



THE GOSPEL JOURNAL

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FROM THE
CROSS**

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It Is Finished

John 19:30

The final words of someone often has great meaning. The final words of our Lord have rich significance. One of those last words is: “It is finished.” When we think about something being “finished,” we might think about various aspects of something being “finished.” However, the meaning in this context has to do with the completed scheme of God’s redemption. God had a plan for man and that plan involved His Son, Jesus the Messiah. Notice what Peter preached:

Ye men of Israel, hear these words; Jesus of Nazareth, a man approved of God among you by miracles and wonders and signs, which God did by him in the midst of you, as ye yourselves also know: Him, being delivered by the determinate counsel and foreknowledge of God, ye have taken, and by wicked hands have crucified and slain. (Acts 2:22-23)

Even before man had sinned against God in the beginning, God had already decided to deliver man from the depths of despair. After Adam and Eve had rebelled against God, He announced to the serpent: “And I will put enmity between thee and the woman, and between thy seed and her seed; it shall bruise thy head, and thou shalt bruise his heel” (Genesis 3:15).

This is our first glimpse of God’s scheme of redemption as He begins this stratagem so that in the fulness of time God would send His Son to die on the cross of Calvary to redeem man.

“But when the fulness of the time was come, God sent forth his Son, made of a woman, made under the law” (Gal. 4:4). Adam Clarke noted this on this phrase:

As if he had said: “I have executed the great designs of the Almighty - I have satisfied the demands of his justice - I have accomplished all that was written in the prophets, and suffered the utmost malice of my enemies; and now the way to the holy of holies is made manifest through my blood.” An awful, yet a glorious finish. Through this tragical death God is reconciled to man, and the kingdom of heaven opened to every believing soul.

Jesus was bringing a climax to all the messianic prophecies about Himself. He said to His apostles, “... Behold, we go up to Jerusalem, and all things that are written by the prophets concerning the Son of man shall be accomplished” (Luke 18:31), and, “... [T]hese are the words which I spake unto you, while I was yet with you, that all things must be fulfilled, which were written in the law of Moses, and in the prophets, and in the psalms, concerning me” (Luke 24:44).

When Jesus said, “It is finished,” He is saying that He is the pinnacle that the prophets had spoken of about Him, His coming, His life, and His death. John Gill wrote:

[T]he whole will of God; as that he should be incarnate, be exposed to shame and reproach, and suffer much, and die; the whole work his Father gave him to do, which was to preach the Gospel, work miracles, and obtain eternal salvation for his people, all which were now done, or as good as done; the whole righteousness of the law was fulfilled, an holy nature assumed, perfect obedience yielded to it, and the penalty of death endured; hence a perfect righteousness was finished agreeably to the law, which was magnified and made honourable by it, and redemption from its curse and condemnation secured; sin was made an end of, full atonement and satisfaction for it were given; complete pardon procured, peace made, and redemption from all iniquity obtained; all enemies were conquered; all types, promises, and prophecies were fulfilled, and his own course of life ended: the reason of his saying so was, because all this was near being done, just upon finishing, and was as good as done; and was sure and certain, and so complete, that nothing need, or could be added to it; and it was done entirely without the help of man, and cannot be undone; all which since has more clearly appeared by Christ's resurrection from the dead, his entrance into heaven, his session at God's right hand, the declaration of the Gospel, and the application of salvation to particular persons.

What a great salvation we have through the blessed Savior Jesus our Lord. Jesus came to earth to redeem man to God. Through His death on the cross of Calvary, He was able to accomplish this wonderful deed. Because of His great love, we can now come before the throne of grace and find redemption. As Jesus said, "... I am come that they might have life, and that they might have it more abundantly (John 10:10).

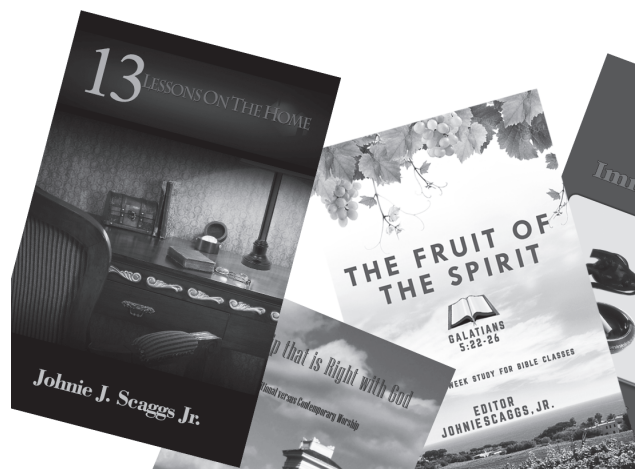
Because of His great love for man, we can enter the Kingdom of God. Jesus said, "... Verily, verily, I say unto thee, Except a man be born of water and of the Spirit, he cannot enter into the kingdom of God" (John 3:5). Some of the people on the day of Pentecost understood what had taken place on the cross of Calvary. After having heard that great sermon and being pricked in the heart, they cried out, "... Men and brethren, what shall we do?" (Acts 2:37). Peter responded: "Repent, and be baptized every one of you in the name of Jesus Christ for the remission of sins ..." (Acts 2:38). All that Jesus had come to do is consummated in this glorious day: the birth of the church, His kingdom, and entrance into the same. This is what He came to do; it is what He finished on the cross of Calvary.

May God's rich blessings be upon us as we remember the final words of Jesus as He bled on the cross of Calvary. Oh, how blessed we are.



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A SENIOR'S MOMENT:



Will the Earth Be Destroyed or Renovated at the Second Coming?

Keith A. Mosher, Sr.

Some among churches of Christ, and in the denominational realm, use 2 Peter 3:1-13 to teach that at the second coming the fire on judgment day will simply “burn off” or renovate the earth, but will not destroy it. The idea of the renovated earth comes from the term in 2 Peter 3:10 translated in the King James Version as *burned up*, but being found in some ancient uncial (large letter manuscripts) as meaning *discovered* since the Greek word in the uncials is different from the majority of the manuscripts used by the King James translators and those like them. [The translation debate between Westcott-Hort theorists, i.e. only the large letter manuscripts are the best, and the majority view of John Burgon and others is that which accounts for the differences, for example, between the King James New Testament and the American Standard New Testament.]

The context of 2 Peter 3:1-13 has three major themes that are: cosmology, judgment, and prophecy. Peter had to deal with the errorists’ claims that the earth now was the same as always (2 Pet. 3:4). (This latter contention that the earth is stable [uniformitarianism] is the basis for evolutionary error.) The flood, which Peter used as his illustration of the instability of the earth becomes, in the context, the example of both the cosmological destruction *and* of the judgment of men (2 Peter 3:5-7).

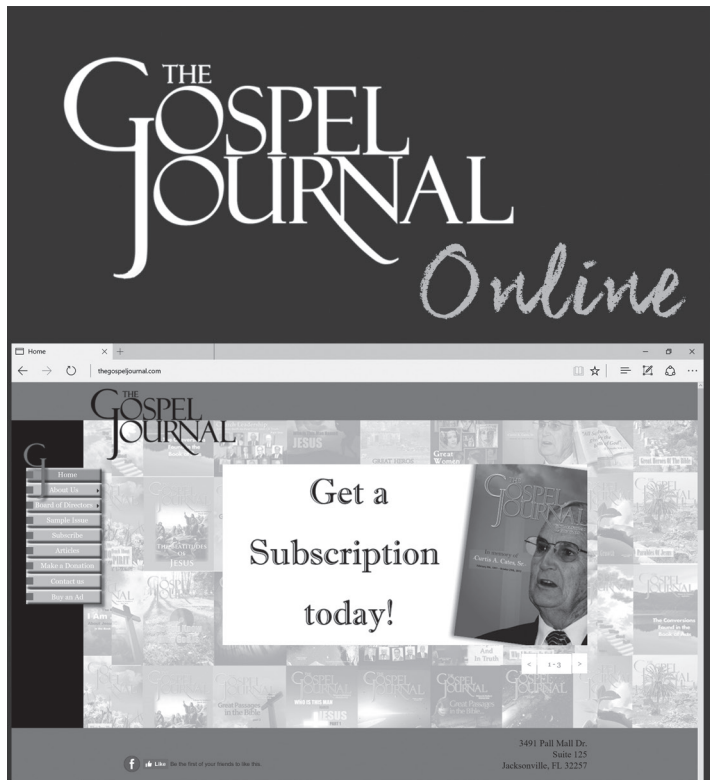
Peter was showing the world that then was *apooletō* (destroyed) by water and can easily be destroyed again (2 Peter 3:7). Therefore, the world that now exists is *different from the one that pre-existed*.

The “heavens and the earth” that are now will exist until judgment (2 Peter 3:7). [The phrase, “new heavens and new earth” is contextual and here refers to a place where God will be, 2 Peter 3:13.] The term *ouranoi*, or *heavens*, is plural and is referring here to the abode of the stars *and the atmosphere* (Traub, TDNT). The Old Testament equivalent is *shemayim* which often refers to the atmosphere (Job 26:11; Psa. 115:15-17) as well as the abode of God (Isaiah 6:5, et al). The meaning of *earth* or *cosmos* in the phrase is significant to an understanding of the new heavens and new earth, for does *cosmos* refer to the material universe or to mankind, per the renovated earth folks? According to the text, the only real purpose in the flood illustration was to demonstrate God’s power to return in His time for judgment (2 Pet. 3:8). Just as the world that then was was once destroyed by a flood, so it can again be destroyed by fire. When the cosmos is redeemed, it ceases to be a *cosmos and becomes the place where God dwells* (2 Peter 3:13).

The phrase, *the day of the Lord*, used by Peter, has strong eschatological implications in all extra-canonical literature and especially in Old Testament teaching (cf. 2 Pet. 3:12; My MTh. thesis of 119 pages is the basis for the claims here.). The phrase occurs five times in the New Testament and *all* of the occurrences have *end time* meanings. So, to describe the end of the universe, Peter wrote: *en a oi ouranoi poidzadon-poiellois*; that is, *the heavens will pass away*. Leaving one to wonder that if the earth is just renovated at judgment, what atmosphere would be there? In fact, the adverb *poidzeedon*, indicates the crackling noise of objects being consumed by fire.

Peter then added: *stocheia de kausuomena luthetetai* referring to what occurs on the “day of the Lord” and the noun *stocheia*, translated *elements*, shows that, since it is being used in the context of a “new heavens and new earth,” that even the celestial bodies will no longer exist. That is, the “new heavens and the new earth” is a comprehensive phrase and any reference to the future existence of either would be superfluous.

The most problematic of Peter’s statements seems to be the last phrase of verse ten: *kai gee kai ta en auto era eupetheestai* (discovered) as in the uncials or *katakaeesetai* (burned up) as in most of the manuscripts. Since judgment day is the contextual consideration, it is the case that when men are found deficient, they will be sent away to another realm and not exist in God’s presence any longer. Will men be *discovered or burned*? It is also the case that 2 Peter 3:10 is a question and means “*the earth and the works it contains, will they be found?*” As with deficient men, the earth that now exists will be nowhere to be *found or discovered* at judgment day. When one uses *katakaeesetai*, the meaning, of course, is plain. This earth and the heavens that now exist will be nowhere to be found on judgment day. They will “*melt with a fervent heat*” (2 Peter 3:10).



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Sam Dilbert

Father Forgive Them

Luke 23:33-34

From a hill outside of Jerusalem, a cross casts its shadow across human history as the symbol of the ultimate tragedy and triumph wedded together in a single event. The cross has been called a scandal, a curse, and a stumbling block. Jesus himself referred to it as his glory. The cross represents hope despite sin, light out of darkness, and life through death.

In Luke 23, the beloved physician records the crucifixion with little fanfare, then immediately recounts Jesus' petition on behalf of his antagonists, "Father, forgive them, for they know not what they do" (23:33-34). In this plaintive cry, Jesus teaches several final lessons.

Jesus Calls Him Father

In his prayer, Jesus first addressed his Father as he taught in the model prayer (Luke 11:2-4). To most onlookers, Jesus had been proven to be a fraud. He declared himself to be the Son of God, but how could the Ruler of the universe allow his Son to be mocked, tortured, and killed? His followers were doubting. The Jewish people were confused. The Jewish leaders were ecstatic. All seemed to discount Jesus' claims, teachings, and miracles in light of his crucifixion.

Luke highlights the skepticism and confusion surrounding the cross by bringing us face to face with distinct groups of people. The council had questioned, "Are you the Son of God?" (22:70). The weeping women grieved over the brutality of Jesus' fate (23:27). As he hung on the tree, the rulers scoffed, "He saved others; let him save himself, if he is the Christ of God, the Chosen One" (23:35). The soldiers mocked his royalty, challenging him to save himself (23:36-38). Even one of the criminals joined in the ridicule, "Are you not the Christ? Save yourself and us!" (23:39). The other thief believed in Jesus (23:40-42).

At his death, the crowds returned home beating their chests with the disgrace of the spectacle they had attended (23:48). Even his disciples stood and watched in puzzlement (23:49). The words of the soldier indicted them all, "Certainly this man was innocent!" (23:47).

To counter the confusion, Luke reminds his audience that this moment has been a part of the scheme of redemption since the beginning. At the end of verse 34, Luke observes the soldiers gambling over Jesus' robe. What Luke saw in that moment, God saw nearly a millennium earlier in Psalm 22:18. The crucifixion proved the Ruler of the universe not only allowed his Son to be mocked, tortured, and killed, but together they orchestrated it.

Thus, even on the cross, Jesus still called God, "Father."

Jesus Desired Their Forgiveness

One of Luke's motifs is his focus on forgiveness. It was a hallmark of John's ministry (1:77), the blessing to the bedfast paralytic (5:20), Jesus' message from the sermon on the plain (6:37), granted to the sinful woman of the city (7:47-50), included in the model prayer (11:4), connected to blasphemy (12:10), and needed to be given over and over (17:3-4). After his resurrection, Jesus challenged his disciples to preach forgiveness (24:47). Luke continues the forgiveness motif in the book of Acts (2:38; 5:31; 8:22; 10:43; 13:38; 26:18). It is little wonder Luke begins his account of the cross with Jesus' petition for their forgiveness.

The forgiveness Luke highlights is only available because Jesus submitted to the cross. God's redemptive plan requires this sacrifice. Again, the cross is shown to be a purposeful act of God, not a setback perpetrated by a hard-hearted Jewish leadership.

The original word translated "forgive" is *aphes* and it means, "Generally, to cause someone or something to undergo separation" (Bauer, Danker, Arndt, & Gingrich, A Greek-English Lexicon of the New Testament). It is used in the New Testament for forgiveness or releasing someone from the penalty of their sins. On the cross, Jesus asked God to separate them from the guilt of their actions.

Implied in his desire for their forgiveness is the expectation of their repentance. God never forces his pardon on those who do not seek it. Justification is reserved for those who seek God and trust him as their only hope for salvation.

Jesus Loved His Enemies

Looking back at Luke's scene, we see the Jewish leaders, the crowds, the disciples, the criminals, and the soldiers. Jesus asked God to forgive "them." Obviously, the leaders needed forgiveness for the hardness of their hearts and their gross miscarriage of justice. The Roman soldiers were guilty of driving the nails, but their ignorance may have lessened their culpability (Luke 12:47-48; 23:34). Though not active in the crucifixion, the crowds needed forgiveness from their sins, and possibly from their tacit approval of the crucifixion. The thieves needed separation from their crimes, and the disciples needed forgiveness from their doubt. All of them required forgiveness, and Jesus desired to give it.

This attitude of forgiveness exemplifies Jesus' teaching toward one's enemies—it is a practice what you preach moment for Jesus. In Luke 6:27-28, Jesus tells his followers to love their enemies and even pray for those who abuse them. On the cross, he showed them what loving your enemy looks like—desiring their change of heart so they could be saved. This is the high moral tone Jesus set during his ministry and expected his disciples to imitate.

The lessons of the cross continue to shape the landscape of Christianity today. Jesus remains the Son of God. The forgiveness he procured in his death still works. And the high moral code of loving one's enemies still marks his disciples. This is the legacy of cross, the tragedy of death and the triumph of forgiveness.



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Ronnie Hayes

Behold Your Son

John 19:25-27

What is the strongest emotion? Is it a mother's love for her children or a child's love for their mother or daddy? While on the cross, Christ makes a plea, "Now there stood by the cross of Jesus his mother, and his mother's sister, Mary the wife of Cleophas, and Mary Magdalene. When Jesus therefore saw his mother, and the disciple standing by, whom he loved, he saith unto his mother, Woman, behold thy son" (John 19:25-26)! But what does this mean? Franklin Camp wrote,

Here we have an indication of the fact that as strong as fleshly ties are, spiritual ties go beyond that. Here is the mother of Jesus; Jesus' own flesh and blood. We know that He had brothers and sister, but while hanging on the cross, Jesus tells his mother, I am leaving you in John's care. He tells John, I am leaving my mother in your care. What an indication of the value, the height, the dedication, and the meaning of spiritual ties. It is stronger than any fleshly tie. It is nobler than any fleshly tie. The greatest love in this world is not the love a parent for a child or a child for a parent even as valid and as important as that is. The greatest love in this world is the spiritual love that ties together hearts that have a common identity. They belong to a spiritual family with God as the father and Jesus Christ as the elder brother. Is that the kind of love that he has produced within our hearts? How strong are the ties of love that bind us one to another? We ought to think seriously about this. This is a lesson that Christ wanted to be a product of the cross. He wanted to bring together our hearts in unity. (Camp's Notes on the Book of John)

What can we learn from the expression, "Behold thy son?" First, it speaks to the love that we should have for each other as Christians. Paul to the church at Colossae said, "That their hearts might be comforted, being knit together in love, and unto all riches of the full assurance of understanding, to the acknowledgement of the mystery of God, and of the Father, and of Christ" (Colossians 2:2). How wonderful it is to have the comfort which comes from our hearts being knit together in love. Christ taught, "A new commandment I give unto you, That ye love one another; as I have loved you, that ye also love one another. By this shall all men know that ye are my disciples, if ye have love one to another" (John 13:34-35). It is imperative for Christians to love one another. How would we react if a brother or sister asked us to take care of their mother or father if something ever happened where they could not? Would we love them enough to honor their request? Our love for our brethren and our love for God are tied together. John wrote:

Beloved, let us love one another: for love is of God; and every one that loveth is born of God, and knoweth God. (1 John 4:7)

If a man say, I love God, and hateth his brother, he is a liar: for he that loveth not his brother whom he hath seen, how can he love God whom he hath not seen? And this commandment have we from him, That he who loveth God love his brother also. (1 John 4:20-21)

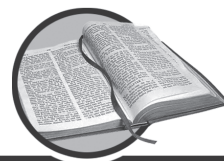
What a special bond there must have been between Jesus and John for Jesus to say to his mother, "Behold thy son." Is that the bond we have with fellow Christians today?

In the second place, how selfless was this statement? This shows more concern about His mother than He was about his suffering. Too often today everything has to be about me. Why didn't Jesus complain on the cross? Why didn't Jesus beg for mercy and ask for a quick death? Could it be that He was far more concerned about His mother? I have heard individuals who were nearing the end of their life say, "Be sure to watch over my wife or my children." They were not concerned about their fate, but about those whom they loved. Shouldn't we do that? We complain about not getting the job, house, car, or recognition which we think we deserve. I was always taught that when you think you have it rough look around, you will always find someone who has it worse. When I am selfless, I will think about the lost and their needs. Christ came to "seek and save the lost" (Luke 19:10), shouldn't we do the same? Instead of worrying about not getting what I want, we should help those who are mourning over new graves. We might want to keep our ears open to those who are depressed. We could brighten someone's day with a meal while they are sick. May we need to look outward, not inward.

Many times, we know what we are supposed to do, but we never carry out the actions. John tells us, "Then saith he to the disciple, Behold thy mother! And from that hour that disciple took her unto his own home" (John 19:27). John did not hesitate to take Mary into his home. The problem is not failure to see the need; it is doing something about it. Yes, I see that they need help with their power bill or groceries and I hope someone helps them. Where would Mary have been if this had been John's attitude? Everybody's business is usually nobody's job! Yet, when we are the kind of Christian we should be, we will be as John and implement a plan of action. Do we take the time to say, "I'm thinking about you?" Do we say, "You are in my prayers?" A small word or kind gesture can go a long way to someone who is in the valley of despair.

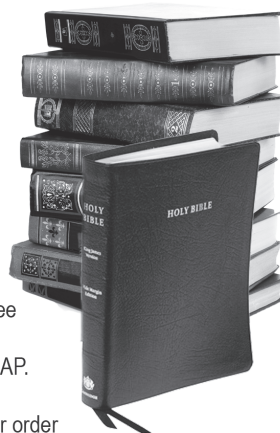
It might be good for us to end by asking, "What does 'behold thy son' mean to you?" May we open our eyes and hearts; may we encourage those who need our help.

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Tim Hayes

My God, My God, Why Hast Thou Forsaken Me?

Mark 15:33-36

And when the sixth hour was come, there was darkness over the whole land until the ninth hour. And at the ninth hour Jesus cried with a loud voice, saying, Eloi, Eloi, lama sabachthani? which is, being interpreted, My God, my God, why hast thou forsaken me? And some of them that stood by, when they heard it, said, Behold, he calleth Elias. And one ran and filled a sponge full of vinegar, and put it on a reed, and gave him to drink, saying, Let alone; let us see whether Elias will come to take him down. (Mark 15:33-36)

McGarvey wrote:

The depth of meaning contained in this bitter outcry can never, we suppose, be fathomed by human thought, yet the word “forsaken” directs our thought in the right channel. If a good man who has long trusted in God and delighted in his favor could suddenly realize that God had forsaken him, he would enter, at least partly, into the Savior’s feeling. But the peculiar relation which Jesus sustained to the Father rendered this feeling more intense than human hearts can experience, and at the same time it renders most mysterious to us the forsaking itself. (McGarvey 246)

The full depths of this statement of our Lord may not be fully grasped by man this side of eternity. But there are many points of the statement upon which we may feast.

Jesus spoke the words as penned by the Psalmist: “My God, my God, why hast thou forsaken me? why art thou so far from helping me, and from the words of my roaring” (Psalm 22:1)? The ensuing record further solidifies the prophecy: “All they that see me laugh me to scorn: they shoot out the lip, they shake the head, saying, He trusted on the LORD that he would deliver him: let him deliver him, seeing he delighted in him” (Psalm 22:7-8).

Forsaken – the word itself conjures an intense loneliness deep within. Of the gospel writers Matthew and Mark, both recorded this cry of our Lord. And of the seven statements from the cross, this is the only statement recorded by this pair.

The same word translated “forsaken” was spoken by King David, in reference to our Lord, as quoted by Peter (Acts 2:47). David spoke of the Lord’s resurrection and the fact that the Father would not leave His Son’s soul in the Hadean realm. Jesus our Lord understood the fact that He would be raised from the grave, but on the cross, He still experienced a sense of being forsaken. In His prayer to the Father, Jesus spoke of the oneness of the Father and Son, while perhaps, the Son had never felt so distant from the Father as He did on the cross (John 17).

Immediately prior to Mark’s record of this statement, he reported about the three hours of darkness. Darkness magnifies the difficulties of trials and while Jesus was one-hundred percent God, He was also one-hundred percent man. “For we have not an high priest which cannot be touched with the feeling of our infirmities; but was in all points tempted like as we are, yet without sin” (Hebrews 4:15). Jesus had to face the trials of life as a man, because that is the way every human being must face the trials of life.

In the early Patriarchal years there was a man named Job who lived faithfully unto God but mistakenly thought God had forsaken him. Job desired a mediator between God and man: someone who fully understood God and who also fully understood man. “For he is not a man, as I am, that I should answer him, and we should come together in judgment. Neither is there any daysman betwixt us, that might lay his hand upon us both” (Job 9:32-33). Man had never been God and God had never been man, but the One who perfectly understood God and man was Christ Jesus.

Jesus, the sinless Son of God, had endured an unwarranted arrest, an unlawful trial, and undeserved punishment. At the time of His arrest in the garden, His apostles left him. During His trial, Peter denied Him and kept his distance. In the text under consideration, our Lord is suspended between heaven and earth on the cross of Calvary. His friends could not save Him. His heavenly Father would not save Him, not if mankind was to be saved. The Word knew this before He left heaven (John 1) and the Savior knew this as He suffered on the cross.

Of the seven recorded statements of our Lord from the cross, three of them were directly to the Father. The first statement: “Father, forgive them; for they know not what they do...” (Luke 23:34). The fourth statement (the middle of the seven): “...My God, my God, why hast thou forsaken me (Matthew 27:46)? Then the seventh and final statement: “...Father, into thy hands I commend my spirit ...” (Luke 23:46). In whatever sense it was wherein Jesus felt forsaken, He never doubted the Father.

Our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ stands as the “days-man” in fulfillment to the need of all mankind. Jesus said, “All power is given unto me in heaven and in earth ... and, lo, I am with you alway, even unto the end of the world. Amen” (Matthew 28:18-20; emp. TLH). The Hebrews writer recorded these words of encouragement: Let your conversation be without covetousness; and be content with such things as ye have: for he hath said, I will never leave thee, nor forsake thee (Hebrews 13:5; emp. TLH). Knowing He will never forsake us, let us never forsake him. Let us remember, we are healed by His stripes, and one of the stripes He suffered was the sense of being forsaken (Isaiah 53:5).

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Stephen Wiggins

Christ Is Preached, So I Rejoice! *Philippians 1:12-18*

In this passage the apostle Paul informs the Philippian brethren as to his welfare. The congregation would have been concerned over Paul's well being after hearing of his arrest and deportation to Rome. The apostle had earlier arrived in Philippi, on his second missionary journey, and established the cause of Christ in that city (Acts 16:12-40). The congregation had later helped financially subsidize Paul's preaching efforts by sending funds of support (Phil. 4:15-16). How was their missionary faring? Had the spread of the gospel been impeded since Paul's arrest? The apostle answers by informing the Philippian brethren that he viewed his circumstances in Rome in a very positive way.

Paul assures his readers that the things that had befallen him in no way hindered the proclamation of the truth. In fact, just the opposite had transpired. The apostle's arrest and extradition to Rome only served to further the progress of the gospel (v. 12). God's providential hand was at work in using Paul to proclaim the saving message to those he would have never had the opportunity to preach to as a freeman. When the apostle was arrested by the Roman authorities he preached to the Jewish mob who had sought to murder him (Acts 21:27-22:1-21); the Jewish Sanhedrin (Acts 23:1-10); the Governor Felix (Acts 24:10-26); the Governor Festus (Acts 25:6-8); King Agrippa (Acts 26:1-29); and, the Roman Emperor (2 Tim. 4:16-17).

Another example of how Paul's imprisonment in Rome advanced the spread of the gospel is that the whole palace guard knew the apostle was in chains for the cause of Christianity (v. 13). At a time when most would have been depressed and discouraged over being arrested and restrained with chains Paul was overflowing with joy because Christ was still being preached amid adversity—"Christ is preached. And because of this I rejoice. Yea, and I will continue to rejoice" (v. 18). Paul was shackled but the gospel was not! At the changing of the guards Paul simply saw more potential converts for the Lord Jesus Christ. What an impeccable attitude from the grand apostle!

Paul's wonderful example led to influencing a majority of brethren "to speak the word of God more courageously and fearlessly" (v.14). These brethren were encouraged to proclaim Christ out of good will and love for God and truth, knowing that Paul himself was "set for the defense of the gospel" (vv. 15-16). One should never underestimate their positive influence for good in the kingdom of God. In today's world we can do the same thing Paul did. No matter what circumstances arise in our lives we can remain loyal and faithful to God. A righteous example and a willing mind to preach the precious good news of Christ will do wonders in spreading the borders of God's kingdom.

But now the reality of human nature sets in. Paul informs his readers that a minority of brethren were preaching Christ but doing it from insincere motives. They do so motivated by envy, rivalry, and selfish ambition "supposing that they can stir up trouble for me while I am in chains" (vv. 15, 17). Some preaching brethren had a competitive spirit. Thus, while they were proclaiming Christ, they were doing so with less than worthy motives—jealousy and self-centeredness. A lesson here should be learned. Preaching brethren should never be envious of one another. We should never wish to see the demise of another's success when preaching the gospel.

Who preaches more gospel meetings, speaks on more lectureships, or baptizes more converts should never enter our minds. Rather, like Paul, we should rejoice when the Lord's work is being accomplished, no matter who does it.

As Paul contemplates the fact that Christ is proclaimed, even from unworthy motives, he can declare: "But what does it matter? The important thing is that in every way, whether from false motives are true, Christ is preached. And because of this I rejoice. Yes, and I will continue to rejoice" (v. 18). Some have difficulty with the statement that Paul could rejoice when Christ is proclaimed from inappropriate motives. Others have misapplied Paul's statement supposing the apostle is giving credence to false teachers who are preaching Jesus though not his plan of salvation. In view of this please note the following observations.

First, the preaching brethren Paul references here are "preaching Christ." To preach Christ is to preach the word of God, the gospel, which includes the kingdom/church of Christ, Christ's authority, and baptism into Christ for the remission of sins [cf. Acts 8:4, 5, 12, 35-40]. There is no indication that these brethren were not preaching the whole counsel of God or else Paul would have reproved them.

Second, whereas Paul approves of the doctrine of these men he does not approve of their motives for preaching. This is why he can rejoice that Christ is being proclaimed. The apostle never utters one word of approval for their disreputable motives. He only commends them for proclaiming Christ and the saving message of gospel truth.

Third, it must be appreciated that these preaching brothers the apostle here alludes to are not the Judaizing teachers that he will later reference in chapter 3 of this epistle where he calls them "dogs," "evil workers," and mutilators of the flesh because they were binding circumcision on the Gentile converts, [cf. Acts 15:1-7]. Those false teachers were preaching "another gospel" and rested under God's condemnation [Gal. 1:6-9].

Fourth, the whole passage under discussion here underscores what was truly important to Paul—that Christ, the Redeemer and Savior of mankind, was being proclaimed to sinful humanity!

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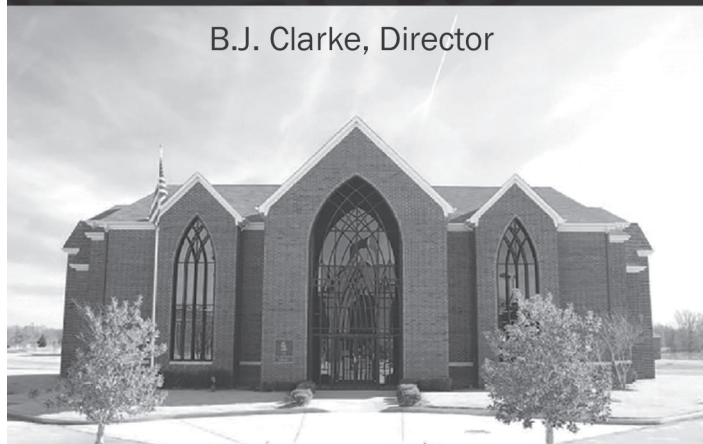
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INTRO TO THE BOOKS OF THE BIBLE:**Daniel F. Cates****Part XXXII:
Jonah**

If few books excite children's imaginations more than the prophecy of Jonah. Far more than some children's fairy tale, though, the book of Jonah is a historical book about a prejudiced, ethnocentric prophet whose commission was to preach to a nation recognized secularly for her great and terrible cruelty. The commission was rejected and the prophet fled; interestingly, the only times the words "flee" and "presence" are in the same verse are in Jonah 1:3 and Psalm 139:7, the latter of which reads, "Whither shall I go from thy spirit? or whither shall I flee from thy presence?" This book is one which not only gives account of the prophet's flight but also of his eventual greatly effective message to Nineveh and also of his disappointment that God's mercy should be shown to such a people.

There is no reason to think that Jonah was not the author of the book which contains his prophecy; in fact, the book begins, "Now the word of the LORD came unto Jonah the son of Amittai, saying," (Jonah 1:1). A good bit is known of Jonah (especially from Jonah 1:1 and 2 Kings 14:25): first, he was an inspired prophet; second, he was the son of Amittai; third, he was from Gathhepher in Zebulun (Joshua 19:10,13); fourth, he prophesied about [and most would say in the time of] Jeroboam (II) the son of Joash of Israel (2 Kings 14:23), sometime, therefore, between 782 and 753 B.C.--likely nearer the beginning of that period; fifth, he prophesied about Nineveh, capital of Assyria; sixth, he served as a type, obviously inferior, of Christ (Matthew 12:38-41; Luke 11:29,30,31; cf Matthew 16:1-4); seventh, while he was wholly ethnocentric (Jonah 3:5,10; 4:1) and wholly stubborn (Jonah 4:9) and apparently unafraid of forsaking God's commission if it meant that the wicked were punished (Jonah 1:1,2; 4:2,3), Jonah was [relatively] selfless (Jonah 1:12) and [inconsistently] penitent (Jonah 2:4,7,9) and obedient (Jonah 1:3; 3:1-9). Jonah's writing this book may reveal that he had acknowledged his sin and its folly; this writer views the book as a confession.

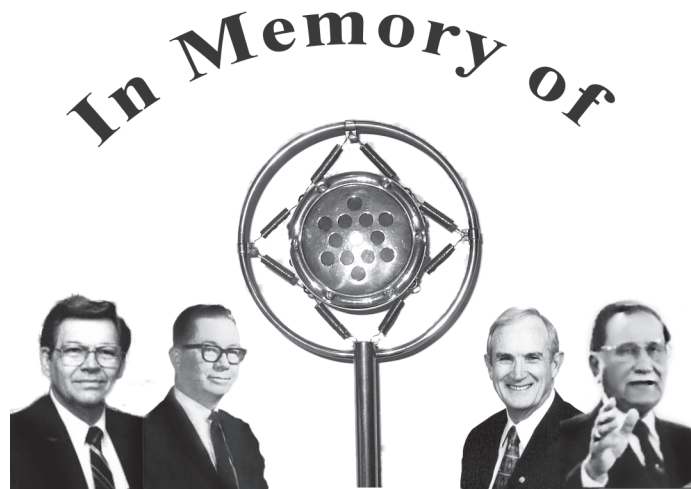
Jonah likely wrote from his home of Gathhepher, but it is possible that he wrote from Nineveh. It would be interesting to know if and how he remained in Nineveh after her repentance. Given that he prophesied of Jeroboam II's restoring "the coast of Israel" (2 Kings 14:25), it might be assumed that this prophecy was written in the early to mid-700s B.C.--perhaps a bit before, but certainly not after.

While the Ninevites were the subject of the prophecy, the prophecy against Assyria is really only a circumstance of the book itself. The book was likely intended for Israel in general to show Jonah's attempt to escape his responsibility and his unwelcome success (both of which would highlight the problems of Jewish unfaithfulness and prejudices) and to contrast with that the great long-suffering and mercy of God--which would run out sooner for Israel (721 B.C.) than for Nineveh (612 B.C.) and its nation Assyria (609 B.C.).

The key word of the book is "turn," found four times in two forms all between Jonah 3:8 and 10; Assyrian would need to turn so perhaps God would turn and indeed Nineveh turned--one will not the presence of "repent" and "repented" as synonymous terms in the same text. The key phrase of the book is Jonah's simple prophecy to Assyria, "Yet forty days, and Nineveh shall be overthrown" (Jonah 3:4). The key verse is Jonah 2:7 in which Jonah "remembered the Lord." The key passage is Jonah 3:9,10 where there is hope for and realization of mercy. The key chapters are Jonah 2 which records Jonah's prayer and Jonah 3 which records Nineveh's repentance, but truly it is hard not to consider each of the chapters key!

There are many lessons; here are just a few: first, God can dictate to kingdoms (Jonah 1:2; cf Romans 13:1; Daniel 4:32); second, one's sins can cause others to suffer (Jonah 1:12); third, "salvation is of the Lord" (Jonah 2:9; cf Acts 4:12); fourth, God can change His mind (Jonah 3:10); fifth, some regret even the goodness of God (Jonah 4:2).

One side note: Some have viewed the account of Jonah as merely allegory, that is figurative; however, Jesus' reference to Jonah was spoken as a reference to a real person in the same way that Job was referred to as only a historical person would have been (Ezekiel 14:14,20; James 5:11).



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Daniel Lange

Last words are always important words. The words of dying men are often written, recorded, and seared into the memories of those who are close to them. They are shared with the masses in public speeches, dispersed abroad in the books of men, and become collected data for webpages that can be accessed at the touch of your fingertips. Last words are always important words and when we turn to the pages of the Holy Bible this equally holds true. Some of the last words that great Shepherd of the sheep ever spoke are recorded in John 19:28, “I thirst.”

Self-Denial

The significance of Jesus statement in this passage is in part representative of the Savior’s great self-denial and suppression of His own will and desire. A narrow view of the passage may not at first reveal this too clearly, but a broader view of the passage and a reading of its greater context soon demonstrate that Jesus was not at all interested in merely quenching His body’s physical thirst, but rather His greater interest was in quenching His soul’s spiritual thirst to proclaim with His last and dying breath the promise and good tidings of God’s salvation for man.

This is evidenced first, not by Jesus desire to drink, but by Jesus refusal to drink, i.e. initially. Matthew and Mark’s account both remind us that when they had brought our Lord to the place called Golgotha, they gave Him “sour wine mingled with gall [Mark – “myrrh”] to drink. But when He had tasted it, He would not drink” (Matthew 27:34; Mark 15:23). When we hear the word “gall,” our thoughts may lead us first to that of our human organ, the gallbladder. The gallbladder is a small organ located near our intestines where bile is stored, a bitter greenish fluid that is secreted by the liver and used to help aid in digestion. Ancients often referred to gall whenever they spoke of that which was bitter, sometimes referring to the bile secretion of the human or animal gallbladder, or sometimes also to that of a bitter herb or the poison of an animal. Job and Hosea both use these varying descriptions for that which could be equally translated as gall in the Hebrew (Job 20:16; Hosea 10:4). Overtime it even came into use metaphorically to describe the spiritual state of men like Simon the Sorcerer who were “poisoned (chole—gall) by bitterness” (Acts 8:23).

Some have suggested that the gall then referred to by Matthew is a generic term, while Mark’s reference to that of the myrrh, a fragrant gum residue obtained from certain trees in the Near East possessing medicinal and fragrance properties, was the specific identification of the liquid mixed with the sour wine. Others, however, have noted the better possibility that the myrrh was simply infused into the wine for a more agreeable flavor and fragrance, since this was its principle application as seen in Jesus own embalming (John 19:39). The principle application of gall was typically its anesthetic purpose. One author notes that such an anodyne (pain-killing drug) was provided by wealthy women in Jerusalem to offer relief to criminals that were crucified. Romans referred to it as “sopor.” The exact nature then of the gall would be left to speculation. Some suggest that of a certain fish’s inner organ commonly believed to have medicinal properties in that time.

I Thirst

John 19:28

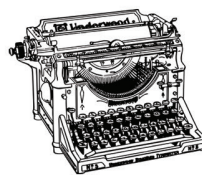
In any event, Jesus initial denial of this medicine reveals to us the Savior we already know to be true. His desire is not for personal comfort. He did not come to be served, but to serve. His words in the garden remind us continually forever of His true character and nature, "... not as I will but as You will... Your will be done" (Matthew 26:39, 42). Jesus practiced what He preached. "If anyone desires to come after Me, let him deny himself, and take up his cross daily" (Luke 9:23). Truly, Jesus did "endure the cross," and He did "taste death for everyone" (Hebrews 12:2; 2:9).

For if the Savior had staggered to the cross under the inhibitions of pain-numbing drugs, how would it have been said of Him that He "suffered for us, leaving us an example, that you should follow in His footsteps" (1 Peter 3:21) But because He suffered we can suffer with Him, and He with us. He is a great High Priest who can sympathize with our weakness, yet without sin, offering unto God an eternal and perfect sacrifice that saves us from sin once and for all. Hallelujah! Praise Jehovah and the Christ forever!

But our study must not end here. For we have not yet explained why our Suffering Servant received the latter drink, but only that He denied the first, showing us in part His self-denying character. What of the latter acceptance? Seeing then the Savior's proven character, we may rightly infer the purpose of His desire and request, "I thirst." Jesus had but one purpose, and one purpose alone in mind. To borrow from the words of J. Cromarty Smith, "This was not to soothe His agony, but only to moisten His parched tongue and lips, perhaps that He might be able to utter 'with a loud voice' His triumphant τετέλεσται," or "it is finished" (J. Cromarty Smith, "Myrrh," ed. James Hastings, A Dictionary of Christ and the Gospels: Aaron-Zion [Edinburgh; New York: T&T Clark; Charles Scribner's Sons, 1906], 212.)

And perhaps we might add to fulfill that last and final Scripture from Psalm 69, "They also gave me gall for my food, and for my thirst they gave me vinegar to drink." Yes, Jesus thirsted not for the drink, but for the righteousness that might come from the drink. To proclaim to us once more the good tidings of the gospel. To comfort us in the full assurance of hope.

I too thirst for this righteousness. "Blessed are those who hunger and thirst for righteousness (Matthew 5:6). What do you thirst?



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Stan Crowley

Into Your Hands

Luke 23:46

How do you plan to face death? Charles Lamb wrote of a friend that he ... “Departed this life on Wednesday evening; dying as he had lived, without much trouble.” What Lamb said of his friend is true of mankind in general; as a rule, men die as they have lived. Often knowing what is on their mind at death reveals what had been on their mind in their lifetime. P. T. Barnum of circus fame, on his deathbed, said: “What were today’s receipts?” Indeed, men usually die as they have lived.

Our Lord’s final words, spoken from the cross, are recorded for us: “And when Jesus had cried with a loud voice, he said, ‘Father, into thy hands I commend my spirit:’ and having said thus, he gave up the ghost” (Luke 23:46). From those last words that He spoke, we learn about the way that He lived.

He Died with a Scripture on His Lips

With His final words, “Into thy hands I commend my spirit:”, Jesus is quoting from Psalm 31:5. Although Jesus was deity, He quoted from the Scriptures and He taught that they were the only authority. Many groups say that church history or tradition is equal to—or greater—in authority than the Scripture, but it is just a fact that our Lord never once attributed any authority to such traditions. There were many Jewish stories and traditions and many Jewish councils that had met, but He never gave them any credibility. When people came to Him with questions, He would often ask, “How readest thou?” or “Have ye not read?”, then He would quote the Scriptures. That was the way He had lived His life, with the phrases of the Scriptures upon His lips. It is no wonder that in His last moments, the words of Psalm 31:5 were on His lips. He died, as He had lived, with Scripture on His lips.

He Died with a Prayer in His Heart

The words that Jesus spoke were not an exact quotation of Scripture. He added one word of His own, the word “Father.” He said, “Father, into thy hands I commend my spirit:”. He addressed the heavenly Father in prayer. Just as our Lord constantly had the Scriptures on His tongue, He constantly had communication with His heavenly Father in His heart. As we look at the Gospels, we discover that of all the work Jesus did here on earth, perhaps the single thing that our Lord put the most effort into was prayer. He had taught men to pray by what He had said (Matthew 6, Luke 11). He taught men to pray by what He did. So, having thus practiced prayer every day and night of His earthly journey, Jesus found it perfectly natural to pray as He reached the end of His journey. As He had lived, so He also died. He died with a prayer in His heart to His heavenly father.

He Died with an Unwavering Trust in God

From those last words He spoke, we learn a third and final thing: He died with an unwavering trust in God. At the end of His prayer the night before His death, after saying, “O my Father, if it be possible, let this cup pass from me:”, Jesus concluded, “nevertheless not as I will, but as thou wilt” (Matthew 26:39).

And so, just as He had submitted His body in acceptance of the physical suffering of that cross, while on the cross He submitted His eternal spirit to God. Moffatt gives this translation of Jesus' words: "I trust my spirit to thy hands." Why was He able to have such trust in yielding His spirit to God at His death? Because that is how He had lived His life.

He had yielded His body and spirit in service to the heavenly Father all His life. He said: "For I came down from heaven, not to do mine own will, but the will of him that sent me" (John 6:38). After he had made the commitment of Himself to His Father a fixed habit of His life, it was only natural for him to fall asleep with those words of trust upon His lips. As He had lived, so He also died. He died with an unwavering trust in God.

Conclusion

What an example our Lord has left us in facing death. He has shown us how to die when our time comes. Those words, "Father, into thy hands I commend my spirit:" (Luke 23:46), sum up what both life and death meant to Jesus.

They sum up what life and death should mean to us. Living is the only way to prepare for dying because, you see, men usually die as they have lived. If people are living outside Christ because they have never become part of the body of Christ (the way the Scriptures teach to become part of that body), or if people are living as unfaithful Christians, then they will indeed die as they have lived—separated from God.

Death is an event we cannot escape. Solomon says in Ecclesiastes 7:2 that death is the ultimate end of all men, and that men need to take that to heart. We all need to take that to heart today, by beginning now to prepare for that day. We will never be ready to die until we start living the way we want to die.

At the time you face death, if you are not able to say, "Father, into thy hands I commend my spirit:", then what will you say? Let those of us who yet live indeed take that to heart.



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SPECIAL STUDIES: ISLAM:



Victor M. Eskew

Islam's View of the Jews Part 2

In our last lesson, we found that Islam tends to speak out of both sides of the mouth. They can affirm something and they can deny the same thing. They can say they have an affinity for something and also state that they hate the same thing. This is true of the Jews. A researcher can find statements that indicate that Islam likes the Jews. The same researcher can find statements that show the disdain for the Jewish people. In such a case, actions speak louder than words. Let's continue with our study about "Islam's View of the Jews." We will do our best reach a conclusion about how Islam truly looks at the Jewish nation.

When Muhammad first began to announce his revelations and to proclaim that he was the prophet of God, he had an affinity for the Jews. They were monotheistic as he was. He tied many of his revelations to Jewish history. Prayer was made toward Jerusalem. Too, Muhammad is said to have had one Jewish wife name Safiyya. When Muhammad became the chief arbitrator for the city of Medina in 622 A.D., he drafted a document that has been called "the Constitution of Medina." This document sought to establish the Ummah, the fold of one community. Muhammad sought to unite the eight major clans found in Medina. Too, he tried to unify Muslims, Jews, and Christians in the city as well. In the Constitution, Muhammad set forth four main rights for the non-Muslims. First, there was to be security for all groups. Second, non-Muslims were to have equal political and cultural rights as Muslims. This would include their freedom of religion. Third, non-Muslims were to take up arms against any enemies of the Ummah and share the cost of the war. Fourth, the non-Muslims were not obliged to take part in the religious wars of the Muslims. All these things show that early in the history of the Muslim religion, Muhammad looked to have a peaceful relationship with the Jews.

Muhammad, however, wanted the Jews to accept him as the final prophet of God. This did not happen. The Jews also rejected the teachings of the Qur'an. Ultimately, the Jews violated the Constitution of Medina by aiding the enemies of the Ummah. This aid helped to bring about the battles of Badr and Uhudi. These battles were won by the Muslims. After their victory, they exiled two of the three main tribes of the Jews found in Medina, Banu Qainuqa and Banu Nadir. From this point onward, there was no peace between the Jews and Muhammad.

Muhammad turned his armies upon the Jews. He beheaded one of the leaders of one of the Jewish tribes. The leader's name was Ka'ab bin al-Ashraf. After he had been killed, Muhammad proclaimed: "Praise God for the death of Ka'ab." In 627, the last Jewish tribe was besieged in Medina. The Jewish men were murdered and the women and children were distributed among the Muslims. A year after this, Muhammad besieged the Jewish city of Khaybar located 95 miles from Medina in the northern part of the Arabian peninsula in modern-day Saudi Arabia. First, assassins were sent to murder the Jewish leaders. Second, the armies then took the city and the Jews surrendered. Third, Muhammad tortured the leader of the city to death and married his wife. This victory is deeply etched into the minds of all Muslims. It is an essential part of the educational system of Islam. One of their slogans is: "Khaybar, Khaybar. O Jews, Muhammad's army shall return!" The Muslims have also named some of their weapons after the city of Khaybar. The Fajar rockets are called Khaybar rockets and in 2002 they developed a rifle called the Khaybar 2002. It is important for our readers to understand the history of the wars of the Muslims. These wars set precedents for the religion of Islam.

Since, Muhammad is considered the ideal Muslim, how he acted is how all Muslims should act. How Muhammad acted toward the Jews in Medina and Khaybar is how all Muslims can and should act toward the Jews.

Israel and the Jews are mentioned in the Qur'an. There are 43 referenced to Bani Isra il (Israel). The Arabic term "yahud," denoting the Jews is found eleven times in the Qur'an. In addition, the verbal form "hada" meaning "Jewish" occurs ten times. These references to the Jews are both positive and negative. "According to Laqueur, conflicting statements about Jews in the Qur'an have affected Muslim attitudes toward Jews to this day, especially during period of rising Islamic fundamentalism" (...Wikipedia.com, "Islam and anti-Semitism").

The negative passages about the Jews in the Qur'an are extremely negative. They send a very powerful message to those Muslims who whole-heartedly believe that the Qur'an is the law book of Islam. Let's look at three quotes. Surah 3:25-27 states:

Allah turned back the unbelievers in a state of rage, having not won any good, and Allah spared the believers in battle. Allah is indeed, Strong and Mighty. And he brought those of the People of the Book who supported them from their fortresses and cast terror into their hearts, some of them you slew and some you took captive. And he bequeathed to you their lands, their homes, and their possessions, together with land you have never trodden. Allah has power over everything.

In this one quote we see three things that Allah allows in battle: 1) fighting itself, 2) the slaying of enemies, and 3) the taking of property of defeated enemies. Another quote from Qur'an states:

The punishment of those who wage war against Allah and His apostle and strive to make mischief in the land is only this, that they should be murdered or crucified or their hands and feet should be cut off on opposite sides or they should be imprisoned; this shall be as a disgrace for them in their world, and in the hereafter they shall have grievous chastisement. (Surah 5:33)

The final quote is from Surah 5:5. It reads: "O you who believe! Do not take the Jews and the Christians for friends; they are friends of each other; and whoever amongst you takes them for a friend, then surely he is one of them: surely Allah does not guide the unjust people."



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TOM'S PEN:**Tom Wacaster**

Two Choices, Two Victims, Two Destinations

The past two weeks have reminded us of the uncertainty of life, regardless of who we are or where we might choose to be at any moment in our daily activities. On Sunday morning, September 24, a lone shooter confronted members of the Burnett Chapel church of Christ near Nashville, Tennessee, evidently while the brethren were dismissing services that morning. Before his rampage was stopped by one of the members, he succeeded in killing one person on the church parking lot and inflicted injury on another half dozen inside the church building. One week and 12 hours later, another crazed shooter rained down bullets from his 32nd floor hotel window overlooking an open-air concert in Las Vegas, Nevada. Latest report is that 59 have now died from the rampage of a man who, for whatever reason, decided that he would take it upon himself to destroy the innocent lives of those within range of his insanity. The names of those two men do not deserve to be mentioned. Their actions bespeak an evil within that causes us to scratch our heads in bewilderment, and ask, "Why?" And then we listen in vain for an answer! Speaking of those whose lives were snuffed out at the concert, one reporter echoed the popular refrain, "They were in the wrong place at the wrong time!"

Two choices, separated by seven days and twelve hours; choices that placed men and women in situations that led to the same outcome. There is no way we can judge the hearts of those who were killed by either one of those shooters. Nor is it within our power to know the spiritual condition of any of any of them. But there is something significant in the choices every one of them made on the Sunday morning of their death. While at least one we know of chose to spend her Sunday in worship to God, thousands in that crowd in Las Vegas chose to attend a country and western concert. There may have been some in that open-air theater who had attended a worship service that morning; some who were members of the Lord's church, anxious to bow in praise to God prior to engaging in the activities of the evening. Still, the two choices represented by the two activities, both of which were separated by seven days and several hundred miles, is a stark reminder that the choices we make can, and often do, make a difference.

The victims of those two shooting spree also stand for two classes of humanity, separated spiritually in this life, and eternally in the life to come. Even if we grant that at least some of those in Las Vegas might have been faithful members of the Lord's church, that does not lessen the fact that, in that 'city of lights,' many who departed this life were simply not ready to meet their Maker that night. Therein is the real tragedy.

Not that so many died at the hands of a crazed killer, but that all too many died unprepared to meet their Master. I would not lessen the horrible nature of any of those killings, whether in Tennessee, Las Vegas, or a thousand other towns and hamlets in our country, or the world for that matter. In one instant, each of those victims was thrust into eternity; no warning, no time to prepare; only the twinkling of an eye. Dr. Keith Ablow, columnist for Fox News, said it well:

No one is guaranteed another day. Not even another hour. Not a minute. We simply don't know how many breaths we have left. And what's more, we don't know how many breaths those we cherish have left, including even those for whom we would readily die. (Keith Ablow, Fox News Opinion)

Finally, there are two destinations represented by the two tragedies of which we speak. In one instant, those precious souls were cast into the night of eternity to await the judgment. Forever gone are the opportunities to hear the gospel. There will be no second chance; no possibility to reverse the destination to which they have now committed their souls. I find myself asking, "Who will be next?" I do not consider myself a pessimist, but I see nothing on the horizon that would suggest these two tragedies will be the last. A nation cannot cast God out of the fiber of its very being and expect God to bless them as before. And so I find myself asking, "Who will be next?" But when it boils down, it makes no difference whether another crazed killer will end the life of any single one of the seven billion souls still living, or whether it will be by natural death, for "it is appointed unto men once to die, and after that cometh the judgment" (Heb. 9:27). We may need to remind ourselves of this reality, and then do all we can to help prepare men for that inevitable moment when they enter eternity. It is to that end that we strive; it is to that end that we serve our Savior.

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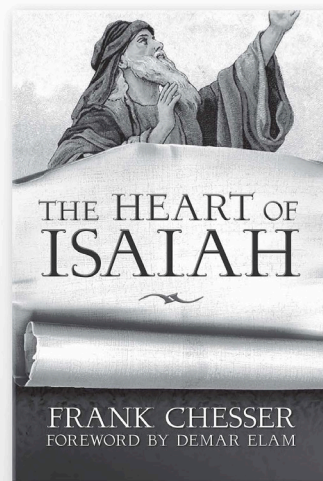
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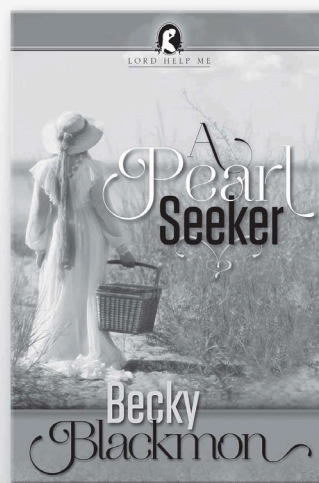
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DIGGING INTO ARCHEOLOGY:

Flood Stories Part 1



Jared Scaggs

This begins a series on Archaeological evidences that further prove the Bible's accuracy. Since the time man has begun to unearth and study the past, there has been a surplus of evidence heralding the Bibles reliable and accurate information. It should be noted that if there was not one shred of archaeological evidence shedding light on the Bible's historical content it would still stand true, but these evidences can help to establish clarity in the puddled mind of today's misguided people. The need to be able to help others realize and understand it's infallibility has never been greater than it is today. In times past, it was agreed by most that the Bible was *THE* inspired word of God and our authority in things of religion. When men discussed the scriptures, it was with an open Bible, but sadly today it is with an open mind and closed Bible. This age we live in has so much doubt sown deep into the minds of our nation, making it impossible to study the Bible without first helping them see the need for Bible authority.

One of the most disputed facts of the Bible is the account of Noah's flood in Genesis 6-9. Though to be fair much of Genesis is dismissed as fiction. There is an element in academics known as Higher Critics, whose seemingly main goal is to discredit the Bible anyway possible. Higher Critics have attacked every miracle in the Bible, but the flood is perhaps one of the most mocked. Let us examine some of the implications of a global flood.

GLOBAL REPERCUSSIONS

An event like a global flood; would demand that there was a global response. It would demand global evidence, which there is record of. Aside from the geological evidence one would expect to see, there is a cultural implication. If the Bible is accurate and we are all decedents of the eight souls that were aboard, then every ancient culture should have some story that reflects this concept.

Which sometime were disobedient, when once the longsuffering of God waited in the days of Noah, while the ark was a preparing, wherein few, that is, eight souls were saved by water. The like figure whereunto even baptism doth also now save us (not the putting away of the filth of the flesh, but the answer of a good conscience toward God,) by the resurrection of Jesus Christ: 1 Peter 3:20-21

There are countless flood accounts in almost all the ancient societies writings.



One such writing, A 2100 BC manuscript that has been labeled “The Sumerian King List,” goes on to list ancient kings of Sumer. This Sumer is ancient southern Iraq. Now in and of itself this list of kings may sound like it should have no bearing on the scriptures. It differs in that the antediluvian portion of the King List is very different from the biblical account. It only contains eight kings, while Genesis has ten patriarchs. What is interesting about this find is this list of kings is separated into two groups. Those kings who ruled before a great flood and kings who ruled after a great flood.

(In) Shuruppak Ubar-Tutu(k) became king and reigned 18,600 years. 1 king 35 reigned its 18,600 years. 5 cities were they; 8 kings reigned their 241,200 years. The Flood swept thereover. 40 After the Flood had swept thereover, when the kingship was lowered from heaven the kingship was in Kish.

Equally intriguing is the length of the king’s reigns prior to the flood were dramatically longer than those after. Long ages of kings should ring home for the Bible scholar, since we know the ages of men prior to the flood were dramatically changed by the disruption of God’s creation. This is but one of many different flood stories. All are like pail imitations of the miraculous nature of God’s word, but all carry similar elements of the Biblical Flood. To find a manuscript of this nature should have turned the thinking world upside down, but skeptics always find a way to dismiss what they do not want to believe.



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ONE WOMAN'S PERSPECTIVE:



Susan Waller

This Day Shalt Thou Be with Me in Paradise *Luke 23:43*

Becoming a Christian is the weightiest decision that we make in our lives. During baptism, we contact the blood of the Son, cleansing all our sins. If we live lives of obedient faith, we will spend eternity in heaven with the Father. The Prince of this world, Satan, wants to shake our faith in God and, eventually, turn us away from loving and obeying our heavenly Father. What better way to do that than to plant seeds of discouragement to destroy the confidence that believers have in God. But we can overcome any experienced discouragement by our confidence in Jesus Christ.

Early Christians faced grave persecution which caused some to revert to Judaism. To combat unfaithfulness, the Hebrews writer warned Christians about the dangers of apostasy. He reminded them of the superiority that Christ has over all religions while encouraging perseverance. He urged brethren to reflect on the times when they joyfully withstood grave trials because they had confidence in the promise of eternal life in heaven (Hebrews 10:34-35). That promise, which the author of Hebrews emphasized throughout his letter, is the same promise which kept the apostles infused with hope (2 Timothy 1:1; 1 Timothy 4:8).

Jesus was given all power and authority over heaven and earth and He persevered through persecution and overcame death on our behalf (Matthew 28:18; Romans 6:9). If Christians hold fast to our confidence in Him, we will not fall away because we know that our Savior will never forsake us (Hebrews 13:5). Like the saints of old, we too can triumph over sin and death through our Lord Jesus Christ, if we do not shrink back in our faithfulness to God (Hebrews 10:36-39). Just as they, we need constant reminders to continue steadfast in the faith (Hebrews 10:22-25; 3:12-14).

The Hebrews writer instructed Christians to remember the past, i.e., the time after they were “illuminated” (Hebrews 10:32). Following baptism, they were enlightened about their knowledge about spiritual matters. Being freed from ignorance, obtaining a good understanding of God’s Word, while enjoying the privileges of being in Christ, were worthy of reflection. Reflecting on their prior commitment of obedience to God no matter the cost, was, among other things, the writer’s method to steering Christians in danger of apostasy back on the road to redemption. After they were enlightened, instead of viewing their tribulations with dread, they joyfully accepted hardships such as the stealing of their possessions and physical maltreatment (Hebrews 10:32-34).

Jesus’ chosen apostles exemplified what it meant to not only preserve through tumultuous times, but how to be joyful while doing so. In the book of Acts, there are several examples of the apostles experiencing ridicule and persecution for the cause of Christ (Acts 7:57-60; 9:1-2; 12:1-4). For instance, the council forbade the apostles from teaching in the name of Christ (Acts 5:27-28). Yet they continued to teach, despite this warning, and were beaten because their allegiance was to God rather than man (Acts 5:29; 40).

Rather than allowing Satan and his ministers to discourage them from sharing the gospel and keeping steadfast, the apostles “departed from the presence of the council, rejoicing that they were counted worthy to suffer shame for His name. And daily in the temple, and in every house, they did not cease teaching and preaching Jesus as the Christ” (Acts 5:40-42). Instead of becoming discouraged, they were joyful.

The apostles rejoiced over the privilege of suffering for the cause of Christ because of the confidence they had in the Son of God. Through their suffering for Christ's sake, they had become partners with other faithful Christians (Hebrews 10:33).

When we face dark and demanding situations because of our love for Christ, it is helpful to be reminded of other godly brethren who were able to stand firm and thwart the Devil's plan. We are not in this spiritual battle by ourselves. If we waver in our dedication to the Lord when we face tribulations, this allows room for Satan to launch his attack. If we are not on guard, we will have an itch to revert to our old selves, like some did in the first century. This is when our attendance at worship and Bible class, our daily prayer time and study of God's Word, and our zeal for sharing the gospel begins to suffer (cf. Matthew 13:20-21). Yet, the confidence we have in Christ Jesus should be our wake-up call, our reminder of the reason for our suffering, and cause us to joyously reflect on our reproaches.

A Christian's faith in God is renewed by the reward of spending eternity in heaven with the Father. Through God's Word, believers know for certain that there is a "better and enduring possession" for us in heaven (Hebrews 10:34). That "better and enduring possession" will never fade, tarnish, spoil, or be destroyed (Hebrews 10:34; cf. Matthew 6:19-21). The Hebrews writer admonishes Christians not to "cast away your confidence, which has great reward" (Hebrews 10:35). That "confidence" refers to the boldness and assurance that believers have about our partnership with God. We can be certain that our faithfulness to God will result in the great reward of receiving the crown of life (James 1:12). This is the promise that God has made to those who love Him, are obedient to Him, and persevere through trials.

While trials and tribulations will come, Christians should not cast their communion with our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ aside and turn back to their former way of living. Solomon reminds us that the race is not to the swift (Ecclesiastes 9:11); but winners will run with endurance while keeping their eyes on Jesus (Hebrews 12:1-2). When we become discouraged and want to distance ourselves from Christ, we should take pause and be renewed in our minds as we remember the price that Christ suffered on our behalf. His suffering allows Christians who keep steadfast to obtain the promise (Hebrews 10:37; 3:6). Jesus is our confidence.



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EXPOSITORY PREACHING:



Send Lazarus to my Father's House

Donald Z. Underwood

Then he said, I pray thee therefore, father, that thou wouldest send him to my father's house: For I have five brethren; that he may testify unto them, lest they also come into this place of torment" (Luke 16:27-28). Read Luke 16:9-31.

This text of Scripture presents two worlds and two scenes of life, one scene is found in this world and on earth, while the other scene is in the world to come. The rich man knew that Lazarus was taken into the presence of Abraham and had asked that Lazarus be sent to warn his five brethren of the impending judgment to come.

May we become evangelistic in this life. May we care for the souls of other people in this life. May we do that which is right in this life. May we live right before the eyes of God in this life.

Unconcerned About Other People

In Luke 16:19-21, the rich man was not portrayed as a heinous person in humanity, but someone who was insensitive to the needs of other people. In contrast, Lazarus was homeless and lived on the streets. All he wanted was the crumbs from the rich man's table of prosperity. Sadly, so many people are like the rich man and the religious leaders that Judas faced in Matthew 27:3-5:

Then Judas, which had betrayed him, when he saw that he was condemned, repented himself, and brought again the thirty pieces of silver to the chief priests and elders, Saying, I have sinned in that I have betrayed the innocent blood. And they said, What is that to us? see thou to that. And he cast down the pieces of silver in the temple, and departed, and went and hanged himself.

"What is that to us?" said the religious leaders of the day. Dear reader, we must be concerned about the souls of people. In the parable of the Good Samaritan, we read of heartless servants (Luke 10:31-32) who passed by a man in need and walked on the other side of the road; this is wrong! The rich man was unconcerned about other people, brethren. May we never become uninterested in the souls of people.

Both the Rich Man and the Beggar Died

We read in Luke 16:22-26 where both the rich man and Lazarus died. In Hebrew 9:27, we read, "And as it is appointed unto men once to die, but after this the judgment." We have but one life to live and then we pass from this world into the afterlife. In our world there is a great divide, a narrow road or way and broad or wide road or way. May our desire be to walk on the narrow road (Matthew 7:13-14). In the world to come there is a great divide: heaven and hell (John 5:28-29). All will die, and all will live either in the presence of God or away from God. We are giving life as an opportunity over death (Deuteronomy 30:15-16; Mark 16:15-16)

The Rich Man Becomes Evangelistic

The rich man had five brothers and he did not want them to enter torments. He wished that they would be warned about their possible impending fate. Sadly, the rich man became evangelistic too late. Friends, we must have a sense of urgency of our family, friends, and neighbors. The church in the book of Acts went door to door. We read in Acts 5:42, "And daily in the temple, and in every house, they ceased not to teach and preach Jesus Christ." The early church was diligent in this important work. It is written that the apostle Paul kept back nothing in Acts 20:20 as he too went door to door, "And how I kept back nothing that was profitable unto you, but have shewed you, and have taught you publicly, and from house to house."

Do we justify sitting in front of our computer? Do we justify staying within the four walls of our building? God has justified His people going into all the world (Mark 16:15).

Our World Has the Word of God

In the final words of this text, we read:

Abraham saith unto him, They have Moses and the prophets; let them hear them. And he said, Nay, father Abraham: but if one went unto them from the dead, they will repent. And he said unto him, If they hear not Moses and the prophets, neither will they be persuaded, though one rose from the dead" (Luke 16:29-31).

The essential point: every soul handles their own salvation and each person must seek out the truth. In John 8:32, Jesus said, "And ye shall know the truth, and the truth shall make you free." The truth will set us free, Lazarus was set free, he was a faithful homeless man, who begged on the streets near the rich man. The word of God is powerful and through the word we can reach heaven.

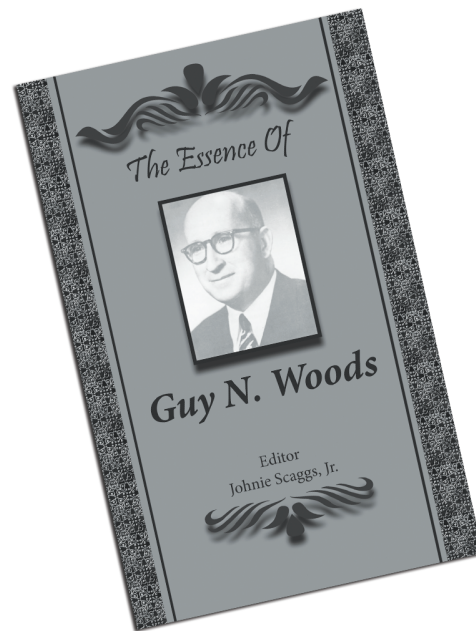
Conclusion

From our study we have learned several truths from the text of Luke 16:19-31. First, the rich man was unconcerned about the need of those around him, as he cared for himself. Secondly, the grave is the great equalizer of life. Furthermore, sadly the rich man became concerned for souls after he died, and not before he died. Finally, our world has the word of God and every soul has a responsibility to seek the Lord of salvation. May we always be concerned about souls.



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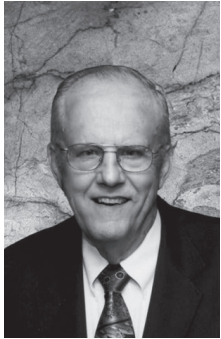


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GEMS FROM THE GREEK:

Call No Man “Father”



Wayne Price

In Matthew 23:9, our Lord lays down a clear directive, “Call no man your father upon the earth: for one is your Father, which is in heaven.” Is this to be considered as absolute, i.e. not limited by restrictions or exceptions? More specifically, may a Christian use this term to refer to those known as the early church fathers? Is it a sin to use the term “father” to refer to anyone other than God, our heavenly Father?

The Greek term translated “father” in Matthew 2:9 is *pater*, which is used 418 times in the New Testament. A substantial number of those references use the term “father” to refer to someone other than God! In fact, even Matthew earlier used the term to mean “father” in Matthew 19:19 where the Lord Jesus Christ says, “Honor thy father and thy mother.” If there was something inherently wrong with using this word to refer to relatives, then surely Christ Himself would not have so used it. It is obvious the New Testament itself uses the term “father,” that command of Matthew 23:9 is not absolute. Yes, there are exceptions to it, as is illustrated by Christ Himself. Furthermore, that is spelled out quite clearly in Hebrews 12:9 where it is written that “we have had fathers of our flesh which corrected us, and we gave them reverence; shall we not much rather be in subjection unto the Father of spirits, and live?” Jesus is not teaching that it is wrong to call our earthly parent “father.” As is always the case, the context in which a reference is found is the determining factor. An earthly parent may be a father, but not a Father, which incidentally is the very contrast emphasized in Hebrews 12:9.

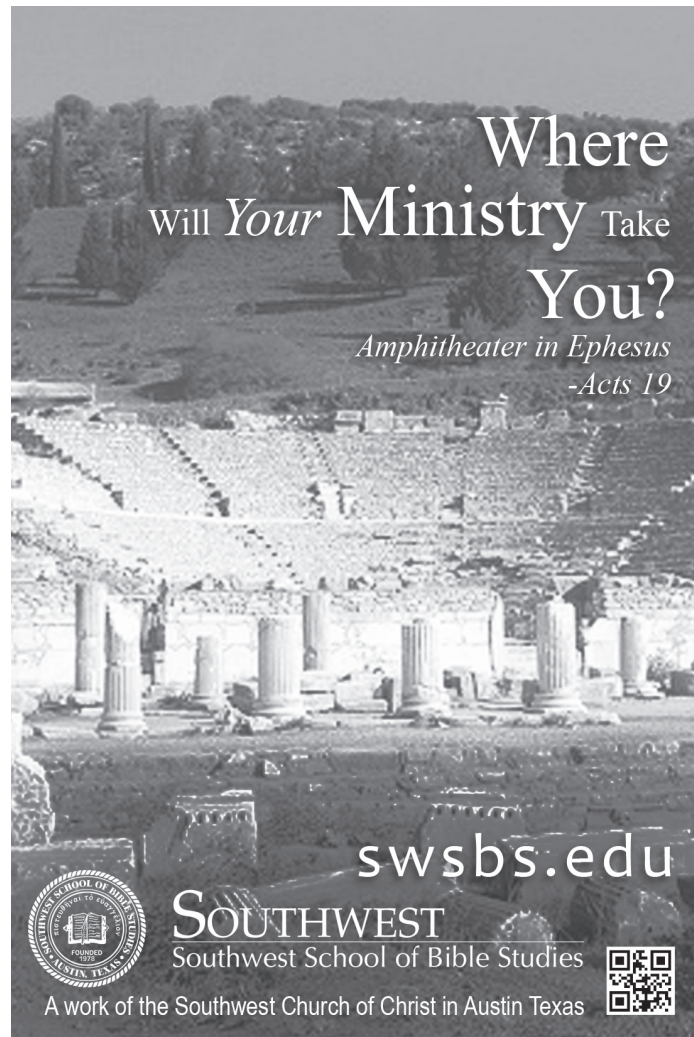
Christ speaks of giving titles in the context of Matthew 23:9, not an earthly family relationship. The examples Jesus used refer to those who seek the praise of men (see v. 5-6). They sought honor for themselves instead of being humble (see vss. 8-12). In the Crowe-Kieran debate many years ago, Glenn Crowe publically referred to his opponent as “Mr. Kieran,” to which Mr. Kieran took exception by informing the audience that he was “Father Kieran.” This self-condemning statement by Mr. Kieran (in light of Matt. 23:9) illustrates the very point of this article you are reading right now! The Pharisees of Jesus’ day loved these distinctive titles.

There are other usages of the word “father” in the Bible. Sometimes it is used in the sense of “ancestors” even found in the same chapter of Matthew. In Matthew 23:30, condemning the scribes and Pharisees, He said that they were claiming that they were not like their ancestors. They were saying, “If we had been in the days of our fathers, we would not have been partakers with them in the blood of the prophets.” Jesus accused them of hypocrisy in the very same context (see v. 32) where He again used the word “fathers” to refer to ancestors.

Not only is pater used in the sense of family relationships, and as forefathers of the Jewish people in the New Testament, but it has other usages as well, as described by Vine's Expository Dictionary of New Testament Words. It can be used of "one who, as a preacher of the Gospel and a teacher, stands in a father's place, caring for his spiritual children..." (1 Corinthians 4:14). Here Paul claims that he is the father of his Corinthian readers, just as John did those of his day (3 John 4). This is not "a mere title of honor, which the Lord prohibited" (Matthew 23:9, according to Vine's [ibid]).

It is in this final sense that the word pater is used when one today refers to the church fathers, and not in the unscriptural sense of giving titles of distinction to human beings. All Christians are brothers and sisters, and those who love to add honorific titles to themselves seek to distinguish themselves from other Christian brothers and sisters. This the Lord condemns.

Finally, rather than being absolute, we see that the word pater is used in diverse ways which are good and scriptural elsewhere in the New Testament. When dealing with how texts are to be interpreted in the New Testament, it needs to be remembered that it often uses terms which are not absolute, but deals with contrasts, stressing that one thing is more important than another. For example, "no longer drink water..." (1 Timothy 5:23) is not absolute, nor is "have ye not houses to eat in..." (1 Cor. 11:22), "hate your father..." (Luke 14:26), "labor not for meat which perishes..." (John 6:27), "do not call (invite) your friends...to dinner" (Luke 14:12), et al. All such references are dealing with contrasts, with one thing being better than another, and in such cases it is not wrong to use "father" in a good sense either, nor is it a sin to eat in a restaurant (or church building), drink water, or even have your friends over to share a meal with you. The setting and purpose of what you are doing is important.



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CHURCH LISTINGS

The congregations listed are either advertisers in
The Gospel Journal or they have purchased
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ALABAMA

Brantley—Sasser Church of Christ, 4 miles south on Hwy. 29. Sun. 10, 11 a.m., 5 p.m.; Wed. 7 p.m. Jeff Grimes, preacher, email: ttbeagles@centurytel.net.

Bridgeport—Rocky Springs Church of Christ, 209 County Road 574, (just off Hwy 72). 256-495-2460, Sun. 9, 10 a.m., 6 p.m. Alabama's oldest congregation. Henry Camp, preacher.

Bryant—Glendale Church of Christ, 532 Co. Rd. 308, 35958 (near Chattanooga, TN). Sun. 9, 10 a.m., 5 p.m.; Wed. 6:30 p.m. (CT). Daryl Haynes, preacher, 256-597-2207.

Fairhope—890 North Greeno Rd. (Hwy. 98), POB 1525, 36533, 251-928-9053, Fax: 251-928-9033. Sun. 9, 10 a.m., 6:30 p.m.; Wed. 7 p.m. Mike Ray, preacher.

Jacksonville—Church of Christ, 321 Nesbit St., 36265, 256-435-9356. Sun. 9:30, 10:30 a.m., 6 p.m. Wed. 7 p.m. Allen Webster, preacher, www.housetohouse.com.

Tuscaloosa—East Pointe Church of Christ, 1 block from exit 76, off I-20, I-59. Sun. 9, 10, 6 p.m.; Wed. 7 p.m. Abiding in God's Word—the Old Paths. LJ of A student, visitor, resident? Welcome! 205-556-3062.

ARKANSAS

Crossett—Church of Christ, 301 Pine St. 71635. 870-364-2721. Sun. 9:30, 10:30 a.m., 6:00 p.m.; Wed. 7:00 p.m.

Swifton—Church of Christ, 313 Ashley, Swifton, Arkansas 72471. 870-485-2472. Sun. 9:30, 10:30 a.m. and 6:00 p.m. Mac Ballard, evangelist.

CALIFORNIA

Mariposa Avenue Church of Christ, 7111 Mariposa Avenue, Citrus Heights, CA 95610 916-725-3946. Sun. 9:45, 10:45 am, 6:00 pm, Wed. 7:00 pm. Preacher: Nathan Franson

Galt --330 N. Lincoln Way 95632, Sun. 9, 10 a.m. 6 p.m. (12:30—2nd Sun): Wed 7 p.m. http://home-page.mac.com/dan22/Menu17. Html; Dan Morris, preacher 209-745-3512. email dan22@mac.com (cong. sub. given by Dan and Sheri Morris)

Norwalk -- Church of Christ, 15333 Pioneer Blvd. 90651, 562-664-2204, Sun. 9:30 10:30, 6 p.m. Thurs. 7p.m.

Visalia -- West Visalia Church of Christ, 4525 W Caldwell Ave, 93277. Sun. 9:45 a.m. 10:45 a.m. 6 p.m. Wed. 7 p.m. Cliff Sabroe, preacher Website; www.westvisaliachurchofchrist.com

COLORADO

Aurora -- East Alameda Church of Christ 13605 E. Alameda 303-344-4050, Sun 9,10 a.m. 6 p.m. Wed 7p.m. Nathan Liddell, preacher.

Denver -- Bear Valley Church of Christ. 2707 S Lamar St, 80227. 303-986-2707 Sun 9 a.m. 10:15 a.m. 6 p.m. Wed 7 p.m. Preacher Neal Pollard. Home of Bear Valley Bible Institute, www.bearvalleycocf.org

FLORIDA

Jay -- Jay Church of Christ, 4034 FL-4 32565. Sun 10:00 11:00 a.m. 6:00 p.m. Wed. 7:00 p.m. 850-675-6443

Kissimmee -- Kissimmee Church of Christ, 921 W. Vine St. 34741. Sun 9:00 10:00 a.m. 6 p.m. Wed 7:30 p.m. Dylan Johns Preacher, 407-847-5749

Milton -- Margaret St. Church of Christ, 6745 Margaret St. 32570. 650-623-6191, Sun 9:30, 10:30 a.m. 6 p.m. Wed 7 p.m. Preston Silcox preacher, Website www.margaretstreetchurchofchrist.com

Pensacola -- Innerarity Point Church of Christ, 13250 Gulf Beach Highway, 32507 (Perdido Key area) 850-910-5942, Sun 9:00, 10:00 a.m. 6:00 p.m. Wed 7:00 p.m. Andy Cates, Preacher

Wewahitchka -- Church of Christ. 2247 Hwy. 71 South (1/4 mi N of CR 386, 2 mi. S. of town), Po Box 929, 32465, 850-639-5401 Sun 9,10 a.m. 5 p.m. Wed 7 p.m. CST Eddie Nichols preacher, email wewachurch@outdrs.net

GEORGIA

Bremen -- Bremen Church of Christ, 650 Alabama Ave S. 30110. 770-537-3013, Sun 9 10 a.m. 6 p.m. Wed 7 pm. Sidney White, preacher

Cartersville -- Cartersville Church of Christ, 1319 Joe Frank Hams Pkwy NW 30120-4222. 770-382-6775, email bdgayton@juno.com; Sun 10, 11 a.m. 6:00 p.m. Wed 7:30 p.m. Corey Barnette, preacher.

Dalton -- Highland Church of Christ, 901 Chester St. 30721, 706-226-4126 Sun 9:30, 10:30 a.m. 5:00 p.m. Wed 7:00 p.m. Barry Gilreath Jr, preacher Home of GBN, www.gbnv.org.

Dublin—Bellevue Rd. Church of Christ, 2214 Bellevue Rd, Dublin, GA. 31021. 478-272-7515, Sun: 10:00 am, 11:00 am, 6:00 pm, Wed. 7:00 pm. Johnnie Scaggs, Jr. preacher.

Fayetteville -- Fayetteville Church of Christ, 870 Redwine Rd. 30215, 770-461-3617 Sun 9,10 a.m. 6 p.m. Wed 7:00 p.m. Website: www.fcoccom. Dave Rogers, Minister, Greg Nash, Associate/Youth Minister

Kennesaw--North Cobb Church of Christ. 885 Shiloh Rd. 30144, 770-424-6611 Sun 9:00 10:00 a.m. 6:00 p.m. Wed. 7:00 p.m. Lee Davis, preacher

McCaysville -- McCaysville Church of Christ, 134 Bridge St. PO Box 699, 30555, 706-455-2793 Sun 10,11 a.m. 6 p.m., Wed. 7 p.m. Bill Johnston and Keith Ritchie preachers, email kritch@ellijay.com

Villa Rica -- Villa Rica Church of Christ, 515 Dallas Hwy, 30180, 770-459-3478 Sun. 10 a.m. 11 a.m. 6 p.m. Wed. 7 p.m. Preacher Patrick Gray

ILLINOIS

Zion -- 23rd St. Church of Christ, 2218 Hebron Ave 60099 Sun 10:30, 11:00 a.m. Don Fianagan, preacher, 847-672-6097, email, dmflanagan@webtv.net. We invite you to attend a growing Biblically sound congregation.

INDIANA

Crown Point -- Church of Christ, 660 Burrell St. 96307, 219-671-0561 Sun 9:30 a.m. 10:30 a.m. Thurs 7:00 p.m. Jeff Collet preacher.

Evansville -- Westside Church of Christ, 3232 Edgewood Dr 47712, 812-421-8645 Sun 9 a.m. 10 a.m. 6 p.m. Wed 6:30 p.m.

Muncie -- Towne Acres Church of Christ, 2411 E. Riggan Rd 47303, 765-269-5138 Sun 9:30,10:30 a.m. 6 p.m., Wed 7 p.m. Brian Howard, preacher.

KENTUCKY

Hickory -- Spring Creek Church of Christ, 970 State Rt. 1684, 42051, 270-658-3381 Sun 9:30, 10:30 a.m. 6:00 p.m., DST (5:00 p.m. CST), Wed 7:00 p.m. Ty Barnette preacher. www.springcreekcoc.org

LOUISIANA

Chalmette -- Chalmette Church of Christ, 200 Delaronde St. 70043, 504-279-9438, Sun 9,10 a.m. 6 p.m. Wed 7 p.m. Mark Lance, preacher

New Orleans -- DeGaulle Drive Church of Christ, 4700 DeGaulle Dr. 70131. 504-392-4110 Sun 9:00,10:00 a.m. and 6:00 p.m. Wed 7:00 p.m. www.degaulledrivecoc.com Scott Cain preacher, email office@degaulledrivecoc.com

West Monroe -- Bawcomville church of Christ, P.O. Box 3057, 2325 Jonesboro Rd 71294, 318-323-2945, Sun 9:45, 10:30 a.m. 6 p.m. Wed 7 p.m. Bill Schooley elder 318-396-7296, email schoofeb@bellsouth.net.

MISSISSIPPI

Coldwater -- Coldwater Church of Christ, P.O. Box 321. 2006 Hwy 306 @ Golden Way. 38618 Sun 9:30 10:30 a.m. 5 p.m. Wed. 7 p.m. Clifton Angel, preacher, www.Coldwatercofc.com

Courtland -- Church of Christ, Hwy 51 N. 38620, 662-563-5100 Sun 9:30 10:30 a.m. 5:00 p.m. Wed 7:00 p.m.

Southaven -- Southaven Church of Christ, 1483 Brook-haven Dr @ Hwy 51, 662-393-2690 Sun 9:30 10:30 a.m. 6 p.m. Wed 7:00 p.m. www.southaven-coc.org Robert Jeffries, preacher.

MISSOURI

Farmington -- Sunnyview Church of Christ, 2801 Hwy H, 2 miles south of town. 573-756-5925 Sun 10:00 10:45 a.m. 6 p.m. Wed 7 p.m.

NEVADA

Las Vegas -- Boulevard Church of Christ, 4000 W Oakey Blvd. 69102, 702-877-9629 Sun 9.10 a.m. Wed 7 p.m. Preacher, Randy L. Mabe, Home of Southwestern School of Religion www.churchof-christlasvegas.com

NEW MEXICO

Albuquerque -- Northeast Church of Christ 11000 Paseo del Norte NE, 87122, 505-797-3025 or 292-3856, www.giftofeternallife.org Sun 9:30, 10:30 a.m. 5 p.m. Wed 7 p.m. John Phillis, preacher

Jal -- Jal Church of Christ, 200 E Utah Ave, PO. Box Drawer N. 88252, 575-395-3010, fax 575-395-2303, Sun 9, 10 a.m. 6 p.m., Wed 9:30 a.m. (Ladies) 6:30 p.m. e-mail jalcofc@valomet.com, Daryl Micham, minister

NEW YORK

Syracuse -- Kimber Road Church of Christ, 408 Kimber Road, Syracuse NY 315-446-5732

NORTH CAROLINA

Rocky Mount -- 3309 Sheffield Dr. 27801 (take S. Winstead 2 mi from US Highway 64, turn right on Sheffield Dr.) 252-937-7997 Sun 10. 11 a.m. 6 p.m. Wed 7:30 p.m. Jack Tittle, preacher, email jacktittle@hotmail.com

OHIO

Fairborn -- (NE of Dayton)—WPAFB and AF Museum, Central Ave. Church of Christ, 922 S. Central, Fairborn, 45324, 937-878-0452. www.cachurchof-christ.com Sun 9:30,10:30 a.m. 6 p.m. Wed 7 p.m.

OKLAHOMA

Porum -- Church of Christ, 8 miles South of I-40 at Hwy. 2, Warner Exit. Sun 10,11 a.m. 6 p.m. Wed 7 p.m. Alien Lawson, preacher, 918-683-6633

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SOUTH CAROLINA

Greenville -- Augusta Road Church of Christ, 5315 Old Augusta Road, 29605, 864-277-5717, Sun 9:30, 10:30 a.m. 6:00 p.m. Wed 7:00 p.m. www.arcoc.org.

North Charleston -- North Charleston Church of Christ, 8415 Patriot Blvd. 29418, 843-552-7733, Sun 9,10 a.m. 6 p.m. Wed 7 p.m. Don Blackwell, preacher, Website: www.northcharlestonchurchof-christ.com

TENNESSEE

Bells -- Crossroads church of Christ, 2587 Crossroads Rd. (2 miles off 88 Hwy), PO Box 295, 38006, Sun 10, 11 a.m. 5/6 p.m. Win/Sum.; Wed 7 p.m. Elders: Ray D. Nanny 731-663-2144, T.J. Warren 731-663-3438

Chattanooga -- White Oak Church of Christ, 2229 Lyndon Ave., 37415, 423-877-9762. Sun 9:30,10:30 a.m. 6 p.m.; Wed 7 p.m.; Rick Owens, preacher, email: whiteoakcoc@gmail.com.

Collierville -- Collierville Church of Christ, 575 West Shelton Rd, 38017-1190, 901-853-9827, Sun 9:30,10:30 a.m., 1:30 p.m. Wed 7:00 p.m. Chad Ezelle, preacher

Cordova -- Cordova Church of Christ, 7801 Macon Rd., 38018, 901-754-9893, Sun 9, 10 a.m., 5 p.m.; Wed 7 p.m.; Rick Owens, Preacher, email: crdvacoc@bellsouth.net

Crossville -- Crossville Church of Christ, 423 Main St, 38555, 931-484-5297, Sun 9,10 am, 6pm; Wed 6pm. Barry Kennedy, preacher.

Englewood -- Liberty Hill Church of Christ, 121 Co. Rd. 470, 37329, 423-887-5614. Sun 9:30, 10:30 a.m., 6pm; Wed 7pm. Mike Williams, Preacher.

Memphis -- Forest Hill Church of Christ, 3950 Forest Hill Irene Road, 38125-2560, 901-751-2444. Sun. 9:30,10:30 a.m., 6 p.m.; Wed. 7 p.m. Home of Memphis School of Preaching. Barry Grider and Matthew Jones, preachers.

Munford -- Church of Christ, 435 South Tipton St., 38058. (901)837-8639. Sun. 10:00, 11:00 a.m., 6:00 p.m., Wed. 7:30 p.m. Randy Collum and Luke Gurchick, preachers. www.munfordcoc.org.

Newbern -- Glendale Church of Christ, 6739 Lanes Ferry Rd., 38059. 731.627.9050. Sun. 9:30, 10:30 a.m., 5 p.m.; Wed. 7 p.m. Ronnie Scherffius, preacher.

Pulaski -- East Hill Church of Christ, 509 E. Madison St., 38478.- 931-363-2777. Sun. 9:30,10:30 a.m., 6:00 pm., Wed. 7 p.m. Preacher, Jonathan Burns. Home of the annual Truth in Love lectures, second week in May. www.easthillchurch.org.

Red Boiling Springs -- Willette church of Christ, 1586 Willette Rd., 37150; 615-699-3768; Sun 9,10 a.m.,6 p.m.; Wed 7:00 p.m. Rob Whitacre, preacher, Jack Honeycutt, India Coordinator, e-mail: willettecoc@nctc.com; www.willettecoc.org http://www.willettecoc.org

Shipp's Bend -- Shipp's Bend Church of Christ, 944 Old State Route 50, Centerville, TN 37033; Sun. 9,10 a.m., 5 p.m.; Wed. 7 p.m.; Charles White, preacher.

Stanton -- Stanton Church of Christ, Hwy. 70, 38069 (exit I-40 at Stanton-Somerville, north on Hwy. 222 to Hwy. 70), 901.294.3831. Sun. 9:45,10:40 a.m., 6 p.m.; Wed. 7 p.m. Niel Bennet, preacher.

TEXAS

Amarillo -- Bell Avenue Church of Christ, 1600 Bell Avenue, Amarillo, TX 79106, 806.355.2351, Sun., 9, 10 a.m., 6 p.m.; Wed. 7 p.m. Glen Walton and Dean Whaley, ministers; email: bacoc@amaonline.com

Austin -- Southwest Church of Christ, 8900 Manchaca Rd., 78748. 512.282.2486. Sun. 9:30, 10:30 a.m., 6 p.m.; Wed. 7:30 p.m., www.swcocf.org. Home of Southwest School of Bible Studies, www.swsbs.edu. Cody Westbrook, preacher.

Beeville -- Adams St. Church of Christ, 1701 N. Adams, POB 1148, 78104. 361.358.4428 or 358.5760. Sun. 9:30,10:30 a.m., 6 p.m.; Wed. 7 p.m.

Blanco -- Blanco Hill Church of Christ, 4022 Hwy. 281S (1.7 mi. so. of Hwy. 32), POB 98,78606.830.833.5871, email: clifford@moment.net. Sun. 10, 11 a.m., 6 p.m.; Wed. 7 p.m.

Bryan/College Station -- Bryan/College Station Church of Christ, 11914 State Hwy 30, College Station, TX 77845, 979.774.7470. Sun. 9,10 a.m., 6 p.m.; Wed. 6:30 p.m..

Burnet -- Burnet Church of Christ, 2805 S. Water St., 78611. 512.756.1153. Sun. 9:45, 10:45 a.m., 5 [stand.]/6 [day.] p.m.; Wed. 7 p.m. Truman Stinson, preacher. 512.693.2042.

Coldspring -- Coldspring Church of Christ, 118 Pinto Lane, Coldspring, TX 77331.936.653.3447.

Corpus Christi -- Riverside Church of Christ, 4701 Cornett Dr., 78410.361.241.4239. Sun. 9:30,10:30 a.m., 6 p.m.; Wed. 7:30 p.m. Matthew Gibson, preacher.

Dripping Springs -- Church of Christ, 470 Old Hwy 290, PO Box 1, 78620. Website:www.dschurchof-christ.org, Sun. 9:30, 10:30 a.m., 6 p.m.; Wed. 7:30 p.m. John Moore, preacher. 512.858.4500,

Granbury -- Historic Downtown Church of Christ, 310 W. Pearl St., 76048.Sun. 10,11 a.m., 5 p.m.; Wed. 7 p.m. Leo Ben Hurr, preacher. 817.573.9862,

Justin -- Church of Christ, 424 S. Snyder, 76247. 940.648.2482. Sun. 9:30, 10:20 a.m., 6 p.m.; Wed. 7 p.m.; email: jcoctx@yahoo.com. Shane Coleman, preacher.

La Grange -- Church of Christ, 646 E. State Hwy 71, POB 523, 78945. lagrangecoc@cmaccess.com. Sun. 9, 10 a.m., 6 p.m.; Wed. 10:30 a.m., 7 p.m. Jason Browning, preacher, email: ja-soncb@cmaccess.com. 979.968.5676

Leonard -- Church of Christ, 206 E. Fannin St., POB 219, 75452. 903.587.2229; Sun. 9, 9:45 a.m., 6 p.m.; Wed. 7:30 p.m.

Lubbock -- Southside Church of Christ, 8501 Quaker Ave., POB 64430, 79464. 806.794.5008. Sun. 9, 9:55 a.m., 5 p.m.; Wed. 7:30. Sunday worship aired live at 10:15 a.m., KFYO 790 AM radio. Tommy Hicks, evangelist, 806.798.1019.

Mathis -- Church of Christ, 407 E. Rockport, 78368 (exit off I-37 and go toward small water tower). 361.547.2016. Sun. 10,10:45 a.m., 6 p.m.; Wed. 10 a.m., 7 p.m.

Mt. Pleasant -- N. Jefferson Church of Christ, 2311 N. Jefferson, POB 963, 75456. 903.572.1136. Sun. 9, 10 a.m., 6 p.m.; Wed. 7 p.m. David McCain, preacher.

Odem -- Odem Church of Christ, PO Box 660,1101 Voss Avenue (HWY. 77), TX 78370. 361.368.2601, Sun. 9,10, 6 p.m.; Wed. 7:30 p.m. Patrick Hammack, preacher.

Portland -- Portland Church of Christ, P.O. Box 1274, 2009 Wildcat Drive, Portland TX 78374. 361-643-6571. Sun. 9 am, 10 am, 6 pm, Wed. 7 pm. H.D. Simmons preacher; email: portlandcoc@junoco.com—website: www.portlandxcocf.com

Richwood -- Church of Christ at Richwood, 1600 Hwy. 288-B, Randy Robinson, Preacher, 979-266-9926

Roanoke -- Roanoke Church of Christ, Rusk & Walnut, 817.491.2388. Sun. 9:45, 10:45 a.m., 6 p.m.; Wed. 7:30 p.m. Joey Davis, preacher.

San Antonio -- Northern Oaks Church of Christ on Red Land Rd., just inside Loop 1604. 210.496.1346. Sun. 9:30, 10:45 a.m., 6 p.m.; Wed. 7:00 p.m. Mel Hutzler, preacher, www.northernoakschurch.org.

Schertz -- Church of Christ, 501 Schertz Pkwy., Schertz, TX 78154 [exit I-35 at Schertz Pkwy., NE of San Antonio], 210.658.0269. Sun. 9:30,10:30 a.m., 5 p.m.; Wed. 7 p.m. Stan Crowley evangelist.

Talco -- Talco Church of Christ, 5th and Lide Sts., 75487. 903.379.2582, pager: 575.4541, Sun. 9:45,10:45 a.m., 6 p.m.; Wed. 7 p.m.

UTAH

Price -- Carbon/Emery Church of Christ, 3300 E. Hwy 6, P.O. Box 299,84501.435.637.4407. Sun. 10 a.m., 2 p.m.; Wed. 7 p.m. John Temples, preacher.

St. George -- 1330 W. 750 N., P.O. Box 3010, 84790. 435.628.6060. Sun. 10,11 a.m., 6 p.m.; Wed. 7 p.m.; Thur. (LBC) 4 p.m. Preacher: Paul J. Di-toro—435.986.4119.

VIRGINIA

Bristol -- E. Bristol Church of Christ, 340 Bonham Rd. (1 mi. off I-81 @ exit 7), P.O. Box 16038, 24209-6038. 276.669.6221. Sun. 10, 11 a.m., 6 p.m.; Wed. 7 p.m. -276.466.0950.

Culpeper -- Culpeper Church of Christ, 1600 N. Main St., P.O. Box 863, 22701. 540.825.5897. Sun. 10, 11 a.m., 6 p.m.; Wed. 7 p.m. Bill Dilks, preacher—540.829.4008, email: billdilks@sysmatrix.net.

Salem -- Westside Church of Christ, 1705 Star-view Dr., 24153. 540.389.9139. Sun. 9:30, 10:20 a.m., 6 p.m.; Wed. 7 p.m. Eddy Gilpin, preacher, www.westidecocf-salem.com.

WISCONSIN

Rice Lake -- Rice Lake Church of Christ, 103 Reuter Avenue, Rice Lake, WI 54868. 715.475.8188. Scott Nedland, Preacher.

Webster -- Burnett County Church of Christ, 7425 Birch St. W, Webster, WI 54893. 715.866.7157. Garrett Derouin, Preacher

WYOMING

Buffalo -- Church of Christ, 1100 Fort St., 82834. 307.684.5141. Sun. 10, 11 a.m., 7 p.m.; Wed. 7 p.m., email: cocbuffalo@vcn.com.



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