He Himself killed and skinned an animal to clothe Adam and Eve at the eastern entrance to the garden of Eden. (2,500 years later, the antitypical brazen altar would be located at the eastern gate of the courtyard of the Levitical tabernacle in the wilderness.) “Unto Adam also and to his wife did the LORD God make coats of skins, and clothed them (Genesis 3.21).” These coats of **skins** were exactly what we now call buckskin, leather, or an animal’s hide. The Hebrew word is rendered **hide** in Leviticus 8.17 and 9.11; **skin(s)** in Genesis 3.21 and 27.16, Exodus 22.27, 25.5, and in Exodus 26.14, 29.14, 35.7, and 35.23, and **leather** in 2 Kings 1.8. See also Matthew 3.4 for a New Testament instance of this type of clothing.

3. Being a literal tree, the fruit of the tree of knowledge was literal fruit, and not merely figurative or symbolic of something else. The eating of this fruit brought about the deadly genetic damage which universally transmits sin from one generation to the next as surely as the color of one’s eyes or hair is transmitted. Call it what you like, it comes down to this: (a) Man dies a physical death as well as a spiritual death; (b) this comes about as a result of the original sin of our first parents, Adam and Eve; (c) each of us inherits both the sin and death directly from our immediate parents, both physically and spiritually; and (d) our parents inherited sin and death from their blood line, and so on, leading directly back to Adam.

4. Before Eve ate the fruit from the tree of knowledge, she was in a situation that was totally beyond her understanding. She did not know what the consequence—death—would be when she ate the fruit, nor could she know, for death was unknown before the fall. She did not know the consequence of disobedience to God’s command, nor could she. She did not know what sin is, nor could she. She did not know the difference between good and evil, nor could she, until she took and ate the destructive fruit that

gave such knowledge. How could she know any of these things, when she had not yet partaken of the one thing that would give her that knowledge—the “forbidden fruit” of the tree of knowledge of good and evil? We cannot have it both ways. She could not *know and not know* at the same time!

We can go still further and say that Eve was “guilty” of yet another sin, before she partook of the fruit, and that was the sin of **adding to the word of God**, when she added “...neither shall ye touch it” to what God had commanded Adam. Revelation 22.18 makes it clear that adding to the word of God is a most serious sin: “For I testify unto every man that heareth the words of the prophecy of this book, If any man shall add unto these things, God shall add unto him the plagues that are written in this book.” But she did not know this was wrong. How could she?

Eve “broke” yet another of “the ten commandments” (of which she had NO KNOWLEDGE—how could she?), “Thou shalt not covet...any thing that is thy neighbour’s (Exodus 20.17),” in that she **coveted** the fruit that belonged to God and did not belong to her; she also coveted that which it would give to her, the knowledge of good and evil, which God, by His explicit command, had denied Adam.

Further, Eve succumbed to all three of the sins named by John: the lust of the flesh, and the lust of the eyes, and the pride of life. Yet the Lord never once mentioned any of these five sins (adding to the word of God, coveting, the lust of the flesh, the lust of the eyes, and the pride of life) either to her or to Adam, nor did He condemn them for these violations of His law. Why not? Because He had never given those commands to them! If He had done so, they would have known what they could not know until they ate the forbidden fruit. “For until the law sin was in the world: but **sin is not imputed when there is no law**...(Romans 5.13).”

But Eve, not knowing, fell into the lust of the flesh: “...the woman **saw** that the tree was **good for food**...”

She participated in the lust of the eyes: “...and [saw] that it was **pleasant to the eyes**...”

She partook of the pride of life: “...and a tree to be **desired to make one wise**...”

And you will note these two things: (1) *she did all this before she ate the fruit*, and (2) *God never once rebuked her or Adam for any of this*.

In sum, there were no less than six identifiable

sins, as we now know them, that Eve violated before the fall, and of which there was only one sin that Adam and Eve were aware:

(1) adding to God’s word,

(2) coveting,

(3) the lust of the flesh,

(4) the lust of the eyes,

(5) the pride of life, and

(6) the one command they knew, namely, not to eat of the fruit of the tree of knowledge of good and evil that God had forbidden.

Now, note the order of Eve’s experience: She **saw**, she **coveted**, she **took**, and she **hid**, in that order. It was the same in Adam’s experience, except for one thing: Adam was not deceived in the transgression. Now, we move on to

ACHAN

It was much the same with Achan, our other example, in the time of Joshua. When Joshua confronted him about the goods he had stolen at the battle of Jericho, Achan said, “When **I saw** among the spoils a goodly Babylonish garment, and two hundred shekels of silver, and a wedge of gold of fifty shekels weight, then **I coveted them**, and **took them**; and, behold, **they are hid** in the earth in the midst of my tent, and the silver under it (Joshua 7.21).”

Where did he think he would spend all that gold and silver, representing what he could buy with it to fulfill the lust of the flesh?

Where did Achan think he would wear that goodly Babylonish garment (representing the lust of the eyes and the pride of life) without his being caught? Speaking after the manner of men, had Achan worn this foreign garb in public, someone would have seen him from a mile away and reported him—but we know such was never meant to be. As it was, God had His own way, a far better way, to reveal Achan’s sin.

Without regard to the problems these stolen goods would bring upon himself and his family, Achan succumbed to the lust of the eyes and the end to which it led. “I saw... I coveted... I took... I hid.”

We could multiply other instances such as David, who **saw** Bathsheba, **coveted** her, **took** her, and **hid**—or tried to hide—his sin; but we leave that for now and pass on to consider

THE TEMPTATION OF CHRIST

As before stated, it appears from 1 John 2.16 that all sins can be summarized or categorized under the three headings of the lust of the flesh, and the lust of the eyes, and the pride of life. It is in these three areas that Jesus was tempted as recorded in Matthew 4 and the parallel account in Luke. (Mark mentions the temptation but gives no details, while John does not mention the temptation at all.)

The lust of the Flesh: In the temptation put upon the Lord Jesus Christ by Satan, the temptation of His flesh was to use His supernatural powers selfishly; that is, for His own benefit, Satan bid Him turn the stones into the bread His hunger-weakened body so desperately wanted. Jesus answered him by quoting a portion of Deuteronomy 8.3: “And he humbled thee, and suffered thee to hunger, and fed thee with manna, which thou knewest not, neither did thy fathers know; that he might make thee know that **man doth not live by bread only, but by every word that proceedeth out of the mouth of the LORD doth man live.**”

The lust of the Eyes: Jesus was thus tempted when “the devil, taking him up into an high mountain, **showed** unto him all the kingdoms of the world in a moment of time. And the devil said unto him, All this power will I give thee, and the glory of them: for that is delivered unto me; and to whomsoever I will I give it. If thou therefore wilt worship me, all shall be thine (Luke 4.5ff).” Jesus answered him by quoting a portion of Deuteronomy 6.13-14” “**Thou shalt fear the LORD thy God, and serve him**, and shalt swear by his name. **Ye shall not go after other gods**, of the gods of the people which are round about you.”

The Pride of Life: This was the temptation to leap from the pinnacle of the temple in full view of an admiring crowd, use His miraculous, divine power to land safely, to impress the multitudes, winning their hearts in a bragging, boasting, self-confident, and prideful way. Jesus answered him by quoting a portion of Deuteronomy 6.16: “**Ye shall not tempt the LORD your God**, as ye tempted him in Massah.”

We need not to elaborate here on Jesus’ victory over Satan and his temptations. Jesus came to undo the curse brought upon His people by virtue of their being born into Adam’s fallen race. To do so, He must satisfy His Father’s righteously perfect demands

and His holy law, which He did. “Think not that I am come to destroy the law, or the prophets: I am not come to destroy, but to fulfil (Matthew 5.17),” Jesus said. It is profoundly fitting, then, that He answered each of Satan’s temptations with a quote directly from the law of Moses; specifically, each of Christ’s quotes were taken from the book of Deuteronomy.

Then, to save His people, He must remove their transgressions from them as far as the east is from the west (Psalm 103.12), that is, infinitely far away from them, so the Father will forgive their iniquity, and will remember their sin no more (Jeremiah 31.34). This He did when He put away sin by the sacrifice of Himself (Hebrews 9.26).

Also, He must give His people a robe of righteousness that will fit them to stand unashamedly in the presence of the Father, not in hiding, not in the shame of Adam’s fig leaves, but in a beauty that transcends the pristine glory Adam enjoyed while yet unfallen, fresh from the hands of his Maker. This Christ Jesus the Lord did for His people: “But this man, after he had offered one sacrifice for sins for ever, sat down on the right hand of God; from henceforth expecting till his enemies be made his footstool. For by one offering **he hath perfected for ever them that are sanctified** (Hebrews 10.12-14).” They now have no shame, and He has no shame in, for, or about them, “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** (Hebrews 2.11).”

In the three temptations in the wilderness, He met and defeated every temptation His people have suffered and endured in the lust of the flesh, the lust of the eyes, and the pride of life. Even this, however, did not end the suffering of His bearing temptations in their behalf. He continued to overcome countless temptations of which we are scarcely aware, throughout His earthly ministry, announcing to His disciples shortly before His final ordeal, “Ye are they which have continued with me in my temptations (Luke 22.28).”

Truly, He was in all points tempted like as we are, and above and beyond measure; yet through it all, He was without sin, spot, or blemish. What a magnificent Savior!

—C. C. Morris

A NOTE ABOUT THE FOLLOWING ARTICLE

The following piece by Elder Jonas C. Sikes (or Sykes, as his name was sometimes spelled) was originally written and printed as part of his continued series on the title subject, *God's Decree and Predestination of All Things*. This series of articles was originally printed in the early 1930s in the *Lone Pilgrim*.

All we presently know about this particular excerpt is that it is from somewhere within the series.

We have published this one excerpt in order to demonstrate the value of the entire series. Even though we cannot at present print the installments that originally preceded and followed it, we nevertheless are confident that our readers will be able to pick up Elder Sikes' train of thought and argument and find this article well worth reading.

WE NEED OUR READERS' HELP!

Elder Stanley Phillips proposes to publish a book on the subject of Absolute Predestination. If all goes as he hopes, the book will include articles going back several hundred years. His desire is to include the complete series by Elder Sikes, of which the following is but one installment.

Elder Phillips has a copy of every other article in the series except the final installment, which was printed in the *Lone Pilgrim* for March, 1932. The March, 1932 issue, then, is the only one we need to complete the series.

Many of our readers have collected old Primitive Baptist periodicals or inherited them from their parents or grandparents. If you have any of these old magazines and would like to help, please take the time to see if you have this particular issue.

If you do have a copy of the March, 1932, issue of the *Lone Pilgrim*, and you would make available to Elder Phillips, please contact us as soon as possible so we can make arrangements to obtain photocopies of the needed article.

We hope Elder Phillips can go to press with this new book in the summer of 2004, Lord willing.

Readers may recall that Elder Sikes, along with Elder J. R. Hardy, organized Saints Rest Primitive Baptist Church of Dallas, Texas, in 1902.

GOD'S DECREE AND PREDESTINATION OF ALL THINGS

By: Elder J. C. Sykes, Sulphur Bluff, Texas
1931 (Continued from April 15, Number 4)

He then goes on and includes fire and hail, snow and vapors, and stormy wind as fulfilling His word. There is not a body, and object, nor an element in the firmament, seen nor unseen, the course, movement, and effect of which is not in accordance with and embraced in God's "decree which shall not pass" (Psalm 148:6). Job said, "He made a decree for the rain, and way for the lighting for His thunder" (Job 28:26). Now if the firmament sheweth God's handiwork (Psalm 19:1) and we find that every thing in the firmament is under, and moves according to God's unchangeable decree, it must follow as an irresistible conclusion that all His handiwork is the same way. The course and movement of all things made by His hand are established forever, and are under His decree that shall not pass. There is no escaping this conclusion if the firmament is a fair specimen of "His handiwork."

Why should inspiration call our attention to the firmament, in which everything that exists there, is under God's absolute and unchangeable decree, and where their every movement is unchangeably fixed, if it did not mean to convey the idea that all His handiworks are the same way? David said, "All Thy works shall praise Thee" (Psalm 145:10). "All Thy works" mean everything that He has made. This includes the devil and all wicked people. They all praise Him in magnifying His terrible justice in the condemnation of wickedness. They do not do so intelligently or intentionally, yet they all praise Him in the sense that they are exactly what He intended them to be, and are moving according as He determined [Editor's note: several lines here are torn with half of them missing, the last words are "mercy and justice."] Everything in this life is so unalterably fixed that man cannot by "taking thought" (Matthew 6:27) change the events that are to come on the morrow. Jesus in admonishing His disciples not to take any thought for the future and what they should eat, drink or wear, finally asked them, "Which of you

by taking thought can add to his stature one cubit?" (Matthew 6:27). Then He added, "If ye then be not able to do that thing which is least, why take ye thought of the rest?" (Luke 12:26). If the language of Jesus has any meaning whatever, men cannot change the least thing in the affairs of this life. This brings us back to the statement of Jeremiah, that *it is not in man that walketh to direct his steps*" (Jeremiah 10:23).

There is no doubt that Solomon told the truth when He said, "Many goings are of the Lord, how can a man then understand his own way?" (Proverbs 20:24). Solomon also said, "The king's heart is in the hand of the Lord as rivers of waters, He turneth it whithersoever He will" (Proverbs 21:1). This was proven in the case of Pharaoh, and in the case of Saul and others we could mention. If He turns the king's heart whithersoever He will, then He must also turn the hearts of the common people in the same way. And we are not lacking in proof on this point: David, speaking of the Egyptians in Psalms 105:25 said of God, "He turned their heart to hate His people and to deal subtly with His servants." Stephen says, "The same dealt subtly with our kindred, and evil entreated our fathers, so that they cast out their young children, to the end they might not live" (Acts 7:19). Keep in mind that God "turneth their heart" to do this. All the cruelties perpetrated and inflicted upon Israel in Egypt by the Egyptians, God turned their hearts to do it. They were doing just what He had turned their hearts to do, and just what He swore to Abraham that they should do. He swore to Abraham saying, "Know of a surety, that thy seed shall be a stranger in a land that is not theirs and shall serve them and they shall afflict them four hundred years" (Genesis 15:13). And when the set time came for it to begin, "He turned their hearts to hate His people and to deal subtly with His servants." (Psalm 105:25).

Reader, what think you? Do you believe this, or are you an infidel? Here are four hundred years of wicked, cruel, and sinful treatment by a whole nation, to God's servants, which God had not only previously purposed and had sworn that they should do it, but which He turned their hearts to do. The man who can accept this (those who cannot are infidels, for this is the precise statement of the Bible) has no grounds whatever to raise any objections to the predestination of all things. For if God did purpose four hundred years of wickedness to be practiced by a

nation, and turn their hearts to do this wickedness, and He still remain just, then every argument that has ever been made against the predestination of all things falls to the ground, and is swept away like chaff before the wind. These are stubborn facts that cannot be denied.

Solomon says in Ecclesiastes 3:1, "*To every thing there is a season, and a time to every purpose under the heavens.*" Let us keep in mind that we are now considering *purposed things*. "*A time to every purpose under heaven.*"

Solomon was not talking about **man's** purpose, but of **God's purposes**. He then begins to numerate some of the *things* that are purposed and the first things that he mentions are: "*A time to be born, and a time to die.*" This proves beyond doubt that he is talking about things that God has purposed and the time for their occurrence, for we know that man does not purpose *his own* birth and the time for it.

He then proceeds to mention some things that are purposed and have a *set time* for their occurrence. He says, "*A time to plant, and a time to pluck up that which is planted; a time to kill and a time to heal; a time to break down, and a time to build up; a time to weep, and a time to laugh; a time to mourn, and a time to dance; a time to cast away stones, and a time to gather stones together; a time to embrace, and a time to refrain from embracing; a time to get, and a time to lose; a time to keep, and a time to cast away; a time to rend, and a time to sew; a time to keep silence, and a time to speak; a time to love, and a time to hate; a time of war and a time of peace*" (Ecclesiastes 3:1-8).

Solomon has here presented the things that men engage in here in this life, from the most trivial things, such as children gathering stones together and then casting them away. Even such things as one tearing a hole in his pants and having it sewed up ("*A time to rend, and a time to sew*"), and on up to the greatest calamity that can befall a people, which is war. All these *things* are purposed of God, and the *time set* for them to take place. Solomon begins this statement by the most sweeping expression that he could employ: He says, "*To EVERYTHING there is a SEASON and a time to EVERY purpose under the heavens*" (Ecclesiastes 3:1). The word *season* means a *suitable time*. Not only just a time *set*, but also a time that *suits* the One that set it for the occurrence of the thing purposed, or a *proper time*.

This brings us back again to the statement of Jeremiah: "*O Lord, I know that the way of man is not in himself; it is not in man that walketh to direct his steps*" (Jeremiah 10:23). There is not a step in man's life from the cradle to the grave that the Lord does not direct. ("*A man's heart deviseth his way; but the Lord directeth his steps*" – Proverb 16:9; "*The preparations of the heart in man, and the answer of the tongue, is from the Lord*" – Proverb 16:1; "*The lot is cast into the lap; but the whole disposing thereof is of the Lord*" – Proverb 16:33; "*The Lord has made all things for Himself: yea, even the wicked for the day of evil*" – Proverb 16:4). Even children gathering stones and casting them at birds are so directed in their movements that they cannot bring one sparrow to the ground unless God so directs. Jesus says: "*Are not two sparrows sold for a farthing? And one of them shall not fall on the ground without your Father.*" Then He adds: "*But the very hairs of your head are all numbered*" (Matthew 10:29-30).

Do you suppose God made the hairs of the head, and then counted them? My, wouldn't that be a job! Thousands of children being born each day and God counting the number of hairs each one has on its head? Perish the thought! They were numbered in His determinate counsel before He made the world. He determined the number of hairs that each head should have and that number is with Him in His perfect mind.

He even gave the seas their decreed places and broke up the fallow ground for them. God said by Jeremiah, "*Will ye not fear Me, saith the Lord? Will ye not tremble at My presence, which have placed the sand for the bound of the sea by a perpetual decree, that it cannot pass it: and though the waves thereof toss themselves, yet can they not prevail; though they roar, yet can they not pass over it?*" (Jeremiah 5:22). Also, God said to Job: "*Oh who shut up the sea with doors, when it break forth as if it issued out of the womb? When I made the cloud the garment thereof, and thick darkness as a swaddling band for it, and brake up for it MY DECREED PLACE, and set bars and doors, and said hitherto shalt thou come, but no further: and here shall thy proud waves be stayed?*" (Job 38:10). Hence, every element in nature is under God's perpetual decree. The raging, heaving, tossing waves of the sea can neither go beyond nor stop short of the place that God has decreed for them. His decree says, "*Hitherto shalt thou come and no further.*" And every thing that lives and moves in

the sea is also in His decree and has a time set by Him for them to take each and every particle of food that they eat. From the greatest monster to the smallest insect that moves in the sea, all wait upon the Lord to take their meat in due season. Did God purpose for them to eat? Then to every thing there is a season, and a time to every purpose under the heaven. David said: "*O Lord, how manifold are Thy works: in wisdom hast Thou made them all: the earth is full of Thy riches. So is this great and wide sea, wherein are things creeping innumerable, both great and small beasts. There goeth the ships; there is that Leviathan, which Thou hast made to play therein. These wait all upon Thee; that Thou mayest give them their meat in due season. That THOU givest them they gather; Thou openest Thy hand, they are filled with good*" (Psalm 104:24-28).

Due season here means the set of God. The ships' crews and passengers; the whale (leviathan) and everything that lives in the sea are included in this sweeping statement of the Psalmist as waiting upon God to give them meat at His appointed time. As every step of man is directed by Him, so too, every movement of these things that inhabit the sea are directed by Him.

Was it by chance that Jonah and the ship he was on, and the whale that God had prepared to swallow him, and the wind that rocked the floundering bark all met at the same place at the same time? Was it by chance that the ship's crew concluded that the storm had been sent because of some one on the ship? Have you ever in all of history read of another case where, in time of a storm, the mariners concluded that the storm had come because of some one that was on the vessel and cast lots to find out who it was and then cast overboard the one that the lot fell on? Was it by chance that they thought to cast lots in this case to see for whom the storm had been sent? Was it by chance that the lot fell on Jonah? Not at all! These things, like all things else, were what God's hand and His counsel determined before to be done. And all things in nature are His agents and are directed by His Providence to the carrying into effect "*what His hand and His counsel determined before to be done.*"

We will next notice what the Lord Himself says about the king of Assyria and his people. In Isaiah 10, He says, "*O Assyria, the ROD of Mine anger, and the staff in their hand is Mine indigna-*

tion. *I will send him against a hypocritical nation, against the people of My wrath will I give him a charge, to take the spoil, and to take the prey, and to tread them down like the mire of the street. Howbeit, HE MEANETH NOT SO, neither doth his heart think so; but it is in his heart (already!) to destroy and cut off nations not a few. For he sayeth, are not my princes altogether kings? Is not Calno as Charchemish? Is not Hamath as Arpad? Is not Samaria as Damascus? As MY HAND HATH FOUND THE KINGDOM OF THE IDOLS, AND WHOSE GRAVEN IMAGES DID EXCEL THEM OF JERUSALEM AND OF SAMARIA? Shall I not, as I have done unto Samaria and her idols, so do to Jerusalem and her idols? Wherefore it shall come to pass, that when the LORD HAS PERFORMED HIS WHOLE WORK UPON MOUNT ZION AND ON JERUSALEM, I WILL PUNISH THE STOUT HEART OF THE KING OF ASSYRIA AND THE GLORY OF HIS HIGH LOOKS. For he saith by the strength of MY HAND have I done it and by MY WISDOM; for I am prudent; and I have removed the bounds of the people and have robbed their treasures, and I have put down the inhabitants like a valiant man, and MY HAND hath found as a nest the riches of the people: and as one gathereth eggs that are left, have I gathered all the earth; and there was none that moved the wing or opened the mouth or peeped.*” That is precisely what natural men would conclude.

Then God said: *“Shall the ax boast itself against him that heweth therewith? Or shall the saw magnify itself against him that shaketh it? As the rod should shake itself against them that lift it up, or as if the staff should lift up itself as if it were not wood.”* This old king with all the arrogance of the devil himself, goes into Jerusalem and willfully murdered the inhabitants, robs their treasures, takes all of their property that he wants and treads the people down like the mire of the street. He acted just as freely, and as cruelly and as wickedly as any one ever did in this world, and boasted of his wonderful wisdom and prudence; and yet God was *using him, and directing his every step* just as truly as any man ever used an ax, or a saw, or a rod, or a staff. If there is any meaning to God’s own Word, He, Himself, was using this old king and his armies to accomplish His purposes on Israel, as surely and as truly as men use the ax, and the saw, and the rod, and the staff to accomplish their

purposes. God’s language will not allow of any other conclusion.

The language shows this king and his armies to be just as powerless to do more than God purposed or less than He purposed as the implements which He mention have in the hand of them that use them. No language could be used to state more positively that God absolutely purposed and directed every step of this old king and his armies in all that they did in this affair. And God Himself still further proves that the whole thing was decreed of Him before He quit speaking. For He goes on to say, *“Therefore shall the Lord, the Lord of hosts, send among his fat ones leanness; and under his glory He shall kindle a burning like the burning of a fire. And the light of Israel shall be for a fire, and His holy One for a flame, and it shall burn and devour his thorns and his briars in one day; and shall consume the glory of his forest and of his fruitful field, both soul and body, and they shall be as when a standard bearer fainteth. And the rest of the trees of his forest shall be few, that a child may write them. And it shall come to pass in that day, that the remnant of Israel and such as are escaped of the house of Jacob, shall no more stay upon him that smote them, but shall stay upon the Lord, the Holy One of Israel, in truth. The remnant shall return, even the remnant of Israel, unto the Mighty God. For though Thy people Israel be as the sand of the sea, yet a remnant of them shall return: the consumption DECREED shall overflow with righteousness.”*

(continued in June, 1931)

Editor’s Note

If you believe you might be able to supply the missing part of Elder Sikes’ series from the *Lone Pilgrim* of March, 1932, Elder Phillips may be contacted by mail at 1159 County Road 420, Quitman, MS 39355-9572. He also may be contacted by e-mail at stan1159@mississippi.net and by telephone at (601) 776-6056. He may also be reached through *The Remnant*. See the masthead on page 2 of this issue for contact information.

BETTER OR WORSE?

For those who have been given by grace to believe in the Lord and Savior Jesus Christ, and who have been made aware of their desperate need for salvation, there are only three possible ways they might think of the course this evil world is presently following. These three positions are:

1. The world is getting better and better, and soon it will be so good that Christ will not be able to stay away any longer: This is the world-view theory of Post-millennialism, which supposes, among other things, that the church is eventually going to convert the world to Christianity. This view, which had its heyday during the joint rise of Arminian freewillism and the missionary movement, apparently has little support nowadays. When Protestantism, thinking it would take the world for Christ, adopted Rome's missionary program, the prospect was that the heathen nations would be converted to Christianity within a generation or so. Citing such passages as Isaiah 11.9 ("They shall not hurt nor destroy in all my holy mountain: for the earth shall be full of the knowledge of the LORD, as the waters cover the sea"), they mistakenly envisioned worldwide Christianity preceding Christ's return. Nowadays, with wickedness running seemingly unchecked throughout the world, it seems there are still a few (but very few) who are deluded enough to believe that all mankind will be converted to Christ before His return.

2. All things continue the same, getting neither better nor worse: This is the world-view of the unbeliever, the skeptic, the Sadducees, and all those who scoff at Bible prophecy. The apostle Peter describes them as follows: "Knowing this first, that there shall come in the last days scoffers, walking after their own lusts, and saying, Where is the promise of His coming? for since the fathers fell asleep, all things continue as they were from the beginning of the creation (2 Peter 3.3f)." These scoffers see nothing special in the prophetic signs of Matthew 24 and elsewhere, the wars and rumors of wars, nation rising against nation, and kingdom against kingdom, famines, and pestilences, and earthquakes, in divers places. They say, "These things prove nothing. We've always had wars, famines, tribulation, and the like, and we always will have them."

3. The world is getting worse and worse: This is basically the world-view expressed by Paul in 2 Timothy 3.13: "Evil men and seducers shall wax worse and worse, *deceiving and being deceived.*" This sounds quite a bit like some of the things Jesus said: "Take heed that no man *deceive* you. For many shall come in my name, saying, I am Christ; and shall *deceive* many (Matthew 24.4f)." "...Nevertheless when the Son of man cometh, shall he find faith on the earth (Luke 18.8)?" "And except those days should be shortened, there should no flesh be saved: but for the elect's sake those days shall be shortened (Matthew 24.22)." "And except that the Lord had shortened those days, no flesh should be saved: but for the elect's sake, whom he hath chosen, he hath shortened the days (Mark 13.20)." Many other citations could be given, had we the space.

The world is indeed becoming worse and worse in a plainly manifest way, as the Lord draws the noose tighter around the necks of Satan and his followers. Some are given to see it, and some are not. This, in itself, is only one more of the events Christ said would precede His glorious return.—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.