

The Remnant

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

March-April, 2008

Volume 22, No. 2

SOME UNFINISHED BUSINESS

A couple of items of unfinished business cry out for attention. One is a commitment made to a Mr. Daniel Hodges in *The Remnant* of November-December, 2005, wherein I said I would address the biblical **use** of the word “**if**,” as compared and contrasted to its **abuse** by the Arminian Conditionalists.

A second item began (for me) last August (2007) when an **Elder Bill Moseley** *publicly announced* on Brother Hoyt Sparks’ Internet Forum (<http://groups.yahoo.com/group/predestinarian/>) that he was filing a claim for the **leather-bound Bible I promised to buy for the first one to produce a Scripture stating, “The Kingdom of Heaven is within you.”** Elder Moseley “filed his claim” as a late-comer to this discussion, not knowing anything about what this discussion concerns (as his questioning attitude expressed to Brother Sparks demonstrates). Nor did he consider the many Conditionalist Elders who are probably older and wiser than he is, who have by now had a few years to chew on this scriptural question, and they have prudently refrained from publicly laying their necks on the chopping block with the careless abandon Elder Moseley has shown.

I had my reasons for not addressing either of these issues before now. At the risk of coming across as a perpetual whiner, I will say again that the problem has never been for a lack of Scriptural support in these matters, as though I had nothing to

say on these subjects. It has ever been a matter of time, computer problems, and priorities.

I have not been putting these men off, but other things had to have my priority. In the case of Mr. Hodges and the little word *if*, I had too many irons in the fire to drop everything and address him. I simply had other things to do, including previous commitments for articles in this paper; commitments to the churches and associations I attend (as the Lord enables), and the responsibilities and commitments which home and family life require. I simply did not have the time before now to try to do a decent job on the subject (As for whether or not I have now done so, our readers may judge for themselves).

In the intervening time since 2005, he seemingly has ignored the comments of around a dozen brethren who have corresponded with him on Brother Sparks’ Forum about his views on *if* and other “conditional” matters. There we will leave it for now and pick up this subject on page 12.

As to why I have not responded to Elder Moseley before now, all of the above reasons obtain, plus the fact that I had major problems with my computer. The latest wave of problems began last summer, a month or two before the Moseley-Sparks e-mail exchange (see pages 3-4), and some of those problems continue to this day.

First, I was having increasing problems with several necessary computer programs, including the word processor with which I write and edit the articles that appear in this magazine. My technician finally convinced me that my operating system was

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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obsolete, and I should upgrade to a newer system. I did so. He installed **Windows XP 2003** for me.

Instead of solving my problems, that increased them. Now, my old **PageMaker 6.5**, with which I actually build these magazines, will no longer allow me to import programs from **MicroSoft Word**. Not even one letter, not even one character. Because of this, I have had to write and edit everything in *The Remnant* from the July-August 2007 issue to this one directly in PageMaker.

Further, Windows XP did something to thoroughly confuse **my printer**. Now the printer does not know where to find the paper, and when I show it where it is, it thinks the paper is the wrong size, and shifts the margins over an inch to the right. Sometimes I have to reset the printer *page for page* when I print. A printer is a necessity: no printer, no *Remnant*, and no labels with which to mail it.

All this took precedence over Elder Moseley's rantings. He could wait; other things could not.

I apologize to our readers who do not use computers for going into what may seem to them to be useless detail, but few know what some of us amateur editors and publishers go through to keep a publication on schedule. You now know a little bit more about this one. Please pardon my “complaints,” if that is what this appears to be. Sometimes, people need and want explanations.

If any of our readers know what has happened to my operating system and how its problems can be fixed, I would be glad to hear from you. —CCM

THE TWO KINGDOMS—AGAIN

Sometime last August (2007), Brother Hoyt Sparks reprinted one of my articles from *The Remnant* on his Internet Forum. In that article (“Tophet Revisited,” from the November-December 2005 issue), I had repeated my challenge to anyone who would produce the nonexistent Bible verse so many people claim to be quoting: “The kingdom of heaven is within you.” To the first one who could produce such a verse, I promised a leather-bound Bible of his choice.

Such a verse, of course, does not exist, or I would not have issued that challenge and offer in the first place. I did so *in the vain hope* that a few people might search the Bible more dilligently and quote it (or refer to it) with a little more respect. After all, it IS the word of God with which we are dealing. There is, however, little or no noticeable evidence that my hope will ever be realized.

Defenders of that error have squirmed around ever since, trying to prove in some roundabout way that even if the Bible doesn’t exactly *say* “the kingdom of heaven is within you,” that is what Luke 17.21 *means*. My position about that is rather simple and straightforward: If the Bible does not say something, then stop **lying** to congregations, telling them the Scriptures say something they do not say. Even if the idea that “*the kingdom of God is the*

same thing as the kingdom of heaven” were true, **which it IS NOT**, men have no right to *invent nonexistent* “Bible verses” and foist them off on gullible people who do not read their Bibles any more than do those men who make up texts. Such men might as well join with the crowd that is constantly churning out all the new “Bible versions,” and, along with the Mormons, the Jehovah’s Witnesses, and the Muslims, make up your own Bible. Saying “the kingdom of heaven is within you” would be a mighty good place to start your new version.

On August 6, 2007, an **Elder Bill Moseley**, having read my article that Brother Sparks reprinted, and being quite unaware that this discussion had gone on for several years (as well as his being unaware of many other things), he sent the e-mail to Brother Hoyt Sparks that I have reproduced in the bordered box below.

Two days later, Elder Moseley sent the email dated August 8, 2007, reproduced in the box at the top of page four. In it, he tried to drag Brother Sparks into the conflict. Brother Sparks rightly responded to him:

Elder Moseley:

This is something you need to take up directly with Elder Morris, if Elder Morris chooses to respond, that’s his decision, not mine. I’ll refrain

(Continued on the next page)

From: TRUEOLDLINERS@yahoogroups.com [mailto:TRUEOLDLINERS@yahoogroups.com]

On Behalf Of bmoseley5@austin.rr.com

Sent: Monday, August 06, 2007 4:49 PM

To: bmoseley5@austin.rr.com

Subject: [TRUEOLDLINERS] RE: IF, THEN

Bro. Hoyt,

I am interested in how you can spin these to be different. Tell me plainly in your words. Do you not consider the Kingdom of Heaven and Kingdom of God to be one in the same? FYI: I do. If they are not the same, is there two different kingdoms? If that be so why did Daniel not tell us of a sixth kingdom. Oh yeah, I want my new Bible ... I like black leather covers. :-)

Luke 17:21 (King James Version) King James Version (KJV) Public Domain 21 Neither shall they say, Lo here! or, lo there! for, behold, the kingdom of God is within you.”

A standing challenge: In the September-October, 2003 issue of *The Remnant*, page 10, we offered a new Bible for the first person who would produce a verse of Scripture from the King James Version of the Bible that says, “The kingdom of heaven is within you.” We promised to buy that person a brand-new leather-bound Bible of his choice. We are still waiting. To date no one has taken us up on this most generous offer. This is simply because such a verse does not exist.” —C. C. Morris

Interested,

Bill M

From: Bill Moseley [mailto:bmoseley5@austin.rr.com]

Sent: Wednesday, August 08, 2007 12:35 AM

To: 'HOYT D. F. SPARKS'

Subject: Kingdom of Heaven - Kingdom of God

Bro. Hoyt,

To prove the Kingdom of Heaven and the Kingdom of God are the same, check these out.

Witness #1 Kingdom At Hand

Matt 3:1-2 In those days came John the Baptist, preaching in the wilderness of Judaea, 2 And saying, Repent ye: for the kingdom of heaven is at hand.

Mark 1:14-15 Now after that John was put in prison, Jesus came into Galilee, preaching the gospel of the kingdom of God, 15 And saying, The time is fulfilled, and the kingdom of God is at hand: repent ye, and believe the gospel.

Witness #2 A Small Grain of Mustard Seed

Matt 13:31- 32 Another parable put he forth unto them, saying, The kingdom of heaven is like to a grain of mustard seed, which a man took, and sowed in his field: ³² Which indeed is the least of all seeds: but when it is grown, it is the greatest among herbs, and becometh a tree, so that the birds of the air come and lodge in the branches thereof.

Mark 4:30-32 And he said, Whereunto shall we liken the kingdom of God? or with what comparison shall we compare it?

31 It is like a grain of mustard seed, which, when it is sown in the earth, is less than all the seeds that be in the earth: 32 But when it is sown, it groweth up, and becometh greater than all herbs, and shooteth out great branches; so that the fowls of the air may lodge under the shadow of it.

Do these look very similar? Now, I know I want my new bible, unless, Bro. CC Morris wants to be legalistic and say that even though the words don't exactly say, the Kingdom of Heaven is within you, the scripture does say the Kingdom of God is within you and I have just proved beyond a shadow of a doubt they are the same.

Luke 17:21 Neither shall they say, Lo here! or, lo there! for, behold, the kingdom of God is within you.

Help me understand why this is such an important issue that Bro. Morris would set up such a challenge? Did he never read these scripture the various gospels?

BM

(Continued from page 3)

from further replies/answers until I receive your retraction of your writing wherein you falsely accused me of saying the O.T. is not valid to use.

HOYT D. F. SPARKS, SL

*

REPLY TO ELDER MOSELEY:

While we do occasionally publish excerpts from what we consider sound doctrinal books, sermons, and hymns, I do not rely on human logic, human reason, or quotes from great men, however spiritual they might be, either to determine or to establish what is biblical, doctrinal truth. By God's grace and mercy I hope to have only one standard for what is published in *The Remnant*: "To **the law** and to **the testimony**: if they speak not according to this word, it is because there is no light in them (Isaiah 8.20)."

We do not depend on human logic and reason as a source for doctrinal truth, but in your case I am willing to make an exception and dig into the field of logic a little, in order to examine your expressed position.

Obviously we do not bring up the subject of the kingdom of God as compared and contrasted to the kingdom of heaven in every issue of *The Remnant*. There is no need to do so. Most of those making critical comments about these two kingdoms, either directly to me or elsewhere, are saying the same old things based on the same fallacious reasoning they have used since their youth, received by tradition from their fathers. This reasoning we will now address, using Elder Moseley's e-mails as a starting point. The "arguments" he has advanced are so fallacious that a child would instantly see through them if such *illogical logic* were used in everyday conversation. But somehow, in the topsy-turvy world of "spiritualizing the Scriptures" (by which the "spiritualizer"

makes the Bible mean anything he wants it to mean), all the rules of grammar, of logic, and of basic communication go out the window.

To begin, let us look at some basic rules of logic, argumentation, and reasoning skills to see what is so dreadfully wrong with saying *the kingdoms of God and of heaven are identical*.

For example, consider these ordinary propositions in nature, first:

All Dogs are mammals
All Cats are mammals

Not even a grammar-school child would make any of the mistakes of concluding either “all dogs are cats,” “all cats are dogs,” or “Cats and dogs **are the exact same thing.**” Yet it is exactly that kind of *unreasonable reasoning* that leads Conditionalists and many other Amillennialists to take the following two propositions:

The kingdom of heaven is at hand
The kingdom of God is at hand

and to conclude from them that “the kingdom of God is the kingdom of heaven; they are the exact same thing.”

To carry this out a bit further, in the first set of propositions, we could have included other premises, as:

All horses are mammals
All human beings are mammals
All skunks are mammals

No one but a spiritualizer gone to seed would conclude from the above that a horse is a skunk, a skunk is a human being, or a human being is a “spiritual” horse.

We well know that people are figuratively called “work-horses” and “skunks.” People are said to “stink” and to “horse around,” “cat around,” and “dog it.” This type of mixing literal with figurative language contributes somewhat to the problem at hand, but most of all this type of error grows in the minds of those who, having little or **no respect for the word of God AS BEING the word of God**, think the Bible is all spiritual, all figurative, all symbolic, all allegorical, all whatever they want it to be for the moment. Had we said:

All dolphins are mammals
Cleo Lemon is a Dolphin

some would conclude that Mr. Cleo Lemon (of the *Miami Dolphins*) is a mammal. **By definition they would be right, but for the wrong reason!** Here the error would come from not recognizing the distinction between the different uses of the word *dolphin/Dolphin*. That is similar to the “*kingdom/kingdom*” problem.

Had we advanced these propositions:

All bats are flying mammals
All Louisville Sluggers are bats

there are those who would “logically conclude” that a milled hickory-stick called a Louisville Slugger is a flying mammal. (Such a bat flies, but only when a batter throws it; that does not make it a mammal.)

Such mistaken reasoning does not usually confuse those who are given the humble desire for the sincere milk of the word that they may grow thereby, those who are blessed by the Lord’s Spirit to regularly and prayerfully seek to know what the Lord hath said and *meant*. No; such erroneous reasoning is almost always found in the domain of (a) those who are close-mindedly bent on proving their pet theory—in the case we have before us, those who want to prove that God’s two kingdoms and the church are all the same thing; or (b) novices who are led astray by such fascinating “interpretations.”

*

“*Do these look very similar? Now, I know I want my new bible, unless, Bro. CC Morris wants to be legalistic and say that even though the words don’t exactly say, the Kingdom of Heaven is within you, the scripture does say the Kingdom of God is within you and I have just proved beyond a shadow of a doubt they are the same.*”—Elder Bill Moseley

In all candor, Elder Moseley, it seems you would not know what to do with a new Bible if you had one. Imagine—a Conditionalist insinuating someone other than himself and his kind might “want to be *legalistic*”! You write:

Elder Moseley asks of Brother Sparks: *Help me understand why this is such an important issue that Bro. Morris would set up such a challenge? Did he never read these scripture the various gospels?* [sic]

BM

(Yes, you did write that, exactly that way.)

First, Elder Moseley, it appears that your inability to read is exceeded only by your lack of comprehension. If you were given to read and understand the Bible exactly as it is written, you would not have a problem, either with what the Bible says or with what I said. "...but now they are hid from thine eyes (Luke 19.42)."

Second, I do not *expect* you to understand. **"Many shall be purified, and made white, and tried; but the wicked shall do wickedly: and none of the wicked shall understand; but the wise shall understand (Daniel 12.10)."**

Third: I watched with interest as the brethren on Brother Hoyt's Forum tried one tack after another on you, evidently to no avail. **"If a wise man contendeth with a foolish man, whether he rage or laugh, there is no rest (Proverbs 29.9)."**

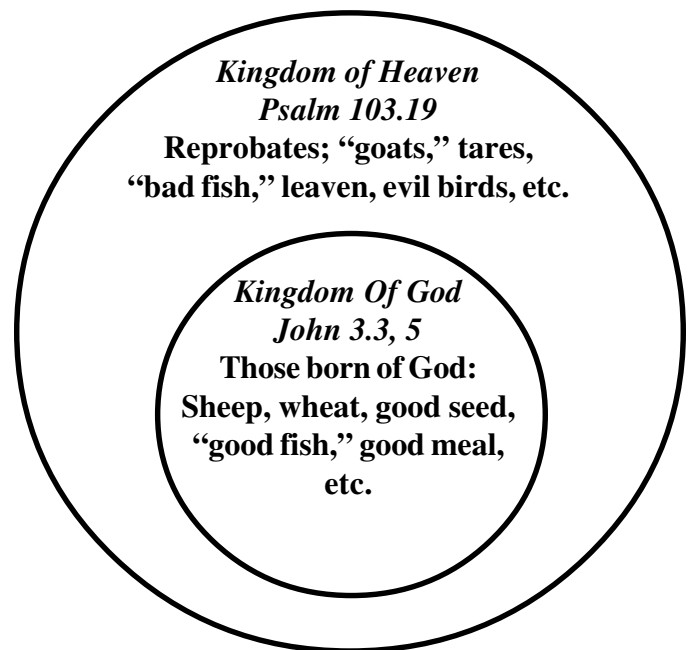
Before we look at what you have said, let us look at what the Scriptures say, which is far more important.

*

The confusion of saying **"the kingdom of God"** equals **"the kingdom of heaven"** equals **"the church"** is the result of the same twofold lack of knowledge that contributed to the errors of the Sadducees: "Ye do err, not knowing [1] the scriptures, nor [2] the power of God (Matthew 22.29)." You evidently think God does not know how to communicate or how to say what He means and to mean what He says.

You are a little late getting in on this friendly little debate that has been going on since the November-December 2002 issue of *The Remnant*, in which I naively published my views on the TWO suppers Christ described in Matthew 22.1ff and Luke 14. By *naively*, I mean I had no idea what a stir my little article would cause. After all; Amillennialists, Conditionalists, and Preterists can with impunity publish any preposterous, figurative, "spiritualization" they wish to. They can say Melchizedek, king Cyrus, and the archangel Michael were really various appearances of Christ. They can get away with saying angels were really Old Baptist ministers. They can deny the bodily resurrection of Christ and His saints, preach soul-sleep and the annihilation of the wicked, deny the existence of an eternal conscious torment of reprobates in the lake of fire; preach universalism, and say that Judas Iscariot and Pharaoh were

merely "unfaithful children of God"; they can apply any and all prophecies of Christ's second advent "spiritually" to His first coming, not discerning the difference; they can say Christ has returned already, the resurrection is past, and we are now glorified, heaven and earth have passed away, the New Jerusalem has already come down, and we are now living in the new heavens and the new earth; they can say Satan is bound, we are in the millennial kingdom now, and the nations are deceived no more; and they can teach whatever other vain imaginations they can stretch their heads and mouths around. They can preach it, and teach it, write it, and publish it in "religious magazines" without opposition, to the wonder, adulation, and praise of those who do not know the difference and cannot understand it when it is shown to them. Why, then, I figured, why



can I not simply publish my understanding of what Christ said about the two separate and distinct parables of the two separate and distinct suppers of which He spoke in Matthew 22 and in Luke 14?

The difference between the two kingdoms may be spelled out simply enough:

The Kingdom of God is seen and entered only by the new birth: "Jesus answered and said unto him, Verily, verily, I say unto thee, Except a man be born again, he cannot SEE the kingdom of God...Jesus answered, Verily, verily, I say unto thee, Except a man be born of water and of the

Spirit, he cannot ENTER into the kingdom of God (John 3.3-5).” Thus **only** the elect children of God, born of His Spirit, see and enter into **the kingdom of God**.

The Kingdom of Heaven

In contrast to the spiritual kingdom of God, entered only by and through the new birth, **the kingdom of heaven consists of all creation**: “The LORD hath prepared His throne in the heavens; and His kingdom ruleth over all.” Each and every reprobate without exception, from Cain to Pharaoh, to the baby-burners of Tophet, to Judas, to that Man of Sin, the son of perdition (2 Thessalonians 2.3), is included in the kingdom of heaven, as are the children of God; they are all in it, as is all of nature—the earth and all that therein is; the solar system and the rest of the material universe; the sky, clouds, rocks, trees, animals, oceans, deserts, and all else, including heaven, hell, angels, demons, and saints as well as the aforementioned reprobates. *All* are included in **the kingdom of heaven**.

That is why you find tares (the children of the wicked one, Matthew 13.38) in the field/world (same verse), and bad fish (Matthew 13.47-50) in the kingdom of heaven, but **there are no tares or “bad fish” in the kingdom of God**.

The fact that both kingdoms were “at hand” and announced to be so should not surprise anyone who recognizes the Lord Jesus Christ as the King of them both. The kingdom of God and the kingdom of heaven were both present (“at hand”) in the person of their King and *some of His subjects*, the subjects of the two kingdoms.

The kingdom of God is a **proper subset** of the kingdom of heaven (See the Venn diagram on page 6). That is, **all who are in the kingdom of God are in the kingdom of heaven, but not all who are in the kingdom of heaven are in the kingdom of God**. (I am sure that fact will make some Conditionalist heads hurt, but for now that can not be avoided.) Thus you will find some overlaps, and some things both kingdoms have in common, a subject I hope to address later, if blessed to do so.

The overlap and whatever things these kingdoms have in common do not do away with the differences and contrasts between the two, as pointed out above (tares and bad fish are in the kingdom of

heaven, but not a one of them is in the kingdom of God, etc.; those born-again ones are in the kingdom of heaven, as is everything and everyone else, but **only these who are born again can see and enter into the kingdom of God**—at least that is what the Lord Jesus, whether or not *you* consider Him to be an authoritative source, told Nicodemus).

This overlap of some things held in common by both kingdoms is a major source of confusion in the minds of Conditionalists or anyone else who stubbornly insists the two kingdoms are one and the same. The problem is further complicated by those who say their compound, *single-kingdom-with-two-names* is identical with the *church*.

The obfuscation caused by this equating both kingdoms to each other (and equating both of them to the church) has contributed materially to the errors of Conditionalism.

Many Conditionalists I have known or read after say the tares, the “goats,” and the reprobates are neither more nor less than “unfaithful children of God.” The number of those who say this seems to be increasing as we suffer under a worldwide epidemic of brain-rot, *the inability to read, think, or reason*. Most who discuss these things seem to take the position that if something is “spiritual,” all common sense must be automatically excluded.

At the human level, the immediate cause of the error of calling every horrid reprobate “an unfaithful child of God” can be traced back, in part, to the Conditionalists’ inability to discern

(1) generally, between the kingdom of God and the kingdom of heaven, and

(2) specifically, between the wheat and the tares.

Since they cannot discern the former, they are vulnerable to falling into the snare of the devil and not being able to discern the latter.

Why is Conditionalist/Arminian/free-will will-worship “the snare of the devil”? To name one reason, it is by and through Conditionalism (a.k.a. Arminianism), Satan strikes at the center of the gospel of the Lord Jesus Christ. Without exception, every time anyone’s eyes are diverted away from the finished work of Christ and onto themselves and their own self-effort, by telling them they are both able and responsible to accomplish all or any part of their salvation (either their *temporal* salvation, which

is their *sanctification*, or their eternal salvation), they are robbing Christ Jesus and His Holy Spirit of glory and praise that is due only to the Living and True God. HE accomplished *all* salvation for *all* His elect in the person and work of the Lord Jesus Christ, in and by His life, His atoning death on the cross, His resurrection and ascension to the right hand of the Majesty on High, and His ongoing mediatorial intercession for the saints according to the will of God. It is *that important* that the spiritual gift of discernment must be used (by God's grace alone is anyone so enabled); and it is by His God-given spiritual discernment that these distinctions must be understood.

Every time Amillennialists (whether they are Absolute Predestinarians, Conditionalists, Anglicans, Protestants, or Roman Catholics) perpetuate the Romish error that "*the kingdom of God is the church, which is the kingdom of heaven on earth, which is the kingdom of God,*" they thereby unwittingly contribute to the poor Conditionalists' ever-deepening bewilderment.

The **Venn diagram**, above, is representative only. The references to sheep and goats are drawn from Matthew 25 and John 10. The references to wheat and tares; the good seed and the "bad" birds that gobble up the good seed, the good meal and the leaven, the good fish and the bad fish, and the like, are drawn primarily from Christ's parables in Matthew 13 and elsewhere. There are of course many other parabolic illustrations that could be added to the diagram, but at least the diagram gives us a talking point in which to start.

First, then, the kingdom of heaven: "The LORD hath prepared His **throne** in the **heavens**; and His **kingdom** ruleth over all (Psalm 103.19)." That defines the kingdom of heaven accurately, simply, and completely, probably better than any other one text. The rest of the Bible expounds upon it.

If someone has a problem with the concept of God's ruling over **all**, and **all meaning all**, including sin and wickedness no less than righteousness, then he should take his problem up with God. God makes it plain elsewhere that He has no fellowship with iniquity, which He hates; and, at and after Christ's second coming, He will destroy all evil and all evil-doers by placing both it and them in the lake of fire. That is plain in the volume of the Book.

Here, however, He tells all those to whom He has given eyes to see and ears to hear that HIS KINGDOM RULETH OVER ALL. A-L-L. **ALL**.

But He does not show this to those He has sovereignly blinded to that fact. There is not a shred of evidence in the Scriptures to justify exempting anything from His all-encompassing sovereign rule.

He rules, then, over the good seed and the sower, but no less so does He rule over the thorns that choke the seed and the crows that come and gobble up what He has sown. He has a perfect reason for it being exactly that way. Again, if you have a problem with that, take it up with the Author and Finisher of our faith.

In sum, up to here: God unquestionably reigns supreme over all His creation; that is the kingdom of heaven. He reigns supreme over the kingdom of God, which is **part of** the kingdom of heaven, the part that consists of His angels and His saints, whether the saints are departed into heaven or whether they are still in this world, in this life.

*

Now, let us examine what you have said to prove the two kingdoms are the same:

1. In your August 6 memo you said to Brother Sparks: *I am interested in how you can spin these to be different. Tell me plainly in your words. Do you not consider the Kingdom of Heaven and Kingdom of God to be one in [sic] the same? FYI: I do. If they are not the same, is [sic] there two different kingdoms? If that be so why did Daniel not tell us of a sixth kingdom. Oh yeah, I want my new Bible...I like black leather covers.*

Reply:

A. I do not care if you **do** "*consider*" the *Kingdom of Heaven and Kingdom of God to be one in [sic] the same*. Your **considering** something to be so does not make it so. Your **considering** something to be so is not grounds for making a claim on my offer. I asked that someone produce a Scripture that says, "The kingdom of heaven is within you," as is often printed in Conditionalist journals. This you have not done, nor will you, unless you print your own version of a "Bible" with that in it.

B. You ask or say, "...*is [sic] there two different kingdoms? If that be so why did Daniel not tell us of a sixth kingdom.*" Please make up your mind—is it two? Or six? Or five?? What are you trying to say? I suspect

you have reference to the second chapter of Daniel, but until you communicate, the ball is in your court.

That seems to cover your e-mail of 6 August 2007. If it does not, you may tell me what I have overlooked—other than your “*Oh yeah, I want my new Bible...I like black leather covers,*” a statement better ignored (better for you).

2. In your 8 August 2007 memo you said:

To prove the Kingdom of Heaven and the Kingdom of God are the same, check these out.

Witness #1 Kingdom At Hand

Matt 3:1-2 In those days came John the Baptist, preaching in the wilderness of Judaea, 2 And saying, Repent ye: for the kingdom of heaven is at hand.

Mark 1:14-15 Now after that John was put in prison, Jesus came into Galilee, preaching the gospel of the kingdom of God, 15 And saying, The time is fulfilled, and the kingdom of God is at hand: repent ye, and believe the gospel.

Let’s see now. **John**, preaching in **Judaea**, said the kingdom of **heaven** is at hand.

Later, after John was put in prison, **Jesus**, preaching in **Galilee**, said the kingdom of **God** is at hand.

And that, you say, is supposed *To prove the Kingdom of Heaven and the Kingdom of God are the same.* I don’t think so.

In those days came the **Mayor of Crump, Idaho**, proclaiming, in **Crump**, that **Bessie Smith** is at hand.

Now after the Mayor of Crump was put in prison, the **Governor of California** said in **San Francisco**, “**Winston Churchill** is at hand.”

According to the exact same parallel logic you use, **Winston Churchill** is the same thing as **Bessie Smith**.

Again, reduced to the simplest of terms, where **H** is the kingdom of heaven, **G** is the kingdom of God, and **X** is “at hand,” your reasoning is: **H** is **X**; **G** is **X**; therefore **H** is **G**. By that line of reasoning, you would have to say:

Cats [**H**] are pets [**X**]

Dogs [**G**] are pets [**X**]

Therefore, cats [**H**] are dogs [**G**].

As long as a corrupt priesthood can convince its hearers that the Bible is so *mysterious and spiritual* that no one can understand it unless one of the clergy explains

it to them, and under the pain of exclusion, dismemberment, and death the people must believe it is exactly as the clergy says, then that kind of *unreasonable reasoning* will prevail. But, as was said elsewhere, Conditionalist “logic” stripped of its “spiritualization” would not fool a grade-school child.

What you have here is **the logical fallacy of the undistributed middle term**. What that means (in the case of the Dogs, Cats, and Pets) is that **Pets** is not properly “distributed” in the premises. That is, nowhere does the syllogism say “**all** Pets are Dogs” OR “**all** Pets are Cats.” Therefore there is no way one could rightly conclude that “**all** Cats are Dogs.”

In the case of “The kingdom of heaven is at hand” and “The kingdom of God is at hand,” the undistributed middle term is “**at hand**.” Nowhere *in these texts* is ALL of whatever is “at hand” defined as “**All** that is at hand is the kingdom of God.” (Note: I said, “Nowhere *in these texts*...”; Psalm 103.19 says the kingdom of heaven *is* all that God rules over.)

No one can rightly say, “Everything that is *at hand* is the kingdom of God.” Remember: Depending on how **at hand** is actually defined, John or Jesus could have as easily said the kingdom of **Herod** is at hand, the kingdom of the **Roman Empire** is at hand, the kingdom of **Greece** is at hand (John 12.20), the kingdom of the **Pharisees** is at hand, or even, the **vegetable** kingdom is at hand, and, the **animal** kingdom is at hand; but you will probably agree that *none of these kingdoms is the kingdom of God*. **In sum, just because something is “at hand” does not mean it is the kingdom of God.**

Anyone who would use Matthew 3.1f and Mark 1.14f to prove “the two kingdoms are the same” would lose to a junior-high debating team.

3. Again, in your 8 August 2007 memo you said: **Witness #2 A Small Grain of Mustard Seed**

Matt 13:31- 32 Another parable put he forth unto them, saying, The kingdom of heaven is like to a grain of mustard seed, which a man took, and sowed in his field:³² Which indeed is the least of all seeds: but when it is grown, it is the greatest among herbs, and becometh a tree, so that the birds of the air come and lodge in the branches thereof.

Mark 4:30-32 And he said, Whereunto shall we liken the kingdom of God? or with what comparison shall we compare it?

31 *It is like a grain of mustard seed, which, when it is sown in the earth, is less than all the seeds that be in the earth: 32 But when it is sown, it groweth up, and becometh greater than all herbs, and shooteth out great branches; so that the fowls of the air may lodge under the shadow of it.*

Do these look very similar?

Reply:

1. To answer your last point (*Do these look very similar?*) first: Of course they do. **Do the Olsen twins look very similar?** Of course they do. Are they the same person? Of course not. Does a **Ford Pickup truck** and a **Dodge Pickup truck** look very similar? In some respects, yes. Are they the same thing? Of course not. Ask any Dodge man or any Ford man. Just because two people or two objects “*look very similar*” does not mean they are the identical one-and-the-same thing.

Kingdom of heaven
Matthew 13

The mustard seed
becomes a **tree**

The Birds lodge
in its branches

Kingdom of God
Mark 4

The mustard seed
becomes **greater than**
all herbs

The Birds lodge
under its shadow

Do these look dissimilar?

I told you earlier, there are some overlapping similarities between the two kingdoms. The sheep, the good seed, and the wheat are in the kingdom of heaven **and** in the kingdom of God. The tares and the crows are in the kingdom of heaven, but they are not in the kingdom of God. Jesus said as much.

Now, you answer a couple of questions, please: Matthew mentions the kingdom of heaven thirty-two times and the kingdom of God five times. No one else in the entire Bible mentions the kingdom of heaven, by that name, even once.

Does this strike you as a bit strange?

Have you ever asked yourself why this is so? But more: The gospels of Mark, Luke, and John mention the

kingdom of God 49 times; the kingdom of God is mentioned 15 more times in the rest of the New Testament. Now, in those 69 times the kingdom of God is mentioned in the Bible, if you can find *one place, one parable* that says there are “goats” or “tares” **in the kingdom of God**, please let me know, and you will have gained my attention.

As for your texts: The kingdom of **heaven** is like a mustard seed...that **becomes a tree**, so that the [unclean] **birds of the air lodge in its branches**.

The kingdom of **God** is like a mustard seed...it **becomes greater than all herbs**, and shoots out great branches, so that the **fowls may lodge under the shadow of it**. Beginning in verse 4, the birds throughout Matthew 13 are evil representatives of Satan, as they are in Revelation 18.2: “...Babylon the great is fallen, is fallen, and is become the habitation of devils, and the hold of every foul spirit, and a cage of every unclean and hateful bird.”

The unclean birds can lodge **in the branches of the kingdom of heaven** (Matthew 13.32), because “The LORD hath prepared his **throne** in the **heavens**; and his **kingdom** ruleth over **all** (Psalm 103.19),” including the hateful birds and what they parabolically represent. But these unclean birds **are not part of the kingdom of God**, because “**they cannot enter** into the kingdom of God (John 3.3, 5).” They must be content with **lodging under the shadow of the kingdom of God**, according to Christ as quoted in Mark 4.32. Their *lodging under the shadow of the kingdom of God* (that is Christ’s emphasis in Mark 4.32) explains, at least in part, why there are false professors and apostates under the *shadow* of the kingdom of God, but they are not *really* a part of it.

Exactly like those who “went out from us, but they **were not of us**; for if they had been of us, they would no doubt have continued with us: but they went out, that they might be made manifest that **they were not all of us**,” even so the evil birds may rest under the shade of the kingdom of God, even *lodging* in its branches, but **they are not organically part of the kingdom of God, any more than birds are organically part of a tree in which they roost**.

More on Elder Moseley’s Illogical Logic

Before concluding, we will look a bit deeper into the *illogical logic* that pervades the thinking of the legions who are like-minded with you, Elder Moseley.

Earlier we mentioned **the fallacy of the undistributed middle term**. What does that mean, again? The middle term must somehow be *distributed*, which is to be

defined completely (as either **all** or **none**). Further, for a syllogism to be valid, any term that is distributed in the conclusion must be distributed in the premises.

Here, “at hand” is **the middle term** of the invalid syllogism—technically **invalid**, as nothing in it states **all** that is *at hand* is *anything*. Look again at your position:

The kingdom of heaven is at hand.
The kingdom of God is at hand.
Ergo, the kingdom of heaven is the kingdom of God.

Then, according to that, this would be just as valid:
The kingdom of heaven is at hand.
The Egyptian caravan is at hand.
Ergo, the Egyptian caravan is the kingdom of God.

One is as valid as the other. Or, try this:

The kingdom of heaven is at hand.
The 2009 model Chevrolet is at hand.
Ergo, the 2009 model Chevrolet is the kingdom of God.

One is exactly as valid as the other.

To compare the invalid amillennial syllogism with a sound (valid) syllogism, look in John 6.37, where Jesus gives two premises with a sound conclusion: “[1] All that the Father giveth me shall come to me; and [2] him that cometh to me I will in no wise cast out.” If we may read “him” as “**all**” in “**him** that cometh to me, (as the text infers and as this text is generally understood), then the syllogism would read:

Major Premise: All that the Father giveth me shall come [or cometh] to me.

Minor Premise: All that cometh [or shall come] to me I will in no wise cast out.

Conclusion: [Therefore] All that the Father giveth me I will in no wise cast out.

There is no term in what Christ said that is not properly distributed; Christ’s syllogism in John 6 is valid.

One More Rule of Logic: Leibniz’s Law

Before we leave this subject we will look at Leibniz’s Law, which should be self-evident to anyone who thinks about it, but for some reason the “same kingdom” crowd cannot see it. This law, named after Gottfried Wilhelm

Leibniz (1646-1716), states: **If two objects are the same, any property of one is the property of the other.** Conversely, if any one property is different between two objects, **they are not the same object.** As for this discussion, what this rule of logic means is: ***If the kingdom of God differs from the kingdom of heaven in even one detail (and it does), then they are not the same kingdom.***

Now, I know I want my new bible, unless, Bro. CC Morris wants to be legalistic and say that even though the words don’t exactly say, the Kingdom of Heaven is within you, the scripture does say the Kingdom of God is within you....

Here is a legalist among legalists, accusing me of “wanting to be *legalistic*”! And yet, sir, you are lawless enough to make up your own rules and to try to force me to obey them, to circumvent my one plain requirement that you simply produce one text that says, “The kingdom of heaven is within you,” **as it is so often misstated.**

Elder Moseley, we see to what lengths you will go to maintain your untenable position. You say, “...and I have just proved beyond a shadow of a doubt they are the same.” All you have proved is how little you understand (1) the Bible, (2) language, and (3) what a valid logical proof is. I suppose you have a Bible already; you would do well to use it some before you seek a new one.

You (or someone) might object that my resorting to “human logic” and natural objects such as football quarterbacks, dogs, cats, pets, dolphins, bats (baseball and otherwise), Chevies, and Ford and Dodge trucks is “carnal reasoning.” Hardly so. **“Art thou a master of Israel [or an Elder among the Conditionalists], and knowest not these things? Verily, verily, I say unto thee, We speak that we do know, and testify that we have seen; and ye receive not our witness. If I have told you earthly things, and ye believe not, how shall ye believe, if I tell you of heavenly things? (John 3. 10ff).”**

Christ often referred to birds, sowers and seed, women and meal, a treasure in a field, fish-nets, lilies, sheep, and goats. Was He being “carnal”?

“Spiritual” does not mean outlandish, novel, illogical, or unreasonable. “Come now, and let us **reason** together, saith the LORD (Isaiah 1. 18).” Of course, that text presupposes that our God has given to the one so addressed the ability to reason. —CC Morris

BACK TO MR. HODGES AND A LOT OF OTHERS: THE BIG “IF”

The If-Then function in formal logic is basic to “conditionals.” The term **conditional** is actually synonymous with the **if-then logic function**. This fact is foundational to any discussion of either of the two terms in the field of logic. **Conditional** is not merely a term some old Absoluter made up to describe the free-will doctrine of Arminians.

We shall attempt to look at the subject of logic and conditionals regarding the word “IF.” First of all, I will say as plainly as I know how, **neither God nor His inspired Bible is illogical**. Neither God nor the Bible goes counter to the established rules or logic, discussion, argumentation, or reason.

We sing a hymn that contains the following words:

There, there, on eagles’ wings we soar
And sin and **sense** molest no more....

The song’s reference to **sense** “molesting no more” has to do with the natural senses of sight, sounds, and feelings that divert our thoughts from spiritual things to things of this natural life. **It does not mean we are to throw common sense out the window**. There is an element of “spiritual thinking” that glories in finding obscure Bible verses and putting weird “interpretations” on them. The more far-fetched an explanation of a word or text is, the better it suits those possessed by that way of “thinking.” The plain meaning of Scripture is rejected, exchanged for outlandish innovations.

To the proponents of this type of thinking, such an approach is an acceptable substitute for “*Study* to show thyself approved unto God...rightly dividing the word of truth. (2 Timothy 2.15).” Studying is too hard. Why *study* when we can play word games?

In such a view, “carnal reasoning” is one word—that is, all reason is carnal. Neither “common sense,” “horse sense,” nor “the sense God gave a goose” has any appeal in such an outlook. Like the philosophers on Mars Hill, those who think thus delight in spending their time in nothing else, but either to tell, or to hear some new thing (Acts 17.21). Unlike the Athenian philosophers, however, these have little use for “reason.”

The Big Little Word “IF”

On page 16 of *The Remnant* for November-December, 2005, I quoted Mr. Daniel Hodges as saying,

“Anytime [sic] you see the word ‘IF’ in the Bible, there is a condition to be met.”

I then said, “**...I hope, Lord willing, to take up the subject of the word ‘IF’ at another time.**”

I will not bother our readers again, here, about the problems I have experienced since that issue of the *Remnant* was published about a year and a half ago, other than to say I have had major computer and printer problems (see pages 1-2). I mention this only to assure Mr. Hodges and all interested readers that the delay has not been from a lack of something to say about “if,” or any reluctance on my part to say it. My computer problems are still not completely solved, but I cannot justify putting this subject off any longer. I must at least try to address the use of the word “if” as it is used in the Bible.

It seems that most Conditionalists assume, as Mr. Hodges says, that “*Anytime [sic] you see the word ‘IF’ in the Bible, there is a condition to be met.*” Such is simply not the case.

It is true that “if” is often used to introduce a conditional statement. That, however, is not by any means the only use of the word. Here I will suggest a few other uses of this little word *if*, none of which are conditional: **If may be used in conjecture, in examples, in hypothetical statements, in contingencies or contingent statements, in categorical classifications, and in rhetorical statements.** These should be sufficient for now.

Please note from the start: **Any one valid example** will disprove the suggestion that “*Anytime [sic] you see the word ‘IF’ in the Bible, there is a condition to be met.*”; but because of the prevalence of that type of thinking, I will address it more completely than by merely giving an example or two. We will begin with:

1. The IF of Conjecture

A conjecture is an inference from defective or presumptive evidence; a conclusion deduced by surmise or guesswork. To surmise is to imagine or infer on slight grounds (Webster).

We often see conjectures in discussions where there is insufficient proof in an area men must try to get around, over, or through. I recently read a series of conjectural statements on the subject of Old Testament Bible history,

where two authors were trying to establish dates pertaining to the length of time between Joshua and King David: “*If* Salmon married Rahab in the year Israel entered the Promised Land,” and “*If* they entered the Promised Land in 1451 BC,” and “*If* David was born in 990 BC....”

The problem with this line of reasoning is, **there are too many IFs!** The two authors I was comparing differed on the year of Israel’s entering the Promised Land under Joshua by forty-two years. They differed on the year of David’s birth by twenty-three years. They had no idea when Salmon married Rahab.

Regardless of the dates involved, none of the IFs in the above-referred line of reasoning is a “Conditional” *if* that has to do with whether or not someone will obey or disobey a commandment of God. There is no “condition to be met” in a conjecture.

2. The IF of Example

“If the clouds be full of rain, they empty themselves upon the earth: and if the tree fall toward the south, or toward the north, in the place where the tree falleth, there it shall be (Ecclesiastes 11.3).”

Here, Solomon, by way of the examples of super-saturated clouds giving way to rain and the seemingly random direction a tree falls, illustrates spiritual truths. Without discussing the verse or its implications further, we point out that the IFs in this verse have nothing to do with “a condition to be met.”

3. The Hypothetical IF

A hypothetical statement is related to a *hypothesis*, or a supposition which is in fact not known to be true, put forth for the purpose of argumentation or speculative theorizing. Hypothetical statements are propositions assumed or supposed in order to explore a line of thought or to explore “what IF” for the moment.

The teaching of **evolution** started out as a **hypothesis**—“the evolutionary hypothesis”—until God manifestly delivered its proponents over to believe their own lie. They then began teaching their impossible theory as fact.

“IF I were you, I would go on vacation,” we say. That is a hypothetical statement. “IF there were no crime, then the world would be a better place,” and, “IF wishes were horses, beggars would ride” are hypothetical statements.

(The use of the word *were*, or the use of the subjunctive case, is a clue to an expression’s being a hypothetical statement.)

Hypotheticals, like *conditional statements*, are usually constructed with two main parts:

1. an **antecedent**, which is introduced by the **if**, and
2. a **consequent**, introduced by **then**, either stated or implied.

Thus the three examples above could as well be stated as they are above, or equally well stated as:

“IF I were you, THEN I would go on vacation,”

“IF there were no crime, the world would be a better place; and

“IF wishes were horses, THEN beggars would ride.”

A comparison of these pairs of sentences should convince us that the word *then* is not necessary to complete the idea conveyed by the sentence; but, by coming between the *antecedent* and the *consequent* of each, “then” is helpful in distinguishing between them, completing the thought, and clarifying what is being said.

The antecedents of our three examples are:

“I were you”;

“there were no crime” (Crime did [does] not exist); and,

“wishes were [are] horses.”

The consequents of these three examples are:

“I would go on vacation”;

“the world would be a better place”; and,

“beggars would ride.”

In each case a “working hypothesis” is set forth. In such sentences one is usually presenting an argument of some form. Such argumentation is almost always unproveable because the antecedent is impossible to achieve, or practically so.

In the first example (“IF I were you, I would go on vacation”), I am NOT you, nor can I be. Anyway, IF I *were* you, I would do exactly what you do, would I not? And if I would not, then why wouldn’t I?

In the second example, Crime DOES exist, and it WILL NOT be eradicated. (One could also argue, *hypothetically*, that IF crime did not exist, the world would NOT be a better place, because millions of law-enforcement officers, politicians, lawyers, judges, and other criminals would be out of work.)

In the third example, Wishes ARE NOT horses, nor will they be.

That being the case (and this is generally so in hypothetical statements), hypotheticals do not really prove anything.

But how does this apply to Mr. Hodge's *conjecture*? It applies because there is simply no "condition" to be met in a hypothetical IF. I **cannot** be you. Crime **cannot** be eradicated. Wishes **cannot** become horses.

Are there hypothetical statements in the Bible? Of course there are. God said, "**If I were hungry, I would not tell thee**: for the world is mine, and the fulness thereof (Psalm 50.12)." Is God hungry? Can He be hungry?

Is God's being hungry "a condition to be met"? I am made to wonder what Mr. Hodges might propose to do to the Lord in the way of "rewards and punishments," **if** God does not meet the "condition" that he (Hodges) says is always there, "*Anytime [sic] you see the word 'IF' in the Bible.*"

Again, during Christ's mock trial, Luke said: "And as soon as it was day, the elders of the people and the chief priests and the scribes came together, and led Him into their council, saying, 'Art thou the Christ? tell us.' And He said unto them, '**If** I tell you, ye will not believe: and **if** I also ask you, ye will not answer me, nor let me go. Hereafter shall the Son of man sit on the right hand of the power of God (Luke 22.66-69)." But, as He was speaking hypothetically, He did not "tell" them or "ask" them.

As long as hypothetical statements exist, wherever they exist, they never present any "condition to be met" as Mr. Hodges has wrongly suggested.

4. The IF of Contingency

A man may say, "I will be on time **if** the bus runs on schedule." In effect he is saying, "It is not my fault if the bus is slow. That is out of my control."

(Note: So is *everything else* out of man's control. We control nothing; it is God who controls all things. "Howbeit there is not in every man that knowledge"—1 Corinthians 8.7).

"I was at the right place—the bus stop—at the right time," he is saying. "My being on time is *contingent* on something other than myself; it is contingent on the bus driver and his meeting his schedule." "My being on time is *contingent* on whether or not the bus runs on schedule."

This shows, humanly speaking, that there is no further "condition" this person can meet, **IF** he is truly, totally dependent on the bus for his transportation.

Are there contingencies in the Bible? Of course. In one passage of Scripture, the Lord God of Israel said king Saul would definitely do something that he did not do. The Lord also said the men of a certain city would do

something they did not do. God did not qualify these direct statements. He made them in answer to direct questions David raised. In 1 Samuel 23, David asked:

"O LORD God of Israel, thy servant hath certainly heard that Saul seeketh to come to Keilah, to destroy the city for my sake. Will the men of Keilah deliver me up into his hand? will Saul come down, as thy servant hath heard? O LORD God of Israel, I beseech thee, tell thy servant." And **the LORD said, "He will come down."**

But King Saul did **not** come down, *even though the Lord said he would!*

Then said David, "Will the men of Keilah deliver me and my men into the hand of Saul?" And **the LORD said, "They will deliver thee up."** But the men of Keilah did **not** deliver David and his men into the hand of Saul, *even though the Lord said they would!*

"Then David and his men, which were about six hundred, arose and departed out of Keilah, and went whithersoever they could go. And it was told Saul that David was escaped from Keilah; and he forbare to go forth. (1 Samuel 23.10-13)."

What we have here is a series of *contingencies*. Saul's coming down to Keilah was *contingent* upon, or directly related to, his knowing that David would be in Keilah. When Saul was given to know David was no longer there, Saul forbare to go to Keilah. Also, the men of Keilah delivering David into King Saul's hands was contingent upon David's being in Keilah, for they could not deliver David to Saul if David was not there.

[Editor's Note: The above paragraphs based on 1 Samuel 23 were written in December, 2007. Then, in January, 2008, Brother Hodges wrote to Elder Stanley Phillips and Brother Sparks (on the latter's Forum) asking them for their views and comments on this very text.

The above thoughts are not an effort on my part to enter into their debate. I personally view my writing the above in December and Mr. Hodges' January questions and remarks on the Forum all as part of God's predestinated purpose as He works **all things**, including these things, together for good to them that love God, to them who are the called according to his purpose. My expressed views, whether good or bad, are part of those "all things."—CCM]

5. The Categorical IF; Categorical Statements

Categorical statements stand in contrast to the hypothetical statements mentioned in point 1, above. Hypothetical and categorical statements supplement each other.

A **categorical statement** recognizes and acknowledges the existence of two or more **categories or defined groups**.

For example, Isaiah 1.19-20 states, “**If** ye be willing and obedient, ye shall eat the good of the land: but **if** ye refuse and rebel, ye shall be devoured with the sword: for the mouth of the LORD hath spoken it.”

Most casual readers, **if** they are yet free-willers, assume these verses present *conditions* that all men can comply with or not, do or not do, as they see fit.

Man cannot do this; he has no ability to be *willing or obedient* until God does something for him. Then and only then a man will be willing and obedient, and not before. “And they came, **every one** whose heart stirred him up, and every one whom His Spirit made willing, and they brought the LORD’S offering to the work of the tabernacle of the congregation, and for all his service, and for the holy garments. And they came, both men and women, *as many as were willing hearted*, and brought bracelets, and earrings, and rings, and tablets, all jewels of gold: and **every man** that offered offered an offering of gold unto the LORD (Exodus 35.21f).”

How was it that these people were willing hearted? “The preparations of the heart in man, and the answer of the tongue, is from the LORD (Proverbs 16.1). The Lord made them willing. “**Thy people shall be willing in the day of Thy power...**(Psalm 110.3)” and not before.

“Now in the first year of Cyrus king of Persia, that the word of the LORD by the mouth of Jeremiah might be fulfilled, **the LORD stirred up the spirit of Cyrus king of Persia**, that he made a proclamation throughout all his kingdom, and put it also in writing, saying, Thus saith Cyrus king of Persia, The LORD God of heaven hath given me all the kingdoms of the earth; and he hath charged me to build him an house at Jerusalem, which is in Judah (Ezra 1.1).”

“And **the LORD stirred up the spirit of Zerubbabel** the son of Shealtiel, governor of Judah, and **the spirit of Joshua** the son of Josedech, the high priest, and **the spirit of all the remnant of the people**; and they came and did work in the house of the LORD of hosts, their God, In the four and twentieth day of the sixth month, in the second year of Darius the king (Haggai 1.14f).”

None of the above acts would have been done had God not taken the initiative, stirred up the ones mentioned, and moved them into their appointed roles and actions.

Back to the Categorical “If”: Texts such as Isaiah 1.19-20 do not set forth conditions for us to meet. They define two **mutually exclusive categories**:

(a) There are those who *are* in the **category** of those who are **willing and obedient**, and

(b) there are those who *are not* willing and obedient, but instead they are in the **category** of the **rebellious**, or **those who refuse and rebel**.

There is absolutely no biblical indication whatsoever that anyone in one of these groups can transfer to the other group by an act of their will. If they are ever moved from one group (say from those who refuse and rebel) to the other (to those who are willing and obedient), it is God who does the moving, in accord with what Paul said to the Colossian brethren: “Giving thanks unto **the Father**, which hath **made us meet** [fit] to be partakers of the inheritance of the saints in light: Who hath **delivered us from** the power of darkness, and hath **translated us into** the kingdom of his dear Son (Colossians 1.12f).”

Even as an English word might be *translated* into the Chinese language (by changing the word’s form), even so God translates His children (by changing them, even as a word is converted or translated into another language) into the kingdom of Christ.

In any case, the original categories remain, and these categories are what is under consideration in the **Categorical IF**. As in other uses of the word *if*, there is no “condition” to be met, other than *the condition(s) that God meets for His people*.

6. The Rhetorical IF

In Malachi the first chapter, God asks Israel, “**If** then I be a father, where is mine honour? and **if** I be a master, where is my fear? saith the LORD of hosts unto you, O priests (Malachi 1.6).” It has been said of rhetorical questions that they are asked, not to be answered, but they are asked to provoke thoughtful consideration in the minds of the hearers. How, indeed, could the backslidden priesthood answer God’s questions in so many words? “*A son honoureth his father, and a servant his master: if then I be a father, where is mine honour? and if I be a master, where is my fear? saith the LORD of hosts unto you, O priests, that despise my name.*” There is no real answer other than a guilty, thoughtful silence. Further, the word “if” carries the weight of “*since*”—

since I be a father, where is mine honour? and since I be a master, where is my fear? This use of the word *if* is not setting forth “a condition to be met.”

The Lord continued in verse 8: “And **if** ye offer the blind for sacrifice, is it not evil? and **if** ye offer the lame and sick, is it not?” These are additional thought-provoking, rhetorical questions that cannot be answered logically. Again, the **ifs** do the work of the word *since*: “...*since* ye offer the blind for sacrifice...and *since* ye offer the lame and sick, is it not evil?”

In the rhetorical sense, Christ asked in Matthew 16.26, “For what is a man profited, **IF** he shall gain the whole world, and lose his own soul?” There is no real answer to such an “if” question. There is certainly no “condition to be met” in any **IF** that is used rhetorically or an **IF** that is used as a synonym for the word *since*.

7. The Conditional **IF**

Of course, there is the conditional use of the word *if*, when it is used to introduce a “condition” that exists, that may exist, or is required to be met before something else develops. It is unnecessary to go into these uses here, because everyone knows that introducing conditional statements is one of the primary ways *if* is used. This is *the* use that men have used to make the subject so controversial. To say it is the *only* way *if* is used is obviously an extremely mistaken position that at best is unjustified. There are at least six other uses, which fact has been demonstrated in earlier sections of this article.

The subject has not been exhausted by any means. *Young’s Analytical Concordance* gives no less than nine Hebrew words and seven Greek words that are translated into English by the word *if*, or some form of it, or some other word entirely. According to one computer count, the word *if* occurs 1,595 times in 1,420 verses (in the King James Version).

BUT the sixteen Hebrew and Greek words are not only rendered *if* in English; they are also rendered by such words as *after*, *as*, *at the least*, *before*, *but*, *except*, *forasmuch*, *how*, *howsoever*, *certainly*, *doubtless*, *nevertheless*, *peradventure*, *rightly*, *seeing*, *since*, *surely*, *then*, *therefore*, *though*, *when*, *whether*, *why*, *would God [that]*, and *yet*.

The above listing is by no means exhaustive. It gives only part of the ways these words are rendered in our English Bible. To do the word *if* justice, a person could spend a lifetime studying these sixteen Hebrew and Greek words and how every one of them are translated into

English; then, to properly understand what is going on, one should weigh whether or not each word *as it is actually translated in the King James Version* (such as *after*, *as*, *at the least*, *before*, *but*, and all the other uses) is correctly translated or if it would possibly be better translated by “if” or by some other word. **IF** one did so, he would quickly find that the word *if* is not merely something that introduces conditional terms.

For most of us, such a study would be utterly impossible. However, men like James Strong, Robert Young, W. E. Vine, S.P. Tregelles, E.W. Bullinger, Joseph H. Thayer, and many others devoted their lives to mastering the Hebrew and Greek texts, compiling concordances and dictionaries, and writing expository commentaries so that you and I would not have to do what they did, or spend a lifetime studying one little word.

Additional Lexical Comments On the Word **IF**

There are several Greek words and word forms that are translated by English phrases such as “if perhaps,” “if so be that,” and the like.

1. **εἴ** (**ean**) = if perhaps, if so be that; from (#2, below) + **αν** (**an**)

haply, perchance. The exact condition is brought out by the *Mood* of the accompanying verb:

a. Followed by the *Indicative Mood* with the *Present Tense*, it expresses the condition simply, as in 1 John 5.15: “And **if** we know that he hear us, whatsoever we ask, we know that we have the petitions that we desired of him.”

b. Followed by the *Subjunctive Mood*, it expresses a **hypothetical** but possible condition, **contingent** on future circumstances: “**If** any man will do His will, he shall know of the doctrine, whether it be of God, or whether I speak of myself (John 7.17).”

2. **εἰ** (**ei**) = if. The simple **conditional**.

a. Followed by the *Indicative Mood*, the **hypothesis** is assumed as a fact, the condition being unfulfilled but placed on the supposition: “For **if** the dead rise not, then is not Christ raised: and **if** Christ be not raised, your faith is vain; ye are yet in your sins (1 Corinthians 15.16f).”

b. Followed by the *Optative Mood*, **ei** expresses a complete uncertainty, a mere assumption, or the **conjecture** of something supposed: “That they should seek the Lord, **if** haply [perhaps] they might feel after him, and find him, though he be not far from every one of us (Acts 17.27)”; “But and **if** ye suffer for righteousness' sake, happy are ye (1 Peter 3.14).”

c. Followed by the *Subjunctive Mood*, (as 1.b. above): This gives the condition more certainty, depending more on the event under consideration: “I would that ye all spake with tongues, but rather that ye prophesied: for greater is he that prophesieth than he that speaketh with tongues, except [ἐκτος ἐι με (ektos ei me) = unless] he interpret, that the church may receive edifying (1 Corinthians 14.5).”

Additional examples:

1. “**if** this counsel or this work be of men [1.b., above; i.e., *which remains to be seen*], it will come to nought: but **if it be of God** [that is to say, *which I—Gamaliel—believe to be the case*], ye cannot overthrow it; lest haply ye be found even to fight against God (Acts 5.38f).”

2. “...**if** ye be dead with Christ...**If** ye then be risen with Christ...(Colossians 2.20; 3.1).” Both of these **ifs** are examples of 2.a., above, **assuming these facts to be true**.

3. “...**if** any man have a quarrel against any...**if** he come unto you, receive him...(Colossians 3.13; 4.10).” Both of these **ifs** are examples of 1.b., above, as they are uncertain.

4. **If [εἴτε (eige) = if indeed;** a form of 2.a., above]: “**If** ye continue in the faith grounded and settled...(Colossians 1.23).” The form here expresses “**if indeed ye continue grounded and settled in the faith, which ye will most assuredly do**”; i.e., there is no doubt about it.

*

There is nothing left to the human’s will to be obedient or not. There is no “condition” to be met, as the very construction of the Greek text assures the reader. The Colossian brethren, and those of like precious faith will “**most assuredly continue**,” grounded and settled in the faith. An exegetically correct understanding of Colossians 1.23 demolishes all Conditionalism.

Sometimes we may think: Wouldn’t it be wonderful **if** merely presenting facts to unbelievers would convince and convert them, and that were all that was necessary? No, not really. **IF** the Lord had wanted it to be that way, then that is the way it would be. As it is, it is all for the best for His people. Ever remember Romans 8.28.

The intent of apologetical argumentation, however, is not to convince and convert unbelievers so much as it is to confirm the believers. May the Lord bless these thoughts to the minds of His people, even as He establishes them in every way in the finished work of His Son, the Lord Jesus Christ.—CCM

THE SERIES ON PREMILLENNIALISM AND OUR PRINCIPLES

The ongoing series on the harmony of our **Principles** (as published on the last page of each issue of *The Remnant*) and the doctrine of the **premillennial return of the Lord Jesus Christ**, which has been running since May-June of 2007, will be continued, Lord willing, in our next issue. The series was interrupted to make room for this issue’s contents.

HORATIUS BONAR ON MODES OF INTERPRETATION

As to tendencies, I shall only add this remark; that whatever may be the evil tendencies imputed to our system, **our general mode of interpretation is one which points in the very opposite direction from that of rationalism. From the days of Origen and Jerome, history has recorded the evils and perils of figurative exposition;** but what evils of *literal* interpretation can history reveal? Where are the commentators that have subverted truth by literality? Where are the heretics that have ever betaken themselves to the *literal* as the basis of their fancies or falsities?

I strive to write for truth, not for triumph. The times call for something else than man’s conflict with, or victory over his fellow-man. The issue of the contest, and the prize that is to be won, is divine truth. I am far from thinking that there is not error cleaving to our system, or that there is not much sin mingling with our defence of it; and I shall be always glad to reconsider its various parts, and thankful for correction or further light. For the remark of the German philosopher I feel to be a true one, that “the worst insult that could be offered, even to a half educated man, would be to suppose that he could be offended by the exposure of an error which he entertained, or the proclamation of a truth which had escaped his notice.” **If in aught I have written unadvised words, or breathed a spirit at variance with the mind of Christ, I shall feel much sorrow. But let not my defective statements of truth be made a reason for condemning the truth itself; and though I have written earnestly, I trust it has not been either with unkindness or intolerance.**

—Horatius Bonar

(*Italic type* is Bonar’s; bold emphasis supplied.)

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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;

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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

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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;

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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.