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MESSAGES FROM JOEL

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Messages from Joel

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Editorial

Introduction to Joel

By: Johnie Scaggs, Jr.



The Book of Joel is a short but powerful prophetic book found in the Old Testament section of the Bible. It is named after its author, Joel, whose name means “Yahweh is God.” Unfortunately, all we know is that the prophet Joel was the son of Pethuel (Joel 1:1).

Homer Hailey places the date of the book at 830 B.C. Others date it from 900 B.C. to 400 B.C. What we know for sure is that it was written during a time when the nation of Judah was facing a severe locust plague and other devastating natural disasters.

Joel’s message is one of repentance, restoration, and hope. He urges the people of Judah to turn away from their sins and return to the Lord, promising that if they do so, God will forgive them and restore their land and prosperity.

Therefore also now, saith the LORD, Turn ye even to me with all your heart, And with fasting, and with weeping, and with mourning: And rend your heart, and not your garments, And turn unto the LORD your God: For he is gracious and merciful, Slow to anger, and of great kindness, And repenteth him of the evil. Who knoweth if he will return and repent, And leave a blessing behind him; Even a meat offering and a drink offering unto the LORD your God? (Joel 2:12–14).

Joel urged the people to turn away from their sins and return to the Lord, emphasizing that God is merciful and forgiving to those who repent. He promised that God would restore their land and prosperity if they did so.

Joel warns them that they need to have a genuine heart of repentance. It is not the outward look of putting on sackclothes that show the external person, but rather God wants the heart to be changed. Though true repentance will be seen on the outside, it always begins from the inside, that is, the heart. God is merciful and wants all men to return to their proper station with Him. Peter says, “But, beloved, be not ignorant of this one thing, that one day is with the Lord as a thousand years, and a thousand years as one day. The Lord is not slack concerning his promise, as some men count slackness; but is longsuffering to us-ward, not willing that any should perish, but that all should come to repentance” (2 Peter 3:8,9). In a world of ungodliness like today, we must remember to preach the message of repentance. Luke wrote, “Repent ye therefore, and be converted, that your sins may be blotted out, when the times of refreshing shall come from the presence of the Lord;” (Acts 3:19).

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Joel also speaks of a coming day of judgment, when God will punish the wicked and bring a new era of peace and justice. Joel's message was primarily directed at the people of Judah who were going through a difficult time. Five times Joel uses the phrase "the day of the Lord" Joel 1:15; 2:1,11,31;3:14, and in 3:18, he says "in that day," referring to in "the day of the Lord." If they would repent, "the day of the Lord" would be a day against the enemies of God and a day of deliverance to those who placed their trust in Him. However, if they choose not to repent, "the day of the Lord" would be used against them.

Speaking of future events and the new era of peace and justice, Joel prophecies about the kingdom that was to come.

And it shall come to pass afterward, That I will pour out my spirit upon all flesh; And your sons and your daughters shall prophesy, Your old men shall dream dreams, Your young men shall see visions: And also upon the servants and upon the handmaids In those days will I pour out my spirit. And I will shew wonders in the heavens and in the earth, Blood, and fire, and pillars of smoke. The sun shall be turned into darkness, and the moon into blood, Before the great and the terrible day of the LORD come. And it shall come to pass, that whosoever shall call on the name of the LORD shall be delivered: For in mount Zion and in Jerusalem shall be deliverance, As the LORD hath said, And in the remnant whom the LORD shall call, (Joel 2:28–32).

On the day of Pentecost, the apostles were accused of being "full of new wine" (Acts 2:13b), for the Spirit of God had been poured out on them, and they began to speak in other tongues (v.4).

But Peter cried out,

But this is that which was spoken by the prophet Joel; And it shall come to pass in the last days, saith God, I will pour out of my Spirit upon all flesh: and your sons and your daughters shall prophesy, and your young men shall see visions, and your old men shall dream dreams:

And on my servants and on my handmaidens I will pour out in those days of my Spirit; and they shall prophesy: And I will shew wonders in heaven above, and signs in the earth beneath; blood, and fire, and vapour of smoke: The sun shall be turned into darkness, and the moon into blood, before that great and notable day of the Lord come: And it shall come to pass, that whosoever shall call on the name of the Lord shall be saved (Acts 2:16–21).

Despite its small size, the Book of Joel has significantly impacted both Jewish and Christian theology. Its powerful imagery and themes of repentance and restoration continue to resonate with readers today, reminding us of the importance of staying faithful to God even amid difficult times. Overall, the message of Joel is one of the importance of faithfulness to God and the hope that comes from trusting in His mercy and the promise of restoration.

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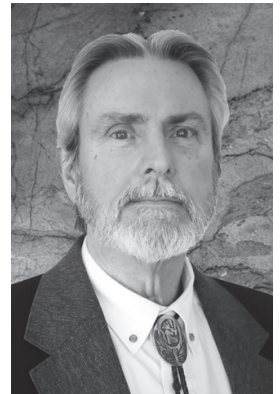
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Associate Editor

God's Rebuke

Joel 1:2ff

By: Tom Moore



“Hear this, ye old men, and give ear, all ye inhabitants of the land. Hath this been in your days, or in the days of your fathers? Tell ye your children of it, and let your children tell their children, and their children another generation” (Joel 1:2-3). With these words God, through the prophet Joel, calls on Israel to look and see the devastation of this horrible locust plague. It appears that Joel is describing various stages of insect development, as one stage is followed by another (Joel 1:4). The severity of this locust invasion is so great that they are instructed to speak of it to their children from generation to generation, that the lesson be not forgotten – “that ye may know that I am Jehovah” (Exo. 10:2). Joel describes this plague as “a day of darkness and gloominess, a day of clouds and thick darkness, as the dawn spread upon the mountains; a great people and a strong; there hath not been ever the like, neither shall be any more after them, even to the years of many generations” (Joel 2:2).

The prophet calls on all to “awake” (Joel 1:5) and proceeds to name the luxuries and the essentials of life that are lost through this great plague. My friends, sin affects everyone – for “the wages of sin is death” (Rom. 6:23).

The drunkards and all drinkers of wine are called on to awaken out of their stupor, for the source of the drink is cut off. All wine of any sort, fresh or strong, would be cut off. Because of this great plague, and the lack of pasture, even the beasts “groan” and are “perplexed” (Joel 1:18).

Therefore, God calls on the priests to “mourn” and “lament” because the offerings of worship are cut off. There is nothing to sacrifice unto to Jehovah. As a result, their mourning should be as that of a young woman lamenting for her husband’s death - a very deep grief (Joel 1:8-9). The “husbandmen” (or, farmers) along with the “vinedressers” are called upon to join in with the priests in mourning for all share alike in the desolation (Joel 1:11). All share in the devastation, “for joy is withered away from the sons of men” (Joel 1:12). They had forgotten that happiness should be based in the Lord. “Rejoice in the Lord always: again I will say, Rejoice” (Phil. 4:4).

As a result of this devastation and mourning, God’s people are called on to repent.

“Gird yourselves with sackcloth, and lament, ye priests; wail, ye ministers of the altar; come, lie all night in sackcloth, ye ministers of my God: for the meal-offering

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and the drink-offering are withholden from the house of your God. Sanctify a fast, call a solemn assembly, gather the old men and all the inhabitants of the land unto the house of Jehovah your God, and cry unto Jehovah” (Joel 1:13-14).

The priests are called upon to take the lead in this. Girding themselves with sackcloth and lying all night before the altar, they were to lament and mourn the nation’s condition. This should set before others as an example of genuine repentance. The priests should be the most concerned of all the people because of their relationship to the altar of God and to the people. The time was one of mourning, not of joy. Although sinners make mock at sin, and often boast of the extent of their evil activities, every act of sin plunges the individual into condemnation, and ought to be mourned. “I now rejoice, not that ye were made sorry, but that ye were made sorry unto repentance; for ye were made sorry after a godly sort, that ye might suffer loss by us in nothing. For godly sorrow worketh repentance unto salvation, a repentance which bringeth no regret: but the sorrow of the world worketh death” (2 Cor. 7:9-10).

With the expression of humility as evidenced in the sackcloth, they were also to be involved in a solemn “fast.” The example in this fast, and the crying to the Lord, should be set by the elders (old men) and followed by all the people. In hours of calamity the people of God should be quick to turn to the Lord in solemn penitence and supplication. Better still, they should live in such a way that there would be no such occasion for repentance.

“Alas for the day! for the day of Jehovah is at hand, and as destruction from the Almighty shall it come” (Joel 1:15).

The awful calamity had come upon the people as a warning of “the day of Jehovah” which was to come, the dawn of which was already breaking. The destruction is from the “Almighty,” a term describing the mighty power of God. The judgment upon the world of the wicked is executed by His omnipotence and controlling providence. The apostle Paul declared, “and to you that are afflicted rest with us, at the revelation of the Lord Jesus from heaven with the angels of his power in flaming fire, rendering vengeance to them that know not God, and to them that obey not the gospel of our Lord Jesus: who shall suffer punishment, even eternal destruction from the face of the Lord and from the glory of his might” (2 The. 1:7-9). This picture of desolation is followed by a fervent cry of the prophet to the Lord, “O Jehovah, to thee do I cry” (Joel 1:19).

My friends the message of Joel is desperately needed in our day – in and out of the church. Those in sin, those living unfaithfully, and those teaching false doctrines need to listen to the rebuke of God or great a great calamity will follow. We need to appeal to God in time of crisis and repent. Those in sin need to wake up – before their gladness is gone. Listen to God’s rebuke.

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God's Call for Repentance

Joel 2:12-13

By: Jared Scaggs



Joel chapter 2 is mostly known for the later part of the chapter with the prophecies that take us directly to the book of Acts, the outpouring of the spirit, and the doors to the kingdom being opened in Jerusalem. However, that is simply the last five verses of this remarkable chapter in which Joel begins a new section calling people's minds to the impending judgment of the Lord. The children of Israel had provoked God's longsuffering and righteous anger in their constant disobedience, and because of this, they would soon be carried away into Babylonian captivity. So verses 1-11 voice God's displeasure and the consequences of their unrepentant transgressions. "And the LORD shall utter his voice before his army: for his camp is very great: for he is strong that executeth his word: for the day of the LORD is great and very terrible; and who can abide it?" (Joel 2:11). The first half of this sounds as though it is set in stone and yet we read on.

Therefore also now, saith the LORD, turn ye even to me with all your heart, and with fasting, and with weeping, and with mourning: And rend your heart, and not your garments, and turn unto the LORD your God: for he is gracious and merciful, slow to anger, and of great kindness, and repenteth him of the evil. Who knoweth if he will return and repent, and leave a blessing behind him; even a meat offering and a drink offering unto the LORD your God? Blow the trumpet in Zion, sanctify a fast, call a solemn assembly: Gather the people, sanctify the congregation, assemble the elders,

gather the children, and those that suck the breasts: let the bridegroom go forth of his chamber, and the bride out of her closet. Let the priests, the ministers of the LORD, weep between the porch and the altar, and let them say, Spare thy people, O LORD, and give not thine heritage to reproach, that the heathen should rule over them: wherefore should they say among the people, Where is their God? Joel 2:12-17

THE FEAR OF THE LORD

Notice that verse 12 begins with "therefore." That leads us to understand that the preceding 11 verses that speak of; darkness, fire, desolation, devouring, pain, blackness, thieves, earthquakes, trembling, and great and very terrible are there to make Israel understand that they should fear the wrath of God. Interestingly, these exact words, almost without fail, are used in the New Testament to help us understand that the impending day of the Lord, the judgment day, is also to be greatly feared. This is not simply to be afraid of something the way a child fears the dark or something of that nature, but it is a reverent fear. God is not a being who can be overthrown, for He is all-powerful; He is not one that can be thrown off our trail, for He is wise and knows/sees all places at all times. We cannot bribe God, for He is just and true. When we understand the power of God and the consequences of being against Him, the result is a healthy fear of the Lord.

Standing before God in opposition to His great power is something that no man should desire. "Woe unto you that desire the day of the LORD!

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To what end is it for you? The day of the LORD is darkness, and not light" (Amos 5:18). As Christians, we must understand the court in which we are to be judged and help the world understand the fear of the Lord and the impending day in which all men shall be called to give an account of the things which they have done.


FEAR BRINGS REPENTANCE TO AN HONEST HEART

Though Judgement was impending, and though we can look back and see that the Children of Israel did indeed go into captivity by the Assyrians, Babylonians, and Medo-Persians, we should note in verse 11 that this was not set in stone. "Therefore also now, saith the LORD, *turn ye even to me with all your heart*, and with fasting, and with weeping, and with mourning: And rend your heart, and not your garments, and turn unto the LORD your God: *for he is gracious and merciful, slow to anger, and of great kindness, and repenteth him of the evil.*" (Joel 2:12-13).

Throughout the Old Testament, God has repeatedly shown us that He gives us every opportunity to turn away from sinfulness and unrighteousness to repentance. The God we are to have a reverent fear of is the same God who has shown mercy beyond belief, love for humanity that we have never deserved, and kindness to those whose hearts will admit their faults and turn away from them. Through Joel's second chapter, we understand today that we have been given every opportunity to repent. "And the times of this ignorance God winked at; but now *commandeth all men every where to repent*: Because he hath appointed a day, in the which he will judge the world in righteousness by that man whom he hath ordained; whereof he hath given assurance unto all men, in that he hath raised him from the dead." (Act 17:30-31). Also, Peter wrote, "The Lord is not slack concerning his promise, as some men count slackness; but is longsuffering to us-ward, not willing that any should perish, but that all should come to repentance" (2 Peter 3:9).

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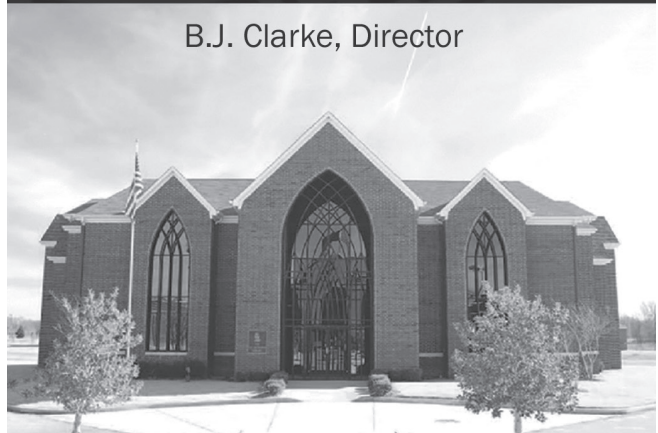
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God's Restoration of His People

Joel 2:15-18

By: Ryan Frederick



God's relationship with His people is seen quite clearly in scripture. In the Old Testament, God had made a promise through Abraham that was threefold (Gen. 12). Two of those promises would involve Abraham's offspring. God would make a great nation out of him, which we know to become the nation of Israel. God also declared that, through Abraham, all families would be blessed. This was the promise of God sending His Son Jesus through this lineage. So, God had a great interest in His people of the Old Testament, the Israelites. God's promise and plan to save mankind would not be forgotten or forsaken by God, no matter how much His people rebelled against Him.

When the period of the Judges began, God's people found themselves in a destructive cycle of sin. The people would fall away from God due to sin, God would punish the people (usually through another nation), the people would repent and beg God to help them, then God would raise up someone to lead the people back to a period of prosperity. This cycle would then repeat itself with the Israelites going back into sin. By the time of the prophet Joel, Israel still found itself in such a cycle. The people had sinned, and God's judgment was coming upon them as a result of that sin.

Joel would write in 1:15, "Woe for the day! For the day of the Lord is near, and it will come as destruction from the Almighty." In this case, the judgement of God would come in the form of an invasion of locust that would eat everything in sight, destroying the produce and vegetation of the land. Not only that, but a drought as well as fire would also wreak havoc on the place where they lived. God's judgement was certainly coming upon them, but would there be anything that might cause God to relent and take away this terrible consequence?

As with any punishment that God would inflict upon His people, the purpose of such was to cause their hearts to turn back towards the God who created them and could save them. This time was no different. In the text under consideration for us in this article, notice what Joel records for us in Joel 2:15-18. He begins by saying in verses 15 and 16, "Blow a trumpet in Zion, consecrate a fast, proclaim a solemn assembly, gather the people, sanctify the congregation, assemble the elders, gather the children and the nursing infants. Have the groom come out of his room and the bride out of her bridal chamber". Action needed to be taken on the part of the Israelites, and no one was exempt from this.

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Notice the wide array of groups that are mentioned here. From the elders all the way down to the children and nursing infants, all were included. The groom, who under law was not even to go off to war in the first year of his marriage, was told to assemble along with his bride. In the beginning of verse 17, the priests were included as well. Rightfully so, those who were to be leaders among God's people should have played a role in repentance before God. No one was excluded since the nation as a whole was guilty of disobedience to God. They got themselves into this as a nation and they would need to come together in unity to petition God that He would turn away from His wrath.

The fast, solemn assembly and sanctification are all marks that point towards godly sorrow, remorse and a penitent heart on behalf of the people. In verse 17, we also see weeping and pleading with God. "Spare Your people, Lord, and do not make Your inheritance a disgrace, with the nations jeering at them. Why should those among the peoples say, 'Where is their God?'" This appeal to God is one similar to Moses in Exodus 32 when the Israelites worshipped a gold calf. There Moses pleaded with God in this way, saying in verse 12, "Why should the Egyptians talk, saying, 'With evil motives He brought them out, to kill them on the mountains and destroy them from the face of the earth?'" God's name is to be glorified among all the earth, so relenting from this destruction would help in that regard.

Finally, in verse 18, as a result of actions and words bearing fruit worthy of repentance, we see what God will do. "Then the Lord will be zealous for His land, and will have compassion for His people."

God loves all of mankind (Jn. 3:16) and desires for all to come to know the salvation He offers (1 Tim. 2:4; 2 Pet. 3:9). If His people were willing to turn their hearts back to Him, then He too was willing to forgive and to turn away from punishment. God was always willing to do this for His people. Even in the book of Judges, as we mentioned earlier, God was always willing to restore His people when they came to Him in repentance. With this, we see the consistency, faithfulness and unfailing love of God.

Just as we learn from those in the past (Rom. 15:4), we can gain much in our lives when we recount the words and works of God. For those who are God's people today, spiritual Israel, the church, we too can be restored to God if we should stray. John writes in 1 John 1:9, "If we confess our sins, He is faithful and righteous, so that He will forgive us our sins and cleanse us from all unrighteousness." These words are written to God's people, those who "walk in the Light as He Himself is in the Light" (v. 7). If we come before God, humble ourselves and confess our sins before Him, we too may be restored. What a blessing that is from our loving and merciful God!



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The Messianic Promise

Joel 2:28-32

By: *Brian R. Kenyon*



Pretend for a moment there was no New Testament, and we read the entire Old Testament. There were many prophecies that struck our interest, but which ones would we think would be featured in the future? I am not sure if Joel's prophecy would stand out as one that would be a main feature. However, it was the very first prophecy to which Peter pointed in his sermon that accompanied the inauguration of the long anticipated Messianic kingdom (Acts 2:16-21)!

Joel 2:28-32 belongs to a larger context encompassing Joel 2:18-3:21 that concerns the day of the Lord, which amounts to blessings for God's people and judgment for God's enemies. As characteristic of many prophecies, Joel spoke of the blessings first in terms of physical restoration, then of spiritual restoration. The physical restoration about which Joel prophesied concerned a complete reversal of the locust damage he mentioned earlier (Joel 2:18-27). This restoration would be based on repentance, which gave even that aspect a spiritual connotation (Joel 2:12-17). The second, spiritual part of the prophecy will be the focus of this article.

OUTPOURING OF GOD'S SPIRIT

"And it shall come to pass afterward, that I will pour out my spirit upon all flesh; and your sons and your daughters shall prophesy, your old men shall dream dreams, your young men shall see visions: And also upon the servants and upon the handmaids in those days will I pour out my spirit" (Joel 2:28-29).

Having finished the part of the prophecy concerning the physical restoration of the locust damage (Joel 2:18-27 cf. Joel 1:2-20), Joel here promised even greater blessings yet to come (Joel 2:28-29). "Afterward" established the chronological order in relation to the restoration of the locust damage. "In those days" (Joel 2:29) points to the final dispensation of time this side of eternity, also called "the last days" (cf. Acts 2:18; Heb. 1:1-2). "Pour out" refers to the generous scope of the Holy Spirit's blessing. This term is used again in connection with the Holy Spirit in Isaiah 44:3. "Upon all flesh" reveals that all people shall benefit, which will include even the Gentiles. "Prophecy ... dream dreams ... see visions" referred to various forms of miraculous revelation God used until His written word was complete (cf. 1 Cor. 13:8-13). A mistake some make is connecting "all flesh" with the miraculous forms of revelation, as if the passage only refers to the miraculous age. The word "and" between "all flesh" and "your sons and your daughters ..." is joining what will also happen "afterward." It is not defining "all flesh." God would "pour out my spirit on all flesh" indicates various people prophesying and receiving miraculous revelations, not limiting who will receive the outpouring of the Holy Spirit. This will be confirmed later with the term "whosoever shall call on the name of the LORD shall be delivered" (Joel 2:32).

END OF MOSAIC SYSTEM

"And I will shew wonders in the heavens and in the earth, blood, and fire, and pillars of smoke.

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The sun shall be turned into darkness, and the moon into blood, before the great and the terrible day of the LORD come” (Joel 2:30-31).

Joel here used figurative language to describe the end of something. What that end is depends on the context. Similar language is used for the end of Babylon (Isa. 13:9-11), the end of Pharaoh (Ezk. 32:1-8), the end of false prophets (Mic. 3:6-7), and the end of Jerusalem (Mt. 24:29). Given its use in Acts 2, Joel’s prophecy is referring to the end of Judaism: spiritually, this occurred the moment Jesus died on the cross (cf. Col. 2:14; Heb. 9:16-17), publicly declared for the first time in Acts 2; politically, this occurred in AD 70 with the destruction of Jerusalem. In Joel’s context, these greater blessings of God’s Spirit would result in judgment upon those who rejected Him by refusing to repent (Joel 2:30-31 cf. Deut. 28:15-68). Although Jesus and His Messianic kingdom would come for salvation, those who reject His message will be judged (cf. Jn. 3:17-19; 12:47-48; Acts 13:46).

SALVATION AVAILABLE TO ALL

“And it shall come to pass, that whosoever shall call on the name of the LORD shall be delivered: for in mount Zion and in Jerusalem shall be deliverance, as the LORD hath said, and in the remnant whom the LORD shall call” (Joel 2:32).

Even in the midst of judgment, God would provide an escape! “Whosoever” means this offer of deliverance would be available to all, both Jew and Gentile (cf. “all nations,” Isa. 2:2-3). To “call on the name of the LORD” is more than just a verbal cry for help. It refers to an exclusive commitment to God evidenced by obedience to His will (cf. Acts 22:16). This deliverance would be in “mount Zion” and “Jerusalem,” which ultimately refer to the spiritual dwelling place of God’s people (Ob. 17; Heb. 12:22-23).

Note also that both the outpouring of God’s Spirit and the “whosoever shall call on the name of the LORD shall be delivered” are congruent in the same, “afterward” period of time (Joel 2:28, 32 cf. Acts 2:17, 21).

Thus, either both the pouring out of God’s Spirit and the calling on the Lord’s name to be saved are in effect or they both are not. It is not the case there are two sets of the “last days,” one miraculous and the other non-miraculous. There is only one set of last days, referring to the entire Christian age, which, in its inaugural period, did involve the miraculous. However, in no sense can the “last days” be limited to the time when miraculous gifts were distributed by the Spirit (cf. 1 Cor. 12:4-11). If people can still “call upon the name of the LORD” to be delivered, then God is still pouring out His “spirit on all flesh.” In addition to Acts 2:21, 37-38; 22:16, “whosoever shall call on the name of the LORD shall be delivered” is referenced in Romans 10:13, where Paul declared, after stating that both Jew and Gentile were welcomed to salvation, “For whosoever shall call upon the name of the Lord shall be saved.”

CONCLUSION

Acts 2:16-41 makes it abundantly clear that Joel’s prophecy is fulfilled in the inauguration and continuation of the church, the Messianic kingdom! While it is true the Father is the main personality of the active Godhead emphasized in the Old Testament and the Son is the main personality of the active Godhead emphasized in the New Testament, it is also true the Holy Spirit is the main personality of the active Godhead emphasized in Acts and the epistles. In that sense, God is still pouring out His Spirit through the gospel so that “whosoever shall call upon the name of the Lord shall be saved” (Rom. 10:13), thus, having access to “all spiritual blessings in heavenly places in Christ” (Eph. 1:3 cf. Rom. 8:1-4; 1 Cor. 12:13; 2 Cor. 1:22; Rev. 22:17).

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The Day of the Lord Through the Book of Joel

By: Clint Yarber



The phrase “the day of the Lord” appears within the pages of the Bible in both the Old Testament and the New. At least twenty-three times this exact phrase can be found inside of the King James Version of the Bible. The focus of this article will be the way that the phrase is used specifically throughout the book of Joel, where it appears five times (Joel 1:15; 2:1, 11, 31; 3:14).

THE PHRASE CAN REFER TO IMMINENT JUDGMENT

Many people who casually read the pages of the Bible can scarcely imagine that the phrase “the day of the Lord” can refer to anything other than the end of time. But in reality, the phrase is used numerous times throughout the Sacred Book to refer to a generic day of judgment brought upon man by God Himself. It is true that the Bible teaches that on the very day that time ends there will be an ultimate display of God’s judgment. But it is equally true, that the Bible also teaches that until that Day comes; God has, is and will continue to judge nations and individuals. In fact, it is possible to interpret every phrase “the day of the Lord” in the book of Joel as a reference to judgment upon nations (not final judgment) and still stay within the confines of the rest of Biblical teaching.

But in order to properly understand the “day of the Lord” in the book of Joel one must understand the main message of the book.

The message was for Israel to get ready because God was going to send judgment upon them. This was not the final judgment of all of mankind, but a judgment that God was executing upon His own people for their unfaithfulness. Notice that this day was imminent or at hand: “Alas for the day! for the day of the LORD is at hand, and as a destruction from the Almighty shall it come” (Joel 1:15). This judgment on “the day of the Lord” would take the form of a nation (1:6), specifically the Chaldean nation that would soon launch an attack upon the homeland of Israel. These attacks are visualized in prophetic language throughout the remainder of the book by pictures of doom, gloom, destruction and misery.

THIS PHRASE CAN REFER TO FUTURE JUDGMENT

Without delving too deeply into the “in and outs” of prophetic language, it should be noted that many of the Old Testament prophecies have a dual fulfillment and application. For instance, the Messianic Prophecy of Psalm 41:9: “Yea, mine own familiar friend, in whom I trusted, which did eat of my bread, hath lifted up his heel against me.” The application had an immediate reference to the writer David, whose close friend and counselor Ahithophel conspired with David’s son Absalom to remove David from the throne. Imagine being betrayed by your own friend, one who eats side by side with you at your own table!

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Yet we learn from the New Testament that this was also a prophecy of a greater betrayal that would take place at the hands of Judas, Jesus' own personal close friend and apostle (John 13:18)! The point being, is that it is not uncommon for prophecies and prophetic phrases to have an immediate application to the people living in the days of their writing, but at the same time referring to some event that would take place in the distant future.

We know that this is the case with at least one of the times Joel uses the phrase "the day of the Lord." The specific reference being made is that of Joel 2:31: "The sun shall be turned into darkness, and the moon into blood, before the great and the terrible day of the LORD come." On the Day of Pentecost Peter quoted this prophecy saying:

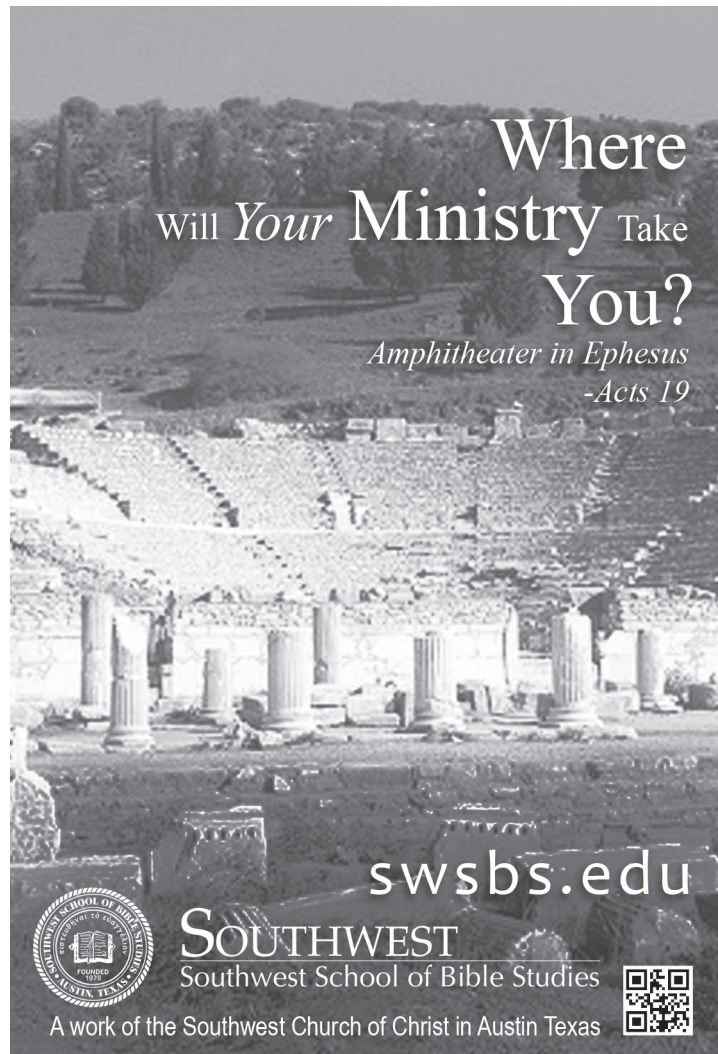
16 But this is that which was spoken by the prophet Joel; 17 And it shall come to pass in the last days, saith God, I will pour out of my Spirit upon all flesh: and your sons and your daughters shall prophesy, and your young men shall see visions, and your old men shall dream dreams: 18 And on my servants and on my handmaidens I will pour out in those days of my Spirit; and they shall prophesy: 19 And I will shew wonders in heaven above, and signs in the earth beneath; blood, and fire, and vapour of smoke: 20 The sun shall be turned into darkness, and the moon into blood, before that great and notable day of the Lord come: 21 And it shall come to pass, that whosoever shall call on the name of the Lord shall be saved. Acts 2:16-21

Notice that Peter said what was happening that day was the very prophecy referenced above from the book of Joel and "the day of the Lord." Note also, that the sun did not literally turn dark, nor did the moon literally turn into blood. This is the nature of prophetic language, which is just another "flowery" way of saying a very notable thing is going to happen on that day. While there is still much discussion among brethren as to whether "the day of the Lord" was the

Day of Pentecost itself, the destruction of Jerusalem or the end of time; we can all agree that Joel's "day of the Lord" had in mind a future event far removed from the happenings of his own day and age. This clearly illustrates the idea of Joel having more than one "day of the Lord" in mind as he was writing.

CONCLUSION

As you read about the "day of the Lord" in the book of Joel it is important to pay attention to the fact that the day was not a day of destruction, terror and punishment for everyone. For some it was a day that looked forward in hope to a better future. The lesson for us is clear: the day(s) of the Lord can either be a scary thing for us or the hope of something better to come. What is the "day of the Lord" for you?





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Fear Not ... For the LORD Will Do Great Things

Joel 2:21ff

By: Clifton Angel



It was not long ago that we suffered as a nation—
as a world, really. Store shelves were barren of
basic necessities like baby formula, toilet paper,
disinfectants, and more. Pain and panic ensued.
Exacerbating the pain and panic was the invisible
virus that was claiming lives, separating families and
churches, and shutting down workforces pervasively.
Yet, in all this, did we suffer to the extent that Judah
and Jerusalem suffered during the locust plague of
Joel's prophecy? It is certain in this publication, you
have already considered this plague (1:1–4). It is likely
you have read of the pain Judah experienced as a result
of the grand devastation brought on by the locust
plague (1:8–13), and you have tried to grasp just how
it must have been for a nation to lose the entirety of
its vegetation, which would lead to famine, disease,
and death. It is probable that you have considered the
reason God sent a locust plague upon Judah: perversion
of the Law (1:14–15; 2:12–17).

Joel indicated their need to turn to God (2:12–14).
He proclaimed their need to be together before God
(2:15–16). He demanded the priests intercede for the
people and talk to God (2:17). Incidentally, these are
all principles which we every soul needs to heed,
no matter the time or occasion. However, for Joel's
listeners, these were prerequisites to the reception of
God's promises, which promises are the center of this
writing. If they did these things, Joel heralded:

Then will the LORD be jealous for his land,
and pity his people. Yea, the LORD will

answer and say unto his people, Behold, I
will send you corn, and wine, and oil, and
ye shall be satisfied therewith: and I will
no more make you a reproach among the
heathen: But I will remove far off from you
the northern army, and will drive him into
a land barren and desolate, with his face
toward the east sea, and his hinder part
toward the utmost sea, and his stink shall
come up, and his ill savour shall come up,
because he hath done great things. Fear not,
O land; be glad and rejoice: for the LORD
will do great things. Be not afraid, ye beasts
of the field: for the pastures of the wilderness
do spring, for the tree beareth her fruit, the
fig tree and the vine do yield their strength.
Be glad then, ye children of Zion, and rejoice
in the LORD your God: for he hath given
you the former rain moderately, and he will
cause to come down for you the rain, the
former rain, and the latter rain in the first
month. And the floors shall be full of wheat,
and the vats shall overflow with wine and oil.
And I will restore to you the years that the
locust hath eaten, the cankerworm, and the
caterpillar, and the palmerworm, my great
army which I sent among you. And ye shall
eat in plenty, and be satisfied, and praise
the name of the LORD your God, that hath
dealt wondrously with you: and my people

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shall never be ashamed. And ye shall know that I am in the midst of Israel, and that I am the LORD your God, and none else: and my people shall never be ashamed (Joel 2:18–27).

God promised to perform great things for the nation of Judah. His prophecy portrays God giving hope to the land (2:21), animals (2:22), and citizens (2:23–24), which have all suffered from the locusts’ destruction. In performing these great things, God would prosper Judah: “And I will restore to you the years that the locust hath eaten, the cankerworm, and the caterpillar, and the palmerworm, my great army which I sent among you. And ye shall eat in plenty, and be satisfied” (2:25–26). Finally, and perhaps the greatest promise of this portion of Joel’s prophecy, God promised His presence: “And ye shall know that I am in the midst of Israel, and that I am the LORD your God, and none else: and my people shall never be ashamed” (2:27).

Now, these promises were not directly to us, today. Yet, as noted in Paul’s writings, the principles therein are pertinent to us: “For whatsoever things were written aforetime were written for our learning, that we through patience and comfort of the scriptures might have hope” (Romans 15:4). God’s faithful people have no reason to fear because of the great things He has done and will continue to do. While expectant of the two greatest prophets (John and Jesus), Elizabeth and Mary communed and conversed of the “great things” God had done and would do (cf. Luke 1:39–56). John prepared the way for Jesus (cf. Isaiah 40:3–5; Malachi 3:1; Matthew 3:3; Mark 1:3; Luke 3:4; John 1:23), and Jesus became the Way for you and me (cf. John 1:14; 14:6; Hebrews 10:20; Ephesians 2:18). Therefore, Jesus exhorted His disciples:

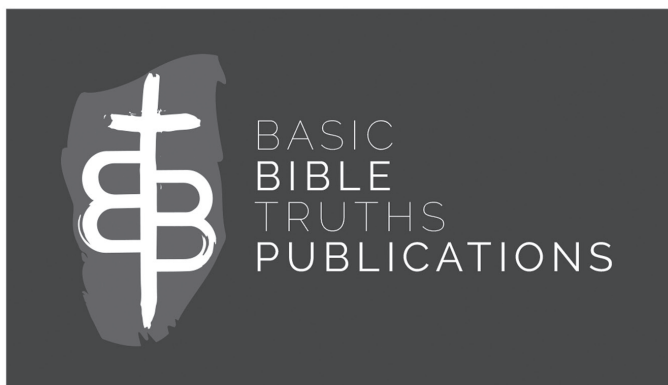
And fear not them which kill the body, but are not able to kill the soul: but rather fear him which is able to destroy both soul and body in hell. Are not two sparrows sold for

a farthing? and one of them shall not fall on the ground without your Father. But the very hairs of your head are all numbered. Fear ye not therefore, ye are of more value than many sparrows. Whosoever therefore shall confess me before men, him will I confess also before my Father which is in heaven (Matthew 10:28–32).

Furthermore, God has not promised us physical prosperity; however, He has promised spiritual prosperity which exceeds the physical in every way. Paul wrote, “For ye know the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, that, though he was rich, yet for your sakes he became poor, that ye through his poverty might be rich” (2 Corinthians 8:9), and “Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who hath blessed us with all spiritual blessings in heavenly places in Christ ... In whom we have redemption through his blood, the forgiveness of sins, according to the riches of his grace” (Ephesians 1:3, 7).

Finally, God has promised the faithful His presence. Jesus said, “If I go and prepare a place for you, I will come again, and receive you unto myself; that where I am, there ye may be also” (John 14:3). The apostle John wrote, “And I John saw the holy city, new Jerusalem, coming down from God out of heaven, prepared as a bride adorned for her husband. And I heard a great voice out of heaven saying, Behold, the tabernacle of God is with men, and he will dwell with them, and they shall be his people, and God himself shall be with them, and be their God” (Revelation 21:2–3).

As long as we continue in this physical world of death and decay, we will experience suffering. However, in principle, we can take comfort like the land of Judah by the words of the prophet Joel, “Fear not ... for the LORD will do great things” (Joel 2:21).



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A Senior's Moment:

What a Study of the Old Testament Prophets Will Do

By: Keith A. Mosher, Sr.



It is the case that a commentary, put together by professors at an Abilene University, contains the claim that there are *no* Christological predictions in the Old Testament, especially in the prophets. New Testament writers and Jesus, Himself, taught differently (cf. John 5:39; Mat. 1:22-23). In fact, without a study of the Old Testament prophets a Bible student's knowledge of Holy Writ would be incomplete, for some of the greatest lessons from God are sourced in the prophets (Rom. 15:4).

In the first place, the lives of those who study the prophets are spiritually enriched, if they apply themselves to learn from the teachings of those grand old men of God. Jesus said to some frightened disciples who saw Him resurrected and thought they had seen an apparition (Luke 24:37) that they needed not to be afraid (Luke 24:38-43). The Lord then opened a discussion of the Old Testament by reminding those disciples that: "These 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).

In the second place, a study of the prophets and an understanding of their usage of language and agricultural and animal illustrations will benefit one's future grasp of apocalyptic language, which is sourced in the prophets' writings. For example, Isaiah spoke of "beasts of the field" in reference to the invading armies of Babylon into Judah (Isa. 56:9).

Such usage of the word, beasts, meaning an invading army, helps one know something about the word, beast, in Revelation as somehow referring to an enemy of God's people (Rev. 13:2). Such knowledge of language is most useful in dealing with those who love to speculate about Revelation.

In the third place, a study of the prophets will help one to understand the moral, religious, and social problems of the ancients and how the prophets taught those peoples how to meet such challenges with divine wisdom and personal courage. Isaiah taught his folks who lived in the midst of a corrupt, debauched, immoral, and idolatrous society: "Thus saith the Lord, Keep ye judgment, and do justice, for my salvation is near to come, and my righteousness to be revealed. Blessed is the man that doeth this, and the son of man that layeth hold on it; that keepeth the sabbath from polluting it, and keepeth his hand from doing evil" (Isa. 56:1-2). Such inspired advice from an ancient prophet has direct application to those of us who live in a corrupt society today.

In the fourth place, one of the most important spiritual lessons [if not the most important] that can be learned from the prophets is that God always wins. The foregoing object lesson is for those, especially, who are defiant and rebellious toward the Almighty. Jeremiah told his people: "Then said the Lord unto me, Though Moses and Samuel stood before me, yet my mind could not be toward this people: cast them out of my sight and let them go forth.

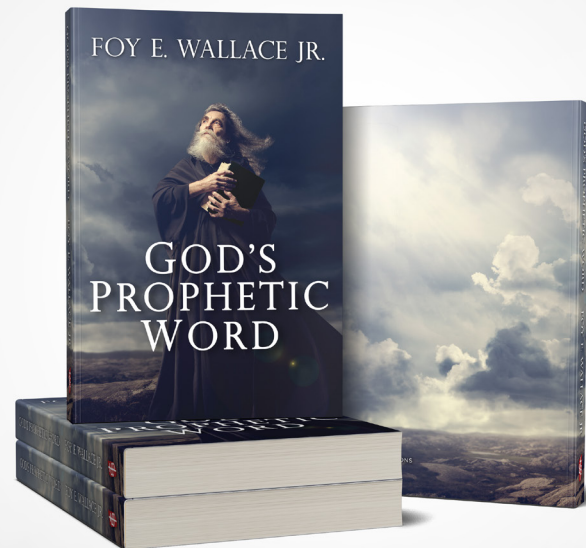
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And it shall come to pass, if they say unto thee, Whither shall we go forth? Then thou shalt tell them, Thus saith the Lord; Such as are for death, to death; and such as are for the sword, to the sword; and such as are for the famine, to the famine; and such as are for the captivity to the captivity, And I will appoint over them four kinds, saith the Lord: the sword to slay, and the dogs to tear, and the fowls of heaven, and the beasts of the earth, to devour and destroy. . . For who shall have pity on thee. . . Thou hast forsaken me, saith the Lord, thou art gone backward: therefore will I stretch out my hand against thee, and destroy thee: I am weary of repenting” (Jer. 15:1-3; 5a; 6).

In the fifth place, one’s understanding of the relationship between God’s will and history is made plain in studying the prophetic writings. Daniel was instructed to write that a king named Nebuchadnezzar was to learn that the “most High ruleth in the kingdom of men, and giveth it to whomsoever he will” (Dan. 4:25b). In reading such material one also becomes aware of the fact that the prophets’ work was much greater than just predicting. They did “foretell,” but most of their efforts were in the area of “forthtelling” or teaching people to return to the law of Moses. For example, Obadiah told Edom about her abuse of Israel (Obd. 10) and Amos reminded Israel that she was being punished for her sins against God’s laws (Amos 3:1-2).

There were wise men and counselors in ancient times (1 Kin. 3:12). There were also seers who preceded the prophets and schools for the prophets who were “sent ones” (Rom. 10:13ff. cf. Jer. 2:21). There are about sixteen prophets named in the Old Testament who often stood alone against God’s own sinful people. They stood as watchtowers, admonishing and pleading, warning and teaching for those ancients to return to God, and many of the prophets were slain for their efforts. We learn from them that “having done all, to stand” (Eph. 6:13b).

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Fundamentals of the Faith

A Pattern for Salvation

By: Mike Hixson



In the sixth chapter of the book of Genesis we have a record of God's decree to destroy the world by means of a universal flood. The reason for God bringing judgment upon the ancient world was "the wickedness of man was great in the earth, and...every intent of the thoughts of his heart was only evil continually" (Gen. 6:5). In contrast to an ungodly world, there was a man named Noah who "found grace in the eyes of the LORD" (Gen. 6:8). He was described by Moses as one who "walked with God" (Gen. 6:9). In order to bring the Promised Seed (Gen. 3:15) to fruition, God reached out to Noah through whose lineage the Seed would emerge, to build an ark to save himself and his household. The inspired record reveals God instructed Noah concerning the type of wood to be used in the construction of the ark, namely gopher wood, and the dimensions of the ark were to be as follows: 450 ft. in length, 75 ft. in height, and 45 ft. in width (Gen. 6:14). There was to be a window in the ark as well as a door in its side, "with lower, second and third decks" (Gen. 6:16). The Hebrew writer informs us that Noah complied with the divine pattern of the ark, and in so doing, saved himself and his family (Gen. 6:22; Heb. 11:7).

The salvation afforded Noah and his family serve as a type or pattern of salvation today. Under the new covenant or law of Christ, salvation is said to be in Christ and the church of Christ (II Tim. 2:10; Acts 2:47). Despite the claims of some, the Bible endorses pattern theology. In Romans 6:17, Paul wrote, "But God be thanked that though you were slaves of sin, yet you obeyed from the heart that form of doctrine to which you were delivered." The "form" or "pattern" of teaching included faith in Jesus as the Son of God (Rom. 10:17; Jo. 8:24), repentance from sin (Acts 2:38), the good confession (Rom. 10:9-10), and baptism for the washing away of sins (Acts 22:16). Through an obedient faith, we contact the blood of Christ, which affords us the forgiveness of sins (Eph. 1:7). Although the denominational world rejects the necessity of New Testament baptism, Peter cites Noah and his family as an example or type of salvation afforded us today through an obedient faith. After citing the fact that Noah and his family "were saved through water" (I Pet. 3:20), Peter writes, "There is also an antitype which now saves us, namely baptism (not the removal of the filth of the flesh, but the answer of a good conscience toward God), through the resurrection of Jesus Christ" (I Pet. 3:21).

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God's pattern of salvation was made crystal clear on the day of Pentecost. Peter, the inspired spokesman recorded by the inspired historian Luke, took "the keys of the kingdom" (Matt. 16:19) given to him and set forth God's terms of pardon. The audience assembled on that occasion believed in the Lord Jesus Christ (Acts 2:22-36) and were commanded to "repent...and be baptized in the name of Jesus Christ for the remission of sins" (Acts 2:38). The apostle Peter, along with the other apostles, under the guidance of the Holy Spirit (Acts 2:4), made it abundantly clear what God requires for salvation. The inspired record is stone-cold silent when it comes to the popular denominational jargon of accepting the Lord Jesus into your heart and reciting the "Sinner's Prayer." The latter conditions are not a part of the divine pattern, nor are they approved by the authority of Christ (Matt. 28:18; 17:5).

Noah and his family were saved in the only designated place of salvation which was the ark (Gen. 6:14; Heb. 11:7), and today the designated place of salvation is in Christ (II Tim. 2:10) and in the church of Christ (Acts 2:47). It is not uncommon to hear people in the denominational world reject the importance of being in the church. Some years back people would say, "Jesus yes, the church no." The pattern reveals Christ is the Savior (Jo. 14:6) and the church is the house of the saved (Acts 2:47). No one can be saved outside the church anymore than they can be saved outside of Christ. As a matter of fact, when we submit to God's pattern of salvation (faith, repentance, confession, and baptism) we are automatically added to the church that Christ built and bought with His blood (Matt. 16:18; Acts 20:28; 2:47).

And since the Lord built the church and bought it with His precious blood, it only stands to reason that it belongs to Him (Heb. 12:23). Therefore, all who are in the church are numbered among the redeemed and are a part of the body the Lord has promised to save (Eph. 5:23).

In Romans 15:4, Paul wrote, "For whatsoever things were written before were written for our learning, that we through the patience and comfort of the Scriptures might have hope." The patriarch Noah and his family are a pattern of salvation for our learning today. Now is a good time to ask, have you complied with God's pattern of salvation set forth in the New Testament? If not, why? You cannot afford to die outside of Christ and His church (Heb. 10:31). Let me close by reminding you of the powerful, provocative words of Ananias, who said to Saul of Tarsus, "And now why are you waiting? Arise and be baptized, and wash away your sins, calling on the name of the Lord" (Acts 22:16).

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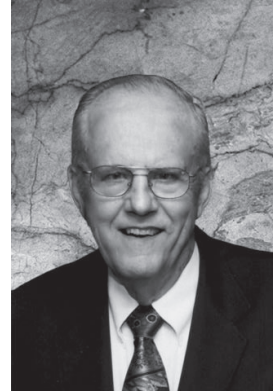


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Gems From the Greek

In the Heavnlies

By: Wayne Price



In Ephesians 1:3, the Apostle Paul tells the Ephesians: “Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who hath blessed us with all spiritual blessings in heavenly places in Christ.” When the KJV translated the Greek into English, it added the word “places” (letting the readers know by putting the word “places” in italics. The footnote on “places” suggests that the word may be rendered as “things.” Either way, the word should put it italics, since the literal phrase in Greek (en tois epouraniois), is “in the heavnlies,” which we have used as a title of this article you are now reading.

Though the word epouraniois is found twenty times in the New Testament, this specific phrase is used only five (5) times in the N.T., all of which are in Paul’s letter to the Ephesians: here in 1:3, and also in 1:20; 2:6; 3:10 and 6:12). A note of interest is that Hugo McCord translated all five of these references as “heavenly realms.”

But how should this term be understood? Probably in a local sense in all five references, except perhaps in chap. 6:12. We now will take a look at these five individual passages.

In Eph. 1:3 it is rather obvious that Paul uses this term to refer to the Lord’s church here on earth. The church is a heavenly institution, for Jesus said:

“My kingdom is not of this world” (John 18:36), but since our “citizenship is in heaven” (Phil. 3:20), even though we are still earthbound, then certainly we can be spoken of as having been seated with Christ in heavenly places. The Expositor’s Greek Testament (Vol. 3, pg. 246) informs us that the adjective epouraniois occurs in both a literal sense and a metaphorical sense in the N.T. The plural is found in Ephesians. It should be expected that heavenly things would be contrasted with earthly things (see John 3:12). It is also used to refer to celestial bodies, sun, moon and stars (1 Cor. 15:40). Likewise it is used to contrast heavenly things with earthly things (Phil. 2:10; Heb. 8:5).

In Eph. 1:20 it is used to point out God’s power (see previous verse 19). God’s power raised Jesus Christ from the dead! Yet God has so limited Himself that even a weak Christian can totally thwart His power. His power “can make you what you ought to be” as the old song declares, yet so many refuse to let “Him have His way” with them. God placed all things under Christ’s control (Matt. 28:18). All things would include things in heaven, earth, Hades, angels, demons, etc. The next verse reveals that He is “above every name that is named” – you name it, He is above it!

In Eph. 2:6 we see further manifestation of God’s power.

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Even though mankind was dead in sins (Eph. 2:1, 5; Rom. 5:8), God could make them (and us) alive, and raise us to sit together in heavenly places with Christ. Again Paul calls the church by this term “heavenly places,” and why not, for it is the reign of Christ on earth while our Lord is in heaven. “Blessed assurance, Jesus is mine, Oh WHAT A FORETASTE OF GLORY DIVINE.” Point of emphasis? All of heaven’s blessings are available only through the church of Christ, a heavenly institution. In this verse, it is quite certain that Paul refers to the church.

Then in Eph. 3:10, Paul states that “the manifold wisdom of God has been made known to the rulers and to the authorities in the heavenly realms by the called-out people” (McCord, p. 192). The church cannot be by-passed on one’s way to heaven. It is the means by which men are to be instructed. The prophets were intrigued by the gospel which came down from heaven (1 Pet. 1:10-12). Paul and his fellow apostles were “made a spectacle unto the world, AND TO ANGELS, and to men” (1 Cor. 4:9).

Finally, in Eph. 6:12, we find this phrase “in heavenly places” used the last time. When we “put on Christ” we put on our armor (Gal. 3:27; 2:20), and are thus furnished with both out offensive and defensive weapons! Note that this battle is pictured as “wrestling” – where emphasis is placed on the individual and not so much on the team. The wrestler is put out there, one on one! This battle is not a fight against the “flesh and blood”, i.e. the human family. J.B. Phillips’ Modern English Version words it as follows: “For our fight is not against any physical enemy: it is against organizations and powers that are spiritual. We are up against the unseen power that controls this dark world, and spiritual agents from the very headquarters of evil. Therefore you must wear the whole armor of God . . .”

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Counselor's Corner

Counsel For Making Life's Decisions Part II

By: Jerry Martin



In our last installment of this column, I shared the first three of six questions that I ask myself to test my decisions. The previous questions were: Is this a good idea, will this defame my integrity, will this allow me to improve?

The wise man of Proverbs wrote: *"Then shalt thou understand the fear of the LORD, and find the knowledge of God. For the LORD giveth wisdom: out of his mouth cometh knowledge and understanding. He layeth up sound wisdom for the righteous: he is a buckler to them that walk uprightly. He keepeth the paths of judgment, and preserveth the way of his saints. Then shalt thou understand righteousness, and judgment, and equity; yea, every good path"* (Prov. 2:5-9). Good decision making requires knowledge, understanding, wisdom, and judgment. So, how can we develop the correct and consistent ability to make good decisions? Let's now consider the fourth, fifth, and sixth questions I ask myself before I make a decision.

Fourth, will this decision allow me to remain independent? Could the action I am about to take become addictive? If yes, then it is a bad decision. The apostle Paul gave us some sage insight into how he made decisions when he stated,

"All things are lawful unto me, but all things are not expedient: all things are lawful for me, but I will not be brought under the power of any" (1 Cor. 6:12, emphasis mine JLM). When we are brought under the power of something or someone, we lose our independence and freedom. We become enslaved. When God gave the Ten Commandments, He warned the Israelites about making decisions to have other gods. Such decisions would lead to degradation and enslavement. *"Thou shalt have no other gods before me. Thou shalt not make unto thee any graven image, or any likeness of any thing that is in heaven above, or that is in the earth beneath, or that is in the water under the earth. Thou shalt not bow down thyself to them, nor serve them: for I the LORD thy God am a jealous God, visiting the iniquity of the fathers upon the children unto the third and fourth generation of them that hate me"* (Ex. 20:3-5). There are thousands of classified addictions in the United States. Those classified addictions typically fall into one of two categories: chemical addictions, which involve the use of substances, or behavioral addictions, which involve repetitive actions that lead to patterns that take control of an individual. So, before making decisions, ask yourself, "Will I be brought under the power of this?"

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Fifth, will this decision tarnish my influence?

The apostle Paul reminds us that we wield influence, whether we think we do or not. *“For none of us liveth to himself, and no man dieth to himself”* (Rom. 14:7). What we see and do influences us. If you have ever seen something, your mind records it and thoughts of it may be triggered later. What others see us do influences them and our actions may trigger thoughts in them over a lifetime. Knowing the impact of our actions on us, Paul warned: *“So then every one of us shall give account of himself to God. Let us not therefore judge one another any more: but judge this rather, that no man put a stumblingblock or an occasion to fall in his brother’s way”* (Rom. 14:12-13). Following his warning, Paul gives this charge: *“We then that are strong ought to bear the infirmities of the weak, and not to please ourselves. Let every one of us please his neighbour for his good to edification”* (Rom. 15:1-2). Those who are spiritually mature control their thoughts, their tongues, and their actions. The spiritually immature do not. The spiritually mature recognize their influence and limit their freedom. The spiritually immature do not. Before making a decision ask, “Will this harm others?”

Sixth, is this a good investment? Time is life.

The greatest successes and the greatest failures have the same amount of time. We all have 168 hours in a week so what we decide to do with that time will help determine whether we succeed or fail. The apostle Paul charges: *“See then that ye walk circumspectly, not as fools, but as wise, Redeeming the time, because the days are evil. Wherefore be ye not unwise, but understanding what the will of the Lord is”* (Eph. 5:15-17). The inspired writer James gives a similar charge:

“Go to now, ye that say, To day or to morrow we will go into such a city, and continue there a year, and buy and sell, and get gain: Whereas ye know not what shall be on the morrow. For what is your life? It is even a vapour, that appeareth for a little time, and then vanisheth away. For that ye ought to say, If the Lord will, we shall live, and do this, or that. But now ye rejoice in your boastings: all such rejoicing is evil. Therefore to him that knoweth to do good, and doeth it not, to him it is sin” (James 5:13-17). Are you so busy that you don’t have time for what is really important? What we decide to do with our time will determine who we are. Who we are will determine where we spend eternity. Before you make a decision ask, “Is this a wise investment of my time and energy?”

Our decisions in life have a profound effect on us, our families, the church, our friends, and everyone with whom we come in contact. Would your decisions pass the good idea test, the integrity test, improvement test, the independence test, the influence test, and the investment test? May we all be sober and prayerfully determined to make the very best life decisions by asking ourselves the six important questions. Remember, decisions have consequences. *“For we must all appear before the judgment seat of Christ; that every one may receive the things done in his body, according to that he hath done, whether it be good or bad”* (2 Corinthians 5:10).

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One Woman's Perspective

Forgiveness

By: Trudy Sampson



We are all familiar with the story of reluctant Jonah, our first foreign missionary. God commanded Jonah: *Arise, go to Nineveh, that great city, and cry against it; for their wickedness is come up before me.* (Jonah 1:2) Jonah, however, rose up and fled to the city of Tarshish instead. Like many in today's society, his thoughts were not in sync with those of the Great I Am.

This prophet of Israel did, eventually, go unto that Gentile nation and cry unto them as commanded by God. Possibly, the shortest sermon ever recorded: "Yet forty days, and Nineveh shall be overthrown." (3:4) Possibly, the greatest revival ever recorded: Nineveh from the greatest of them even to the least of them turned from its evil ways. (3:5-9)

There are many major lessons to be gained from this book of the minor prophets. The primary one being centered around the reason for Jonah not wanting to go unto this wicked Gentile nation. Jonah 4:2 reads:

And he prayed unto the LORD, and said, "I pray thee. O LORD, was not this my saying, when I was yet in my country? Therefore, I fled before unto Tarshish; for I knew that thou art a gracious God, and merciful, slow to anger, and of great kindness, and repentest thee of the evil. (KJV) One who relents from doing harm. (NKJV)

The prophet was angry!

He did not want this heathen city to repent because he knew that if Nineveh turned from its wicked ways the LORD in his infinite mercy and loving kindness would forgive. The Assyrian nation which included Nineveh threatened to destroy the people of God; therefore, Jonah found it difficult to forgive such an enemy of his people. He wanted God to withhold his bowels of mercies and utterly destroy all the inhabitants of that great city.

Jonah's flight to Tarshish demonstrated a blatant disregard for obedience to the will of the Father. However, his three days and three nights in a great fish prepared by God afforded him an opportunity to reconsider his ways.

Jonah had to have recognized the hand of God in his entombment and in his escape from his watery grave. Consider the irony! He readily accepted the patience and compassion of Almighty God for himself, but he became angry at even the thought of them being extended to others. Unfortunately, this attitude is prevalent in the vast majority of the world today. Many thrive on the concept of an eye for an eye (Lev. 24:19-21), instead of the admonition to turn the other cheek (Mat. 5:38-42). The movie industry has garnered an untold amount of wealth with revenge as one of its primary themes. "Vengeance is mine; I will repay, saith the Lord" (Rom. 12:19) has been pushed aside.

One of the saddest and yet most beautiful verse of scripture begins:

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“And they heard the voice of the LORD GOD walking in the garden in the cool of the day...” (Gen. 3:8-9).

These verses show that man was not placed in the garden of Eden and forgotten. From the beginning our heavenly Father has demonstrated a desire for fellowship with His highest creation. His unwavering love for man has always been evident. God is not only concerned with man’s physical and mental well-being, but with his spiritual well-being also. Before the world began, our Creator had set in place a plan of redemption so that mankind might have an opportunity to enjoy an eternal relationship with him.

John 3:16 reads: “For God so loved the world, that he gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have ever lasting life.” We were not, are not, and never will be deserving of the love our God bestows upon us. So, let us be of the same mind as the apostle Paul who wrote: “For I am persuaded that neither death, nor life, nor angels, nor principalities, nor powers, nor things present, nor things to come, nor height, nor depth, nor any other creature, shall be able to separate us from the love of God, which in is Christ Jesus our Lord.” (Rom 8:38-39)

We are truly blessed to have a Father who is indeed the God of a second chance. For Paul reminds us in Rom 3:23 that all have sinned, and fall short of the glory of God. In Rom 3:10 he writes, “As it is written, There is none righteous, no not one.” All of us are but filthy rags in need of the cleansing blood of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ.

Nevertheless, our God in his infinite grace, mercy and love stands always ready to forgive. “If my people, which are called by my name, shall humble themselves, and pray and seek my face, and turn from their wicked ways; then will I hear from heaven, and will forgive their sin and heal their land.” (2Chron.7:14)

There are times in our lives when our faith may be severely tested. In this present age, we are constantly being bombarded with shocking examples of man’s inhumanity to man.

When gross mistreatment or senseless violence involves ourselves or those we care about, it can be difficult, if not impossible, for us not to take on the role of an avenging angel bringing destruction to ourselves and those around us.

As heirs with Christ, we count ourselves blessed to belong to a perfect God who forgives his imperfect people. But when God in his infinite wisdom commands his sinful children to forgive one another, some like Jonah, turn and flee toward Tarshish. Whether we obey or not is our choice. However, our Bible gives examples of how God wants us to behave toward those who sin against us.

Eph. 4:32 reads “And be kind to one another, tenderhearted, forgiving one another, even as God for Christ’s sake has forgiven you.” Jesus taught his disciples to pray, “And forgive us our sins; for we also forgive everyone that is indebted to us.” (Luke 11:4) Although He was suffering unjustly on that cruel cross of calvary, our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ prayed, “Father, forgive them; for they know not what they do.” (Luke 23:34)

God knew that forgiveness would be a hard pill for us to swallow. It goes against our nature to allow someone to get the best of us. We do not like having others see us as being weak or afraid. During those times when the flesh and the spirit are at war within us, we must keep our eyes on Jesus Christ. Peter focused on the raging waters and began to sink. When we focus on circumstances and evil doers we also begin to sink. We can not serve God buffet style- picking and choosing what we will obey. Regardless of what we think or how we feel, His word should remain our comfort and our guide.

There are those who endure trauma at the hands of others that leave visible and invisible scars. Only God knows why He chose forgiveness as a healing ointment for those scars. We are blessed because our Father makes the impossible possible. We can take our burdens to our heavenly Father and leave them there; knowing that “Heaven Will Surely Be Worth It All.”

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Special Studies

Calvinism: Unconditional Election Part 4

By: Victor M. Eskew



In our last three installments, we have been discussing the Calvinistic doctrine of Unconditional Election. It is also referred to as Predestination. This doctrine proclaims that before the beginning of the Creation God chose some individuals to redeem and all others to be lost. In other words, a few were predestined to live eternally with God. Everyone else was predestined to live in everlasting condemnation.

There are numerous so-called “proof-texts” from Scripture that are used by Calvinists in an attempt to prove Unconditional Election. We looked at some of these texts in our last article. We will look at another in this article. Ephesians 1:5 is an important text to the Calvinist. Paul writes: “Having predestined us unto the adoption of children by Jesus Christ to himself, according to the good pleasure of his will.” There are two things the Calvinist will highlight in this verse. First, they will refer to the word “predestined.” Second, they will point to the words: “...according to the good pleasure of his will.” They will tell us this verse teaches that God predestined some to be His adopted children. This was done according to God’s good pleasure. In other words, God appointed them to be adopted without the individual’s being involved in the process at all.

In answer to this teaching, we begin with a question. If you are not one of God’s adopted children, how does that make you feel? You are lost because God did not choose you. You are lost having no say in the process at all. There are some, however, whom He chose to adopt. They did not do anything to deserve to be called God’s children. He simply chose them “according to the good pleasure of his will.” Personally, this writer would be upset if he were not chosen by God. He would wonder why he has to suffer in hell and another gets to enjoy an eternity in heaven, especially since being lost or saved had nothing to do with the individual. It seems that God is a respecter of persons. Yet, the Bible tells us He is not (Rom. 2:11).

One of errors made by those who teach false doctrine is to lift passages out of their contexts. Thus, we must go back into the context of Ephesians 1 to truly understand Paul’s words. Paul begins a discussion in Ephesians 1:3 about spiritual blessings. “Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who hath blessed us with all spiritual blessings in heavenly places in Christ.” In verses 4-13, Paul lists some of those spiritual blessings. The point that must be emphasized here is that Paul tells us that these blessings are “in Christ.”

Read verse Ephesians 1:3 again. In fact, the apostle will mention this several others times throughout this section. “According as he hath chosen us in him...” (Eph. 1:4). “...he hath made us accepted in the beloved” (Eph. 1:6). “In whom we have redemption...” (Eph. 1:7). “...he might gather together all things in Christ” (Eph. 1:10). “In whom we have obtained an inheritance...” (Eph. 1:11). All of the blessings listed, in fact, “all spiritual blessings,” are “in Christ.”

Now let’s make application of this to Ephesians 1:5. God predestined all those who are in Christ to be His adopted children. All who are out of Christ will be condemned. Man is not forced to be a child of God. Man is given the choice to become a child of God. He can choose to remain outside of Christ. Or, he can choose to be in Christ. The question is: “How does a person get into Christ?” There are only two verses in the New Testament that answer this question, Romans 6:3 and Galatians 3:27. In Romans 6:3, Paul asks: “Know ye not, that so many of us as were baptized into Jesus Christ were baptized into his death?” Galatians 3:27 states the same truth with just a slightly different wording. “For as many of you as have been baptized into Christ have put on Christ.” When a person is baptized, he is taken out of the world and put into Jesus Christ. “In Christ” is where all spiritual blessings are found. This individual is now adopted into the family of God. Note, God predestined a group of people to become His children, that is, all those who are in Christ. When the gospel is proclaimed to the lost, they are told: “He that believeth and is baptized shall be saved...” (Mark 16:16). All are free to choose to believe and be baptized. Those who do believe and who are baptized become God’s children (See 1 Cor. 12:13; 2 Cor. 5:17; 1 Pet. 1:22-23).

When we turn to the book of Acts, we have a record of the conversion accounts as the apostles began to carry the gospel to the world. When the gospel was preached, the invitation was extended to all who were present. Those who were gathered to hear the good news were not told that only a select few of them had been chosen to be adopted by God. No! They were all given the chance to yield in obedience to the truth. Peter preached to thousands gathered in Jerusalem on Pentecost Day Acts 2:6-22). He preached to them about the Christ. The Jews had crucified Him, but God raised Him from the dead (Acts 2:23-24, 32). Too, He was raised to sit on the right hand of God as “both Lord and Christ” (Acts 2:33-36). Let’s now watch what happens. “Now when they heard this, they were pricked in their heart, and said unto Peter and to the rest of the apostles, Men and brethren, what shall we do? Then Peter said unto them, Repent, and be baptized every one of you in the name of Jesus Christ for the remission of sins, and ye shall receive the gift of the Holy Ghost....Then they that gladly received his word were baptized: and the same day there were added unto them about three thousand souls...And the Lord added to the church daily such as should be saved” (Acts 2:37, 38, 41, 47). The lost were told what they needed to do to be saved. Those who gladly received the word did as Peter instructed. Everyone could have been saved that day. Unfortunately, only about three thousand obeyed the gospel. These three thousand were not predestined as individuals to salvation. They were predestined to salvation in Christ Jesus (See 2 Thess. 2:14; 2 Tim. 2:10).

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Tom's Pen

4x8

By: Tom Wacaster



Over the past couple of decades I have written at least three articles on the topic of plain old common sense. “The Death of Common Sense,” by Phillip Howard was written and published in the 1990’s. I learned of the existence of this book in sort of a round about way, and I will admit up front that I have not read the book (though it is on order). I only mention the book to prove a point. This book, along with thousands of hits on a Google search under the words ‘common sense,’ indicates that the Western World seems to be losing common sense in almost every facet of life. What I am about to tell you is true, and it will serve as an indication of the need to revisit the subject of common sense and careful reasoning.

I placed an order at the local Lowe’s here in Montgomery this week. I needed a 4’ x 8’ piece of paneling for the back of a small bookcase I am building. I received the email that my order (placed six hours earlier) was ready for pickup. Behind the pickup counter there were approximately 20 feet of wall space containing various sizes of small cubicles where pickup orders were placed for easy retrieval when the customer arrived. So, I handed the lady at the counter a copy of my order, containing the order number. She took the sheet and commenced to look in those small cubicles for the number that would match my order number.

Realizing she did not know what the item was I had ordered, I informed her that the order was a 4’ x 8’ piece of paneling. She seemed not to have heard what I said, so I got her attention and told her again that the order was for a 4’ x 8’ piece of paneling. She said she heard me, but she was required to begin by looking in the cubicles. It took about 5 minutes for her to compare the order number of my sheet with the tag number on the products in the two-dozen or more cubicles. The next step was to go to the computer and look up the order, which obviously informed her the order was a 4’ x 8’ piece of paneling. So, she returned to the cubicles to begin a search once again for this 4’ x 8’ piece of paneling. When she could not find it, she just stood there looking around the cubicles as if at a total loss of what to do. She finally sent me to the contractor department of the store, where I was informed that I had to return to the pick up order counter. Rather than go through all that again, I simply returned home and cancelled the order.

Thomas Edison is credited with having said, “The three great essentials to achieve anything worthwhile are: Hard work, stick-to-itiveness, and common sense.” Someone once suggested that common sense is the same thing as wisdom. If they are not the same, at least they are first cousins.

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Even the renowned atheist Robert Owens was aware of the importance of common sense when he wrote, “It is a thousand times better to have common sense without education than to have education without common sense.” It seems to be that the further our nation gets away from God the more it loses the ability to exercise plain old common sense. Does it seem that way to you?

The apparent lack of common sense in our society has led to the decline in the ability of those with whom we study the Bible to grasp some of simple passages in God’s word. What, for example, can be simpler than the statement, “He that believeth and is baptized shall be saved” (Mark 16:16)? That is not difficult to understand. In fact, it takes years in a seminary to mess that up. Do we doubt this? Several years ago I was asked by a denominational preacher what those in the church of Christ believed about baptism. Without saying a word, I simply opened my Bible to Mark 16:16 and asked him to read the passage. Without a word from me, he responded by saying, “Well, we don’t see it that way.” I said nothing, but just looked at him. He realized what he had said and attempted to correct his statement. To my astonishment he said, “Well, I know what it says, but we don’t believe that.” I remained silent, just looking into his face. The more he struggled with how to explain what had just happened, the worse he got himself into a mess.

The Bible calls for men to use sound reasoning when seeking divine truth. We are to “prove all things, hold fast to that which is good” (1 Thess. 5:21-22). We are to be able to “give answer to every man that asketh you a reason concerning the hope that is in you, yet with meekness and fear” (1 Pet. 3:15). God called on Israel of old, “Come now, and let us reason together” (Isa. 1:18).

Luke tells us that when Paul “reasoned of righteousness, and self-control, and the judgment to come” (Acts 24:25), his sound logic was so convincing that “Felix was terrified, and answered, Go thy way for this time; and when I have a convenient season, I will call thee unto me” (Acts 24:25b).

Most people engage the mind when it comes to secular matters and draw certain conclusions based upon sound principles of logic. They may not realize they are using logic, but they do so just the same. When we exercise the mind so as to reason properly, we are exercising prudence. Now there is word that we don’t hear much in today’s vernacular. The “Free Dictionary online” defines prudence as: “Careful or wise in handling practical matters; exercising good judgment or common sense.” Jesus once called for His disciples to humble themselves and become as little children. I have no doubt that two of the character traits our Lord encouraged us to pursue was that of being forgiving and teachable. But children also have a knack at using simple common sense in doing the things they are really interested in. Solomon tells his son to “understand prudence” (Pro. 8:5). He also tells us, “smite a scoffer, and the simple will learn prudence” (Pro. 19:25). Paul tells us that God gave us His Son to redeem us “according to the riches of his grace, which he made to abound toward us in all wisdom and prudence” (Eph. 1:8).

One more thought before I close. Common sense can help us to make reasonable estimates of the outcome of certain actions and where those will lead. One observation is that salvation will only be obtained by our use of common sense reasoning in our study of the Bible. At the same time, you will never find a 4’ x 8’ piece of plywood in a cubicle that measures only 12 x 12. Common sense tells me that.

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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 coreybarnette@bellsouth.net; 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.

Fairmount—Fairmount Church of Christ 265 South Ave. Fairmount 30139. Sun, 10, 11 a.m. Wed. 6 p.m. Bobby D. Gayton, preacher. 678-431-1884. bdgayton@gmail.com

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. Riffin 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 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.Coldwatercocf.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, 681 Church Rd East, 662-393-2690 Sun 9,10 a.m. 6 p.m. Wed 7 p.m. www.southavencoc.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 Oakley 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 night 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. Allen Lawson, preacher, 918-683-6633

May 2023

CHURCH LISTINGS

The congregations listed are either advertisers in
The Gospel Journal or they have purchased
Congregational subscriptions to The Gospel Journal.

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., 1:30 p.m.; Wed. 7 p.m. Home of Memphis School of Preaching. Scott Cain and Evan Manning, 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. 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.swcofc.org. Home of Southwest School of Bible Studies, www.swsbs.edu. Cody Westbrook, preacher.

Bangs - Bangs Church of Christ, 306 5th St, 76823 (PO Box 41), 325.752.6464 Sun. 9:45; 10:45; 6 pm; Wed. 7 pm. Radio Program 9am KOXE 1010.3 FM Preacher: Micheal Light

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.

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: jcocxt@yahoo.com. Shane Coleman, preacher.

La Grange -- Church of Christ, 646 E. State Hwy 71, POB 523, 78945. lagrangercoc@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. Kris Groda, 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. Larry Delong, preacher; email: portlandcoc@juno.com -- website: www.portlandxcofc.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.

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.

Hampton - Peninsula Church of Christ, 502 Woodland Rd. Hampton, VA 23669, Sun. 9:30am, 10:30am 5pm Wed. 7pm. Ben Phillips Preacher, AM790 Radio @ 9am, info@peninsulacoc.org, www.peninsulacoc.org - 757.848.1120

Mechanicsville - Cold Harbor Church of Christ, 6856 Cold Harbor Rd. Mechanicsville, VA 23111, Sun. 9:30am 10:30am 2pm Wed. 7pm Doug Haught, Preacher, www.coldharborroadcoc.org - 804.746.8224

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. www.westsidecofc-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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By Jason Moore

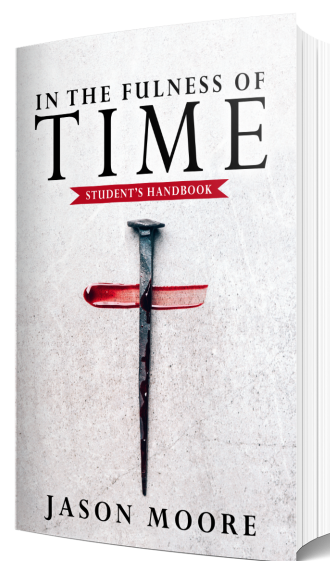
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