

The Berean Searchlight

Studying God's Word, Rightly Divided

August 2007



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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 Editor to You:



Dearly Beloved,

We want to take this opportunity to personally thank you for your kind letters of encouragement. It is a rewarding experience to see the Lord's people respond to the Word, rightly divided, for which we are most grateful on your behalf. Of course, we receive our share of opposition to the message of Grace, but we understand that there is an offense to the truth. While we are careful never to purposely be offensive or ungracious, the truth does its perfect work in the hearts of men. It either receives a warm reception or is defiantly rejected.

We count it a privilege to minister the Word, but there is also a business side to the Lord's work as we make known the message. When we send out our literature and tapes we work closely with the Post Office, which requires the patience of Job. We recently received word that postal rates are going to increase *dramatically* this year. In fact, one shoe has already dropped! The past four years we have absorbed the minor increases they passed along, but this time they're hitting us with both barrels by increasing First Class, Media and Library Mail, which are the rates we use most frequently.

Most publishers and book houses raised their shipping charges earlier this year and, unfortunately, the time has come for us to follow suit. Beginning this month our new shipping charges for the *United States* are as follows:

For orders up to \$30.00, please add \$4.00 for postage and handling.

For orders over \$30.00, please add 15% for postage and handling.

Foreign postal rates have also gone straight through the roof because the Post Office has eliminated Book Rate, which used to be the most economical way to send foreign orders. The new system is based upon a graduated weigh scale; therefore, orders outside the continental US will be billed actual shipping. Thanks for your patience!

In addition to *First Class* rates being increased, we have also received word that the cost of mailing the *Berean Searchlight* (2nd Class) is going up, but the Post Office has not informed us to date what the new rate will be. It currently costs \$4,800 per month to mail the *Searchlight*, so we are bracing ourselves for the other shoe to drop.

Your continued support is much appreciated as we labor together to make known the riches of His grace. If you've benefited spiritually from the ministries of the *Berean Bible Society* and have been considering supporting BBS, we can't think of a better time to begin. Many, many thanks to all those who faithfully pray for us—your kindness and thoughtfulness is greatly appreciated!

In His service,

Paul M. Sadler, President

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PAUL'S EPISTLE TO THE PHILIPPIANS

Philippians 2:12-16

By Paul M. Sadler

“Wherefore, my beloved, as ye have always obeyed, not as in my presence only, but now much more in my absence, work out your own salvation with fear and trembling.”

—Phil. 2:12

“BE THE BEST YOU CAN BE!”

Queen Mary often made it her practice to visit Scotland every year during her reign. She was so loved by the people there that she often mingled with them freely without a protective escort. While walking with some children one afternoon, she went out farther than she had planned. Dark clouds came up unexpectedly, so she stopped at a nearby house to borrow an umbrella. “If you will lend me one,” she said to the lady who answered the door, “I will send it back to you tomorrow.” The woman didn’t recognize the Queen and was reluctant to give this stranger her best umbrella. So she handed her one that she

intended to throw away. The fabric was torn in several places and one of the ribs was broken.

The next day another knock was heard at the door. When the woman opened it, she was greeted by the royal guard, who was holding her old, tattered umbrella. “The Queen sent me,” he said, “She asked me to thank you for loaning this to her.” For a moment the woman was stunned, then she burst into tears. “Oh, what an opportunity I missed,” she cried. “I didn’t give the Queen my very best!”¹

When Paul pondered the awe-inspiring scene of the Church *bowing* in humble adoration at the Judgment Seat of Christ, he was compelled to write to the Philippians, “wherefore,” or “for this reason, my beloved.” It was his heart’s desire that they didn’t miss the opportunity to do their very best for the Lord. You see, he did not want them to have any regrets at that day, for we

only have this one life to serve the Lord, and only those things that we accomplish in Him will bear an eternal weight of glory (II Cor. 4:17,18).

Paul was truly touched by the response of the saints at Philippi to his apostleship and message. They were the genuine article! But the apostle didn't merely want them to be on their best behavior when he was in their company. The real test of their spiritual maturity would manifest itself in his absence. This is why he adds, "**but now**, much more in my absence."

When my wife and I were conducting our local church ministries years ago, if we were out of town on a speaking engagement, I used to say to my wife on the way home, "Well, I wonder what major crisis Satan has brewing this time among the brethren." Sure enough, we would barely walk through the door only to be greeted by a call from one of the board members announcing—"We have a problem!" Paul would have probably smiled if someone had quoted in his day, "To live above with saints we love, O will that be glory. But to live below with saints we know—now that's another story."

Moms and dads labor tirelessly to teach their children the difference between right and wrong, to be polite, and respectful of others. At some point we usually wonder whether or not we're getting through to them. So when someone outside the family says to you, your kids are the best behaved children we've ever met, the first

thought that crosses your mind is, are they talking about my kids? Then you realize that what you've been teaching your children all those years has made a difference. They are actually applying what you taught them. Paul desired to see the same results in the believers at Philippi; he not only wanted them to know the truth, but to consistently make a daily application of it in their lives, whether he was present or absent.

SALVATION

"Work out your own salvation with fear and trembling" (Phil. 2:12b).

Salvation in the Scriptures is a general term that must always be defined by the context to ascertain if spiritual or physical deliverance is the subject. Most times in Paul's epistles *salvation* is spoken of in the spiritual sense, and this is definitely the case here. It is important to remember that salvation in the epistles is presented in three tenses:

The *past tense* of our salvation has to do with our *justification*; that is, we have been declared eternally righteous by God on the basis of the shed blood of Christ through the means of faith (Rom. 3:24,28; 5:9). In essence, we have been saved from the *penalty of sin*; therefore, we're beyond the reach of God's judgment. This is what Paul meant when he stated, "There is therefore now no condemnation to them which are in Christ Jesus" (Rom. 8:1). Christ bore the full penalty of our sins that we might receive the righteousness of God in Him.

The *present tense* of our deliverance concerns our *sanctification*, which simply means to be set apart by God. This next point is very important; sanctification is taught in two senses in the Word of God known as *standing* and *state*! All believers have a perfect *standing* before God the Father. As far as God is concerned, *in Christ* we are holy, perfect, and called saints (I Cor. 1:30). On the other side of this same coin we have the practical outworking of this positional truth called *state*.

Every year in January the President of the United States gives a State of the Union address. Essentially, he is giving his administration's view of how things are progressing in the country, which changes from year to year.

The state of the believer is also subject to change. The assembly at Thessalonica is often appealed to as a model church, and for the most part it was, but when Paul gave his assessment of the *state* of some within the assembly, he said: "For this is the will of God, even your sanctification, that ye should abstain from fornication" (I Thes. 4:3). The apostle was pointing out to them that their conduct was not consistent with their standing in Christ. They were saints, but they weren't acting like saints. So there is a sense in which we are being saved or delivered from the *power of sin* in our lives. More on this in a moment!

The *future tense* of our salvation is called *glorification*. Someday soon the trump is going to sound and all members of the Body of Christ will be delivered

from death and these bodies of humiliation. At that time, we will receive a glorified resurrected body that will be fashioned like unto His glorious body (Phil. 3:21). These old bodies are sown in dishonor due to the Adamic nature, but they will be raised in glory (I Cor. 15:43). Be patient, the day is just around the corner when we will be delivered from the very *presence of sin*.

Paul's challenge to "work out your own salvation with fear and trembling" was primarily directed at the entire assembly at Philippi, although what is stated here can certainly be applied to individual believers as well. Notice the apostle says "work out" not "work for" your own salvation. As we know, salvation from their sins was by grace through faith *apart* from works; therefore, Paul is speaking about sanctification, the then-present tense of their salvation. In addition, he is specifically addressing the practical application or *state* of their sanctification.

"As far as God is concerned, *in Christ* we are holy, perfect, and called saints...."

The apostle's desire for the assembly to "work out" their salvation simply means, according to Wuest, "to carry out to the goal, to carry to its ultimate conclusion." For example, most Dads don't follow the instruction manual when they're assembling something for



their kids.² After all, it's pretty obvious how it goes together, that is, until Dad runs into a major problem. Of course, when all else fails consult the instructions! Sure enough after he isolates the problem and corrects his error, he is able to continue the assembly process, step by step, bringing the project to completion.

The local church is also a work in progress that is often plagued with problems. Since the *state* of the church at Philippi was teetering on a major split, Paul challenged them to stop *complaining* and *arguing* with one another so they could more effectively carry out the work of the ministry to which God had called them (Phil. 2:14). Apparently it had gotten to the point where you could cut the tension within the assembly with a knife. The apostle wanted the assembly to work out these issues with “fear and trembling,” not in the sense of terror but of reverence for the things of God. The Lord's work is *serious* business, which should cause us to approach it with honor and respect.

Years ago I worked in an injection molding plant where I was

responsible for keeping twenty hydraulic presses running smoothly. From time to time the job required I work with high voltage equipment. I did so with “fear and trembling,” not dreading it (in fact, I rather enjoyed it), but I did respect it and handled it with great care, understanding the consequences.

One afternoon a switch went out on a 220-volt drier. I was working with a trainee at the time who I had instructed to unplug the unit on the other side of the machine. When he gave me the thumbs-up I proceeded to remove the switch. One thing you learn early on working with electricity is that you always work with it as if the power's on, even though it is turned off. Thankfully I heeded that rule, because the trainee had pulled out the wrong drier plug. Of course, even though the switch I was working on was off, the line side of it was still *hot*. As I began loosening the terminals I noticed a minute arc indicating the presence of power, which resulted in the trainee receiving the lecture of his life.

You see, the Philippians were to work out their differences in “fear and trembling” bearing in mind who they were serving. Paul didn't want them to displease the Lord who gave Himself for them. He was sincerely concerned they would see tears in the Lord's eyes at that day, because some of their number defiantly esteemed themselves better and more deserving than others in the assembly who were opposing their prideful attitude.

The misconduct of these brethren endangered the unity of the assembly, threatened their testimony for Christ, and could ultimately rob them of their joy. In working out their salvation at Philippi the members of the assembly were not to allow sin to have dominion over them. While there was a time in their lives prior to their conversion that they could do nothing but sin, in Christ their old man had been crucified with Him; therefore, they were to reckon themselves dead to sin. Sin no longer had power over them, unless they allowed it to control them.

After we come to Christ, if we sin it's by choice—it is a failure on our part to yield to our *new man*, “which after God is created in righteousness and true holiness” (Eph. 4:24). The saints at Philippi merely needed to make a practical application of this truth in their daily walk. If they simply yielded their members as instruments of righteousness their unity and testimony to the world would be restored in its fullness. Paul adds that they were not alone in this conflict between the old and new man, for God in His sovereignty would assist them, if they upheld their God-given responsibility.

“For it is God which worketh in you both to will [desire] and to do of His good pleasure” (Phil. 2:13).

Although many today teach the transcendence of God they reject His immanence; that is, they deny He is involved in our daily lives in any way. This passage along with Ephesians 4:6 clearly teaches God

is working “in us” and “through us” both to desire and to do His will. God has a plan and purpose for each life, in Christ, and each local assembly. When Moses “refused to be called the son of Pharaoh’s daughter, choosing rather to suffer affliction” with his countrymen, the Lord removed him from Egypt and sent him to the back side of the desert. For the next forty years God “worked in” the heart of Moses to purge him of the worldly ways of Egypt and to separate him to Himself. He then “worked through” Moses sending him back to Egypt to be the *Deliverer* of His people and made him the *Great Lawgiver* at Mount Sinai.

In like manner, God was working in the Philippian assembly to energize them, through the ministry of the Holy Spirit, to live the victorious Christian life that He might use them in a greater way to accomplish His good pleasure. What is true in the broader sense in regard to the local church, the same can be said of every believer. Here the words of John Knox seem appropriate: “The world has yet to see what God will do with, and for, and through, and in, and by, the man who is fully consecrated to Him.”

HOLDING FORTH THE WORD OF LIFE

“Do all things without murmurings [grumbling] and disputings [arguing]. That ye may be blameless and harmless, the sons of God, without rebuke, in the midst of a crooked and perverse nation [generation]” (Phil. 2:14,15a).

Whenever there is something that is disrupting the harmony of the local assembly each member of that body needs to examine himself, and ask: "Lord is it I?" Is it I who has caused this problem? The flesh can justify anything, even *grumbling* to others how they would have handled things differently, which only serves to cause discord among the brethren. These types of things are normally said in the shadows of the assembly hall where the battle lines are drawn for a major confrontation. When you're not on the frontlines fighting the good fight of the faith, it's easy to stand in the shadows and criticize others who are defending the faith. Criticism is not one of the gifts of the Spirit, but a manifestation of the flesh!

Paul wanted those at Philippi who were living in carnality to turn from it so they could be used in a greater way by the Lord. They were to be blameless, harmless, and without rebuke, that there would be little question who they were in the eyes of the world. You see, believers have something the world is searching for: peace, purpose and hope! Therefore, it was important that these children of God maintain a consistent testimony for Christ before a crooked and perverse generation. Essentially the apostle is challenging the Philippians to live a godly life so as not to give the world a reason to disgrace the name of Christ.

The unsaved of our day, for example, revel in pointing out: "Oh, you mean *that* church where they fight like cats and dogs and had to call the police to settle a

dispute. Why it's no different over there than the corner tavern I frequent." Once a local assembly has this type of reputation it is highly unlikely they will have much of an outreach to the community for Christ. As it has been said, "When a non-believer sees a professing Christian who is argumentative, hard to get along with, and worldly in his ambitions, conversation, and behavior, the unbeliever soon forms a poor opinion of Christianity."

Paul's usage of the terms "crooked" and "perverse" to explain his generation is instructive. It was *crooked* in the sense of being wicked, especially in relation to departing from the truth, and *perverse* as far as being distorted, with a twist. The apostle's generation and ours have a lot in common. The Gnostic belief of Paul's day that denied the Deity of Christ has been revived today in Dan Brown's so-called fictional novel, *The Da Vinci Code*, which was recently made into a movie. This wicked perversion of the Scriptures claims that Jesus married Mary Magdalene with whom He allegedly had children. And before His death He supposedly named her the leader of the Church. Of course this is nothing short of blasphemy, having no basis whatsoever historically or Biblically. Yet the world has generally accepted it as a reasonable explanation of the life of Christ.

"Among whom [the crooked and perverse generation] ye shine as lights in the world; holding forth the Word of life; that I may rejoice in the day of Christ, that

I have not run in vain, neither labored in vain” (Phil. 2:15b,16).

In the midst of the darkness of this world’s system the believers at Philippi were to shine as lights. They were to hold forth the Word of Life! It is said that years ago there was a light in the torch of the Statue of Liberty that stands in New York Harbor.³ “During the night, she held forth a light in the darkness, but she could not be seen. You could see only the light.” In similar fashion, believers are to hold forth the Word of life to a lost and dying world that they might see the “Way” and be saved.



Sadly, for the most part, in the pulpits of America today you no longer hear the Word of God proclaimed. The Church is under the spell of a social gospel and is more interested in entertainment than the truth. Those who attend these assemblies are unaware they are on the broad road that leads to destruction. If they are not warned soon they will perish in their sins.

Everything in this world eventually dies, except the Word of God. It is *living* and quick and powerful and sharper than any two-edged sword. In the Old Testament when God gave the

law, Moses sprinkled the blood on both the Book and all the people (Heb. 9:19). Why did he sprinkle the Book? Beloved ones, the life of the flesh is in the blood, it symbolized *life*. When Moses sprinkled the Book it demonstrated the message of the law was spiritual, it was a living thing. As we hold forth the Word of Life, it points the world to Christ who is “the way, the truth and the life.” It has the power to transform lives, as it did mine, but it must be proclaimed, for “faith cometh by hearing, and hearing by the Word of God” (Rom. 10:17).

He who glories, the Scriptures say, “let him glory in the Lord.” It was Paul’s desire that at the Judgment Seat of Christ he might glory in the Lord because the believers at Philippi had responded to his challenge and heeded the counsel of God’s will. He wanted them to do their very *best* for the Lord, and not be like the woman who *weped* when she realized she didn’t give her very best to the Queen when she had the opportunity. The apostle had labored among them to the point of exhaustion; but if they failed to respond favorably to his words his ministry would be in vain at Philippi, at least in part. Of course, the loss of commendation and reward at that day would be theirs, not Paul’s.

To Be Continued!



Endnotes

1. As told by Dennis J. De Haan, *Windows on the Word*, Baker Book House, Grand Rapids, Michigan, pages 125, 126.
2. www.designpics.com
3. [iStockphoto.com/Jeremy Edwards](http://iStockphoto.com/JeremyEdwards).



Berean Bible Fellowship

Fall Bible Conference

Dates: October 11,12, 2007

Location: *Marriott Hotel*
Evansville, Indiana

Guest Speakers:

John Fredericksen, David Siegmann,
Paul M. Sadler, Richard Ware, Ricky Kurth,
Ken Lawson, Edward Bedore, Joel Finck

Theme: “*Vital Ministries*”

If you need additional information regarding accommodations, directions or to receive a BBF Fall Conference brochure, please contact: Pastor Floyd Baker at: (386) 851-0744, e-mail: bakerpastorf@aol.com, or the *Berean Bible Society* at: (262) 255-4750, e-mail: berean@execpc.com.

Berean Bible Institute

Fall Bible Conference

Dates: October 19,20, 2007

Location: *Berean Bible Institute*
116 S. Kettle Moraine Drive
Slinger, Wisconsin 53086

Guest Speakers:

Ricky Kurth, Dan Wolgast, Paul Turner,
Matthew Ritchey, Ken Lyon, Rob Nix

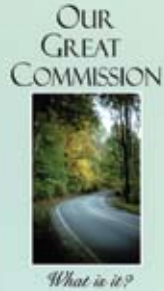
Theme: *The Supremacy of God’s Grace*



For additional information or directions please contact Dr. W. Edward Bedore at: **Berean Bible Institute**, 116 S. Kettle Moraine Drive, P.O. Box 587, Slinger, WI 53086-0587, phone: (262) 644-5504, fax: (262) 644-5507, e-mail: bbi@bereanbibleinstitute.org.

A Serious Side Effect

By C. R. Stam



Satan and Sickness

Sometimes we hear of one who is stricken with some deadly disease. He is taken to a healing meeting and, seemingly at least, is completely restored. Can this possibly be of Satan?

Why not? Besides all his other powers, is it not he who *inflicts* sickness and disease? Think of the case of Job. Did not God permit Satan to bring Job to the point of death, physically (Job 2:4-9)? Think of Paul himself. Was it not “a messenger of Satan” who was sent to “buffet” him until he cried again and again for deliverance (II Cor. 12:7,8)? And is it not clearly stated in Hebrews 2:14 that for the present Satan has “*the power of death*”?

If it is Satan, then, who inflicts sickness and disease, why cannot Satan *stop* inflicting them? Why can he not—why *would* he not, withdraw the illness he has inflicted upon you if this will cause you to center your interest on the wrong thing, and cause you to walk by sight, rather than by faith?

We specially mention bodily healing here because most people are attracted and convinced by this sort of supernatural demonstration. But the physical healings under our Lord's earthly ministry and at Pentecost were “signs.” Signs of what? Signs of the validity of our Lord's royal claims. Had He been accepted as King, all those thus healed would have gone into the prophesied kingdom, where sickness and disease would never again overtake them.

This is not so today, for the King and His kingdom have been rejected, and the reign of Christ on earth now awaits a future day. Thus it is that those who are “healed,” all finally die like the rest. Though “healed” again and again, there always comes *that last time* when *nothing* avails.

One of the saddest aspects of modern healing campaigns is the long, sad trail of disillusionment and shaken faith it leaves behind. Some are not healed at all, and even those who are “healed” finally come to that last time, when

Hebrews 9:27 is fulfilled, for “it is appointed unto men once to die.”

Again we say: What a list could be compiled of all those who once sincerely preached that it was a lack of faith, a sin, not to claim and expect from God a strong, sound body, yet they themselves all died.

How much better, then, to walk by faith and leave ourselves in His loving hands to do as He sees is best for us?

Thus we beg our Christian readers not to be carried away with amazing demonstrations that can only beguile us to take our eyes off *Him*. Rather let us heed the Spirit’s exhortation through Paul:

“Be careful² for nothing; but in everything by prayer and supplication, with thanksgiving, let your requests be made known unto God.

“And the peace of God, which passeth all understanding, shall keep your hearts and minds through Christ Jesus” (Phil. 4:6,7).

Pentecostalism and Snakes Roman Catholicism and Tongues

Never have we had more compelling evidence of the importance of “rightly dividing the Word of truth” than in this day of religious confusion.

Years ago the *Searchlight* published an article by the Editor titled, *The Great Commission and the Virginia Police*. At that time the question was: Do the Virginia Police have a legitimate right to stop Pentecostals from handling



snakes publicly? The law said they did, and the practice was soon discontinued.

Now, in 1974, however, snake-handling has again come to the fore, and it seems that this time the practice may be defended more ably—and all the way to the Supreme Court.

This writer saw and heard its chief proponent in America present his case before news reporters. “What if the law tells you that you may not handle snakes in public?” he was asked. “What will you do then?”

His answer was simple and to the point: “We always try to honor God by obeying the law, as He says we should. However, there are exceptions. When the law forbids us to follow God’s specific instructions, we must obey the higher authority and say with Peter: ‘We ought to obey God rather than men.’”

He then quoted the so-called “great commission” from Mark 16, including the phrase: “*They shall take up serpents*” (Ver. 18).

Asked if he had ever been bitten by snakes, he said, “Yes, seven times.” Asked whether he had ever participated in snake-handling—

or strychnine-drinking—episodes in which *others* had become ill or had died, he said, “Yes.” Asked why he then persisted in the practice, he answered simply: “I don’t blame the Lord for my lack of faith; I simply do what He told us to do in the ‘great commission.’”

How the courts will rule in this case regarding freedom of religion vs. the public safety, we do not know, but meantime it is a rather frightening thing for the people of any community to learn that poisonous snakes will be let loose and freely handled in their communities.

We, of course, object to religious snake-handling on Scriptural as well as civil grounds, but what about the vast majority of our fundamentalist brethren?

“It is not *our* prerogative to decide what part or parts...we are to obey, and to ignore the rest.”

Can any fundamentalist really find serious fault with those who handle snakes on the basis that this is included in the program outlined in the “great commission,” when they themselves have taught for years that this commission, given by the Lord to His twelve apostles, is indeed *our* “great commission,” the “marching orders” of the Church today? By what Scriptural rule can any believer *take what he wishes out of this commission* for his obedience, so that some use it to teach

legalism (Matt. 28:20), others baptismal salvation (Mark 16:16), others speaking with tongues (Ver. 17), others healing miracles (Ver. 18), still others absolution (John 20:21-23), or certain combinations of these, but none of them *all*.

If one fundamentalist believer can use this commission to teach water baptism, why should not another use it to teach snake-handling, for *this commission* distinctly says: “*These signs SHALL follow them that believe...they shall take up serpents...*”

If the commission to the eleven is our commission, let’s obey it *all*. It is not *our* prerogative to decide what part or parts of this commission we are to obey, and to ignore the rest. But if, in the light of a further revelation communicated by the glorified Lord to Paul, a new dispensation has been ushered in, let us hasten to acknowledge that the commission to the eleven is *not our commission*. The Church has not faced up to this challenge. This is the basic cause of the continued and growing confusion and division within its ranks.


But another startling phenomenon appearing on the religious horizon and growing fast is *Roman Catholic Pentecostalism*. Great numbers of Roman Catholic priests and people are involved in healing the sick, speaking in tongues, casting out demons, etc.

Here we ask, *Why not?* The Roman Church has always followed Peter rather than Paul, and has always taught that the “great commission” with its miraculous signs, its healing powers and its power to remit sins, is for our obedience.

Only they, like others, chose what *they* felt would best further the interests of Roman Catholicism and *de-emphasized* the rest.

Thus it is no great wonder that, with the charismatic movement growing like wildfire, Rome should now become interested in speaking with tongues, etc.

What an apostate system teaches, however, is not our chief concern. We are more deeply concerned about Bible-believing

Christians, who are true to the fundamentals of the faith. Until these learn the importance of dispensational truth and begin to rightly divide God's Word, especially as to His message for the world today and His program for the Church today, they will be forced—self-forced—to go on serving the Lord as a divided army. 

Endnote

2. I.e., full of care, anxious.

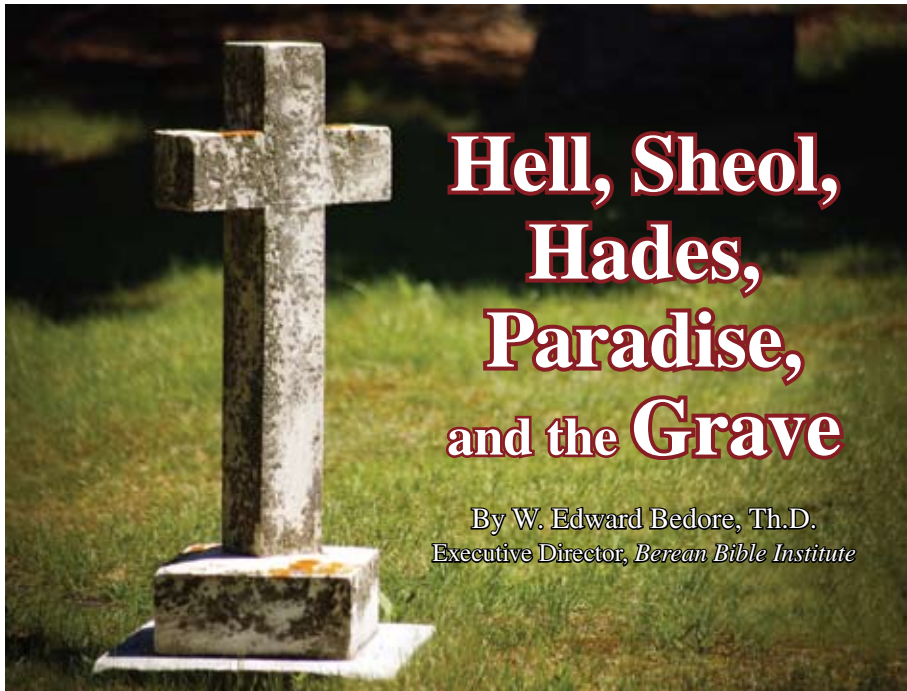
Question Box

“Will the Spirit be on earth during the Tribulation? I believe the Body of Christ, where the Spirit dwells, will be taken out (II Thes. 2:6-12).”

We too believe the Body will be Raptured before the Tribulation, but we believe the Spirit will remain behind. Isaiah 59:19 makes a prediction about the Spirit, and we know that he refers to the Tribulation period, for the next verse continues, “and the Redeemer shall come to Zion.” Since Paul quotes this verse and ascribes it to the Second Coming of Christ (Rom. 11:26), the previous verse in Isaiah must refer to the period prior to the Second Coming, i.e., the Tribulation.

Next, the Lord predicted that after He left the disciples He would send them the Spirit, “that He may abide with you *for ever*” (John 14:16,17). That's why He told them they needn't worry about what they would say when interrogated for their faith, for they would be given the words to say by “the Spirit of your Father which speaketh in you” (Matt. 10:19,20). We know this speaks of the Tribulation period, for two verses later the Lord speaks of enduring to the end, something that will be required when the Antichrist is present (Matt. 24:13-15).

Finally, while Paul's epistles speak of what God is doing today, the prophetic application of the epistles that follow Paul's epistles in our Bible is to the people who will follow us, i.e., the believing Jews in the Tribulation. With that in mind, it is significant that the Spirit is mentioned often in these books (Heb. 10:29; I Pet. 1:2; I John 2:20,27; 3:24; 4:13; 5:7; Jude 19; Rev. 22:17).
—Pastor Kurth



Hell, Sheol, Hades, Paradise, and the Grave

By W. Edward Bedore, Th.D.
Executive Director, *Berean Bible Institute*

There seems to be some confusion about the meaning of Hell and who goes there because of the way the Hebrew word *Sheol* and the Greek word *Hades* have been translated in our English Bibles. Since this confusion has led some into an erroneous understanding of what the Bible actually teaches about the intermediate state and the final state of the dead, we think that it is important that we address this subject here.

Sheol is found in the Bible sixty-five times. It is translated “the pit” three times, “the grave” thirty-one times, and “hell” thirty-one times. *Hades* is used eleven times, being rendered “hell” ten times and “grave” once. Adding to the confusion is that two other words are also translated hell in the New Testament. These are *Tartarus*, which is found once and *Gehenna*, which is used twelve times.

The term “Hell” is commonly understood to mean a place of torment where the souls of the wicked go after physical death. This is true. However, because Hades in the New Testament and Sheol in the Old are variously rendered hell or grave, there has been some misunderstanding about what hell and the grave are. Before looking at these words though, we should first give our attention to the Greek word *Gehenna*, which is always translated hell and used in reference to the Lake of Fire. It is found in Matthew 5:22,29,30; 10:28; 18:9; 23:15,33; Mark 9:43,45,47; Luke 12:5; and James 3:6.

THE FINAL HELL

The Lake of Fire, or Hell, is a literal place of everlasting fire that was originally created by God as a place of punishment for Satan and the angels that followed him in his rebellion against God (Mat. 25:41). Because it is referred to as the place of *“outer darkness”* (Mat. 8:12; 25:30), we believe that it is most probably located at the farthest reaches of the creation. Gehenna is described in Scripture as a *“furnace of fire”* (Mat. 13:42); *“everlasting punishment”* (Mat. 25:46); *“the mist [gloom] of darkness”* (II Pet. 2:17); the *“hurt of the second death”* (Rev. 2:11 cf. 20:6,14; 21:8); *“a lake of fire burning with brimstone”* (Rev. 19:20; 20:10; 21:8).

While Hell was created for Satan and the other fallen angels, the unsaved of humanity from all ages will be with them in this place of torment where *“there will be wailing and gnashing of teeth”* (Mat. 13:42). This is the *“everlasting reward”* of all that die in their sins.

While there is no one in the Lake of Fire at this time, it will one day hold a vast multitude. The first residents of this place of righteous retribution will be the Beast (Antichrist) and the False Prophet who, at the end of the Tribulation, will be *“cast alive into a lake burning with brimstone”* (Rev. 19:19-20). Joining them will be the unsaved of the nations who survive the Tribulation (Mat. 25:31-32,41-46). Also, at Jesus Christ’s return to earth, the rebel Israelites, i.e. unbelieving Jews, who survive the Tribulation, will be denied entrance into the Millennial Kingdom, no doubt to join their Gentile counterparts in the *“place of everlasting fire”* (Eze. 20:33-38; Mat. 7:21-23; cf. Mat. 24:29-31, 45-51). Then, at the end of the Millennial Kingdom of Jesus Christ, Satan will be *“cast into the lake of fire and brimstone, where the beast and the false prophet are, and shall be tormented day and night forever and ever”* (Rev. 20:10). And finally, the unsaved dead of all ages will be raised and judged at the Great White Throne by Jesus Christ and then cast into the Lake of Fire (see Rev. 20:11-15).

The name Gehenna comes from a deep narrow ravine south of Jerusalem where some Hebrew parents actually sacrificed their children to the Ammonite god, Molech, during the time of the kings (II Kin. 16:3; II Chron. 28:1-3; cf. Lev. 18:21; I Kin. 11:5,7,33). This pagan deity is also referred to as Malcham, Milcom, and Moloch in the Bible. This valley later served as the city dump and, because there was continual burning of refuse there, it became a graphic symbol of the place of punishment for the wicked. It was named the *“Valley of Hinnom,”* which translated into Greek becomes Gehenna. The passages where the word is found in the New Testament plainly show that it was a commonly used expression for Hell by that time. The word is found twelve times in the Scriptures, being used eleven times by the Lord Jesus and once by James. When we consider the context, it is clear the Lord used this word in reference to the place of everlasting punishment for the wicked dead and not to the city dump.

Gehenna, or the Lake of Fire, might be referred to as the future, or final, Hell because it is where all of the wicked from all ages will finally end up. Satan, the fallen angels, and all of the lost of mankind will reside in torment there forever and ever.

SHEOL/HADES: THE PRESENT HELL

Scripture passages in which Gehenna is used should be distinguished from those using Hades, which refers to a place of temporary torment that we might refer to as the immediate, or present, Hell. What we mean by this is that, at the time of death, the souls of the lost go directly to Hades, where they suffer in torment until the time of the Great White Throne Judgment when they will be resurrected and cast into the Lake of Fire. The souls of all the lost who have already died are presently there and those who die in their sins immediately go there to join them.

Hades is the New Testament equivalent of the Old Testament word Sheol. The Greek and Hebrew words speak of the same place, the present Hell. However, this is problematic because Sheol has been translated “grave” as often as it has “hell” and some have mistakenly taught that Sheol and Hades are only references to the grave rather than Hell. This erroneous teaching leads to the denial of the existence of an immediate or present Hell. The false doctrine of soul-sleep, and other ideas that teach the unconscious state of the dead between death and resurrection, spring from this error.

The common word for “grave” in the Old Testament is *queber*. Of the sixty-four times it is used, it is translated “grave” thirty-four times, “sepulcher” twenty-six times, and “burying place” four times. *Queber* is used five additional times as part of a place name, Kibroth-hattaavah, which means “graves of lust.” As we said earlier, Sheol is found sixty-four times, being rendered “grave” thirty-one times, “hell” thirty-one times, and “pit” three times.

A comparison of how *Sheol* and *queber* are used reveals eight points of contrast that tell us that they are not the same thing.

1. *Sheol* is never used in plural form. *Queber* is used in the plural 29 times.
2. It is never said that the body goes to *Sheol*. *Queber* speaks of the body going there 37 times.
3. *Sheol* is never said to be located on the face of the earth. *Queber* is mentioned 32 times as being located on the earth.
4. An individual’s *Sheol* is never mentioned. An individual’s *queber* is mentioned 5 times.
5. Man is never said to put anyone into *Sheol*. Individuals are put into a *queber* by man (33 times).

6. Man is never said to have dug or fashioned a *Sheol*. Man is said to have dug, or fashioned, a *queber* (6 times).
7. Man is never said to have touched *Sheol*. Man touches, or can touch, a *queber* (5 times).
8. It is never said that man is able to possess a *Sheol*. Man is spoken of as being able to possess a *queber* (7 times). (These eight points of comparison are adapted from “*Life and Death*” by Caleb J. Baker, *Bible Institute Colportage Ass’n*, 1941).

From the differences between how *Sheol* and *queber* are used in Scripture, it is obvious that they are not the same thing. The Greek word *Hades* in the New Testament would fit into the *Sheol* column of our chart, strongly indicating that it is the same thing as *Sheol*. *Hades* is used eleven times, being rendered Hell ten times and grave once.

Words associated with *queber* are *quabar* and *qeburah*. *Quabar* is a verb meaning to bury or to be buried and *qeburah* is a noun meaning a grave or place of burial. The use of these related words helps to reinforce the difference between *queber* and *Sheol*, as they clearly have to do with the grave as a burial place, while *Sheol* does not.

EXAMPLES SHOWING THAT SHEOL IS NOT A BURIAL PLACE

1. After selling Joseph into slavery, his brothers stained his coat with blood and used it to convince their father that he had been killed by a wild animal (Gen. 37:26-36). Jacob’s sons and daughters tried “*to comfort him; but he refused to be comforted; and he said, ‘for I will go down into the grave (Sheol) unto my son mourning’. Thus his father wept for him*” (v. 35).

From Jacob’s words it is clear that he fully intended to eventually be reunited with his son in a tangible way. Obviously then, he did not simply have in mind the idea of joining him in burial as he believed that Joseph’s body had not been buried at all, but was eaten by an animal (v. 33). This being the case, it was impossible for Jacob to think he would join Joseph in burial. Obviously, he looked forward to being reunited with him in the place of the departed dead, not in burial. The word rendered grave in this passage is *Sheol*, the abode of the souls of those who have died.

2. After Jacob died, Joseph had his body mummified, a process that took forty days, then took him back to Canaan for burial (Gen. 50:1-14). When we add to that the thirty days of mourning (Gen. 50:2-4), and the time it took to travel to Canaan for the funeral (Gen. 50:5-13), we see that it was several weeks after Jacob was “*gathered unto his people*” (Gen. 49:33) before his body was placed in the cave that served as his burial place. Considering that he had been dead for well over two months before his body was buried and that the Scriptures state

that at the time he died he was “gathered to his people” (Gen. 49:33) is telling. This shows that at the time of physical death, when “he yielded up the spirit,” his soul immediately departed his body to be with Isaac and Abraham. This cannot be a reference to his body being gathered together with their bodies, as that did not take place for over ten weeks. This is strong proof that Sheol does not mean a burial place for the body, but is the place where the souls of the departed reside.

“Sheol/Hades and the grave are not the same thing, nor are they in the same place.”

3. That communication takes place in Sheol/Hades tells us that something other than a burial place is in view. In Isaiah 14:4-20, we find the prophet foretelling the eventual defeat and death of the king of Babylon. The nation that would eventually send Judah into captivity will itself be defeated and its mighty king will find himself among “the chieftones of the earth...the kings of the nations” (Isa. 14:9) who preceded him in death. These are the kings of nations that he had conquered with the sword and ruled over with a cruel hand (Isa. 14:6). These same men will serve as a welcoming committee for this once great “world ruler” when he arrives in Sheol/Hades. In mock surprise, they will ask this once powerful king, “Art thou also become weak as we? Are thou become like unto us?” (Isa. 14:10). They then taunt him by pointing out that the pretentious display of magnificence that he had demonstrated as the king of Babylon now meant nothing (Isa. 14:11).

All of those who find themselves in this section of Sheol/Hades, like the king of Babylon and the kings who greeted him, will be faced with the reality of how helpless and hopeless they are. One of the boasts these kings make against him is that, while their bodies have been placed in their respective tombs, or graves, he was not honored by a respectable burial, “But thou are cast out of the grave (queber) like an abominable (despised) branch...thou shalt not be joined with them in burial” (Isa. 14:18-20). Obviously, if his body was not in any grave at all, he was not simply joining them in burial.

What we see here is this man going into Sheol, while at the same time his body is cast out of its grave. Obviously then, Sheol cannot be the grave here as the body and soul are in different places, the soul going to Sheol while the body remains unburied, or outside of the grave (vs. 20) to be infested by maggots (vs. 11). It is true that this is a prophetic passage; and there are various opinions as to the identity of the person in view here (verses 12-15 are commonly thought to refer to Satan, the power behind the Gentile kings). But, regardless of who this prophecy is about, or whether it has already been fulfilled or not, does not change the fact that Sheol and the grave are to be regarded as different places in this passage of Scripture.

3. In the case of Samuel and Saul, we find another example of the Scriptures making a distinction between Sheol/Hades and the grave. In his conversation with King Saul, Samuel, whom the Lord had sent back from the dead to deliver a message to Saul, said that Saul and his sons would be with him the next day (see I Sam. 28:15-19). As foretold, Saul and his sons did die the next day while in battle with the Philistines (see I Sam. 31:1-6). However, their bodies were not buried the next day, so they did not join Samuel in the grave but their souls went down to Sheol/Hades where the person, or soul, of Samuel was. As it is said that Samuel “came up” it seems obvious that he went back down after speaking with Saul (I Sam. 28:8,11,14). As for the bodies of Saul and his sons, their remains were not buried for several days. As Samuel had said, they died the next day (I Sam. 31:1-6). But it was the day after they died that their bodies were taken by the Philistines and hung on the wall of Beth-Shan (I Sam. 31:7-10). After hearing of this, valiant men from Jabesh-Gilead went by night and removed their bodies, took them to Jabesh, burned them, and then buried their bones. All this took place at least three days after Saul had died, and probably longer. Saul and his sons joined Samuel in Sheol/Hades the day they died and the flesh of their bodies was burned with only their bones being placed in a grave several days later. Obviously Sheol/Hades and the grave are not the same thing, nor are they in the same place.

The story of the Rich Man and Lazarus that is found in Luke 16:19-31 gives us the record of a remarkable conversation that took place in Hades between the Rich Man and Abraham. Obviously, these two men could not have had this conversation at all if Sheol/Hades is only a place where dead bodies are buried. First, there could be no communication between lifeless, decaying corpses and second, Abraham’s body, which was buried in the cave of Machpelah over 1800 years earlier, had long since decayed. Also, the rich man’s body, regardless of whether it had decayed or not, would not have been buried in the burial cave of Abraham. From the context, it is obvious that these men were in the place of departed souls rather than a burial place.

There are some that contend that this is a parable that never actually took place and deny that it could have ever taken place. To these, who usually hold to a position of soul-sleep or the eradication of the soul at death, we answer; the Lord said that it did take place. Besides, as we have already pointed out, a parable by definition is a “true to life” story. To have meaning, it must be a story that could have actually taken place whether it ever did or not.

To Be Continued!



Questions or comments for Dr. Bedore should be addressed to him directly at: *Berean Bible Institute*, P.O. Box 587, Slinger, WI 53086, or by e-mail at: bbi@bereanbibleinstitute.org.

Keystone State Meetings

Dates: September 29-30, 2007

Location: *Grace Family Bible Church*
2243 Mill Road
Duncansville, Pennsylvania

Guest Speaker:

Paul M. Sadler
President of the *Berean Bible Society*

For additional information, please contact:
Pastor James Zaebst at (814) 696-4366

*May God richly bless these meetings to
the praise of His glory in Christ Jesus!*



Spotlight on Grace Churches

This month's church is:

Grace Fellowship Bible Church

Location: 413 S. Main St., Sheridan, Arkansas 72150

Pastor: Richard Ware

Services: 9:30 a.m. Sunday School
10:45 a.m. Worship Service
6:00 p.m. Evening Service
6:30 p.m. Wednesday Prayer Meeting

Additional Ministries: Men's Meeting (Mondays 6:00 a.m.), Lady's Meeting (Mondays 6:30 p.m. and Thursdays 8:30 a.m.), Children's Ministry (Wednesdays 6:30 p.m.).

Contact information: Pastor Dick & Ruth Ware at: rnrware@aol.com.
Church e-mail: gfbchurch@windstream.net or phone: (870) 942-2700.

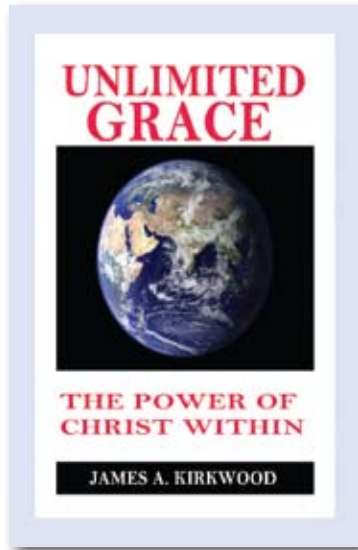
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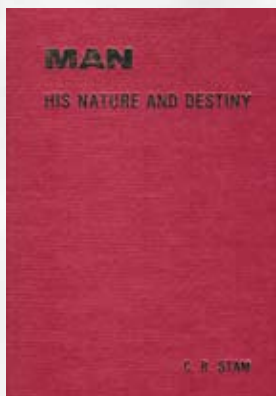
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James A. Kirkwood is a mid-Acts, dispensational teacher and former pastor, and best known for his radio program: “The Grace Believer.”

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BBS Letter Excerpts

From Florida:

“A friend has introduced me to the gospel of Grace through the teachings of Paul, which has brought me to the acceptance of Jesus Christ by His death and resurrection. I have been saved by grace! Faith without works was hard for me to understand for awhile. For my whole life I was taught the gospel of the kingdom, that faith without works is dead. I am truly interested in learning more about the gospel of Grace, for myself and to help others to believe in Christ and His gift of grace and the end of the Law.”

From Ohio:

“I really enjoyed Pastor Sadler’s presentation at the *Community Bible Church* in Tipp City this weekend. It was informative as well as enjoyable, as seemingly difficult Scripture became crystal clear. I strongly advise any who have not been to one of these conferences to sign up for one as soon as they can.” (Good advice!—RK).

From India:

“Thanks a ton!!! You helped me a lot...relieved a burden.”

From Virginia:

“I have really been blessed by your many publications. To be able to understand between Prophecy and the Mystery that was revealed to the Apostle Paul has brought me to know the difference between false doctrine, error, and the true hope we have in the Grace gospel.”

From Michigan:

“This letter is sent requesting a monthly subscription to your *Searchlight* studies. I have been encouraged to study God’s Word, rightly divided, which has changed my whole perspective on Biblical truth. I would also appreciate it if you could send my brother a monthly subscription as well.”

From the Internet:

“Do you really believe that the only portion of the Bible applicable to Gentiles are the Pauline Epistles? If so, what do you do with the portion in Timothy, written by Paul, that says that ALL Scripture is given for reproof, etc.?”

From Missouri:

“I would like to order two copies of *Studies in James*. I appreciate your continuing effort in presenting books that rightly divide the Word. It is a joy to understand what one is reading.” (That’s what Nehemiah 8:12 says!—RK).

From North Carolina:

“I am an 88-year old retired professor of engineering. I spent two years in the first grade, since I did not learn to read the first year. I can remember only one book I truly enjoyed reading. That was the book now titled *Things That Differ* by Cornelius R. Stam. I ordered that book as soon as it was published, and I have been receiving the *Berean Searchlight* since about that time.”

From the Internet:

“I was raised in a Baptist environment and this is where I get my understanding of many Bible subjects. I have been searching for the truth of God’s Word for myself all my adult life. Through the teachings of God’s Word with the Berean ‘look’ at the Word of God, I believe I have grown. I have moved more to the Word in a deeper way.”

From Indiana:

“I have been receiving your daily e-mail devotional at my place of work and love it. It really helps ‘charge my batteries’ for the day. I can’t wait to receive the magazine and share it with my family.”

From Arizona:

“It’s a blessing to receive spiritual reading materials to inspire my walk with God. I have passed the *Searchlight* to a few cellmates to read as well. Can I be put in your BBS *Mailbag* letter excerpts?” (Yes you can!—RK).

From the Internet:

“I would like to post your remarks on a forum, if that’s alright...I was a bit disturbed at some of the attitudes that I encountered on Pal Talk with some who believe as you, and I am talking *arrogant*, but I am thrilled to say that you are a real gentleman, and it is a privilege to converse with you.” (Paul no doubt recommended “speaking the truth in love” [Eph. 4:15] and “in meekness” [II Tim. 2:25] because he found it more effective.—RK).

From Utah:

“I’m in Utah State Prison. I was writing in hope of receiving your free materials that teach the Word of God, to help us find Him. Please.”

From Minnesota:

“I enjoyed reading my parents’ copy of the *Searchlight*, and now would like to receive my own subscription at my new apartment so I can share with my roommates.”

From Kenya:

“I have just come across one of your books, which after reading, it has given new revelation of the Word.”

From Georgia:

“Is it possible to start my new subscription to the *Searchlight* with last month’s issue? I was reading a friend’s copy, and I want to finish reading the articles.”

From Zimbabwe:

“We have a study group here and I share all my *Searchlights* with others. We have some students and lecturers who need Bible study literature. Any Bible literature is welcome.”

From Indiana:

“Here is our order for some Spanish books and booklets. We have just started up a Hispanic church and are now holding regular services. Any other literature in Spanish would be greatly appreciated. We have about 30 to 40 regulars, so hopefully they won’t mind sharing these ten copies of *Things That Differ*. We will use the booklets at the local Mexican grocery and ‘taqueria’.” (We are working on printing four more of our booklets in Spanish.—RK).

From Australia:

“I spent 15 years in Pentecostal-type churches, and I’m just so glad I came to the knowledge of the truth through studying Pastor Stam’s writings and others.”

“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

Grace Conference in Scenic Idaho

Dates: September 7-9, 2007

Location: *Grace Community Bible Church*
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For directions or more information, please contact:
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Wisconsin Bible Conference

Dates: September 21-23, 2007

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Speakers: Joel Finck and Peter Fries

For additional information, please contact:
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*Come for the sound preaching of
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NEWS AND ANNOUNCEMENTS

Martha Kaptan went home to be with the Lord on May 21st. Martha worked for Pastor Stam here at *Berean Bible Society* for many years when we were still located in Chicago. Her duties included keeping our extensive radio ministry in good order, and your assistant editor can look back on many profitable and enjoyable hours spent with Martha proofreading the *Searchlight*. We thank God for her faithful service, and what a comfort it must be for her daughters to know she is with Christ, which is far better.

Good News! *Grace Bible Fellowship* of Nokomis, Florida, has called Elvyn "Whitey" Myers to be their pastor. Brother Whitey had served as their interim pastor for several years, and so is no stranger to the saints of GBF. Please remember Pastor Myers and his wife Betty in prayer, and if you live or vacation in the area, be sure to pay them a visit. You are sure to be blessed by his ministry of the Word, rightly divided. Brother Whitey and Adult Sunday School Teacher Robert Brock make quite a team!

More Good News! The saints of *Grace Fellowship Bible Church* in Sheridan, Arkansas, have moved into their newly constructed church building, located at 413 Main Street. If you live in the area, or have plans that will bring you near the vicinity, Pastor Dick Ware and his wife Ruth would love to have you pay them a visit. You'll enjoy warm fellowship, and the sound teaching of the Word in the light of the Pauline revelation. For more information, see our *Spotlight on Grace Churches* on Page 23.

The 17th Mid-Atlantic Fall Grace Conference will be held again this year at White Sulfur Springs Hotel in Manns Choice, Pennsylvania. This year's theme of *The Names of God* will be addressed by several different Grace pastors, including featured speaker Pastor Richard Owsley of *St. Louis Theological Seminary*. The dates: September 7-9. For reservations or more information, write Suzanne Potter, 208 S. Alabama Avenue, Martinsburg, WV 25401, or call her at 304-263-2411. Come learn why this conference is a favorite among so many Grace believers!

News Correction: In our June *News & Announcements* we erroneously reported that *Beacon of Grace Bible Church* in St. Catherine's, Ontario, was looking for a pastor. The church is actually looking for an *assistant pastor* to aid Pastor Bill Petri in the ministry. For more information, contact Jim Bartkiw at 905-562-7170.

*Our cover lighthouse photo was taken by David Van Wyck of Jonesville, MI. The *Janet Head* (or *Gore Bay*) *Lighthouse* is located on the northern shore of Manitoulin Island, Ontario, Canada. Established in 1879, the light is a private home, but still an active aid to navigation.

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