

The **Berean Searchlight**

Studying God's Word, Rightly Divided

January 2012



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The Purpose of the Berean Bible Society is to help you understand and enjoy the Bible. The Mission of BBS is to exalt the Lord Jesus Christ by proclaiming the whole counsel of God according to the revelation of the Mystery. Our Goals are to evangelize the lost, to educate the saved in "rightly dividing the Word of truth" (II Tim. 2:15), to energize their Christian lives, and to encourage the local church.

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From the President's Desk

Dear Friends in Christ,

I received a call the other day from our dear friend, Newton Dobson. Any time we've had the opportunity to visit or talk by phone we always enjoy our fellowship together because we are so like-minded in the faith. I am probably treading on dangerous ground, but I would venture a guess that Newton is in his early eighties. Over the years, Brother Dobson has passed out millions of salvation tracts, and was preparing to make his way over to Tampa, Florida, hoping to reach others with the gospel of salvation, when we spoke.

I'm glad that Newton has not deemed it necessary to pass the torch to another, because he understands that the Author and Finisher of his faith has more for him to accomplish. Sometimes we are ready to quit the race before the race is finished, which many times means we fall short of being a further blessing to those around us. To those who are older in the faith, always remember that it has taken years for God to bring you to your present level of wisdom and spiritual maturity, so please don't sell yourselves short!

Newton had the occasion recently to speak at a local church in Orlando. The pastor and the assembly were so moved by the Word, rightly divided that he called us to order ten copies of *Things That Differ* to introduce them to the message. Surely a great recompense of reward awaits those at the Judgment Seat of Christ who faithfully serve the Lord in whatever capacity God has called them.

For too many years, our younger generation has forsaken the counsel of their elders, and need I say that they are now reaping the consequences of their neglect? In fact, our Board of Directors is looking into inventive ways of reaching our young people with the message of grace without compromising the faith.

In the local church we need both young and old alike to carry on an effective ministry for the cause of Christ. The young supply the zeal and enthusiasm to move the work forward. At the same time, the older saints provide the needed wisdom to make sure the forward movement is in the right direction. God always strikes a balance in His work, and we do well to follow the pattern set forth for the Church. It really comes down to having our priorities straight. As Solomon once said,

"Happy is the man that findeth wisdom, and the man that getteth understanding. For the merchandise of it is better than the merchandise of silver, and the gain thereof than fine gold" (Prov. 3:13,14).

Yours in His service,

Paul M. Sadler, President



The First Month of the Year

By Pastor Ricky Kurth

Even a child knows that January is the first month of our calendar year. For the ancient people of Israel, however, the first month of the year was the month of Abib, which roughly equates to our month of April. Speaking of Abib, God said,

“This month shall be unto you the beginning of months: it shall be the first month of the year to you” (Exodus 12:2).

If you are wondering why God chose April as the beginning of months for His chosen people, we learn the reason in the next chapter:

“Moses said unto the people, Remember this day, in which ye came out from Egypt....This day came ye out in the month Abib” (Exodus 13:3,4).

God wanted His ancient people to “remember” that their birth as a nation marked a *new beginning* for them, so he instructed them to “observe” this month as something special unto the Lord (Deut. 16:1). God’s people today often do the same with their spiritual birthdays. Many who can tell you the exact date they were saved consider the day worth remembering each year.

But what if you can’t remember the day you trusted Christ as your Savior? There are many believers who grew up under the sound of the gospel and were saved at an early age. Occasionally we hear from these dear saints, who tell us they are troubled by the fact that they cannot remember the day they were saved. Since they can’t remember the date, some even wonder if they are truly saved.

When we hear from believers like this, we like to point out that while we can’t remember the day we first understood that we were born an American citizen, now that we know it to be so, we know that all the rights promised to citizens in the Bill of Rights are ours. In the same way, while you may not remember the day of your spiritual birth, now that you believe, you can be sure that the promise of eternal life and all the other blessings found in Paul’s epistles are yours.

The point is, of course, that it doesn’t matter *when* you first believe something; what matters is what you believe *right now*. If you believe you can get to heaven by something that you yourself can do, you are not saved. If you rather believe you are going to heaven because of what Christ did for you on Calvary, we’ll see you someday in glory!



What Will Hell Be Like?

By Paul M. Sadler, D.D.

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“An old Scottish preacher had to go past a glass factory each day on his way to the church. On one occasion he had a little extra time, and since the factory door was open, he decided to look inside. There before him was a large, blazing furnace. The minister gazed into the white, blue, and purple mass of liquid flame, and the intense heat almost seared his face. As he turned to leave, a workman standing in the shadows nearby overheard him exclaim, ‘Ho mon! What shall Hell be like!’

“Several days later, the man came to the pastor at church. ‘You don’t know me,’ he said, ‘but the other day when you stepped into the furnace room I heard what you said. Now every time I open that hot door to stoke the fire, the words ring in my mind, “What shall hell be like!” I have come to you, sir, to find out how to be saved. I don’t ever want to know the reality of that place.’”¹

Before we consider the perils of Hell, we first want to understand

what the Scriptures teach about the greatest love story that has ever been told. It is a story that’s older than the wind, spans the ages, and touches the very heart of God. This touching love story is the vehicle through which we can escape the wrath to come.

THE LOVE OF GOD

“And He said, Take now thy son, thine only son Isaac, whom thou lovest, and get thee into the land of Moriah; and offer him there for a burnt-offering upon one of the mountains which I will tell thee of.” —Genesis 22:2

My wife recently came across a book called *Search and Find*, which has been a hit with our grandchildren. Essentially, they are given a long list of things they need to find in a different scene on each page. It sounds easy enough until you see the pictures they have to study in order to find the objects. It is literally filled with hundreds of things configured in a maze of complexity. The object

you are in search of is like looking for a needle in a haystack.

The pursuit is an exercise in patience. But it also challenges you to search carefully for something that you know is on the page, but is elusive. This can also be the case as we study the Word of God. We sometimes read the text so quickly that we often pass over those things that can be beneficial to our spiritual growth in the Lord. The above passage in Genesis, and the context in which it is found, is a good example.

The story of Abraham and Isaac serves as a divine illustration of a wonderful truth. We have before us a spiritual picture that, if examined closely, teaches us an important lesson about the *love of God*.

God appeared to Abraham in the middle of the night and instructed him to go to Moriah and offer Isaac there as a burnt offering. The burnt offering was a *voluntary* offering that was well pleasing to God. As we study this scene, it is significant to note exactly what the LORD said to Abraham. By divine design, the LORD instructed him in the following manner: "Take now thy son, thine only son Isaac, whom thou lovest," and offer him as a sacrifice.

Isaac was the son of Abraham's old age, whom he loved dearly. There was no generation gap found here, as we so often see today. Isaac, who was about twenty-two years of age at the time, walked in perfect harmony with his father. They enjoyed one another's company and were like-minded in the things of the Lord. Although Abraham had other children, Isaac is said to be

his *only son* because he was the promised seed.

When Isaac asked his father where the lamb was that would be offered in sacrifice, Abraham wisely replied, "God will provide Himself a lamb for a burnt offering." When Abraham and Isaac arrived at Mount Moriah, Abraham sat down with Isaac and explained to him what God was going to require of them both. Isaac could have easily rebelled and fled, but he loved His father and believed God could raise him from the dead as He promised. We often speak of the faith and obedience of Abraham, but the same could also be said of Isaac.

It was on the mount that Abraham built an altar of wood and bound his son to it. Then came the moment of reckoning: Abraham drew back the knife and would have plunged it into the heart of his son, but the angel of the LORD halted the forward motion of the knife when He said, "Lay not thine hand upon the lad, neither do thou any thing unto him: for now I know that thou fearest God, seeing thou hast not withheld thy son, thine only son from Me" (Gen. 22:12) or "Jehovah will see (to it)."

At that moment, Abraham looked up and saw a ram caught in the thicket and offered it as a burnt offering instead of his son. Remarkably, "Abraham called the name of that place Jehovah-jireh" which means "In the mount of the LORD it shall be seen" (Gen. 22:14).

This account is the basis for the greatest love story that has ever been told. God so loved the world that He gave His only begotten Son, the Son of His love, to die for

the sins of the world. Christ was the promised seed of Genesis 3:15 Who would crush the head of Satan. And this once-for-all sacrifice would be accomplished at Mount Moriah, which is in Jerusalem (II Chron. 3:1). It was here that the eternal Son of God was bound to a wooden cross. But unlike Isaac, God the Father didn't spare His own Son, "but delivered Him up for us all" (Rom. 8:32).



“What shall Hell be like! ...sinner friend, you don't ever want to find out.”

When Abraham named the place where he was prepared to offer up Isaac, little did he realize the significance of his words. For “In the moun[t] of the LORD it shall be seen,” referring to the sacrifice of God's dear Son, Who voluntarily gave Himself as a burnt offering, which is a sweet-smelling savor to the Father. The Son of God is the sinners' substitute and, therefore,

the fulfillment of the ram that was caught in the thicket, the thicket completing the picture of the crown of thorns that the Son would wear.

GOD'S UNCONDITIONAL LOVE

“But God commendeth His love toward us, in that, while we were yet sinners, Christ died for us” (Rom. 5:8).

This is perhaps one of the most profound passages in the Word of God. It is amazing to pause and consider that God has directed His love toward us. But in what way? The answer is found in the very next statement, that “while we were yet sinners, Christ died for us.” In other words, when we were in total rebellion against God, dead in trespasses and sins, and shouting profanities in the face of God out of hatred for Him, God intervened to provide a way of salvation. In unconditional love, He sent His only Son, the Son of His love, to die for His enemies. As a result, Christ was “obedient unto death, even the death of the cross” (Phil. 2:8). Death by crucifixion is one of the most cruel, inhumane, excruciating forms of suffering known to mankind. But in love, Christ willingly laid down His life to redeem us back to God.

In the Garden of Eden, when Adam ate the forbidden fruit, he sinned against God; subsequently, seeing that we were in Adam, the entire human race was identified with Adam's sin. “Wherefore, as by one man sin entered into the world, and death by sin; and so death passed upon all men, for that all have sinned” (Rom. 5:12). This one act of disobedience left

the entire human race in need of being rescued from condemnation to Hell.

Essentially, Adam sold us into the slave market of sin, in which we were in bondage, before the Savior came to redeem us by way of the Cross. At Calvary, God made a *provision for all*, but only those who believe the gospel of salvation will be saved. The Apostle Paul says,

“In Whom we have redemption through His blood, even the forgiveness of sins” (Col. 1:14).

Allow me to comment briefly on this passage and highlight a few key words and phrases. “In Whom” refers to *in Christ*. According to this verse, there is **no** redemption or forgiveness outside of Christ. Paul adds, “we”—that is, the members of the Body of Christ who have accepted God’s offer of reconciliation—we are the beneficiaries of His finished work. It is the *believer*, not the unbeliever, who has had redemption applied through the blood of Christ, even the forgiveness of our sins.

Nothing in life is free! When we tell the lost that if they believe the gospel, they will be given eternal life as a free gift—Someone paid for it!

It has been correctly said that, in the Old Testament, the blood of lambs, goats, and bullocks was sprinkled and poured out just about everywhere in relation to the tabernacle. It was applied seven times to the tabernacle, sprinkled on the horns of the altar before the veil, sprinkled on the high priest’s garments, poured out at the base of the brazen altar, and sprinkled on the mercy seat on the Day of Atonement.

When Solomon’s Temple was dedicated in Jerusalem, 22,000 oxen and 120,000 sheep were offered in sacrifice (II Chron. 7:5). God was impressing upon us that the value of the blood cannot be measured in dollars and cents, or even gallons. This all speaks of Christ’s coming death.²



When Christ was made sin for us, He was covered in blood for His crucifixion. He was beaten beyond recognition. They planted a crown of thorns on His head. They pierced His hands and feet, and a Roman centurion thrust a sword in His side and blood and water came forth. The value of the blood of Christ is priceless. We are not redeemed with silver and gold, but by something that is of infinite worth. Today, those in Christ are forgiven on the basis of Christ’s shed blood alone.

While the wages of sin is death, which is exacted at physical death, the righteous judgment of God and the “second death” yet await those who die in their sins (John 8:24; Eph. 5:6; Rev. 21:8). God takes no pleasure in the death of the wicked. But those who spurn the love of God and **reject the Sin-Bearer**, Who paid the penalty of their sins, will leave God no other recourse than to sentence them to the lake of fire where they will

suffer the penalty of their sins for eternity. God will not hold them blameless after what His dear Son endured at Calvary.

Speaking in the context of the Great White Throne, Pastor Charles Baker, one of the founders of the grace movement, made this insightful comment: "Any attempt to minimize God's judgment of sin only serves to minimize the importance and degree of the sufferings of Christ to satisfy God's holiness."

IS THERE A LITERAL HELL?

There is very little said about Hell these days from the pulpit or even the printed page. This undoubtedly is by design, to avoid offending someone, especially in our enlightened age when eternal judgment is normally explained away. Those who deny or question the existence of the lake of fire do not fully comprehend the holiness of God. Consider for a moment the words of the prophet concerning His holiness:

"Thou art of purer eyes than to behold evil, and canst not look on iniquity" (Hab. 1:13).

God cannot abide in the presence of sin; consequently, it must always be judged. With this in mind, God judged sin at the Cross, but if the sinner rejects the once-for-all sacrifice for sin on his behalf, these same sins will condemn him, which means he will have to suffer the eternal consequences of them in Hell.

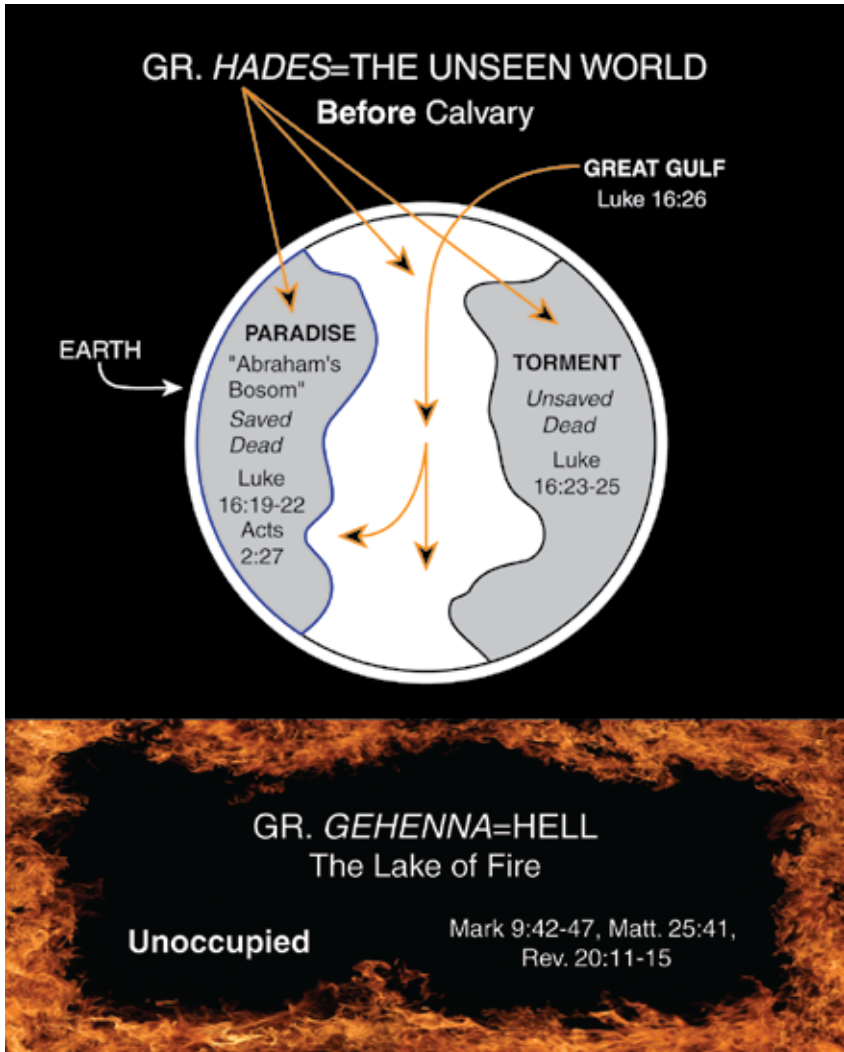
So then, what is the best course of action: withhold the truth about Hell from the sinner for fear of offending him, or warn him of the danger of the hellfire judgment to

come, thus giving him an opportunity to be saved? The Apostle Paul always proclaimed the way of salvation for sinners against the backdrop of the judgment to come (Acts 17:30,31; 24:24,25). We do a great disservice to the unsaved by not warning them of what lies ahead if they reject the gospel. They may walk away for the time being, but the lingering thought of what you shared may well be the difference as to whether or not they trust Christ. We should add that in the Scriptures, Hell, the lake of fire, and the everlasting fire all refer to the same place.

"And in hell [Gr. *hades*] he lift up his eyes, being in torments, and seeth Abraham afar off, and Lazarus in his bosom" (Luke 16:23).

"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 [Gr. *gehenna*]" (Matt. 10:28).

Perhaps we need to pause here for a moment to clarify our terms. Most times the reference to the term *hell* in our Bibles is actually *hades* in the Greek. Since it is impossible to translate from one language to another word-for-word, we must consult the original language at times to arrive at the proper sense. In view of the fact that we don't have an English word for *hades* the translators chose to use the word *hell* for want of a better term. It is therefore extremely important to distinguish between the English word *hell*, based on the Greek term *hades*, and the English word *hell*, based on the Greek term *gehenna*, which is the final Hell and destination of



the unsaved. A good concordance will serve you well if you are unsure which term is used in the original language.

The story of the rich man and Lazarus teaches us that, prior to the Cross, Abraham's bosom, or *hades*, not only had a compartment called paradise for the saved, it also had a torment compartment for the unbeliever. The unseen world of *hades* is located

in the center of the earth; it's the place of departed spirits. The torment of those who reject the way of salvation is very real in *hades*.

In fact, the rich man that spoke to Abraham across the great gulf is still in torment there at this very hour, and will remain there until the Great White Throne Judgment. *Gehenna*, on the other hand, is unoccupied and will remain unoccupied until the

consummation of all things. Hell is the “outer darkness” that our Lord spoke of where there will be weeping and gnashing of teeth (Matt. 8:12; 22:13; 25:30). It is the “blackness of darkness” that Jude makes reference to in the book that bears his name (Jude 13). Apparently, the lake of fire is located somewhere in the outer reaches of the universe. One thing we know for certain, God knows!

THE ORIGIN OF HELL

“Then shall He say also unto them on the left hand, Depart from me, ye cursed, into everlasting fire, prepared for the devil and his angels” (Matt. 25:41).

Interestingly, Hell was not originally created for mankind. We are to understand that the creation of the everlasting fire was prior to Adam’s fall into sin. Hell was originally prepared for the devil and his angels as a consequence of their rebellion against God. Pride, of course, was Satan’s downfall when he determined that he wanted to be like God and sit on the throne of Heaven as God. Amazingly, in his rebellion, one-third of the angelic host departed with him.

In all probability, the lake of fire was created sometime between Genesis 1:31 and Genesis 3:1. We know, for example, it could not have been prepared before Genesis 1:31, where we learn that “God saw everything that He had made, and, behold, it was very good.” Since God would never call sin and rebellion against Him good, much less very good, the lake of fire would have had to come into existence after this pronouncement.

As we know, the Lord, more than any other, warned about the danger of Hell (Gr. *gehenna*) and hellfire. Most would agree this is the literal “Hell” of the Bible. And the Lord had much to say about this realm.

“Woe unto you, scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites!...Ye serpents, ye generation of vipers, how can ye escape the damnation of hell?” (Matt. 23:29,33). He adds in Mark 9:43,44 that some will “go **into hell, into the fire** that never shall be quenched: Where their worm dieth not [apparently a reference to the soul], and the fire is not quenched.”

If they go “into Hell,” are we not to understand that Hell is a *place*, and not merely a state of mind? The fire that is said never to be quenched clearly coincides with the “everlasting fire” prepared for the devil and his angels. Furthermore, we know the fire is literal because the Lord Himself confirmed this when He gave the interpretation of the parable of the wheat and tares (Matt. 13:36-43). We do well to remember that the Lord’s parables are always based upon true life or what could be true life. Consequently, the “fire” referred to in the parable of the wheat and tares is real and literal, and so is the “furnace of fire” that the unsaved are cast into.

But some will argue that God is a God of love. We agree wholeheartedly; in fact, He loved the human family so deeply that He sent His only begotten Son to Calvary to die for us. As we noted earlier, a *provision* has been made for all; however, it is only applied to those who believe the legitimacy of that provision. Those who die

outside of Christ, yet in their sins, will quickly learn that God is also a God of justice. His holiness demands it!

But some question whether or not the eternal punishment spoken of here in these passages is really everlasting, or merely temporal. This is easily addressed by asking a couple of simple questions. Is God the Father everlasting? Every believer in Christ, without exception, believes He is indeed eternal (Rom. 16:26 cf. Psa. 90:1,2). When you trusted Christ as your Savior, were you given everlasting life? According to what the apostle states in I Timothy 1:16, you would be correct. The exact same word *everlasting* is used in the original language in both cases. Interestingly, the same word was used by our Lord when He spoke of the “everlasting fire” in Matthew 18:8 and Matthew 25:41. If God is everlasting, and if life and life more abundant is everlasting, then the same has to be true of the punishment of the unsaved, for it too is everlasting.


Hades is but a temporary holding cell for Hell, but there are things we can learn about *Hades* that will also be true of Hell. In the story of the rich man and Lazarus in Luke 16:19-31, we learn a few of these things.

The rich man was able to recall his past life on earth. He remembered the poor beggar Lazarus, whom he passed by every day without showing pity. He also requested that Abraham send Lazarus to bring him some water. This indicates there will be recognition in Hell. But even more troubling is that the unsaved will always have before them how

things could have been different if only they had believed.

The rich man had all five of his senses—eyesight, hearing, smell, taste, and touch. He knew he was suffering torment in a flame. Here *Hades* and *Hell* differ in that there will be degrees of punishment in Hell (Matt. 11:20-24; Luke 12:47,48; Rev. 20:12). Consequently, the eternal punishment will be more intense for some than others. This flame, which the Lord called hellfire (Matt. 5:22), will be eternal.

The rich man knew there was no hope for him, but asked Abraham to send Lazarus to warn his family “lest they also come into this place of torment” (Luke 16:27,28). But the Apostle Paul gives us the most chilling description of Hell, that those who enter through its gates will suffer *everlasting destruction* or loss of wellbeing (II Thes. 1:9). They will be forever separated from the presence of the Lord and the glory of His power.

As the old Scottish preacher exclaimed, “What shall Hell be like!” Hear me and hear me well, sinner friend, you don’t ever want to find out. God loves you! Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ before it’s too late, that He died for your sins and rose again (I Cor. 15:3,4). Remember and remember well the rich man! 

Endnotes

1. Dennis DeHaan, Compiler, *Windows on the Word*, Baker Book House, Grand Rapids, MI, pp. 66,67.
2. Bibliography: H.A. Maxwell Whyte, *The Power of the Blood*, Whitaker House, New Kensington, PA. While we would not endorse all the views of this particular author, he does make a number of valid points about the blood of Christ.

Is Israel Really Back in the Land?

By Pastor Ricky Kurth



For decades now, we have been told that the End Times must be very near “since Israel is back in the land.” While it may be true that the End Times are near, we wouldn’t agree that they *must* be near simply because many Jews returned to the promised land in the years following the creation of the state of Israel in 1948.

We are of course familiar with the many Bible prophecies that predict that Israel will one day return to the land that God gave their father Abraham, but we do not believe that these prophecies have yet been fulfilled. We are living in the dispensation of the *mystery*, a period of time in which *no* Bible prophecies have been fulfilled for nearly 2,000 years now.

With that in mind, we invite you to join us as we review the prophecies that speak of Israel’s return to the land, and demonstrate from Scripture that the fulfillment of these prophecies is

yet to come. To help with this, we plan to employ a Bible principle that BBS founder Pastor C. R. Stam taught us many years ago.

The Principle

In *Unanswered Prayer*, Pastor Stam talks about the “prayer promise” found in Isaiah 65:24:

“And it shall come to pass, that before they call, I will answer; and while they are yet speaking, I will hear.”

Pastor Stam points out that while God *occasionally* answers prayer this way, He does not do so *consistently*, as the promise indicates will someday be the case. The thoughtful student of Scripture will then ask, “If God is not consistently answering prayer this way *now*, when will He?” Pastor Stam then points to the context of this prayer promise, where the very next verse correctly identifies it as a promise that will find its fulfillment in the kingdom of

heaven on earth. It is *then* that “the wolf and the lamb shall feed together” (v. 25), and it is *then* that God will consistently answer prayers before they are prayed. Of course! That’s part of what will make it heaven on earth!

The Bible principle that Pastor Stam employed to identify the time frame for this prayer promise is the simple principle of *context*, and it is this principle that we would like to bring to bear on the Bible prophecies that say Israel will one day return to her homeland. We believe that when this principle is applied, the context of each of these prophecies will then correctly identify them as prophecies that will not be fulfilled until the kingdom. We invite you now to join us as we consider these prophecies in the order in which they appear in Scripture.

The Prophecies

“Then the Lord thy God will... return and gather thee from all the nations, whither the Lord thy God hath scattered thee” (Deut. 30:3).

While this verse clearly states that the Lord will someday “gather” Israel “from all the nations,” the word “then” prompts us to ask *when* this will happen. The context indicates that this gathering will take place when the people of Israel “return unto the Lord” with all their heart and soul (vv. 1,2). We would submit that the Jews found in the land of Israel today were not gathered there because they returned to the Lord (cf. Jer. 29:13,14).

Notice also that this gathering of Israel is said to take place when

the Lord shall “return” (Deut. 30:3), a reference to the Second Coming of Christ. It is *then* that Israel will be gathered together *by God*, as opposed to the Jews who presently occupy the land, who were gathered *by men*. By the way, since this is the first Bible reference to the regathering of Israel in the land, the law of first mention might suggest that *all* such predictions will find their fulfillment at the Second Coming of Christ.

“And He shall set up an ensign for the nations, and shall assemble the outcasts of Israel, and gather together the dispersed of Judah from the four corners of the earth” (Isa. 11:12).

This verse says that God will gather Israel together when “He shall set up an ensign for the nations.” This ensign is defined in the context as the “root of Jesse,” i.e., Christ at His Second Coming, when He “shall stand for an ensign of the people” (v. 10), at a time when “His rest shall be glorious” in the kingdom He will establish on earth. It is “in *that* day that the Lord shall set His hand again the second time to recover the remnant of His people” from the four corners of the earth (v. 11). When it says here that this gathering will be the “second” gathering of Israel back into their land, it must be remembered that Israel was *first* gathered back after her exile during the Babylonian captivity.

The context further describes that day as the day when the wolf shall dwell with the lamb (v. 6), the lion will eat straw like the ox (v. 7), and deadly animals will not harm a child (v. 8) in the “holy mountain” of the Lord’s kingdom (v. 9). The

subsequent context indicates that God will facilitate this gathering of His people by parting the Red Sea again (v. 15) to prepare “an highway for the remnant of His people” to return home (v. 16). Obviously, the gathering of Israel described in this passage has not yet taken place.

“And it shall come to pass in that day, that the great trumpet shall be blown, and they shall come...and shall worship the Lord in the holy mount at Jerusalem” (Isa. 27:13).

The gathering of Israel that is described here “shall come to pass” in the day when “the great trumpet shall be blown,” a trumpet the world has yet to hear. In addition, Isaiah predicts that when this gathering of Israel takes place, the nation will “worship the Lord,” something that cannot be said of the nation currently occupying the land, but something that certainly *can* be said of the nation that God will someday gather for the kingdom. This gathering is also said to follow the parting of the river of Egypt (v. 12), another body of water that God will divide to facilitate the return of His people to their land.

“I will bring thy seed from the east, and gather thee from the west; I will say to the north, Give up; and to the south, Keep not back: bring My sons from far, and My daughters from the ends of the earth; Even every one that is called by My name” (Isa. 43:5-7).

In this passage we must identify the “sons” and “daughters” that God vows to gather from the four winds of heaven. It cannot be said of Israel, “Ye are the *sons*

of the living God” (Hos. 1:10), until “the children of Judah and the children of Israel be gathered together, *and appoint themselves one Head*” (v. 11). We would suggest from this that the sons and daughters that *God* will gather will be *believing* sons and daughters, who will appoint the Lord Jesus Christ as their Head.

This reminds us to say that while Israel is back in the land, “they are not all Israel, which are of Israel: Neither, because they are the seed of Abraham, are they all children” (Rom. 9:6,7). When *God* gathers Israel back into the land, “He shall send His angels...and they shall gather together *His elect* [believers] from the four winds” to enter the kingdom (Matt. 24:31).



What reason could God have had to gather *unbelieving* Jews into the land in the years following 1948? *That* gathering was initiated by *men*, and we know that God does not need any help from men when it comes to fulfilling His promises. Just ask Abraham, who fathered a boy named Ishmael in a vain attempt to help God fulfill His promise of a seed.

“...I will bring them again into their land that I gave unto their fathers” (Jer. 16:15).

This promise to gather Israel back into her land is tied to a time when “it shall no more be said, The Lord liveth, that brought up the children of Israel out of the land of Egypt; But, The Lord liveth, that brought up the children of Israel from the land of the north, and from all the lands whither He had driven them” (vv. 14,15). This will not happen until “a King shall reign and prosper” in Israel (cf. Jer. 23:5-8; Ezek. 34:13,23).

“I will gather the remnant of My flock out of all countries whither I have driven them, and will bring them again to their folds” (Jer. 23:3).

When this re-gathering of Israel takes place, God will “set up shepherds over them which shall feed them” and Israel will “fear no more” (v. 4). This is certainly not true of the Jews presently gathered in Israel, who have no God-given shepherds, and who live in constant fear of the threat of terrorism and other dangers from the nations.



“...I will cause them to return to the land that I gave to their fathers, and they shall possess it” (Jer. 30:3).

The context of this return of Israel to the land deals with the Great Tribulation, or “the time of Jacob’s trouble” (Jer. 30:7). “In

that day” (v. 8) the people of Jacob “shall serve the Lord their God” (v. 9), “and none shall make him afraid” (v. 10), for God shall “make a full end of all the nations” into which He had scattered Israel (v. 11). None of this has yet taken place, and so we would submit that, in context, neither has the return of Israel to the land that is also mentioned here.

“I will bring them from the north country, and gather them from the coasts of the earth...” (Jer. 31:8).

When this coming of Israel back to the land takes place, God says, “They shall come with weeping, and with supplications will I lead them” (v. 9), something that cannot be said of the Jews presently in the land. The context here also predicts that when this re-gathering of Israel takes place, God will “cause them to walk by the rivers of waters in a straight way, wherein they shall not stumble” (v. 9), something that will not take place until God puts His Spirit within them to “cause” them to walk in His statutes in the kingdom (cf. Jer. 32:37-40; Ezek. 11:17-20; 36:24,27). When *the Lord* gathers Israel (Jer. 31:10), it will be after He has “redeemed Jacob, and ransomed him from the hand of him that was stronger than he” (v. 11), i.e., the Antichrist.

“And ye shall know that I am the Lord, when I shall bring you into the land of Israel...” (Ezek. 20:42).

The context here affixes this gathering of Israel to a time when God will accept the sweet savor of Israel’s animal sacrifices in the kingdom, and be sanctified in

Israel in a way that He is *not* sanctified in them today (vv. 40,41). In addition, the people of Israel will loathe themselves for all their past evils after this gathering (v. 43), something not true of the apostate nation gathered in the land today.



“...God does not need any help from men when it comes to fulfilling His promises.”

“I shall place you in your own land” (Ezek. 37:14).

This return of Israel to her land is said to take place only after God places His spirit within them, and Christ is the “one king” over them all (vv. 21,22). Additionally, when God speaks of placing Israel in her “own land,” He refers to the huge area of land He promised to Abraham and His seed (Deut. 11:24), not the sliver of land that men allocated to Israel in 1948.

“Then shall they know that I am the Lord their God, which caused them to be led into captivity among the heathen: but I have gathered them unto their own land, and have left none of them any more there” (Ezek. 39:28).

When this gathering of Israel takes place, God solemnly vows to leave “none” of the people of Israel among the heathen. This “no man left behind” policy describes a gathering that obviously has yet to take place, for there are still many Jews among the nations.

It is only when God gathers all of His elect that He will then pour out His spirit upon them (v. 29) in the kingdom (Ch. 40-48).

“And I will plant them upon their land, and they shall no more be pulled up out of their land” (Amos 9:15).

Here God says that when *He* returns Israel to her land, He will plant them there *forever*. The people of Israel that presently occupy the land could be evicted tomorrow; they have no assurance from God otherwise. All of God’s promises that Israel will be planted in the land forever are conditioned upon her obedience. From her beginning as a nation, God served Israel notice that if she rebelled, the land would vomit her out (Lev. 18:25-28). When they defiled the land with their sin, God scattered them (Ezek. 36:17-19).

Thus God says that it is only when Israel shall “walk in My judgments, and observe My statutes, and do them” that “they shall dwell in the land...for ever” (Ezek. 37:24,25). It is only when God’s people “shall be *all righteous*” that they will “inherit the land for ever” (Isa. 60:21). Israel will not be “all righteous” until the kingdom, when God will fill them with His Spirit, as He did at Pentecost, and *causes* them to do His will (Ezek. 36:27), making it *impossible* for the land to spew them out because of their sin.

The Conclusion

We have tried to be as exhaustive as possible in this examination of these prophecies. There are no doubt others that did not come to mind, and the reader has

only our word that these were not omitted because they did not support our view. We would project that any other Bible predictions of Israel's return to her land would also be found in the context of the coming kingdom. If not, we would suggest that any such references where the context does not give a clear time frame must be interpreted in the light of the passages we viewed in this article, which clearly place Israel's return to her land as a yet future event.

The Decoy


We sometimes wonder if the present gathering of unbelieving Jews back to their homeland might actually be a decoy, comparable to the case of Antiochus Epiphanes. This mighty oppressor of the Jews arose during the inter-testament period, and many believe his sacrifice of a pig on the altar of Israel was "the abomination of desolation, spoken of by Daniel the prophet" (Matt. 24:15 cf. Dan. 9:27). However, there are many reasons why this cannot be, not the least of which concerns how Antiochus desecrated the temple before the Lord's prediction that Daniel's desecration was yet to come (Matt. 24:15).

We believe Antiochus was a Satanic decoy, designed to cause people to believe that the Antichrist spoken of by Daniel has already come, leaving them off guard and unaware that the real man of sin is yet to appear. In like manner, if the present gathering of Jews in Israel is the fulfillment of Bible prophecy, it is easy to conclude that there is no need for Israel to look for another.

If the verses we have considered in this article predict a future gathering of Israel, how will God fulfill these future prophecies if Israel is *already* back in her ancient land? Not even God can gather people who are already gathered. As members of the Body of Christ, "our gathering together unto Him" at the Rapture (II Thes. 2:1) can only happen once; similarly, the gathering of Israel back into her land can only happen once.

We realize that the view we have presented goes against the grain of much of what is taught today. We also know that many of God's people take comfort in thinking that the Rapture must be near since Israel is back in the land. We don't mean to rob the brethren of comfort; we just prefer that the comfort of the Rapture be based on the firmer foundation of Paul's instruction to believers in *every* age to be "looking for that blessed hope" (Titus 2:13).

The Application

The most pressing question facing every member of the Body of Christ does not concern whether *Israel* is where God wants *them* to be. The most pressing question for us, one that should be much on our hearts, is whether or not *we* are where God wants *us* to be, spiritually speaking. If you are thoroughly convinced that the next face you see might be that of the One who shed His blood to pay for your sins, this will surely be reflected in your life. Is that where you are in your Christian experience *right now*? If not, why not? If not now, then when? 

Do the Work of an Evangelist

By Cornelius R. Stam



Paul's farewell exhortations to Timothy were written with great urgency. The time of the apostle's departure by cruel martyrdom was now at hand and ere long his testimony would be sealed with his life's blood. It was with this in view that, rather than thinking of himself or now simply "leaving everything with the Lord," he still kept planning for the future, still occupied with the ministry which the glorified Lord had committed to him many years previous. There was still so much to be done, so many souls to be won, and Timothy must now carry on the work with renewed vigor. Thus it is that we read in II Timothy 4:5:

"But watch thou in all things, endure afflictions, do the work of an evangelist, make full proof of thy ministry."

There is much confusion about evangelism these days.

First, there are some who have concluded from Ephesians 4:11 that the evangelist necessarily belongs to a different category from "pastors and teachers," or "teaching pastors." It is true that, according to this verse, some of God's servants are specially gifted and specially productive as evangelists, but have we read too much into this passage?

Some have read into it that the evangelist need not be a teacher of the Word. He need not be well-grounded in the Scriptures if only he can tell people that Christ died for their sins. This reminds us of the converted performer who, contrary to I Timothy 5:22, was immediately pushed forward by Christian leaders as an evangelist. It cost heavily to secure his services, but it was worth it: he could get crowds! He was barely grounded in the Scriptures, but what matter? He has such a way with him: he could tell such interesting stories and had written

several popular gospel songs. He was able to induce many hearers to make “decisions” for Christ just because he had come to the pulpit straight from show business. To quote his own words, “I leave doctrine to the theologians. I preach Christ.”

But the question immediately arises: “Christ who?” “What Christ?” It makes a great difference whether one preaches the Christ of Palestine or the glorified Christ proclaimed by Paul. And it makes a greater difference whether he preaches that Christ of Liberalism or the Christ of the Bible.

A similar notion prevails that foreign missionaries (also actually evangelists) need not be thoroughly grounded in the Word to do justice to their ministries. But all this is unscriptural and wrong, and the churches established by such missionaries cannot be spiritually strong.

St. Paul was doubtless the greatest evangelist that ever lived and he won the lost to Christ by teaching the great doctrines of alienation, reconciliation, justification, etc. And today the evangelist, no less than any minister of God, must be well-grounded in the Word, for souls are saved only as the Spirit uses the Word (I Pet. 1:12-25).

Thus the proclamation of the gospel is not to be separated from the Word. Those who are saved—and many are not truly saved—through hearing no more than a verse or two from the Scripture, presented along with an emotional and psychological appeal, are often easily swayed and must at best be spiritually weak. But when the great doctrines of salvation are taught from the Scripture, those who hear and believe begin already to be established in the faith. Nor will they be easily shaken, for nothing so grips the heart of man like the Word, understood and believed. This writer will never cease to thank God that he was saved through the teaching of the Word. One blessed result of this is that, never once since that day forty-four years ago, has he ever doubted His eternal security in Christ.

To look at this subject from the other side, there are some who suppose that the pastor or Bible teacher need not be an evangelist. He can always have gospel literature ready to hand to interested persons and can from time to time call in evangelists for special service. As one pastor said to this writer, “Some of us simply are not evangelists and we should not try to be.” But the pastor was wrong, dead wrong, for as we have seen, Paul wrote to Timothy, the pastor and Bible teacher at Ephesus: “Do the work of an evangelist, make full proof of thy ministry.”

Does not this clearly imply that the pastor, the Bible teacher, who does not do the work of an evangelist, is inefficient in his ministry? For one thing, such a pastor shows a shameful lack of concern for the lost, for he fails to press home to the hearts of his unsaved hearers the urgency of many of the very Scripture truths which he discusses in his

sermons. For another thing, he disobeys God, who says, “Do the work of an evangelist”; indeed, who has committed to us all “the ministry of reconciliation” to be fulfilled as “the love of Christ constraineth us” (II Cor 5:14-21).

If pastors and Bible teachers were more faithful in doing “the work of an evangelist,” the general public would not be so readily taken in by the unscriptural and God-dishonoring methods of evangelism so popular in our day, methods which create much interest and make statistics but also do much to confuse both the lost and the saved and to make void the Word of God.

Finally, does not Paul’s Spirit-inspired injunction apply indirectly to every believer in Christ? Are not our pastors simply our leaders in the work of the Lord? Shall the congregation sit idly by as the pastor alone does “the work of an evangelist?” God forbid! The pastor is rather to be an example to his flock to go and do likewise. How well this writer recalls the days of the so-called Darby-Scofield movement, when multitudes all over the country thronged to hear Bible teachers like Gaebelein, Gray, Gregg, Ottman, Chafer, and Newell. These able men of God expounded the Word as the “blessed hope” of the Lord’s return was being recovered. But these Bible teachers were evangelists too, in the truest sense of the word, and their evangelism was contagious.

In those days almost all premillenarians, including the young people, carried New Testaments in their pockets wherever they went. Why? They hoped and prayed for opportunities to testify to others about God’s plan of salvation through Christ and they wanted to show them the way from Scripture. In those days if a Christian failed to have a New Testament with him, he was apt to be reproved with the words: “What, a soldier without a sword!” By contrast, few believers carry New Testaments about with them today, and they certainly don’t carry Bibles! Here at *Berean Bible Society*, we still sell many Bibles for use at home and church, but rarely does a New Testament go out the door.



Some are telling us today that this brand of fundamentalism is out of date and ineffective in these fast-changing times. We reply that all of us ought to get back to this brand of fundamentalism, this earnest effort to personally win souls to Christ by showing them God’s plan of salvation from the Scriptures.

God help His people in general and our spiritual leaders in particular, to “do the work of an evangelist.”



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THE REST OF THE STORY

By Pastor Ricky Kurth



During the Second World War, radio personality Paul Harvey began ending his daily newscast with a feature he called, “The Rest of the Story.” These factual narratives always concluded with an interesting twist that made for a surprise ending. Listeners were often fascinated to learn that even when it came to stories with which they were familiar, there was always more to the story than what they had previously heard.

This is sometimes true of the greatest story ever told, the gospel of Jesus Christ. There may be more to the story than what you have heard in the past, and the part you may not have heard just might be the very thing that is keeping you from believing what the Bible says about how to be saved from your sins. Let’s begin by reviewing the part you may have already heard, the part that maybe left you feeling skeptical about the Bible’s plan of salvation.

The Bible clearly teaches that you cannot work your way to heaven by doing good works:

“For by grace are ye saved through faith; and that not of yourselves: it is the gift of God: Not of works, lest any man should boast” (Ephesians 2:8,9).

“Not by works of righteousness which we have done, but according to His mercy He saved us...” (Titus 3:5).

Perhaps you’ve heard these verses before, and wondered, “Does that mean God does not want us to do good works?” Since this didn’t seem to make any sense to you, maybe you chose not to believe what you considered to be such an unbelievable gospel.

If that’s the case, it might comfort you to know that God knew in advance that people would wonder about this. That’s why right after

that verse we quoted that says salvation is “not of works,” the next verse goes on to say that believers are “created in Christ Jesus *unto* good works” (Ephesians 2:9,10). If you are wondering what it means to be “created in Christ,” remember that God created a creature named Adam in the beginning. Today, when someone believes the gospel, God makes him “a *new* creature” (II Corinthians 5:17). And just as God’s first creature was created to do the good work of dressing and keeping the Garden of Eden (Genesis 2:15), believers in Christ are likewise “created in Christ Jesus *unto* good works.” That is, while you cannot be saved from your sins by doing good works, once you are saved by grace, you’ll *want* to do good works because you *are* saved (not in order to get saved) to express your gratitude to God for saving you.

We see the same thing in that other gospel verse we quoted, where right after saying that salvation is “not by works of righteousness which we have done” (Titus 3:5), Paul adds “that they which have believed in God might be careful to maintain good works” (v. 8). Here again we see that after we are saved by grace through faith, God then reminds us to do the good works that we were created to do.

So you see, just because God does not ask you to do good works *in order to be saved* doesn’t mean He doesn’t want you to do good works! He just wants you to understand that good works come *after* salvation, not before. Most people get the cart before the horse, and you just can’t get to heaven in a cart like that!

Does the gospel story seem a little more believable to you now? If so, you should know that while you can only be saved by believing, it is important to believe in the right thing! It is not enough just to believe in God, for “the devils also believe, and tremble” (James 2:19). It is not even enough to have faith in Christ; you must have “*faith in His blood*” (Romans 3:25). That is, you must believe that the blood He shed on the cross paid for all of your sins, and that you don’t have to add a single good work to what He has already done on your behalf. Romans 4:5 says:

“But to him that worketh not, but believeth on Him that justifieth the ungodly, his faith is counted for righteousness.”

If you are still not sure how to be saved from the judgment of God on your sins, ask yourself this question. If you died today, and God asked, “Why should I let a sinner like you into My Heaven?” what would your answer be? If your answer is anything other than, “Christ died for my sins,” or if you try to add your own good works to what Christ did for you on Calvary, then you are not fully trusting in His blood. Why not rather follow the advice of the Apostle Paul? When a man asked him, “What must I do to be saved?,” Paul replied quite simply,

“Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ, and thou shalt be saved” (Acts 16:30,31).

And now you know *the rest of the story!*



Question Box

“Four years ago we learned that our son is a homosexual. We agreed to disagree and to continue our relationship. But recently he married his partner, and we declined his invitation to the wedding because we thought it would be like giving our blessing. Were we wrong for not going?”

While these are matters of personal conviction, we believe your decision to agree to disagree and maintain a relationship with your son was a good choice. We also believe that declining the wedding invitation was the right thing to do.

If you have a daughter who knows you disagree with abortion, it would not be fair for her to ask you go with her to an abortion clinic for a procedure just to show her your love and support. If your sister knows you don't believe in women pastors, she can't expect you to go to her ordination just to show your love and support. If your father knows you don't believe in doctor-assisted suicide, it is not fair for him to ask you to sit by his bedside to watch him end his life so as to show your love and support. If your niece knows you don't believe in polygamy, she can't expect you to attend as she marries a married man. The Bible has something to say about each of these issues, so in each case, it is not fair for your loved one to ask you to choose between your faith and your family.

You might ask your son if he would accompany you to an anti-gay rights rally. You could explain that he would not have to participate, just attend. This might help him understand the position in which he put you.

When asked to choose between faith and family, we must choose our faith (Deut. 33:9). When Paul instructed the Corinthians to disfellowship a man living in incest (I Cor. 5), any family the man might have had would have had to choose faith over family. Matthew 10:34-37 may have the Tribulation in view, but the principle has an application today.

If your son no longer wishes to have a relationship with you for declining his invitation, this is on him, not on you. Four years ago you chose to continue to have a relationship with him when he made a choice of which you did not approve. Now that you have made a choice of which he does not approve, we believe he should do the same.

—Pastor Kurth



BBS Letter Excerpts

From the Philippines:

“Now I am really assured of my salvation. I do believe and trust Him. Thanks for the message, Pastor. I will share this with my friends.”

From British Columbia:

“I was caught in a cult for over twenty years. Finally I have found the truth, the Bible, the true Word of God.”

From Kenya:

“I am now reading a copy of *Things That Differ*, and I can't adequately describe how the book has brought much light to my understanding of the Scriptures! Thank you for the book.”

From Nova Scotia:

“I have now finished *The Life and Letters of the Apostle Peter*, *True Spirituality*, *Exploring the Unsearchable Riches of Christ*, and *Moses and Paul*....I am simply blown away by everything I have learned. These teachings are filling in all the holes that have been in my learning for thirty years! I am now lending these to my son who cannot wait to read them, and I have alerted my Christian friends of the importance of learning these truths. *Praise God* and thank you for your dedication to spreading the message of the Apostle Paul... undiluted and unmixed with other Biblical letters. I am so grateful! Awesome!” (Sounds like you're doing a pretty good job of spreading the message yourself!—Ed).

From Indonesia:

“My congregation has been almost two years studying and enjoying your grace sermons that we obtain through the internet. And thank God, it turns out the truth of God's grace has begun to restore our church. We are now preparing to proclaim the gospel of the grace of God....Both the ministers and the whole congregation of *Grace Gospel Church* here in Jakarta are committed to continue to focus on studying and teaching the Word of God that is rightly divided in hoping to recover spiritual information about God's mercies. Thank you so much for the very inspiring knowledge and the truths that spring from *Two Minutes with the Bible* and the *Searchlight*.”

From Nigeria:

“I have been going through your books on the internet and it is wonderful.”

From India:

“I am very happy and praising God for your wonderful ministry. I have been strengthened through the grace literature and growing in maturity, enabling me in my preaching effectively and also in group Bible Study. May God bless you and your ministry for the glory of God and the edification of the members of Christ's body.”

From Indonesia:

“I thank you very much for sending the *Searchlight* continuously. It's very helpful for our ministry in *Grace Bible Church of Tangerang*.”

From the Netherlands:

“Thank you for your explanation. This is a new approach for me, but it will help me a lot in my understanding of that part of Scripture.”

From Cameroon:

“Thank you very much for broadening my spiritual knowledge and that of others, especially on some controversial and often distorted or watered down Bible topics.”

From South Africa:

“Kindly send my paper copy of the *Searchlight* to someone else in spiritual need. I am now able to download the *Searchlight* over the internet thanks to your excellent service and webpage. My wife and I are accommodating a family in our home for five months now whilst their 21-year-old daughter is receiving chemo for Burkitts Lymphoma. She is also now cancer free and is receiving her last two chemo sessions. So we can identify with Pastor Sadler and praise our Lord for both recoveries! Keep up the good work for our Lord.”

From India:

“Thank you for your kind email Bible messages which are a real rich blessing to us here....I am a regular reader of your magazine for the last thirty years for truth of right division of the Bible....I am a full-time minister for the last fifty years...ours is an independent small congregation...we need your real prayers.”

From Myanmar:

“Thank you so very much for your...2010 December issue....Your magazines are my special study material for my missionary works in Myanmar.”

From Kenya:

“I am from Kenya and a recipient of the *Berean Searchlight*, and let me tell you, it is such a wonderful booklet, which is really enlightening me and making my faith grow tremendously.”

From the Philippines:

“We don’t have a pastor in our church, and being one of the elders, I used to be the one conducting Sunday School and preaching the Word of God to the church members. The *Berean Searchlight* helped me a lot in sharing with them the Word rightly divided.”

From Brazil:

“This past week we started testing our translated *Growing Up in Grace* material with some of the folks that will do the actual teaching. Been getting some interesting feedback.... The people who are presently working with the lessons are long-time schoolteachers. They were especially inquisitive about the age level for the Junior series. I guess the impression is that the subject content is more than they expected. I’m sure you’ve heard this before. They were also pleased to see the layout format, and right away noticed the teacher’s helps. We will hear more about what they think as time goes on. For me, their comments are a sure sign that your objectives have been reached.” (From our good friend Leo Keiper, who is translating our GUIG Sunday School lessons into Portuguese.—Ed).

From Ghana:

“From your end there, posting something across to Africa here may cost you, but you are doing it. THANKS a lot!”



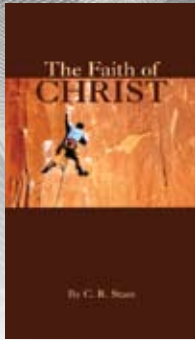
“These [Bereans] were more noble than those in Thessalonica, in that they received the Word with all readiness of mind, and searched the Scriptures daily, whether those things were so.”
—Acts 17:11

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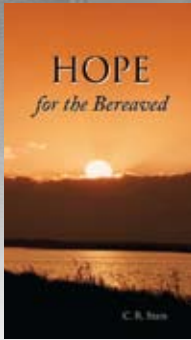
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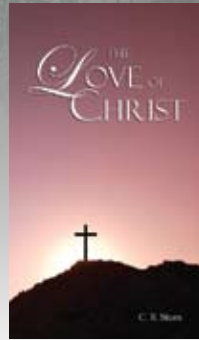
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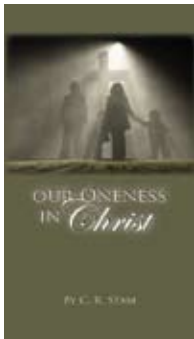
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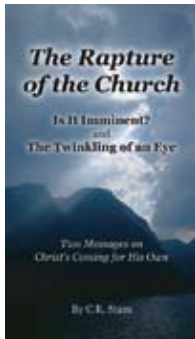
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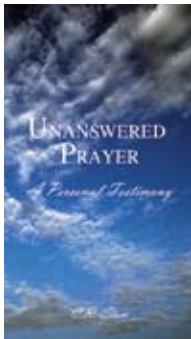
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Exploring the Unsearchable Riches of Christ

By
Paul M. Sadler

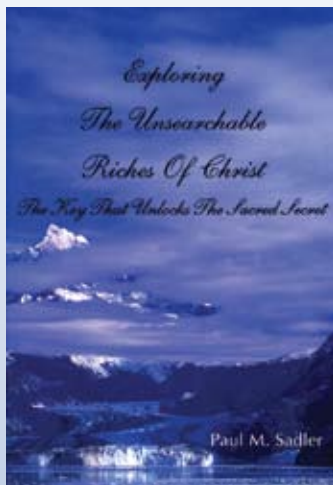


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News and Announcements

Mailbag Special Delivery: This month's *Letter Excerpts* (pages 26,27) are made up entirely of communiqués from outside of the United States. These letters, from twelve different countries, will serve to give some idea of how God is blessing the ministry of *Berean Bible Society* "in the regions beyond" (II Corinthians 10:16).

Blame your spam catcher! We frequently hear from people who write to ask why we have stopped sending their daily *Two Minutes with the Bible* morning devotional. With that in mind, we thought we would let you know that we *never* take anyone off of the *Two Minutes* mailing list unless we are specifically asked to do so. So if your morning mail is suddenly two minutes lighter than it should be, BBS webmaster Pastor Richard Church suggests checking your spam catcher to see if your computer has taken the liberty of banishing us from your inbox. If then checking with your internet provider still has not resolved the issue, be sure to contact us here at BBS.

Les Feldick in Florida: Our good friend Les has accepted an invitation from the friendly folks of *Grace Bible Fellowship* in Inverness for some special March 3rd and 4th meetings. Nearby *First United Methodist Church* has graciously agreed to host these meetings, to accommodate the expected overflow crowds. For your personal invitation, as well as additional information, call Pastor John Fredericksen at 352-762-9972, or email him at jfgrace@gmail.com.

St. Louis Theological Seminary has a new president! Former missionary Dr. Tony Sistelos comes to SLTS well qualified, with a wealth of real-world experience under his belt. He and his wife Barb plan to continue their work with *TBS Ministries*, and so will covet your prayers as they take on this additional responsibility. SLTS founder Pastor Rick Owsley will remain with the school in the capacity of President Emeritus, and invites you to learn more about this seminary that is dedicated to rightly dividing the Word of truth at www.stlts.org.



The cover photo of *El Morro Lighthouse* was taken by Pastor Miguel Ortiz and is located in San Juan, Puerto Rico. It was the first lighthouse built in Puerto Rico. It sits atop the walls of El Morro Castle, a fortress built in the 1500s, located in the entrance of the Old San Juan Bay.

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“Simmers frequently turn over new pages and
'start all over again,' but God will someday turn
the pages back.”
—C. R. Stam

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