

# THE BIBLE TEACHER

*Pleading for the Restoration of Pure New Testament Christianity*

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## EDITORIAL

### ***The Blood of the Kid Goat***

In chapter thirty-seven of the book of Genesis we read the story of Joseph and his brethren. Their father, Jacob, loved Joseph more than all his children, and he had made him a tunic, a long garment, of many colours. In the story we read that Joseph's brothers didn't like him: they envied him and were jealous of him; and their hatred for him grew so much that they even wanted to get rid of him by killing him. So one day when they found him alone approaching them in the fields of Dothan where they were feeding their flocks, they thought that was the best opportunity to kill him. They first conspired to kill him and cast his body in a pit, but one of the brothers suggested not to do that but rather cast him alive in the pit; to which they all agreed. So they caught Joseph and first stripped him of his tunic of many colours and then cast him into a deep empty pit. Then, as they sat down to eat, they saw a group of business people coming from Gilead with their camels, bearing spices, balm, and myrrh, on their way to carry them down to Egypt. So another kind-hearted brother suggested that instead of letting him die in the pit, it would be better to sell him to the merchants who would take him to their country and thus they would get rid of him forever. So the brothers pulled Joseph up and lifted him out of the pit and sold him to the Egyptian merchants. Now the question was what would they tell their father Jacob about the missing Joseph? To solve that problem, they took Joseph's tunic, killed a kid of the goats, and dipped the tunic in the blood. Then they brought the tunic of Joseph to their father and said to

him, "We have found this. Do you know whether it is your son's tunic or not?" Jacob, at first sight, recognized it, and said, "It is my son's tunic. A wild beast has devoured him. Without doubt Joseph is torn to pieces. The Bible says that Jacob tore his clothes, put sackcloth on his waist, and mourned for his son many days." And when his sons and daughters tried to comfort him, he refused to be comforted and said, "For I shall go down into the grave to my son in mourning."

Here, in this story, we make two very important observations, one each from the brethren and their father. Firstly, notice, to deceive their father, Joseph's brothers did not take just any garment or another tunic from another brother, but they took the same tunic that belonged to Joseph, that Jacob was able to recognize and readily accept as of Joseph. Secondly, Jacob accepted their claim *prima facie*, at first sight, without asking any further explanation or question, without any investigation; and thus was deceived by his own sons with the help of the garment of his own son which was corrupted or coated with the blood of a kid goat.

This shows how easy it is to deceive people and to be deceived, with coloured or coated facts! For instance, we know that Christ was born into the world, the Bible teaches this fact. But this fact has been coloured over and presented to the world by some men centuries ago as "Christmas", and even a date has been set by those men! Yet, the fact is that Christ was born, but the Bible does not call it "Christmas" and neither the date of his birth is mentioned in it. Likewise, the death of Christ has been turned into "Good-Friday" and His resurrection from the dead into "Easter." The truth is that the Bible talks about Christ's birth and death and resurrection, but the Bible is silent about Christmas and Good-Friday and Easter. Such are the blood of the kid Goat. Listen to the Apostle Paul, "But now after you have known God, or rather are known by God, how is it that you turn again to the weak and beggarly elements, to which you desire again to be in bondage? You observe days, and months and seasons and years. I am afraid for you, lest I have laboured for you in vain." (Galatians 4:9-11).

Even though the Bible warns all its readers not to add anything, and not to take away anything, and not to change anything, in its message (Revelation 22:18,19 and Galatians 1:6-9). Men, through the centuries, little by little, have done all of these things. Baptism (burial) has been changed into sprinkling; instead of teaching penitent believers to be baptized for the remission of sins (Mark 16:16; Acts 2:38; Acts 8:35-39), parents are told to get their infant babies sprinkled (baptized). According to God's plan of salvation, each individual must believe in

Christ, repent of sins, confess Christ as the Son of God and be baptized to be saved (read the passages, mentioned above, in your Bible); people are taught to get an experience of salvation; accept Christ as personal Saviour, pray for salvation, etc. The Bible declares that Christ Himself adds the saved to His church daily (Acts 2:47), whereas people are saying to join the church of your own choice. Saved people, according to the Bible, are the church of Christ (1 Corinthians 11:18; Matthew 16:18), but now a material building or house is called a church! The Bible talks about the second coming of Christ; Christ Himself said that no one, except God, knows about His coming again to judge the world. Yet people have been setting different dates for His coming; they are calling it "the Rapture." The Bible does not teach that. Neither does the Bible teach about Christ's coming on earth to reign for 1000 years! (Read 2 Peter 3:1-13). And what about calling men "Reverend", "Father", "Padri", and "Priest"?

We read, at 1 John 4:1, "Beloved, do not believe every spirit, but test the spirits, whether they are of God; because many false prophets have gone out into the world." Through the centuries, many words, passages, teachings and doctrines have been lifted from the Bible and the same have been coated over with human teachings, dipped in the blood of the kid goat, and presented to people as Bible truth. And, sadly, people have gullibly, like Jacob, accepted them as God's truth in the name of the Bible. How wonderfully safe it would be if people go directly to their Bible to find out whether the phrases, words, terms, teachings and doctrines, they use and believe are really mentioned and authorised in the Bible. What's wrong in doing that? We want to be sure about the water we drink and the food we eat. We just don't drink anything or eat anything that is offered to us. Why do less in the spiritual matters? Merely believing in Christ and doing some things religiously would not qualify an individual to enter and live in heaven. Because Christ said, "Not everyone who says to me Lord, Lord, shall enter the kingdom of heaven, but he who does the will of my Father in heaven." (Matthew 7:21). How can one know the will of the Father in heaven? It is found in the Bible. (Hebrews 1:1,2). There is no excuse. And, there will be no excuse on the Judgment day!

# **Some Things That Will Happen When Christ Returns**

**J.C. CHOATE**

Christ will return. When that happens, we have no way of knowing. It could be today, tomorrow, next year, or a thousand years from now. We just know that he will come again, and we have been asked to be prepared for that day, whether in our life time, or after our departure from this world. We want to discuss those things at this time.

The Lord will come at a time unannounced. Both Paul and Peter say that Christ will come as a thief in the night. Paul wrote these words to the Thessalonians: "For yourselves know perfectly that the day of the Lord so cometh as a thief in the night. For when they shall say, Peace and safety, then sudden destruction cometh upon them, as travail upon a woman with a child; and they shall not escape." (1 Thessalonians 5:2,3). Read also 2 Peter 3:10. Christ is not a thief but he will come as a thief, at a time in which he is not expected. The idea is that we must be prepared at all times to meet him.

Jesus will come with the trump of God. Paul said, "For the Lord himself shall descend from heaven with a shout, with the voice of the archangel, and with the trump of God: and the dead in Christ shall rise first: Then we which are alive and remain shall be caught up together with them in the clouds, to meet the Lord in the air: and so shall we ever be with the Lord." (1 Thessalonians 4:16,17).

The Lord will come with his angels to take vengeance. We read again the words of Paul, "And to you who are troubled rest with us, when the Lord Jesus shall be revealed from heaven with his mighty angels, in flaming fire taking vengeance on them that know not God, and that obey not the gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ: Who shall be punished with everlasting destruction from the presence of the Lord, and from the glory of his power." (2 Thessalonians 1:7-9).

Christ will send forth his angels to gather out of his kingdom or church all that offend. Christ himself said, "The Son of man shall send forth his angels, and they shall gather out of his kingdom all things that offend, and them which do iniquity; And shall cast them into a furnace of fire: there shall be weeping and gnashing of teeth." (Matthew 13:41,42).

At the Lord's return, all will be resurrected, both the righteous and the wicked. John said, "Marvel not at this: for the hour is coming, in the

which all that are in the graves shall hear his voice, And shall come forth; they that have done good, unto the resurrection of life; and they that have done evil, unto the resurrection of damnation." (John 5:28,29). Read also Acts 24:15.

When the Lord comes again all things will be destroyed and burned up. Peter writes, "But the day of the Lord will come as a thief in the night; in the which the heavens shall pass away with a great noise, and the elements shall melt with fervent heat, the earth also and the works that are therein shall be burned up. Seeing then that all these things shall be dissolved, what manner of persons ought ye to be in all holy conversation and godliness. Looking for and hasting unto the coming of the day of God, wherein the heavens being on fire shall be dissolved, and the elements shall melt with fervent heat? Nevertheless we, according to his promise, look for new heavens and a new earth, wherein dwelleth righteousness." (2 Peter 3:10-13).

When the Lord returns the judgment will take place. Paul says, "For we must all appear before the judgment seat of Christ, that every one may receive the things done in his body, according to that he hath done, whether it be good or bad." (2 Corinthians 5:10). Christ said, "He that rejecteth me, and receiveth not my words, hath one that judgeth him: the word that I have spoken, the same shall judge him in the last day."

Christ will deliver his kingdom up to God on that day. Paul explains it like this, "Then cometh the end, when he shall have delivered up the kingdom to God, even the Father; when he shall have put down all rule and all authority and power." (1 Corinthians 15:24).

The righteous will be saved for all eternity but the wicked will be cast into eternal destruction. (Matthew 25:46).

We now come to this question: Are you prepared for the Lord's return and for all of these things? Whether you are ready or not, this day will surely come. The wise will take heed and prepare now.

*Especially For Women*

## ***A New Person***

**BETTY BURTON CHOATE**

"Could you baptize me tonight, Papa?" Anthony asked as the

family sat down for the evening Bible study.

"That would be wonderful, Anthony," answered Papa, smiling broadly. "From our studies these past few nights I believe you understand what you would be doing in obeying the gospel, that your sins would be forgiven in Christ and that you would be born spiritually into the Family of God. Do you have any questions about anything?"

"No, I do understand. And, Papa, could I ask my friends, Tarun and Arun, to go with us? Their families are not Christians but I want them to know about forgiveness."

"Yes, Anthony, that's a good idea. You run down the street and ask them to come along with us. I'll call brother Andrew and let him know we'll be there soon. Maybe he can inform other Christians who live near the building so they can come over as well."

So it was a happy group that gathered in the place of worship to hear brother Andrew read the Scriptures explaining the Gospel and obedience to its commands.

"Anthony, as Paul wrote to people of the first century, we have received the 'good news' of the Gospel of Jesus, '... that Christ died for our sins according to the Scriptures, and that He was buried and that he rose again the third day according to the Scriptures' (1 Cor. 15:3,4).

"In Romans 6:17, he said, '... you obeyed from the heart that form of doctrine. ...' He said in chapter 10, '... The word is near you, even in your mouth and in your heart,' (that is, the word of faith which we preach): that if you *confess* with your mouth the Lord Jesus and *believe* in your heart that God has raised Him from the dead, you will be saved. For with the heart one believes to righteousness, and with the mouth confession is made to salvation' (verses 8-10).

"'For whoever calls upon the name of the Lord shall be saved.'"

"How then shall they call on Him in whom they have not believed? And how shall they believe in Him of whom they have not heard? And how shall they hear without a preacher? and how shall they preach unless they are sent? As it is written, 'How beautiful are the feet of those who preach the gospel of peace, who bring glad tidings of good things?' But they have not all *obeyed* the gospel. ..." (verses 13-16)."

"Anthony, can you tell me what it means 'to obey the gospel'? What did Paul mention doing in these verses we've just read?" asked Andrew.

"He said that we must hear the gospel of Jesus. Then we believe

what we have heard, and we confess that we believe in Jesus," answered Anthony.

"When Philip preached to the man from Ethiopia, he told him that he could be baptized if he believed." Andrew nodded. "The man from Ethiopia replied, 'I believe that Jesus Christ is the Son of God.' (Acts 8:37). 'Anthony, I want to ask you to confess before these people your faith in Jesus.'"

Anthony spoke clearly, "Yes, I believe that Jesus Christ is the Son of God."

"There is another thing required of those who want to be Christians," brother Andrew explained. "Do you remember that Peter told the listeners on Pentecost, when the Lord's church was first begun, 'Repent and be baptized. . . ' (Acts 2:38). All people are sinners, but those who follow Jesus must repent or turn away from a life of sin and they must try to live good and pure lives, like Jesus. 'Obeying the gospel' means to die to sin so that you may be buried in the water of baptism, as Jesus was buried in the grave. Then God will add you to the church, as He added the 3,000 who obeyed Him on the day of Pentecost, in Acts 2:47," explained brother Andrew. "If you are ready to give your life to Him, you are ready now to be baptized."

"Yes, Sir," Anthony answered, "I want to obey Jesus."

So Anthony's father baptized him "in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit" (Matthew 28:19). Afterwards the group that had gathered sang a hymn and prayed together, asking God to help Anthony to be faithful in the new life he had begun.

It was the end of a wonderful day, and Anthony went to bed that night feeling clean and new before God, knowing that he was saved and that he was now a part of the church Jesus died for.

## ***Knowing The Deceitfulness Of Sin***

**CLEM THURMAN**

It is easy to become complacent, thinking that we "have it made" with God. We sometimes forget that Satan is still in this world, constantly busy trying to tempt us to sin and fall away from our

fellowship with God. It is important that we know how Satan works on us: "*That no advantage may be gained over us by Satan: for we are not ignorant of his devices*" (2 Cor 2:11). To those who had become Christians and were striving to serve God through Jesus Christ, the apostle wrote, "*Take heed, brethren, lest haply there shall be in any one of you an evil heart of unbelief, in falling away from the living God: but exhort one another day by day, so long as it is called Today; lest any one of you be hardened by the deceitfulness of sin*" (Heb. 3:12-13).

This warning of "*the deceitfulness of sin*" is also an exhortation to faithfulness. To become "*hardened*" is to "*have our conscience branded as with a hot iron*" (1 Tim. 4:2) and thus become morally obstinate and stubborn. It signifies an unwillingness to listen to God's instruction, and a determination to live according to one's own desires. The word "*deceitful*" means: "*That which gives a false impression, deceptive, treacherous, cunning.*" The inspired writer, therefore, is warning children of God that it is possible for them to become stubbornly unwilling to listen to God because of the "*devices of Satan.*"

All of us should prayerfully and seriously consider the deceitfulness of sin. Satan's temptations do not picture sin as it really is, but presents it under the pretense of what is good for us in one way or another. When we really look at sin as God pictures it in His word, it appears completely different than the appearance under which Satan sends it to us.

### SIN IS DISGUISED AS "ATTRACTIVE"

Sin always promises more, and different, than what it gives. The serpent put on a deceptive mask for Eve to see, when he tempted her to eat of the forbidden fruit in Eden: "*Ye shall be as gods. . .*" (Gen. 3:5). Satan knew better, but Eve didn't; she had only God's word for it. She chose to believe Satan. When Eve then looked on the tree, she saw it as "*pleasant to the eyes, and a tree to be desired to make one wise*" (v. 6). But to her sorrow, and Adam's, she found that sin was only pretending to be attractive and advantageous. Satan promised much, but he failed to deliver. He always will. What sin promises in its appearance, it never gives.

The pretense of sin also discounts what sin really does. Too many live as though there are no consequences for their actions. Beloved, we must learn that every action has consequence — whether good or bad. The devil promised Eve, "*Ye shall not surely die.*" But she did, separating herself from God (Isa. 59:1-2; Eph. 2:1,5). Satan's pretense

was, "Do not be afraid. The things God said about sin are just fairy tales. Nothing of any real consequence will happen to you. Why not go ahead and enjoy the pleasures and advantages?" Too many times today, we see the allure of sin as Eve did. We need to learn to see sin as the destroying monster that it is.

## **SIN PRETENDS TO BE OUR SERVANT**

History abounds with examples of kings making alliances with other kings, believing that they could make the other kingdom their servant. Often the reverse becomes the fact. Young men take up the habit of drinking liquor, or cursing or doing narcotics, believing they could make such habits their servants to bring them happiness. Instead, they find in later life that the "servant" has become their master, and they are enslaved to a habit they wish they could break. Men look at a life of sin and believe they can make it their servant. They believe that they can make falsehood, deception, cheating and immorality their servants to bring them a life of happiness. But they find that sin will not fill the role of a servant.

Jesus said it plainly, *"Everyone that committeth sin is the bondservant of sin"* (John 8:34). The apostle Paul wrote later, *"Be not deceived: neither fornicators, nor idolaters, nor adulterers, nor effeminate, nor abusers of themselves with men, nor thieves, nor covetous, nor drunkards, nor revilers, nor extortioners, shall inherit the kingdom of God. Know ye not, that to whom ye present yourselves as servants unto obedience, his servants ye are whom ye obey; whether of sin unto death, or of obedience unto righteousness"* (1 Cor. 6:9-10; Rom. 6:16). Sin is always the MASTER of those who engage in it, it never accepts the lesser role. Sin will pretend to be our servant, until we engage in it. Then we become the servants (slaves).

## **SIN DECLARES THAT IT IS RIGHT**

From the beginning, the devil has acted as a false teacher. He misled Eve, and continues to: *"Call evil good, and good evil; that put darkness for light, and light for darkness; that put bitter for sweet, and sweet for bitter"* (Isa. 5:20). If we are gullible enough, the devil will take a false way and convince us that it is the right way: *"There is a way that seemeth right unto a man; but the end thereof are the ways of death"* (Prov. 14:12). Many "think" that they are saved by faith only, because the devil wants them to think it. But the word of God does not teach that. In fact, it states the exact opposite! *"Ye see that by works a man is*

*justified, and not only by faith" (James 2:24). We even read of some who thought they were right in the sight of the Lord, but, instead, were nauseating to Him (Rev. 3:14-17). The only way to be sure of our salvation is to listen to what God says, not Satan.*

The devil, through many different disguises, will say to us, "Come and live this way, study God's word very little, and enjoy the things of this world. God loves you and won't let you be lost." We must learn what sin does: *"Your iniquities have separated between you and your God, your sins have hid his face from you, that he will not hear" (Isa 59:2).* Satan says, "Take it easy, don't be a religious fanatic." Jesus says, *"Seek ye first the kingdom of God, and his righteousness . . . Present your bodies a living sacrifice. . . If any man come after me, let him deny himself and take up his cross and follow me" (Matt. 6:33; Rom. 12:1; Matt. 16:24).* Jesus said of Satan, *"He was a murderer from the beginning, and standeth not in the truth, because there is no truth in him. When he speaketh a lie, he speaketh of his own: for he is a liar, and the father thereof" (John 8:44).*

We must beware, lest we be led into going to the Bible to try to justify what we are already doing, instead of going to the Bible to find what to do. The apostle Paul writes of some whom the devil deceives, *"Because they received not the love of the truth, that they might be saved. And for this cause God sendeth them a working of error, that they should believe a lie: that they all might be judged who believed not the truth, but had pleasure in unrighteousness" (2 Thes. 2:10-12).* If one tries to justify his wrong actions, he usually will do so to his own satisfaction (but not God's). *"Every man of the house of Israel that taketh up his idols into his heart, and putteth the stumblingblock of his iniquity before his face, and cometh to the prophet; I the Lord will answer him therein, according to the multitude of his idols" (Ezek. 14:4).*

### SIN DENIES ITS CONSEQUENCES

Satan wouldn't tell Eve the truth about the consequences of sin, and he won't tell you the truth, either. The apostle Paul wrote the truth, *"Be not deceived; God is not mocked: for whatsoever a man soweth, that shall he also reap. For he that soweth unto his own flesh shall of the flesh reap corruption; but he that soweth unto the Spirit shall of the Spirit reap eternal life" (Gal. 6:7-8).* One just cannot turn up his nose at God and determine to walk in his own way, there are consequences to such attitudes and actions! God said of things, both plant and animal, that He created, *"Whose seed was in itself, after his kind" (Gen. 1:12-25).* You

can't plant turnips and reap apples! Neither can you sow sin and reap eternal life. The devil would like you to ignore the consequences of sin, but be assured the consequences are real: *"The wages of sin is death . . . Lust, when it hath conceived, beareth sin: and the sin, when it is fullgrown, bringeth forth death"* (Rom. 6:23; James 1:14-15).

Satan will promise a harvest of happiness and prosperity from the seed of sin. But the fruit which results is completely different: degradation, shame, fear, misery, frustration, unhappiness and loss of loving relationships are the harvest of the seed of sin. But the worst result of sin is the eternal separation from God: *"Depart from me, ye cursed, into the eternal fire, prepared for the devil and his angels . . . These shall go away into eternal punishment"* (Matt. 25:41,46). John writes of that, also: *"The devil that deceived them was cast into the lake of fire and brimstone, where are also the beast and the false prophet; and they shall be tormented day and night for ever and ever . . . This is the second death, even the lake of fire. And if any was not found written in the book of life, he was cast into the lake of fire"* (Rev. 20:10-15).

Jesus came to set us free from sin: *"You shall know the truth, and the truth shall make you free . . . If the son shall make you free, ye shall be free indeed"* (John 8:32,36). The apostle Paul wrote later of the death, burial and resurrection of Jesus as the means of our being saved from sin (1 Cor. 15:1-4). Then he wrote, *"Are ye ignorant that all we who were baptized into Christ Jesus were baptized into his death? We were buried therefore with him through baptism into death: that like as Christ was raised from the dead by the glory of the Father, so we also might walk in newness of life"* (Rom 6:3-4). He then continued to show how and when we are made free from sin: *"Thanks be to God, that, whereas ye were the servants of sin, ye became obedient from the heart to that form of teaching whereunto ye were delivered; and being made free from sin, ye became servants of righteousness"* (Rom. 6:17-18). Then let us thrill to our freedom in Christ: *"For freedom did Christ set us free: stand fast therefore, and be not entangled again in a yoke of bondage"* (Gal. 5:1).

Let's learn to view sin as God does. Then let, us have the determination to live for the Lord. And, *"Let him that thinketh he standeth, take heed lest he fall"* (1 Cor. 10:12). And, always, let us be careful, *"Lest any of you be hardened by the deceitfulness of sin."*

# God's Matchless Love

JOHNNY RAMSEY

Paul praised the incomparable love of God in many beautiful passages of Scripture. *"O the depth of the riches both of the wisdom and the knowledge of God . . . The breadth and length and height and depth, and to know the love of Christ which passeth knowledge"* (Rom. 11:33; Eph. 3:18-19). A tremendous song reminds us of these riches, and what our response should be:

*I love the Lord;  
He has done so much for me.  
He gave His Son  
From sin to set me free.  
No greater gift  
Than this could ever be . . .*

Calvary, where our Savior died, is the essence and epitome of what grace, mercy, compassion and love truly convey. We did not earn, nor do we deserve, such blessed hope. From the kind heart of our Creator flows the privilege and opportunity of redemption from sin, death and hell! Golgotha will forever be a classic reminder to us of the vicarious sacrifice, personal pain and empathy on behalf of a wicked world by our sinless Savior.

*Why did my Savior come to earth . . .  
Because He loved me so!*

Our hopeless condition is graphically described, *"For we also once were foolish, disobedient, deceived, serving divers lusts and pleasures, living in malice and envy, hateful, hating one another. But when the kindness of God our saviour, and his love toward man, appeared, not by works done in righteousness, which we did ourselves, but according to his mercy he saved us . . . That, being justified by his grace, we might be made heirs according to the hope of eternal life"* (Titus 3:3-7). Wicked, shameful and depraved mankind could not devise a plan that would ransom them from Satan's hold. Without hope and without God, we struggled in vain to escape the desert of sorrow and sin.

*Out of the ivory palaces  
Into a world of woe,*

*Only his great eternal love*

*Made my Savior go.*

The psalmist describes God, *"But thou, O Lord, art a God full of compassion, and gracious, long-suffering, and plenteous in mercy and truth"* (Psa. 86:15). Were it not for such traits, we could never be removed from the depths of apostasy and its eternal consequences. The prophet asks the question, *"Who is a God like unto Thee that pardoneth iniquity? . . . Thou wilt cast all their sins into the depths of the sea"* (Micah 7:18-19).

*Into the heart of Jesus*

*Deeper and deeper I go,*

*Longing to know the reason*

*How He could love me so.*

God did not send His Son into the world to condemn us: *"For God sent not the Son into the world to judge the world; but that the world should be saved through him"* (John 3:17). Any who are lost will be those who stubbornly refused the way of salvation. Jesus makes this clear, *"And ye will not come unto me, that ye may have life"* (John 5:40). One of the majestic statements in the sad book of Hosea is the expression from the Creator to sinful Israel, *"I will love them freely; I drew them with bands of love"* (Hosea 11:4). Yes, in spite of rebellion, anarchy and disobedience, our God would reach out to them to come back home! In spite of their sins, God kept reaching out to them: *"All the day long did I spread out my hands unto a disobedient and gainsaying people"* (Rom. 10:21). Such matchless love!

After Peter denied Christ three times, the Redeemer gave him a three-fold opportunity to affirm the love he once had betrayed (John 21:15). If, in that final day of accounting, we are forever lost, it will surely be our own fault. Time and again, the message of redemption has been preached and lived before us. When we allow anyone or anything to deter us from the pathway of righteousness, or the memory of our crucified Friend, we are truly spiritually inept and thoroughly ungrateful.

The unfathomed love of our glorious God should serve as a strong magnet that draws us near to the shores of that land of fadeless day. The apostle wrote, *"We have seen and do testify that the Father sent the Son to be the Savior of the world"* (1 John 4:14). May such compelling kindness draw us near to the heart of God!

# ***Buy The Truth And Sell It Not***

**T. PIERCE BROWN**

To the superficial mind, the question might be raised, "How could a person buy something if no one sold?" But the thing of which Solomon spoke in Proverbs 23:23 is not a commercial venture. Our liberty was bought with the blood of our forefathers, and our Christian heritage was bought with the blood of the martyrs, but no person sold it to us.

The importance of that precept seems increasingly important as we see a number of men who at one time seemed to exalt truth, but who have sold out for some reason or another.

When Jesus said, "Ye shall know the truth and the truth shall make you free" (John 8:32), he expressed a principle of the widest application. Knowledge of historic truth can make us free from various things, but especially from having to repeat the same mistakes over and over. Knowledge of scientific truth can make us free from superstition in those areas, and free to explore in all sorts of areas heretofore inaccessible. Economic truths can make us free from poverty. Medical truth can make us free from various kinds of diseases. Moral and ethical truths can make us free from many of the social ills that plague our nation. Religious truth can make us free from the love, practice, guilt, burden, stain and the punishment of sin. But when Jesus used the word "shall", he did not mean in either case that it was an automatic or predetermined reality. That is, "You shall know the truth" in no way means you are forced to know it. And "The truth shall make you free" in any or all of the areas mentioned above, or any other, only if it is applied or acted upon.

There is no authority that can cause man to respond with the proper attitude but that which comes to him in the guise of truth. To seek the truth wherever it may be found, to follow it wherever it may lead, and to practice it whatever the consequences is one of the highest duties of man.

If we think of truth in man's normal relationships with man, we can immediately see the value of Paul's admonition, "Wherefore putting away lying, speak every man truth with his neighbor" (Ephesians 4:25). An orderly society, even in the Communist world, cannot exist in the absence of truth. The disorder in all societies is largely the result of the

failure to recognize the value of truth. Whether one goes to the gas tank and expects to see the true number of gallons delivered, or takes a bank draft from another, or goes to the grocery store and gets a bag labeled "Sugar", or does any other thing in his social relationships, the truth must be respected, or chaos results.

In the philosophical or scientific area, the same kind of thing is true. For example, the acceptance of the false doctrine of evolution and its related corollaries has brought untold damage to humanity. It includes such things as the murder of millions of unborn babies, Hitler's atrocities (many of which were based on the idea of "the survival of the fittest"), including selective breeding, and the murder of the "unfit", and many other examples of man's inhumanity to man. There is nothing at all philosophically or scientifically sound about the theory.

One of the most remarkable things in the history of scientific thought is that thousands of persons who know that absolute scientific, demonstrable truth is necessary for us to even begin to explore, much less conquer, outer space, try to explore and conquer inner space with no apparent regard for either scientific or philosophical truth. The wisest philosopher and the greatest scientist cannot even answer the simplest questions concerning this "inner space" because they have no regard for truth. For example, you may ask, "From whence did man come?" "What is his purpose in life?" "How can he fulfill that purpose?" "What is his destiny?" The only answers you get from those who have no regard for truth in those areas, that is, facts that can be philosophically demonstrated as reasonable, or scientifically proven as facts, are simply wild guesses.

Then, beyond those kinds of truth, there is moral, religious, or spiritual truth. Probably Solomon had this kind primarily in mind. It would be humorous, if not so pathetic, to hear Congressmen, news commentators and others speaking of the ethics of certain things, such as getting drunk or committing adultery. They seem to equate it with the ethics of killing seals, whales or crocodiles. But I have never heard any of them give the slightest hint as to what they think makes a thing unethical or immoral. If God is not a sovereign God, the source of all moral and spiritual truth, and man is not a mortal, moral, accountable being, made in his image, bound by nature and law to live in accord with that truth or suffer the consequences, then any talk of ethics and morality is so much foolishness.

To "buy the truth", then, is to assiduously assert its reality, painstakingly persevere its acquisition, and deliberately devote oneself

to its practice. Prejudice and pride must be put aside. Sin and self will must be sacrificed.

To "sell it not" means never to lose the disposition of mind that causes you to value it above all else. It means never to betray it through any selfish, sordid motive. A preacher who preaches some false doctrine through the desire for money, prestige or power has sold the truth. But the preacher who does not preach false doctrine but fails to preach the truth for the same reasons, or any other, has also sold it.

I heard Marshall Keeble give an exegesis of Paul's statement in 2 Timothy 4:2, "Preach the word; be urgent in season, out of season." He said, "In season" means 'when they like it', 'out of season' means 'when they don't'."

I still remember reading half a century ago from Hamlet, "This above all: to thine own self be true, and it must follow as night the day, thou canst not then be false to any man." Inasmuch as no society can function with disregard for truth, no noble or worthwhile activity that is not based on truth can be carried to successful fruition, our freedom in any area is based on truth, and our sanctification and eternal salvation are as a result of truth, let us buy the truth and sell it not. Let us sacrifice all, even life if need be, on the altar of truth.

## *So Thick, It Could Be Felt*

EDDY GILPIN

The Bible is unique among all books in many ways. One such way is its use of typology. Many items of the Old Testament are used as types, or shadows, of the true substances to be found in the New Testament (Heb. 8:5; 9:1-17; 10:1). When one compares such items as the Passover lamb (Ex. 12:43-13:10) and Christ, the true Passover (Jn. 19:36), he can readily see how the former points to the latter. (Also compare Number 21:8,9 with John 3:14,15). Close examinations of such instances reveal many lessons. This article will center around one such instance, the ninth plague brought upon the land of Egypt.

Exodus 7-12 records the miraculous endeavors by God upon the nation of Egypt in order that His people might be set free. This series of plagues is one of the most intriguing of all Old Testament accounts of history. Each of these plagues was aimed at one or more of the

Egyptian idols. For example, the Egyptians worshipped the Nile River (and its god, Hapi), so God proceeded to turn it, as well as all Egyptian waters, into blood (Ex. 7:14-25). Thus, the plagues served well not only in delivering the Israelites from bondage, but also in revealing to all mankind the futility of serving impotent idols. This was a lesson that neither Israel nor modern man has learned.

The ninth plague in this series brought upon Egypt is overwhelming in its power, significant in its magnitude and revealing in its scope. Exodus 10:21-29 reveals that the Lord, through Moses, brought "a thick darkness in all the land of Egypt three days." It was described as "darkness which may be felt" (vs. 21). Yet, in the land of Goshen, the dwelling place of Israel, the Bible reveals there was light (vs. 23). Here, then, was a distinct line of demarcation. On the one side lay Egypt, the idolatrous. On the other lay Israel, the chosen. On the one side was complete darkness. On the other side, there was light.

The apostle Paul penned through inspiration his desire that the Colossians be "strengthened with all might, according to his glorious power, unto all patience and long-suffering with joyfulness; giving thanks unto the Father, which hath made us meet 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: in whom we have redemption through His blood, even the forgiveness of sins" (Col. 1:11-14). Here again, light and darkness are placed in contrast. Darkness has always symbolized that which is perverse and evil, in contrast to light, which represents good. I John 1:5 states: "God is light, and in Him is no darkness at all." It stands to reason, then, that when a plague of darkness was brought upon the ungodly of Egypt that light would be present among God's people.

Jesus said, "I am the light of the world; he that followeth me shall not walk in darkness, but shall have the light of life" (Jn. 8:12). John penned, "If we say that we have fellowship with him and walk in darkness, we lie, and do not practise the truth: but if we walk in the light, as he is in the light, we have fellowship one with another, and the blood of Jesus Christ his Son cleanseth us from all sin" (I Jn. 1:6,7). Jude revealed the despair that darkness represents when he spoke of the destiny of the angels that sinned. He wrote, "And the angels which kept not their first estate, but left their own habitation, he hath reserved in everlasting chains under darkness unto the judgment of the great day" (Jude 6). Again he stated, "Raging waves of the sea, foaming out their own shame-wandering stars, to whom is reserved the blackness of darkness for ever" (Jude 13). Numerous other passages could be cited

which reveal the standing contrast between light and darkness in the spiritual realm. However, these are sufficient to establish the basis of a study of the aforementioned passage from Colossians 1:11-14.

One can readily see in this passage the contrasting kingdoms of light and darkness. Contained in the kingdom of light is the "glorious power" of God (vs. 11). Conversely, the kingdom of darkness has been made powerless (Heb. 2:14). It is also noted that through the power of God man can be made "meet (suitable) to be partakers of the inheritance of the saints in light" (vs. 12). On the other hand, Satan can only deliver a portion of his inheritance, which is "everlasting fire prepared for the devil and his angels" (Mt. 25:41). It is also seen as a place of "outer darkness (Mt. 25:30).

Verse 13 reveals that Christians have been delivered from "the power of darkness." Not only that, but they have also been "translated into the kingdom of his dear Son." Thus, as with Egypt and Israel of old, the line of demarcation is clearly drawn. On the one side are those who, like Egypt, are not in fellowship with God and are, hence, in darkness. On the other side are those who have been delivered from that particular kingdom with its power, and have been redeemed "through his blood," thus obtaining "the forgiveness of sins" (Col. 1:14).

It must have been an awesome sight to behold a portion of land in which there was no light (indeed, in which there was darkness so thick it could be felt), and then see another portion of that same land in which there was light! Only the power of God could have accomplished such. It is just as amazing to note that there is such a distinction in the spiritual realm as well. However, just as there were those whose hearts were like Pharaoh's, who would rather stumble in darkness than submit to God, there are those who would rather grope in spiritual darkness than to yield to God's will and enjoy the glorious light. Why would anyone in ancient Egypt prefer absolute darkness and that which was powerless to light and He who has all power? But, then again, why do modern men desire spiritual wickedness and ignorance with its darkness over the lamp unto their feet, and the light unto their path (Ps. 119:105)? "And have NO FELLOWSHIP WITH the unfruitful works of DARKNESS. . . (Eph. 5:11).

# *I've Got The Cure For Aids*

**BILL BRANDSTATTER**

According to the news media the A.I.D.S Virus has reached epidemic proportions. Yet statistics continually reveal that 90% of the A.I.D.S cases fall into two categories: homosexuals and intravenous drug users. To lessen the number of people in each of these categories would be to decrease the number of A.I.D.S cases substantially. If such were the case this disease would no longer be considered "epidemic".

God never has been, nor will He ever be pleased with homosexual activity. It was even wrong for Ham to see his father Noah naked (Gen. 9:22ff). Throughout the ages the principle set forth in Gal. 6:7 has applied: "Whatever man soweth, that shall he also reap." People that lead such lifestyles are "worthy of death" (Rom. 1:27, 32). Sodom and Gomorrha were engaged in activities of this sort. God condemned them, "making them an ensample unto those that after should live ungodly" (II Pet 2:6). People who live this "alternate lifestyle" according to the Bible "shall not inherit the kingdom of heaven" (I Cor. 6:9, 10). The first step in curing A.I.D.S is to get back to the Biblical teaching of one man married to one woman for life. Then, sexual activities are to be confined to that marriage (I Cor. 7:2, 4, 9; Rom. 7:2).

People that use drugs are violating a number of scriptures. In I Cor. 3:16ff Paul indicates the body is a temple of God and must be kept holy. This text has reference specifically to the Christian. However Eccl. 12:13 states: "Fear God and keep His commandments for this is the whole duty of man." Surely no one can say that God is pleased with an individual who is a drug user. Two verses of scripture could be used to summarize how to cure A.I.D.S First is Phil. 4:8. Although written to Christians primarily, mankind in general needs to heed the words in that passage: "Whatsoever things are true, whatsoever things are honest, whatsoever things are just, whatsoever things are pure, whatsoever things are lovely, whatsoever things are of good report; if there be any virtue, and if there be any praise, think on these things." Also Col. 3:17 states: "whatsoever ye do in word or deed, do all in the name of the Lord Jesus." Since there is no authority in scripture for either of the major causes of A.I.D.S., both are wrong and therefore sinful (I Jno. 3:4).

If individuals would follow the above mentioned scriptures and heed the words of the Bible, and become a Christian and "deny

ungodliness and worldly lusts, and live soberly, righteous, and godly in this present world" (Titus 2:12) the threat of A.I.D.S would be eliminated.

## ***Too Busy***

A business man, harrassed and discouraged from overwork took his problem to a psychiatrist who promptly told him to do less work. "Furthermore," prescribed the doctor, "I want you to spend an hour each week in the cemetery." "What on earth do you want me to do that for? What should I do in the cemetery?" "Not much. Take it easy and look around. Get acquainted with some of the men already in there permanently and remember that they didn't finish their work either. Nobody does, you know."

Well, it's so, isn't it? Perhaps many of us become involved in so many responsibilities and affairs of life that we feel we have no time to give to faithful worship of God. . . No time to study and meditate upon the word of life . . . No time for any thing but "making a living." We just can't take off from our regular routine. YES YOU CAN. And furthermore, you will some day and permanently. And the world will go right on without you just as it has done with countless thousands of people who, like you, thought they just had to attend a multiplicity of matters before they met their obligations to God. Think it over.

**YOUTH:** Too happy to think; there is plenty of time.

**MANHOOD:** Too busy to think; I must get more money.

**PRIME:** Too anxious to think; I am overburdened with worry.

**DECLINING YEARS:** Too old to think; the years are fast slipping away.

**DYING BED:** Too ill to think; I am weak, suffering and all alone.

**DEATH:** Too late to think; the spirit has flown.

**ETERNITY:** Forever to think; God's mercy is past.

# ***"Abstain From All Appearance Of Evil"***

## ***I Thessalonians 5:22***

**ALLEN WEBSTER**

Before this day is over you will have influenced someone to be closer to God or farther from Him. Influence is defined as "that invisible force in one's personality that causes others to act."

While we do not have a choice as to having influence, we do have a choice in the *kind* of influence we exert. Not only do we have a choice, we have a RESPONSIBILITY to be a good influence on others. Some "Christians" rebel at the thought of being held responsible for words and actions that cause others to think bad of Christ, but it is the case nonetheless.

I Thessalonians 5:22 should be constantly on the minds of faithful Christians because it gives a principle by which to live. THIS VERSE SHOWS THAT...

### **(1) WE ARE RESPONSIBLE FOR WHAT OTHERS THINKS OF US.**

To the best of our ability we are to have a good reputation among those of the world. "That ye may be blameless and harmless, the sons of God, without fault, in the midst of a crooked and perverse generation, among whom ye shine as lights in the world" (Phil. 2:15). Notice this principle, "Sound speech, *that cannot be condemned*; that he that is of the contrary part may be ashamed, having *no evil thing* to say of you" (Titus 2:8).

We must be careful about what people think of us, because what they think of Christians is what they think of the church of Christ.

### **(2) WE MUST AVOID QUESTIONABLE.**

Some seem to delight in seeing how close they can come to sinning without going over the line. This "flirting" with sin is wrong! We are to "abhor" evil (Rm. 12:9) and "eschew" (flee) it (I Pet. 3:12), not "adhere" to it and pursue it! This principle applies, "And he that doubteth is damned if he eat, because he eateth not of faith, for whatsoever is not of faith is sin" (Rom. 14:23).

The conscience cannot be offended without sin being committed.

Yet, one cannot go solely by the conscience because it can be hardened and must be educated by the word of God (Rom. 10:7). Things such as gambling, dancing, A-rated movies, immodest clothing, mixed swimming, smoking and social drinking should be avoided for this reason (among others).

Additionally, we must be careful that our liberties as Christians do not offend those weaker in the faith. "It is good neither to eat flesh, nor to drink wine, nor anything whereby thy brother stumbleth or is offended, or is made weak" (Rom. 14:21). "And through thy knowledge shall the weak brother perish, for whom Christ died? But when ye sin so against the brethren, and wound their weak conscience, ye sin against Christ. Wherefore, if meat make my brother to offend, I will eat no flesh while the world standeth, lest I make my brother to offend" (I Cor. 8:11-13).

We should not knowingly do anything that offends our brethren because each soul is worth more than all the world. (Mt. 16:26).

The Christian's influence is described as salt (Mt. 5:13), light (Mt. 5:14-16), personal (I Cor. 7:14,16), honorable (I Tim. 6:1), beneficial to other (I Pet. 2:11-12), soul-saving (I Pet. 3:1,2) and permanent (Heb. 11:4). With these thoughts in mind, let us guard ours closely and use it fully !

## ***Hell***

***Mt. 25:46***

**WADE LEE WEBSTER**

*"And these shall go away into everlasting punishment: but the righteous into life eternal" (Mt. 25:46).* Christ clearly taught that there is either eternal life or eternal punishment awaiting us. Most everyone thinks about heaven and its many joys. However, many today have put the thought of eternal punishment and hell out of their minds. As Paul wrote, *"There is no fear of God before their eyes"* (Rom. 3:18). Although the world and many weak-kneed preachers may be silent on the subject, the Bible is not. Biblical writers speak often of hell. The Biblical doctrine of hell can be studied by answering three general questions.

First, *IS HELL A REALITY?* Many in today's world deny that hell is a real place. Even among those who claim to be religious, many deny

that hell exists. Some contend that when a righteous person dies he goes to heaven, but that when a wicked person dies he is annihilated (John 5:28-29). Others contend that an all loving God could not send anyone to Hell (Rom. 11:12). However, God's word lends *no* support to these erroneous suppositions. The Biblical writers speak of hell as a very real place. David wrote, "*The wicked shall be turned into hell, and all nations that forget God*" (Psa. 9:17). David believed that hell was real. Daniel wrote, "*And many of them that sleep in the dust of the earth shall awake, some to everlasting life, and some to shame and everlasting contempt*" (Dan. 12:2). Likewise, Daniel believed that some were going to be lost for an eternity in hell. Our Lord believed that there was a hell. Matthew records, "*And fear not them which kill the body, but are not able to kill the soul; but rather fear him which is able to destroy both soul and body in hell*" (Mt. 10:28). When people deny that there is a hell, they are denying that which our Lord taught. They can try to deny it, and try to place it out of their minds, but that doesn't change the fact that it exists. Hell is a reality!

Second, *WHAT IS HELL LIKE?* The Biblical writers not only picture the beauty of heaven, they also picture how horrible hell will be. (1) Hell is often described as being a place of fire. It is described as: "*the lake of fire*" (Rev. 20:15), "*a furnace of fire*" (Mt. 13:42), "*everlasting fire*" (Mt. 25:41), "*flaming fire*" (II Thess. 1:8), and "*unquenchable fire*" (Mt. 3:12), cf. Mk. 9:44). (2) Hell is described as a place of torment. Luke writes concerning the rich man: "And in hell (hades) he lift up his eyes, *being in torments*, and seeth Abraham afar off, and Lazarus in his bosom. And he cried and said, 'Father Abraham, have mercy on me, and send Lazarus, that he may dip the tip of his finger in water, and cool my tongue; *for I am tormented in this flame.*' But Abraham said, 'Son, remember that thou in thy lifetime receivedst thy good things, and likewise Lazarus evil things; but now is he comforted, and *thou art tormented*'" (Lk. 16:23-25). John wrote, "*And the smoke of their torment ascendeth up forever and ever: and they have no rest day nor night, who worship the beast and his image, and whosoever receiveth the mark of his name*" (Rev. 14:11). (3) It is described as a place of darkness. Christ said: "*And cast ye the unprofitable servant into outer darkness: there shall be weeping and gnashing of teeth*" (Mt. 25:30). Peter writes, "For if God spared not the angels that sinned, but cast them down to hell, *and delivered them into chains of darkness*, to be reserved unto judgment" (II Pet. 2:4). (4) It is described as a place of destruction and separation. Paul writes, "And to you who are troubled rest with us, when the Lord Jesus shall be revealed from heaven with

His mighty angels, in flaming fire taking vengeance on them that know not God, and that obey not the gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ: *Who shall be punished with everlasting destruction from the presence of the Lord, and from the glory of His power*" (II Thess. 1:7-9). someone has well said that: "Heaven will be heaven because God is there, and hell will be hell because God is not there." Hell means separation from God. The picture that the Bible Paints of hell should cause everyone to seriously think of his condition, and to live in such a way that heaven and not hell will be his home.

Third, *WHO WILL BE IN HELL?* The Bible names a number of different people that will be in hell. They are: (1) *The devil and his angels* (Mt. 25:41; cf. II Pet. 2:4), *the wicked and nations that forget God* (Psa. 9-17), *those who know not God* (II Thess. 1:8), *those who obey not the gospel* (II Thess. 1:8), *those not written in the book of life* (Rev. 20:15), *the unprofitable servant* (Mt. 25:30), *those who have sin in their lives* (Rev. 21:27), *the fearful, the unbelieving* (before death, all will be believers after death), *the abominable, murderers, whoremongers, sorcerers, idolaters, and all liars* (Rev. 21:8). Imagine what hell will be like with such horrible people. Many people today feel that only a few of the most terrible people will be in Hell. However, the Bible teaches that the majority of people will be lost. Matthew records, "*Enter ye in at the strait gate: for wide is the gate, and broad is the way, that leadeth to destruction, and many there be which go in thereat*" (Mt. 7:13). Sadly, the majority of people are going to be lost and not saved.

"*And these shall go away into everlasting punishment: but the righteous into life eternal*" (Mt. 25:46). Our Lord plainly taught that the righteous would be rewarded, and that the wicked would be punished. He taught that either heaven or hell will be our eternal home. We must choose where we will live our lives in eternity. Marshall Keeble often said, "God votes for you, the devil votes against you, and you hold the deciding vote." Which will it be, Heaven or Hell?