

The Remnant

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

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A MEDITATION FOR A NEW-YEAR'S DAY.

By Augustus M. Toplady

Author's Introduction:

Suggested by some remarkable passages in the twenty-first Chapter of Revelation; particularly by that which immediately follows.

He that sat upon the throne said, Behold, I make all things new. [Revelation 21.5]

As the opening of the present year has recalled a train of reflections, which have not been wholly useless to myself, I transmit the substance of them to the press;* at the same time breathing up any earnest wishes to the great Sovereign of eternity, and Author of time, in behalf of my readers, and of myself, that, together with a new year, he would be graciously pleased to give us new hearts, and enable us to lead new lives; renew and brighten our experiences and our evidences; give us new hold on the everlasting covenant; and write the law of faith and obedience, by the finger of his Spirit, on our inmost souls, more deeply,

*This article was originally published in a periodical.—Editor

more feelingly, more comfortably, and more visibly, than ever. So shall we rise into an increasing meetness for that state of glory where the distributions of duration are not measured and regulated by a created sun; the uncreated and eternal Sun of righteousness, shines, and will for ever shine, on the whole choir of his glorifying and glorified people. Phosphore, redde diem!

A considerable part of the following meditation refers to the doctrine of the millennium: a doctrine, which many excellent persons are inclined to disapprove. It may be proper to assure these that as much as relates to that article is inserted, not with a view to offend, or to perplex the mind of any man; much less with an intention to obtrude my own private opinion upon other people, or even to proselyte a single reader to the belief of it: least of all, with a desire to raise any controversy about it. But, as the question is naturally connected with the present occasion, I could not have done justice to the subject, without touching on that string: and I have endeavoured to touch it as concisely, as tenderly, and as inoffensively, as I was able. If I have erred, I hope I shall not displease: for which I throw myself on the public candour.

(End Author's Introduction;
article begins on page 2)

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Jan. 1, 1775.

Lord's-day Evening.

Great, unspeakably great, are the Mediator's power and glory. He will eminently display them both at that blessed, that most desirable period, when he shall be manifested a second time, at the end of the world ; and appear not as at first, to suffer and die, but to reign on earth, with his saints, prelusive to their final glorification in heaven.

Every thing below is changeable. The expiration of one year, and the birth of another ; the successions of the several seasons, and the regular vicissitudes of day and night ; all conspire to remind us, how transitory, how various, and how uncertain, our time is ; and unite in calling upon us to look beyond the present valley, through which we travel, to the mount of God, the habitation of angels, and the saints' eternal home.

As the things of this world are thus liable to perpetual mutation, so are its best blessings mingled, even for the time being, with their respective inconveniences. Imperfection is written, not only on all we are, and on all we do ; but likewise, on all we enjoy. This has been

invariably the case, ever since man fell in paradise. With perfect innocence, perfect happiness took her flight : nor will either of them be seen on earth again, until that distinguished time arrive, when He that sitteth upon the throne shall say, Behold, I make all things new.

The whole frame, even of material nature, deviated into disorder from the moment Adam sinned. The elements acquired a propensity to hurt, unknown before. The earth teemed with thorns, and refused to supply its fallen master with food convenient for him, but on condition of labour and toil. Water and fire, though in themselves two of the most important sublunary gifts, received, nevertheless, a power to injure and destroy. The very air we breathe is frequently the region of disease, and the vehicle of death.

If such be the present state of the material world, how much less pleasing is the visible state of the moral world ! But I willingly draw the curtain before a scene which, on a superficial view of things, seems rather calculated to excite our concern than joy. Both Scripture, philosophy, and reason, concur in assuring us, that the all wise God, by whose permission every event comes to pass, must have the justest causes, both for the good he does, and for the evil he permits.

It is enough for us to know that a day will dawn when a period shall be put to every disorder under which nature at present labours; and that the earth will become just what it was (perhaps considerably better than it was) ere sin destroyed the harmony, and broke the balance of the well- according system. The stupendous accomplishment of this predestined restoration is largely and explicitly foretold, Rev. xx, where we read that the apostate angels shall

be restrained by the coercive power of God, and confined to their own place for 1000 years. [For farther satisfaction on this subject, if the reader is disposed to consider it, he may consult the third Volume of the present Bishop of Bristol's Dissertation on the Prophecies ; wherein the Scripture doctrine of the Millennium is judiciously cleared, rationally stated, solidly proved, and ably vindicated —A.M.T.] That those of mankind who belong to Christ ; and especially such of them as have been, or are yet to be, slain for his name's sake shall reign with him upon earth, during that given period. And that the bodies of the reprobate dead shall not be raised, until that period is fully expired.

The next chapter opens with acquainting us that, prior to the actual commencement of the millennium, a new heaven, i.e. a new body of surrounding air, and a new earth, shall be prepared for the residence of Christ and the elect. I saw a new heaven and a new earth ; for the first heaven and the first earth were passed away ; and there was no more sea. Intimating, that this terraqueous globe, and its circumambient atmosphere, will be so purified by the preceding general conflagration, as to be totally changed in their qualities, and entirely divested of every thing noxious, or that can cause disgust and pain. And I John saw the holy city, the new Jerusalem, coming down from God out of heaven, prepared as a bride adorned for her husband. By the holy city, I understand the departed souls of the elect, which had all been received into glory, from the moment of their dismissal from the body. These are termed holy, because of their separation unto God, by the decree of election and because of their complete sanctification by the Spirit of grace. They are a city, because of

their 'multitude, dignity, splendour, and unity with each other. These, when Christ appears, shall come down with him from God out of heaven; in order to be reunited to their respective bodies, which will then be raised by the voice of the archangel, and by the trump of God. Their beatified souls thus descending, will be prepared, as a bride, adorned for her husband clothed with perfection of grace, and radiant in the robes of immortality and glory suitable to the state of those who are to reign with Christ, as kings and priests to the Father. Those of the elect who shall be found alive on earth at Christ's appearing will be changed, in the twinkling of an eye (1 Cor. xv.) i.e. their souls will be instantaneously perfected in grace, and their bodies immortalized ; and thus will they render the Church of the first born complete, and be caught up to meet the Lord, and their glorified brethren in the air. (1 Thess. iv.)

And I heard a great voice out of heaven, saying, Behold, the tabernacle of God is with men, and he will dwell with them, and they shall be his people, and God himself shall be with them, and be their God. Thus will angels and saints shout in concert. And let me observe, by the way, that it is impossible for the utmost power of language to express the Deity of Christ, in terms more strong, explicit, and decisive. The tabernacle of God is with men, and God himself, [i. e. Christ, in his own proper and individual person] shall be with them, and be their God. With what eyes does an Arian, or a Socinian, read the Scriptures ?

The felicity of the Millenniary state is next described :—

—First, God shall 'wipe away all tears from their eyes. The world as it now is, is a valley of tears ; and even God's own people have their weeping days below. But in the renewed world,

wherein righteousness shall dwell (2 Pet. iii.) no sigh shall heave the breast, no pang shall rend the heart, no tear shall stain the cheek:

—Second, And there shall be no more death. Each saint will possess personal immortality. We shall never die ourselves : nor be robbed by death of our Christian friends.

—Third : Neither sorrow nor crying, neither shall there be any more pain of body or mind.

—For fourthly, the former things are passed away; all possible occasions of distress and uneasiness being for ever and totally removed; the blessed inhabitants of the new earth will be crowned with unmixed honour, holiness, and joy.

The sacred penman assigns a cause adequate to these great effects. And He that sat upon the throne said, Behold, I make all things new. It will be a new formation indeed. Dr. Watts paraphrases the passage, with great beauty and justness, in those admired lines :—

Attend, while God's Eternal Son
Doth his own glory shew!
Behold, I sit upon my throne,
Creating all things new.

Nature and sin are past away,
And the old Adam dies;
My hands a new foundation lay
See a new world arise!

On what throne does the adored Immanuel sit?

—On the throne of nature : for without him was not any thing made that is made. On the throne of providence: for all things are upheld by the word of his power, and governed by the counsel of his will.

—On the throne of grace, as Mediator of the covenant: and as the Saviour of all who recline on his blood and righteousness.

—On the throne of his converted people's hearts: inspiring them with good, and restraining them from evil; sanctifying them by his presence, and cheering them with the smiles of his love: He will occupy the Millennial throne: as head of all principality and power.

—He will also sit on the throne of universal judgment: assigning the heavenly inheritance to the saints on his right hand; and denouncing the sentence of condemnation against the unholy on his left. He will for ever and for ever sit on the throne of glory: encompassed by the angels he created, and by the people he redeemed. A cross was once his humble throne: and his crown was a diadem of thorns. A reed, once served him for a mock sceptre; and insulting ridicule was the homage he received. But his humiliation ended when he rose from the dead. He is set down at the Father's right hand; and, though a lamb (for he still wears the human nature in which he was sacrificed for our salvation), is in the midst of the throne, and the immortal inheritor of endless honour, and glory, and blessing.

Reader, dost thou say within thyself "Happy the people who are washed in the blood of Him that sitteth upon the throne: and are arrayed in the righteousness of him that maketh all things new?" I can give you one sign, whereby to know, whether this happiness is evidently yours. Has Christ, by the power of his spirit, made thy soul anew? Has he begun to introduce his new creation there? God forbid that we should enter upon a new year, without seriously inquiring, Whether he, who maketh all things new, has given us a new nature and a new name? You may read the character of those, who shall be excluded from the

New-Jerusalem state, in the chapter which has supplied us with the above remarks. The fearful, who deny Christ or his truths from worldly motives; and the unbelieving, who depend on their own repentance in the room of Christ's blood, and on their own works, in the room of or conjointly with Christ's righteousness; and the abominable, i.e. in general, all who are grossly and daringly immoral; more particularly, murderers, and whoremongers, and sorcerers, and idolaters, and all liars, shall have their part in the lake that burns with fire and brimstone, which is the second death.

In like manner spake Isaiah many centuries before, in his thirty-fifth chapter referring to the Millenniary dispensation, he thus proceeds: The unclean shall not pass over it; ; where, no sinner that is unjustified and unsanctified shall have any share in the blessings of that holy state: No lion shall be there; no unregenerate person, none who is a stranger to the meekness and gentleness of Christ: nor shall any ravenous beast go up thereon: no man, in his natural state, no avaricious harpies, or sensualized worldlings, who die unchanged by grace, shall participate in the first resurrection, or attain to the glory which is reserved for the sons of God; but the redeemed shall walk there; the redeemed from sin, who are ransomed by the atonement, and made holy by the spirit of Christ.

What shall I say farther, to the reader? Shall I wish him joy of the new year, into which the good hand of Providence has brought us? I do: and chiefly, I wish him to be a partaker of that joy which cometh from above. I wish, as the apostle did, that the God of hope may fill you with all joy and peace in believing, and cause you to abound in hope, through the power of the Holy Ghost. If thou art already a

believer, the Lord crown the new year with his goodness, by giving thee a fresh out-pouring of faith, holiness, and liveliness! If you are not a believer, God confer on you the best new year's gift, by granting you to experience the new birth unto faith and good works! What will become of you, if you die without that experience learned from Christ's own mouth? He who sitteth upon the throne; he who maketh all things new has, himself, most solemnly and irrevocably averred, that, unless you are made anew, unless you are born again of the Holy Ghost, you shall not so much as see, much less inherit, the kingdom of God.

O, pray to him for faith; and he who prepares your heart to call upon him will hearken to your cry. Throw yourself, for eternal life, on the merits of Jesus; and then, whether you believe the doctrine of the millennium, or not, you will certainly have a part in the blessedness of the state itself, and the second death shall have no power over you.

From The Complete Works of Augustus Toplady, p. 427ff

Editor's Notes (CCM):

1. AUGUSTUS M. TOPLADY (4 November 1740 – 11 August 1778) was a cleric in the Church of England. He composed "Rock of Ages," "A Debtor to Mercy Alone," "Grace, 'Tis a Charming Sound," and other hymns. His English translation of The Doctrine of Absolute Predestination Stated and Asserted, by Jerome Zanchius (Girolamo Zanchi) from Zanchi's original Latin was published under its shorter name of Absolute Predestination, which is available from The Remnant Publications (see page 19).

Toplady died of tuberculosis less than three months before his thirty-eighth birthday anniversary.

2. A NOTE ON THE DEITY OF CHRIST: On page 4 Toplady says, "And let me observe, by the way, that it is impossible for the utmost power of language to express the Deity of Christ, in terms more strong, explicit, and decisive...God himself, [i. e. Christ, in his own proper and individual person] shall be with them, and be their God. With what eyes does an Arian, or a Socinian, read the Scriptures?"] We might add, Arian, Socinian, Sabellian, and Modalist, for these last two heresies have recently resurfaced and have been given some unwarranted publicity and credence of late.

GEMS, #2

by Elder Lynwood Jacobs

Gems are verses of scripture that alone present a powerful message to believers.

Only a part of some verses of Scripture are profound statements of the truth. A good example is Acts 13:48. "And when the Gentiles heard this, they were glad, and glorified the word of God, AND AS MANY AS WERE ORDAINED TO ETERNAL LIFE BELIEVED." This has not changed with time. Today, as then, as many as were ordained to eternal life by almighty God believe, and no one else! Paul and Barnabas had just turned to the Gentiles because the Jews did not believe in the risen Christ. The Apostle brought joy and gladness to those Gentiles, both then and now, who were before ordained of God to believe the truth. Their names are in the Book of Life. They were chosen in Christ before the world began.

Acts 2:39: "For the promise is to you, and to your children, and to all that are far off, **EVEN AS MANY AS THE LORD OUR GOD SHALL CALL.** These words by the Apostle Peter say explicitly that the promise of salvation is to those that God calls out of darkness, into the glorious liberty of the children of God. God calls with a holy calling, not according to our works, but according to his purpose and grace, given us in Christ Jesus before the world began. God calls with power, a direct spiritual awakening to his child with no intermediary needed. His amazing grace fills his children with praises to God and their saviour Jesus Christ.

Acts 2:47: "Praising God, and having favour with all the people. **AND THE LORD ADDED TO THE CHURCH DAILY SUCH AS SHOULD BE SAVED.**" Only God's elect that gladly received Peter's words of truth, believed and were baptized. God still adds to the church daily such as should be saved. Those that gladly receive His word are his children whose appointed time has come for revelation. That time was ordained of God before the world began. It is called the new birth, when they are born, not of the flesh, but born of God. It is the time for baptism of the Holy Ghost and with fire, when they receive that Spirit of wisdom and revelation in the knowledge of God, the eyes of their understanding being enlightened. They then begin to grow in grace and true knowledge.

I John 5:14: "And this is the confidence that we have in him, that, **IF WE ASK ANYTHING ACCORDING TO HIS WILL, HE HEARETH US.**" This statement blesses us to understand the difference between begging and praying. If we ask God for things we don't have, this is begging. If we are thankful to God for what we have this is

praying. True prayer is the fruit of our lips and heart rendering praise and thankfulness to God and his Son for our many blessings. True prayer indicates that God has reconciled us to his will, which is done in heaven and among the inhabitants of the earth. Those reconciled can say with Christ to their Father, "not my will, but thy will be done."

Heb. 8:10: "For this is the covenant I will make with the house of Israel after those days, saith the Lord: **I WILL PUT MY LAWS INTO THEIR MIND, AND WRITE THEM IN THEIR HEARTS:** and I will be unto them a God and they shall be unto me a people." Moses received the law to be written on tables of stone. Christ received the law to be written in the heart and mind of God's people. Thou shalt love thy God and thy neighbor, on these two laws hang all the law and the prophets. There is no "ought to" anything. You shall love when the love of God is shed abroad in your heart, by the Holy Ghost which is given you of God. Then you shall walk in the way of righteousness, and perform those good works that your heavenly Father before ordained that you should walk in them.

Lynwood Jacobs
2012

[Note: We were saddened to hear that Elder Jacobs passed on to meet his Lord on Friday, July 26, 2013. He was well blessed in his preaching and his writing. Lord willing, we hope to finish publishing Elder Jacobs' series of five articles on Gems from the Bible in future issues of The Remnant.—CCM]

GOD'S DECREE AND THE PREDESTINATION OF ALL THINGS

By: Jonas C. Sikes,
Sulphur Bluff, Texas
1931-32

PROPHECY EXPRESSES THE DETERMINATE COUNSEL OF GOD

To all who love the truth, greetings:

With a felt sense of my weakness and an humble desire that the God of truth may enlighten me and direct my mind in the way of truth in a manner that it may be enlightening, strengthening, and comforting to His people, and to silence and put to flight the enemies who are so loud and boisterous against the truth, I have decided to pen my thoughts on the doctrine of God's most holy, righteous, and sinless "decree of all things whatsoever come to pass." (London Baptist Confession Of Faith, 1689, Chapter III, paragraph 1)

To my mind, to deny that God predestinated all things is to deny the very existence of God Himself. To my mind, to say that an all-wise and all-powerful being would make a thing for Himself, and not make it so that it would operate to suit Himself, is unthinkable. I wish to ask all who may read this to stop and think. Would you, dear reader, do such a thing? You undertake to make a thing for yourself; you know how you want it to perform; just what you want it to do; and you know also what you do not want it to do. You are perfectly able to make it so that it will function exactly as you want it to, so that it will not do anything you rather it would not do.

Would you willingly and knowingly use your wisdom and power to make it so that it would not do what you wanted it to do, but would do what you most rather it would not do? Would it not be absolute folly to do such a thing? Yet if you deny that the things that God made are not [*sic*] performing as He desired and intended for them to do, but to the contrary, are continually doing that which He rather they would not do, you are charging Him with such folly as you nor any other sane man would be guilty. A man might for lack of knowledge and ability to do otherwise, make a thing that will not fill the purpose for which he made it, and it may do that which he much rather would not be done. But his work brands him as an imperfect bungler and a failure. Any one seeing his machine in operation, and knowing what it was intended to do, would understand that he, as a mechanic, was a failure. He would understand that by the thing that the man made. If it was contrary to God's will for sin to enter the world, and for His creatures to do as they have done, and He had rather things had come to pass as they have and yet He willingly and knowingly used His wisdom and His power to make it so that it would not operate to suit Him, He made the most colossal blunder that was ever made. The perfect wisdom and almighty power of God forbids the thought of such folly to Him. And yet there is no escaping that awful charge against Him by those who deny the predestination of all things.

They admit that God knew that if He made the world as He did, that it would turn out as it has. They admit that He could have made it so that no sin could have entered it. They say that He had much rather man had kept the law and that none of his race had sinned, and yet

they acknowledge that He willingly and knowingly made it so that sin was sure to enter and all mankind were sure to become sinners and commit every wicked act that they have done, when it would have suited Him much better for none of these things to ever have taken place.

Dear reader, my God is not guilty of such folly as that. No one who knows our God can believe such foolishness. The Bible teaches as clearly as it teaches that there is a God, that all things are appointed by Him. God Himself says so. In Isaiah 44:7, He says: "And who, as I, shall call, and shall declare it, and set in order for Me, since I appointed the ancient people? And the things that are coming, and shall come, let them show unto them." Here, God Himself declares that He appointed the ancient people, and the things that are coming and shall come. The old Geneva Bible which is 105 years older than the King James, reads thus: "And who is like Me, that shall call, and shall declare it, and set it in order before Me, since I appointed the ancient people? And what is at hand, and what things are to come? Let them shew unto them." This is clearly set forth in Isaiah 46:9-10, where God Himself said again: "Remember the former things of old; for I am God and there is none else; I am God and there is none like Me, 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."

If this language means anything, it means that His declaration of the end and the things that were not yet done in ancient times when He declared these things, were all embraced in His counsel, and, when He declared them, He said, "My counsel shall stand," meaning these

things shall surely come to pass, for they are in My counsel and it shall stand. Reader, if this is not what it means, can you tell why when He made this declaration back in ancient times He said at the end of that declaration "My counsel shall stand"? What relation has His counsel and this declaration in connection, if He did not mean to emphasize the certainty of what He declared by saying, "My counsel shall stand"? And why should that give any assurance whatever to their certainty if they were not determined in His counsel? There is no question in my mind but what all things were embraced in His determinate counsel, and back in the beginning, from the most ancient times, He declared the whole thing. in His counsel, and when He declared them, He said "My counsel shall stand," meaning these things shall surely come to pass, for they are in My counsel and it shall stand. Reader, if this is not what it means, can you tell why when He made this declaration back in ancient times He said at the end of that declaration "My counsel shall stand"? What relation has His counsel and this declaration in connection, if He did not mean to emphasize the certainty of what He declared by saying "My counsel shall stand"? And why should that give any assurance whatever to their certainty if they were not determined in His counsel? There is no question in my mind but what all things were embraced in His determinate counsel, and back in the beginning, from the most ancient times, He declared the whole thing.

[Editor's Note: Elder Sikes was a member of the presbytery that organized Saints Rest Predestinarian Primitive Baptist Church in Dallas, Texas, in 1902.—CCM]

GOD'S WORK IS STRANGE, WONDERFUL, AND EXCELLENT

By Jonas C. Sikes, 1911

"For the Lord shall rise up as in Mount Perazim, He shall be wroth as in the valley of Gibeon, that He may do HIS WORK, His strange work; and bring to pass His act, His strange act. Now therefore be ye not mockers, lest your hands be made strong: for I have heard from the Lord God of hosts, a consumption, even determined upon the whole earth" (Isaiah 28:21). "This also cometh forth from the Lord of hosts, which is wonderful in counsel, and excellent in working" (verse 29).

The prophet Isaiah was a strong believer in God's determinate counsel extending to all events; this is clearly seen in all of his writings. In this text, the Lord rising up and being wroth was in order "that" He might do His work, and bring to pass His act, His strange act. It was that He might do this Himself. "That" as it is used here, is in place of the preposition "for" and is used to signify purpose, or in other words, it introduces a clause expressing purpose; it means that God rose up and was wroth for the purpose expressed in the text.

This purpose, as more fully explained in the next verse, is a consumption even determined upon the whole earth. This text necessarily leads us to consider the nature and character of God and His eternal purpose as embraced in His determinate counsel. A wrong conception of the nature and character of God will necessarily lead us into a wrong conception of the nature and character of His purposes. The doctrine that a man preaches is a correct measuring rod with which one can correctly determine the length and breadth, height and depths of the perfection or imperfection of the God of his conception. If he conceives of God

as being eternal, immutable and absolutely and eternally perfect in wisdom and in power, his doctrine will always conform to that thought, and thus will his conception of God be reflected in his every doctrinal utterance. To conceive of God as being eternally perfect in wisdom and power, then we must conceive of His purposes, decrees or determination, as originating in Himself, and as being based wholly upon the counsel of His will, which will was in no sense hampered, biased, by or influenced in its determination by any external cause, force, power, circumstances or events foreseen but undesired. To argue otherwise, is to impeach the eternal perfection of God. To say that He was "before all things," and that He is the "Creator of all things," "that are in heaven and that are in earth, that are visible and that are invisible, whether they be thrones, or dominions, or principalities or powers" (Colossians 1:16), then to say that all or any part of these things that He created are not working exactly what He desired or intended when He made them, no more nor no less, is to say that He was either deficient in wisdom to devise a plan for their creation so that they would do exactly what He willed for them to do, no more no less, or He is deficient in power to so perform in the making of them as to so make them that they would do this and no more.

If we admit that God knew what the result would be if He made the world as He did, then we admit that He willed these results, or was powerless to prevent them. The first admits His predestination of all things, and the last admits that He is imperfect.

What intelligent man, going to make a machine or implement, does not first consult his will as to what he wants it to do? And having determined just what he wants it to do, does he not then engage his wisdom to devise a plan for

the making of it so that it will meet and perform the exact demands of his will? And having thus by his intelligent devised a plan to meet the demands of his will, does he not then, to the full extent of his power or ability so perform the task of making it as to make it so that it will do exactly what he willed for it to do? If he should see that if he makes it as he planned, it will not do what he willed or purposed for it to do, but will do that which he does not want it to do, will he not, if he is wise enough, so change his plan as that when it is made it will meet and perform the exact demands of his will? When it is done, and in operation, will it not, by its workings and movements reflect the exact character of the wisdom that planned it and the power or ability that made it? If it does what its maker did not will for it to do, do we not know at once that he made a mistake somewhere, either in his plan for it or in the making of it? And does not this mistake declare plainly that he is imperfect? Is God less intelligent than man? If what God has made is doing that which He did not will or purpose for it to do, and is leaving undone that which He did will or purpose for it to do, does not His perfection stand impeached by the workmanship of His hand just as truly as man's perfection does when judged by the same rule?

Paul gives us this rule to judge the perfection of God by when he says, "For the invisible things of Him from the creation of the world are clearly seen, being understood by the things that are made, even His eternal power and Godhead; so that they are without excuse" (Romans 1:20). The word power here means to present the perfection of His creative power which includes His will, wisdom and strength as they are brought to view in the things "that are made," they being the workmanship of His hand. We are justified then in judging of the

perfection of God by the things that He made. The many, many places in the Scriptures that call our attention to God as the Creator of all things are to heighten our conception of His infinite perfection and greatness.

The man then who, with the book of nature open before him, will conclude that the things that God has made are doing more or less than He willed and arranged for in His divine plan, must and does deny the infinite perfection of God, and Paul says he is "without excuse" for so doing. These people, whom the prophet was speaking of in the text at the beginning of this article, belong to this class. It is said of them in the same chapter, "But they also have erred through wine, and through strong drink are out of the way: the priest and prophet have erred through strong drink, they are swallowed up of wine, they are out of the way through strong drink; they err in vision, they stumble in judgment" (Isaiah 28:7).

This is the exact condition of things today, and it is the cause of the great wrangle on the question of God's sovereignty and Conditionalism. This "wine and strong drink" does not mean literal wine and whiskey, but alludes to the doctrinal tenets that they have imbibed. They are drunk on the wine of the doctrine of Babylon. This causes them to err in vision when they look at the things that are made which are the works of God's hands, and to stumble in judgment, when they judge His perfection by the things that are made and conclude that they are doing much more on the one hand than their Maker designed, and much less on the other, and thus they impeach His perfection and sovereignty. In the 9th verse, the prophet ask, "Whom shall He teach knowledge? And whom shall He make to understand doctrine?" Then He answers, "Them that are weaned from the milk, and drawn from the breasts." Thus we

see at a glance, that doctrine is the thing under consideration. Not only do they err in vision and stumble in judgment when they look at the works of God and thus misjudge Him by His works, but when they read His word, they do the same thing, for we read in the 13th verse, "But the word of the Lord was unto them precept upon precept, precept upon precept; line upon line, line upon line; here a little, and there a little; that they might go, and fall backward, and be broken, and snared, and taken." Here, it is clear to be seen who it is that have erred in vision and stumbled in judgment. It is those who hold that the precepts of God as laid down in His word were intended for men to obey them and thus obtain the favor of God and escape the trouble and awful scourging which is here announced against this people. But it is most emphatically asserted in this verse that they were given unto this people for exactly the opposite purpose; for it is said that it was "that they might go, and fall backward, and be broken, and be snared, and taken." Those who deny the purpose of God in all things, even in the disobedience of men to the precepts of God, are the ones who are drunk on false doctrine, and therefore they err in vision and stumble in judgment. They are the class of whom Peter speaks when he says, "But unto them which be disobedient, the stone which the builders disallowed, the same is made the head of the corner, and a stone of stumbling, and a rock of offence, even to them which stumble at the word, being disobedient: whereunto also they were appointed" (1 Peter 2:7-8). Peter believed in the appointment of all things, even in relation to the disobedience of wicked men and here asserted that these people were appointed to disobedience.

Who can gainsay it but an infidel? Isaiah believed and asserted the same truth in the last

verse that I have just cited from the 28th chapter; not only so, but also asserts that the consumption that shall come upon the whole earth is determined of God. He does not stop at this, but when he makes this statement, he then goes out to men in their every day avocation and says, "Give ye ear and hear my voice, hearken and hear my speech, doth the plowman plow all day to sow? Doth he open and break the clods of his ground? When he had made plain the face thereof doth he not cast abroad the fitches and scatter the cumin, and cast in the principle wheat and the appointed barley and the rye in their place? For his God doth instruct him to discretion, and doth teach him. For the fitches are not threshed with a threshing instrument, neither is a cartwheel turned about upon the cumin; but the fitches are beaten out with a staff and the cumin with a rod. Bread corn is bruised; because he will not ever be threshing it, nor break it with the wheel of his cart, nor bruise it with his horsemen. This also cometh forth from the Lord of hosts, which is wonderful in counsel, and excellent in working" (Isaiah 28: 24-29). This is God's work even in the skills and activities of men in nature! How wonderful indeed is the determinate counsel of our God! There is nothing left out of it. It reaches to obedience (1 Peter 1:1), and to disobedience (1 Peter 2:8). It reaches to salvation (2 Thessalonians 2: 13), and to condemnation (2 Thessalonians 2:12 and Jude 4); to our every day avocations (Isaiah 28: 23,29). Yet in all of it God is just and right (Deuteronomy 32:1-4). But while this is true the carnal mind cannot see it; it is only seen by faith. Paul said, "I am not ashamed of the gospel of Christ, for it is the power of God through faith unto salvation to every one that believeth, to the Jew first and also the Greek; for therein is the righteousness of God revealed from faith to faith."

(Romans 1:16-17). The system then that God has devised is one, which none can see His righteousness in, only as it is revealed to them. It is no wonder then that the entire religious world unite in saying that if God has predestinated certain things, then He is unrighteous for His counsel, and as it is proclaimed in the true Gospel, is only known to those to whom God reveals it. The preacher who proclaims it must be in possession of the true faith of God's elect and the hearer who receives it must be in possession of the same; otherwise the preacher cannot preach it, and the hearer cannot receive it. Jesus says that, "wisdom is justified of her children" (Matthew 11:19). To justify the wisdom that devised such a scheme one must be born of the same wisdom.

If we proclaim that God has not purposed anything but righteousness, every one from the vilest wretch in a felon's cell to the most popular Doctor of Divinity in the throng of antichrist will join in one chorus of "Amen" to it; but if we declare that the eternal God in His determinate counsel has determined just what shall be in the world, there is a howl goes up from the same class, that is heard throughout the land, declaring that God is unrighteous and there is no such thing as justice if this be true. But there are a few who can see the righteousness of God in such a gospel and they join in that sweet song, "Great and marvelous are Thy works, Lord God Almighty, just and true are Thy ways, Thou King of saints." But let us drop back and considered more fully the language of the text. The prophet says, "I have heard from the Lord God of hosts, a consumption even determined upon the whole earth." If the consumption was determined, a legitimate question arises here, "Who determined it?"

If God had determined this consumption upon the whole earth, when did He determine

it, and by what was He moved to so do? Was it by the free and immutable counsel of His own will that He did it, or was He moved to do it by some extraneous or external cause or influence? If He is "without variableness or shadow of turning" (James 1:17), or if "He is in one mind, and who can turn Him? And what His soul desireth, even that He doeth" (Job 23:13); or in other words if "same yesterday, and today and forever" (Hebrews 13:8); free, immutable and absolutely independent, then He was Master of the surroundings, and was not moved in any degree by anything outside of Himself. If God was infinite in wisdom, then He was certainly wise enough to arrange a plan for creation so that all things embraced therein would work exactly and at all times just as He willed for them to work; and if He was unlimited in power, then He was fully able to make them so they would do this; Then if He did not thus make them, why did He not do it? Did He foreknow just what each of His creatures would do? If not, then He was not perfect in wisdom. Was He not able to make them so that they would do exactly to suit Him? If not He was not perfect in power. Would any intelligent being, who had the wisdom and the power to make a thing so that it would suit him in all its movements knowingly make it so that it would not do what he desired it should? That God did determine this consumption upon the whole earth we cannot deny. To say that He had rather the thing which it was to be a punishment for, had never existed, and that He was moved by them to determine this consummation is to impeach His perfection and say that He has anterior and posterior purposes, the former being based on the free and immutable counsel of His own will, and the latter upon some unpleasant foreseen events which He had much rather would never occur, but seeing that they would

occur, He was moved thereby to make arrangements to accommodate them. And as at that time He alone existed, the indication would be, that He was unable to arrange in the making of the world so as to prevent their occurrence, but was forced out of necessity to meet these things by new arrangements and do the best He could under the circumstances. Such an idea of God is preposterous. God says to those who hold such an idea, "Thou thoughtest that I was altogether such an one as thyself" (Psalm 50:21b). To avoid this conclusion we are forced by the Scriptures to conclude that God's purpose or determinations are all of one age, and are all free and immutable, and are all based on one internal cause, the counsel of His own will. To argue that God had rather that sin, (the thing which this consumption is to destroy), had never entered the world, and that He was moved by foreseeing that it would come to determine all of His dealings with it and the subjects thereof, is to argue that God in all of His dealings with man as a sinner, has in every act of His done that which He would rather not have done, but was moved thereto by conditions thrust upon Him, which He would rather had never existed, I must conclude then, that such is not and cannot be true. But we cannot escape this position if we deny that His free and eternal purpose embraces all events.

I will say with Paul, "O the depth of the riches, both of the wisdom and knowledge of God: how unsearchable are His judgments, and His ways past finding out! For who hath known the mind of the Lord? Or who hath been His counselor or who hath first given to Him and it shall be recompensed unto him again? For of Him, through Him and to Him are all things, to whom be glory for ever, Amen" (Romans 11:34).

—Elder J. C. Sikes
Sulphur Bluff, Texas

SCRIP, OR "SCRIPT"? or, When He-Men Carried Purses

Provide neither gold, nor silver, nor brass in your purses, nor scrip for your journey, neither two coats, neither shoes, nor yet staves: for the workman is worthy of his meat (Matthew 10.9-10).

And he said unto them, When I sent you without purse, and scrip, and shoes, lacked ye any thing? And they said, Nothing. Then said he unto them, But now, he that hath a purse, let him take it, and likewise his scrip: and he that hath no sword, let him sell his garment, and buy one (Luke 22.35f).

In Matthew 10.9-10, the word *scrip* has been understood, or *mis*understood, to mean "script," in the sense of a prepared sermon. This text has been used to argue against a preacher's preparing his sermons.

The Bible may well have something to say against preachers "preparing their sermons" beforehand, but this text in Matthew and its kindred texts have nothing to do with it.

Hebrew, Greek Definitions of "Scrip"

Hebrew: 3219. *yalquwt, yal-koot'*; a **travelling pouch** (as if for gleanings):—scrip.

Greek: 4082. *pera, pay'-rah*; a **wallet or leather pouch for food**:—scrip.

The word "scrip" is found seven times in the King James Version (KJV); once in the Old Testament and six times in the New.

It first occurs in the account of David's encounter with Goliath, found in 1 Samuel 17. **There, the definition of a scrip is found:** "And David girded his sword upon his armour, and he assayed to go; for he had not proved it. And David said unto Saul, I cannot go with these; for I have not proved them. And David

put them off him. And he took his staff in his hand, and chose him five smooth stones out of the brook, and put them in a **shepherd's bag which he had, even in a scrip**; and his sling was in his hand: and he drew near to the Philistine (1 Samuel 17.39f).”

A scrip is “**a shepherd’s bag which he had, even [in] a scrip.**” David’s “scrip” was not a sermon outline (which would have done him precious little good); it was a small bag in which he could put, among other things, five good-sized, smooth, killing-stones. Remember, the men of Bible times did not wear blue-jeans and flannel shirts with an abundance of pockets. They wore robe-like garments or togas, which were without sewn-in pockets. A **scrip** worn at the belt or suspended from their shoulder with a shoulder-strap served the men of Bible times as pockets serve men now. Now our “scrips” are sewn inside our pants and called pockets; then their “pockets” were carried on the outside of what they wore.

In Matthew 10, Christ gave the apostles additional instructions as He sent them forth. “These twelve Jesus sent forth, and commanded them, saying, **Go not into the way of the Gentiles**, and into any city of the Samaritans enter ye not: but go rather to the lost sheep of the house of Israel. And as ye go, preach, saying, The kingdom of heaven is at hand. Heal the sick, cleanse the lepers, raise the dead, cast out devils: freely ye have received, freely give (Matthew 10.5-8). *Provide neither gold, nor silver, nor brass in your purses, 10 Nor scrip for your journey, neither two coats, neither shoes, nor yet staves: for the workman is worthy of his meat* (Matthew 10.9-10).”

If these instructions apply to Old Baptist Elders today, and if scrip really means a script, or prepared sermon notes, then

we of course are not to write our sermons beforehand; but by the same command we are also not to go into Gentile or Samaritan territory!

They were also not to take a lunch, snacks, or any money in their billfolds. That would include extra gas money because they would not need any gas. They would be walking, so they could take their walking-staff. They were to go two by two; not alone, and not three or more all tagging along together. There could not be a carload going to the next meeting. They would not need backpacks, suitcases, a luggage rack, or a clothes-hanger bar to hang clothes on, because they would take only one coat, not two. They would not even need a coat-hanger for their coats. Their shoulders would be coat-hangers enough.

“And he called unto him the twelve, and began to send them forth by two and two; and gave them power over unclean spirits; and commanded them that they should take nothing for their journey, save a staff only; no scrip, no bread, no money in their purse: but be shod with sandals; and not put on two coats (Mark 6.7-9).”

“And he sent them to preach the kingdom of God, and to heal the sick. And he said unto them, Take nothing for your journey, neither staves, nor scrip, neither bread, neither money; neither have two coats apiece (Luke 9.2f).”

“Therefore said He unto them, The harvest truly is great, but the labourers are few: pray ye therefore the Lord of the harvest, that He would send forth labourers into his harvest. Go your ways: behold, I send you forth as lambs among wolves. Carry neither purse, nor scrip, nor shoes: and salute no man by the way (Luke 10.2-4).”

(Continued on page 18)

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(Scrip: Continued from page 15)

How many who won't take a sermon script with them also (as Christ said) leave their bill-fold at home, go barefooted, and refuse to say hello to anyone they meet on the street?

The last two times "scrip" is found, they are together in Luke 22.35-36: "And he said unto them, **When I sent you without purse, and scrip, and shoes**, lacked ye any thing? And they said, Nothing. Then said he unto them, **But now, he that hath a purse, let him take it, and likewise his scrip**: and he that hath no sword, let him sell his garment, and buy one."

We must notice that in the early part of their ministry, which was confined to the land of Israel, the apostles were to go without a **scrip** (and a purse, and shoes, and a lot of extra baggage). Now, as they will soon be going to the nations, they are told to take their purse and **scrip**, and while they were at it, they also would need a good sword—even if they had to sell their coat or shirt to get one.

Interesting. If a *scrip* were really a *script* or set of *sermon notes* (which of course it was not), and the apostles were not to take sermon notes among the Jews, then **by the exact same logic** Luke 22 says they were now to **take sermon notes and outlines with them** when they went to the Gentiles!

We are caused to wonder: Among those who now minister to Gentile believers and use Matthew 10.9-10 to argue against preparing sermons, how many of them now take their sermon notes with them as Christ said to do in Luke Luke 22.36 (IF, as they say, that is what "scrip" means)? That is, how many who preach to the churches among the Gentiles *prepare their sermons against preparing sermons*, and who takes along with them *their notes against using notes?*—CCM

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We believe these principles are, in the main, harmonious with the articles of faith published by predestinarian associations and churches of the old order of Baptists known as Primitive, Particular, or Old School Baptists the world over.

1—The eternal existence, sovereignty, immutability, omnipotence, and perfections of Jehovah God; He has revealed Himself as the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit, and these sacred Three are One; Jesus Christ was and is God manifest in the flesh, and in Him dwelleth all the fullness of the Godhead bodily;

2—The Old and New Testaments in their original languages are the verbally inspired word of God, and they are the complete and only valid guide of faith and practice; the King James Version is the preferred English translation;

3—The will of the eternal God is the first cause of all causes;

4—The absolute predestination of all things;

5—The eternal personal election of the redeemed in Christ, before the world began, and their eternal, vital union with Him; their number is fixed, certain, and sure, and can neither be increased nor diminished; their fall in

their federal head Adam into spiritual death, total depravity, and just condemnation; their utter inability to recover themselves from this fallen state;

6—The blood atonement and redemption by Jesus Christ are for the elect only, and are both efficacious and effectual in accomplishing the will and purpose of God to reconcile His people unto Himself;

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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.