

The BEREAN SEARCHLIGHT

Studying God's Word, Rightly Divided

December 2016



Feature Article

Praying for the Rascals, *by Ricky Kurth*5

Articles

Ambassadors For Christ, *by Paul M. Sadler*10
Men of Faith, Men of Worship..., *by Patrick Kilgo*13
I Will Not Forget Thy Word, *by Kevin Sadler*19

Departments

House Rules4
Question Box12
Paraskevidekatriaphobia18
News and Announcements30

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” (2 Tim. 2:15), to *energize* the Christian life, and to *encourage* the local church.

The *Berean Searchlight* is the official organ of the *Berean Bible Society*,
and is sent free of charge to any who request it.

Editor: Ricky L. Kurth—Graphic Design: Jessica Sadler (Book specials: Christine Mulholland)

Reader’s Rights & Responsibilities: BBS respects a reader’s right to hold views that differ from those of our writers. If a reader has a serious concern with a specific article, it is his or her responsibility to act in a manner that endeavors to preserve the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace. This can best be accomplished by contacting the editor, who will then forward your concerns to the author of the article in question. We promise to address all concerns in a timely manner.



You can reach us at:
BEREAN BIBLE SOCIETY
N112 W17761 Mequon Road
PO Box 756
Germantown, WI 53022

Main Office: (262) 255-4750 — Monday-Friday, 9 am to 5 pm, CT

Internet: www.bereanbiblesociety.org
E-mail: berean@bereanbiblesociety.org

The *Berean Searchlight* (ISSN 0005-8890), December 2016. Vol. 77, Number 9.

The *Berean Searchlight* is published monthly (except July) at no subscription price, by *Berean Bible Society*, N112 W17761 Mequon Rd., PO Box 756, Germantown, WI 53022-0756. Periodical postage paid at Germantown, WI. POSTMASTER: Send address changes to *Berean Searchlight*, N112 W17761 Mequon Rd., PO Box 756, Germantown, WI 53022-0756 and additional mailing offices.



A Note From the President

Dear Friends in Christ,

One Christmas a little boy was allowed to select a dog as his Christmas present. At the pet store he was shown a number of puppies. He looked them all over very carefully and spent time with each of them. From all the puppies he looked at, he chose one whose tail wagged wildly. When asked why he selected that particular dog, he explained, "I wanted the one with the happy ending." In the Gift that started it all, the Father has given us the assurance of a happy ending: eternal life with Him for those who have trusted His provision of salvation.

Most every gift we give this Christmas will be given because the recipient of that gift is near and dear to our hearts and is an important part of our lives. We buy gifts for our family and friends, as well as co-workers and neighbors, people that have touched our lives during the year.

What makes God's gift of His own Son so special is that He gave His Son for *sinners* and His *enemies*. Paul says in Romans 5:8,10:

"But God commendeth His love toward us, in that, while we were yet sinners, Christ died for us...For if when we were enemies, we were reconciled to God by the death of His Son, much more, being reconciled, we shall be saved by His life."

We were all enemies of God, sinners in rebellion against Him, yet God still gave His Son to die for us. God gave the *gift* of His Son, not because we were His friends, good people, because we deserved or earned it, or because He was obligated to do so. God gave His Son simply because of His great love for us. So when we look at the manger at Bethlehem this Christmas season, we must remember that Jesus Christ is a Gift of pure grace.

Christmas is all about God's unconditional love and the unspeakable gift of His Son. No one can out-give God. He gave us the very best that possibly could be given: His only begotten Son. And He gave Him for our highest good, so that believing in Him we may be saved from hell and have everlasting life. Out of gratitude for His gift, knowing that He "gave Himself for me" (Gal. 2:20), it is reasonable and right to give ourselves for Him by presenting our lives as a living sacrifice (Rom. 12:1; 2 Cor. 5:15; 8:5).

From all of us here at *Berean Bible Society*, we wish you a blessed and merry Christmas and the happiest of New Years.

Because of His grace,

Pastor Kevin Sadler, President



House Rules

“If ye have heard of the dispensation of the grace of God which is given me to you-ward” (Eph. 3:2).

God’s Word must be understood in the way God revealed His will to mankind. Therefore, it needs to be understood *dispensationally*. There is the broad division in Scripture between God’s two programs, Prophecy and Mystery, but then there are *dispensations* which must be broken down within it as well.

The term “dispensation” is the Greek word, *oikonomia*, which means “house law” or “house management.” At different times and stages in God’s Word, God *dispensed* to mankind a different and distinct rule of life.

Within each of our homes we have a certain set of rules that we expect our children to abide by. These are the house rules, the law of the household. Our house law may be different than your house law. For example, one time one of my kids came to me and said, “My friend’s family does it this way in their home, can’t we do this?” My response was “That’s their rules. We don’t do it that way in our house.” That’s the case in the dispensations of God. They each have their own set of house rules. We shouldn’t try to live by the house law belonging to another time and dispensation.

Within each dispensation of God, God dispensed a new set of “house laws or rules” that needed to be followed, and was the responsibility of those who lived under them to carry out and obey. God has given different commands to different people at different times throughout the Scripture.

It is also similar to presidential administrations. With the administration of our newly-elected president, there will be changes in how they govern and operate from the previous administration. It’s the same with the dispensations of God. God, according to His will, at different points of time in history, revealed a new administration in which there were changes in how man was to live and what was required to be saved.

Today we are under “the dispensation of the grace of God.” This current administration is an administration of grace. The house is managed by grace. Grace dominates everything about this dispensation under which we live. Our salvation is by grace, our walk is a grace walk, we are blessed by grace, our speech is with grace, and we sing with grace in our hearts, etc. There are countless principles to be applied throughout God’s Word, but the letters of Paul provide us with our “house rules” that we are to directly live by in this dispensation of Grace.

—Pastor Kevin Sadler



Praying for the Rascals

By Pastor Ricky Kurth

“I exhort therefore, that, first of all, supplications, prayers, intercessions, and giving of thanks, be made for all men;

“For kings, and for all that are in authority; that we may lead a quiet and peaceable life in all godliness and honesty” (1 Tim. 2:1,2).

After exhorting us to pray for “all men,” the Apostle Paul went on to single out the men for whom most Christians are least likely to pray: men in positions of authority in the government.

Now, maybe you’re thinking, “Why should I pray for those rascals? They’re just a bunch of self-serving scoundrels whose only interest is lining their pockets at our expense, and getting re-elected so they can *keep* lining their pockets at our expense, while they pass laws that erode our rights and make our lives miserable in the process. Not to mention taxing us into oblivion!” But this is precisely why God’s people must be *told* to pray for their leaders. Timothy lived under a *deplorable* king named Nero,

a ruler who was far worse than any that we here in the United States have ever known. No wonder Paul had to exhort Timothy to make “supplications” for Nero, a word that means to call on God to request something from Him (cf. Esther 4:8; 1 Kings 8:52).

What to Pray for Leaders

So what kind of supplication should we make for the leader of *our* government, our president? It seems that no matter who is in office, many would suggest we pray the supplication we read in Psalm 109:8: “Let his days be few; and let another take his office!” But how about this supplication instead: “Give the king Thy judgments, O God” (Psa. 72:1). Of course, we can’t expect that God will open the top of the king’s head and pour in sound judgment in some supernatural way. But we can follow Paul’s instruction to pray “that the word of the Lord may have free course” (2 Thes. 3:1), free course right up Pennsylvania Avenue to

the White House. God's Word can instill sound judgment in all men, and kings and other rulers are no exception. Not all the men who founded our country were saved, but the influence of God's Word can be seen in the government they established. Not all the men in our current government are saved, but God's Word has not lost its power to influence them in the same way that it influenced our founding fathers.

Besides supplications, Paul also directs that "prayers" be made for kings, a word that just means to talk to God about whatever is on your heart. Most Christians have no problem with this directive, and often approach God to air their grievances about our rulers, no matter which party is in office. But some Christians draw the line at offering the "intercessions" that Paul says should also be prayed for leaders, because intercessions are selfless prayers prayed to God solely on behalf of others, the kind of prayer the Lord prays for us (Rom. 8:34).

At this point, I can just hear some reader exclaim, "I'll intercede for the president, all right. May the fleas of a thousand camels infest his armpits. May 10,000 vampire bats mistake him for a crippled giraffe! Why would I want to offer sincere intercessions on behalf of a leader of whom I don't approve?"

Why We Should Pray for Leaders

Well, imagine for a moment that the United States was conquered by Canada, and they

carried us all back home to be their slaves. Our friends to the north wouldn't do this, of course.



But in such a case, would you feel like interceding with God on behalf of the hostile regime that had whisked you away from your homeland, and enslaved you and your family and your fellow citizens? Probably not. Yet when God inspired Jeremiah to write a letter "to all the people whom Nebuchadnezzar had carried away captive...to Babylon" (Jer. 29:1), He instructed them to...

"...seek the peace of the city whither I have caused you to be carried away captives, and pray unto the Lord for it: for in the peace thereof shall ye have peace" (Jer. 29:7).

Now just think about that! If Canada conquered and enslaved us, most Christians would be praying for them all right. They'd be praying, "Punish them, Lord! Beat 'em like a rented mule, and make them pay for what they are doing to us!" But how would that help you to "lead a quiet and peaceable life?" How would it profit you if God rained fire and brimstone down on the land in which you were being held captive?

It's no coincidence that Paul says to pray for our leaders "that" we might have peace, just as God told the citizens of Israel to pray for the peace of their captors that *they* might have peace. Since the citizens of Israel had to live in Babylon, it just made sense for God's people to pray for the peace of Babylon. In the same way, you're a citizen of heaven, but you have to live in the United States, so it just makes sense for you to pray for our leaders "that we may lead a quiet and peaceable life."

Paul's use of those words "quiet" and "peaceable" remind us of the Bible's description of the reign of Solomon (1 Chron. 22:9), whose reign was a type of the kingdom of heaven that God will one day establish here on earth for Israel. When the twelve apostles asked the Lord if it was time to "*restore again* the kingdom to Israel" (Acts 1:6), it was because they knew the kingdom would be a *restoration* of the peace and quiet they once enjoyed under Solomon. Accordingly, God promised that in that kingdom, "My people shall dwell in a *peaceable* habitation...and in *quiet* resting places" (Isa. 32:18).

The point? If a land filled with peace and quiet sounds good to you, Paul says that the best way to obtain these heaven-on-earth conditions is to pray for our leaders.

More Motivation to Pray for Leaders

At the risk of sounding like an infomercial—But wait! There's more! There are often *additional* benefits to praying for rulers. When the Babylonian captivity

was ending and God's people were returning home to Israel to rebuild the temple, we read:

"Darius the king made a decree...concerning the house of God at Jerusalem, Let the house be builded...and let the expenses be given out of the king's house...even of the tribute...and lambs, for the burnt-offerings..." (Ezra 6:1-9)

“Why would I want
to offer sincere
intercessions on
behalf of a leader
of whom
I don't approve?”

Did you catch that? King Darius not only commanded that the temple should be built, he commanded that *the financing* for the temple be provided "out of the king's house," and that animals should be supplied to God's people for them to sacrifice in their new temple. If you are wondering what possible motive a pagan king could have had to make such a generous gesture, the king wasn't shy about expressing it. He went on to explain himself within the body of the executive order, saying that he was bankrolling God's people...

"...that they may offer sacrifices...unto the God of heaven, and pray for the life of the king" (v.10).

Evidently Darius was aware of Jeremiah's instruction for God's people to pray for their captors in the past, so he authorized funding

for the re-establishment of their religion, that they might *continue* to pray for him, in response to his benevolence, upon their return home. An awareness of these Scriptural precedents might be what prompted the founding fathers of our own government to allow tax exemption to our churches, and an additional tax shielding for the gifts that God's people give to their churches.



Even if not, our response to these benefits should mirror that of God's people back then. That is, we should heed our apostle's behest to pray for all that are in authority in our own land.

A Pauline Parallel

We see this same Pauline principle exhibited later in this epistle, when Paul explained to Timothy that widows with no family to support them should be honored with financial support from the church (1 Tim. 5:3,4). Widows with no family support were forced to trust in God for their support (v. 5), and in this dispensation God rewards that trust with financial aid through the church.¹ In response, a widow could choose to offer “supplications and prayers” (1 Tim. 5:5) for the saints who

were providing her needs, or she could choose to live sinfully “in pleasure” (v. 6).

The proper response, of course, was for widows to pray intercessory prayers for the saints who were providing her needs, just as Anna did (Luke 2:36,37) in response to the triennial tithe that the people of Israel gave to support their widows (Deut. 14:28,29).

This is the only proper response to any such financial support. When I lead our morning devotions here at *Berean Bible Society*, I always pray for those of you who support our ministry financially. And the proper response to all of the benefits our government provides for us is to pray for them, rather than to live sinfully in cursing them (Job 34:18; Ecc. 10:20).

Okay, maybe you're convinced that you should pray for your leaders, but you draw the line at offering up “the giving of thanks” for them (1 Tim. 2:1). If so, remember that Paul calls the leader of our civil government “the *minister* of God” (Rom. 13:4). If you thank God for the ministry God provides you in your local church, and you thank God for the ministry that He provides you through *Berean Bible Society*, you should consider thanking Him for the ministry that “God's ministers” (Rom. 13:6) in civil government provide for you as well.

Finally, while history outside the Bible cannot be trusted, the Jewish historian Josephus wrote that in his day the Jews were offering daily sacrifices in the temple along with prayers for

the emperor, no doubt following Jeremiah's instructions about what Israel should do when in captivity. When they discontinued these sacrifices and prayers, it angered the emperor so severely that he commanded the temple be destroyed. If this is true, it points up the kind of ill will that *not* praying for our leaders can foster, especially when intercessory prayer is replaced by cursing and bitterness.

More Perks

In addition to the peace brought by rulers who are less likely to persecute people whom they know are praying for them, God's people are more likely to find *inner* peace if we spend our time praying for leaders instead of railing against them. It's *hard* to gripe about anyone for whom you are offering sincere and earnest supplications. That means, in addition to the benefit of peace and quiet in your land, praying for your leaders can also lead to peace and quiet *in your soul*. This writer has observed that people who are obsessed with raging against the government often live lives characterized by anything *but* peace.


Some who seethe against the government are even led to engage in civil disobedience that can only bring reproach to the name of the Lord (1 Tim. 3:7). This is an incorrect response to the benefits our government affords us. Paul says we should rather pray for our leaders "that we may lead a quiet and peaceable life *in all godliness and honesty*" (1 Tim. 2:2). In times of chaos and

anarchy, even honest and godly Christians are tempted to resort to dishonest thievery to provide for their families. So the reason we should pray "that we might lead a quiet and peaceable life" is not just so we can *enjoy* that peace, it is so we can enjoy it "in all godliness and honesty."



"...praying for
your leaders
can also lead to
peace and quiet
in your soul."

That's what makes praying for our leaders that we might have peace "good and acceptable in the sight of God" (1 Tim. 2:3). The gospel of grace and the Pauline revelation are much more likely to "have free course, and be glorified" (2 Thes. 3:1) in a land of peace and quiet than in a land dominated by oppression and unrest, and "God our Savior...will have all men to be saved, and to come unto the knowledge of the truth" (1 Tim. 2:4).

So pray for our leaders, beloved. It's for your own good, the good of your family, the good of your church, the good of your country, and the good of the gospel of grace and the Pauline revelation. 

Endnote

1. Compare how God cares for widows today to the miraculous way He provided for them in time past (2 Kings 4:1-7).



“Now then we are ambassadors for Christ, as though God did beseech you by us: we pray you in Christ’s stead, be ye reconciled to God” (2 Cor. 5:20).


Such a glorious message as reconciliation must at all cost be taken without haste to the unsaved masses. This is precisely what God did when He *commissioned* us as *ambassadors* for Christ. I read some time ago that in the Roman empire there were two types of provinces—senatorial and imperial. The senatorial provinces were peaceful for the most part, and never caused Rome any problem. This could not be said of the imperial ones, for they were dangerous and frequently rebelled against the empire. It was to the imperial provinces that Rome sent ambassadors to help ease tension and announce the emperor’s objectives. They were some of the first diplomats in the truest sense of the term.

In the present evil age in which we live, the world is an imperial province that has nothing but contempt for God. In the midst of this tumult, God has sent in His ambassadors to offer amnesty the world’s weary warriors of rebellion.

What an honor it would be to be chosen by the President of the United States to serve our country as an ambassador in a foreign land. Every ambassador seems to have three outstanding characteristics. First, they always look *presentable*. Secondly, they are *dignified*, and finally, they are *well informed* as to the goals of the commander in chief. If this is true in the affairs of men, how much more so as we represent Christ in His absence. Many in the world are dull of hearing and therefore need to hear again that God loves them and has reconciled them unto Himself. Unlike the Great Commission given to Israel, our commission does not concern nations, but individuals within the nations. Begin by committing the word of reconciliation to your loved ones, and remember that the mission field extends into foreign lands as well.

What has happened to the missionary zeal that was cradled in our country? The fires have seemingly gone out except for a few flickering

embers that yet glow. Pray that God will ignite a fire in our hearts for lost souls in other lands. Permit me to say that far too often our Grace Missionaries struggle on meager salaries that would probably be below the poverty level in this country. They have left family and friends and the security of our homeland to preach Christ to those who are less fortunate than ourselves. The very least we can do is to *encourage* them with our *financial* support and *pray* without ceasing for their needs. I suppose the polar caps would melt before the denominational churches of North America would come to their assistance, for reasons that are obvious. We must rise to the occasion on their behalf before the doors of third-world countries are completely closed.

A Herculean task lies before us to spread the *word of reconciliation*. And may it ever be before us that "...if one died for all, then were all dead." Can it be truthfully said that *all* who have been born of the woman are born in sin and therefore spiritually dead? Then as the apostle says, Christ died for all *without exception* (2 Cor. 5:14,15). Yes, Christ died for you! "Now is the accepted time, **NOW IS THE DAY OF SALVATION.**" How many would you say have died in the last 24 hours around the world? Tomorrow death may tap you on the shoulder and say, "Your hour has come." Time is of the essence; to receive God's wonderful offer of reconciliation, simply believe that Christ died for *your sins personally* and rose again the third day for *your* justification. Do it today, eternity awaits. 

An Excerpt from *Exploring the Unsearchable Riches of Christ*.

Florida Bible Conference

Dates: January 7-8, 2017

Location:

Haven of Grace Bible Church
13520 Foxcrest Blvd., Winter Garden, Florida (near Orlando)

Guest Speaker:

Pastor Kevin Sadler, *Berean Bible Society*

For questions or additional information, please contact:

Pastor John Fredericksen at 407-952-0510 or

email: jrfgrace@gmail.com

www.havenofgracebiblechurch.com



Question Box

"How is Christ the Savior of all men, specially of them that believe?"

"...the living God...is the Savior of all men, specially of those that believe" (1 Tim. 4:10).

"...the Father sent the Son to be the Savior of the world" (1 John 4:14), but "it pleased God...*to save them that believe*" (1 Cor. 1:21). So God is the *potential* Savior of all, and the *particular* Savior of all that believe. Righteousness is offered "unto all," but it only comes "*upon* all them that believe" (Rom. 3:22).

But in the context of 1 Timothy 4:10, it is possible Paul had even more than this in mind. In Verse 16, he told Timothy:

"Take heed unto thyself, and unto the doctrine; continue in them: for in doing this thou shalt both save thyself, and them that hear thee."

Since Timothy was already saved from his sins, Paul must be saying he could save himself and his hearers from all the misery and heartache that *not* taking heed to Pauline doctrine always brings. Unsaved men can benefit from *this* kind of salvation as well.

Remember, a few verses earlier, Paul told believers that "godliness is profitable...*having promise of the life that now is*, and of that which is to come" (v. 8). Every believer knows that living a godly life will yield the profit of rewards at the Judgment Seat of Christ in the life to come. But godliness also profits richly in this life as well. Berean Bible Society founder Pastor C. R. Stam used to say that if he died and found out that Christianity was all a lie, that there was no life after death or rewards in the life to come, he wouldn't regret a moment of the life he had lived, for it is the richest, most rewarding and satisfying life that can be lived.

But even unbelievers know by experience that "the way of transgressors is hard" (Prov. 13:15), and that "virtue is its own reward." So Christ can save *them* from misery and heartache as well, as they inadvertently take heed to "the doctrine that is according to godliness" (1 Tim. 6:3).

And so, just as the sun and the rain that God gives all men can save unsaved men from the deprivation they would know without these things in life (Matt. 5:45; Acts 17:17), adhering to Christian principles can save unsaved men from misery and heartache in life. That makes God "the Savior of all men," but specially of them that believe, for them that believe will *also* be saved from an eternity in the lake of fire in the life which is to come.

—Pastor Kurth



Men of Faith, Men of Worship

The Wise Men From the East

By Patrick D. Kilgo

At Christmas, many of us cherish the nativity scene: Mary and Joseph, animals, shepherds and wise men all gathered to worship newborn Jesus. There's only one problem—the wise men weren't even there! Considering what they actually went through, the wise men no doubt would have preferred this cozy setting! Instead, they faced dangerous robbers, harsh elements, a blood-thirsty king, and cowardly priests—all just for a chance to visit the Messiah. But just who were these wise men? And how did they have knowledge of “the King of the Jews?” How did they know to associate a star with His birth?

The Wise Men from the East

To answer these questions, it is vital to understand what the Bible teaches about the civilizations to the east of Israel. Following the reign of King David, the Jewish nation began a slow descent into idolatry and ruin. Solomon, David's son, wiser than the wise

men of the east (1 Kings 4:30), started well but finished poorly, falling into idolatry and wickedness (1 Kings 11:1-13). Soon David's kingdom was divided into two separate nations—Judah and Israel (1 Kings 11:30-37). Eventually both nations lost their sovereignty, and were taken captive by other nations as a judgment for their idolatry (2 Kings 17:5-23, 25:1-11). Judah, the nation of Christ's lineage, was defeated by the Babylonians and its people deported as slaves to Babylon.

Babylon, to the east of Israel and Judah, was famous in the ancient world for its academic achievements. The prophet Daniel and his companions, young slaves from Judah, were trained by the greatest thinkers and scientists of the ancient world—the Chaldeans (Dan. 1:3-4). These Chaldeans are later called “wise men” (Dan. 2:2 cf. 2:12-49).

While Daniel was still a young man, the wise men, his teachers, faced a crisis. King Nebuchadnezzar had a bad dream that deeply

troubled him. He called the “the magicians, and the astrologers, and the sorcerers, and the Chaldeans”—the wise men—and demanded that they not only tell him the interpretation but also provide the details of the dream, which he had forgotten (Dan. 2:1-5). In the history of unreasonable requests, this one is near the top of the list. How could the wise men know another man’s dreams, much less interpret them? This made the king angry and he decreed that “the wise men should be slain; and they sought Daniel and his fellows to be slain” (Dan. 2:13).

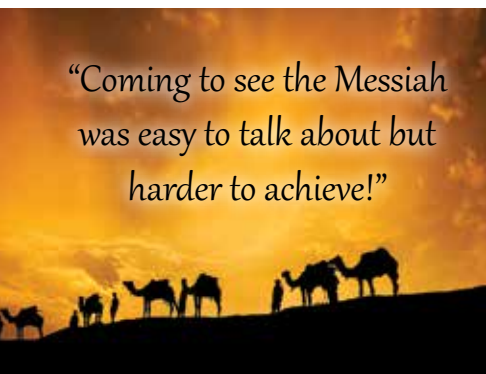
governors over all the wise men of Babylon” (Dan. 2:46-48).

What an amazing turn of events! Daniel went from being sentenced to death to being the top wise man in Babylon. The Bible says that “in all matters of wisdom and understanding, that the king enquired of them, he found them ten times better than all the magicians and astrologers that were in all his realm” (Dan. 1:20).

Thus, for the rest of his life, all of which was spent in captivity, Daniel had pre-eminent influence over the smartest men in the world. Pretend you were a wise man, and that your boss was ten times smarter than you and had saved you and your family from execution by relying on the God of Israel. Wouldn’t you ensure that his teachings and his God were remembered for generations to come? These wise men and their progeny (including those in Matthew 2) no doubt perpetuated the influence of Daniel for many generations.

Daniel’s prophecies concerning the Messiah form the link between the “wise men from the east” (Matt. 2:1) and the birth of Jesus Christ. One such prophecy, the so-called “seventy weeks prophecy,” concerned the timing of the Messiah’s arrival. Daniel no doubt expounded on this prophecy and its timing to the wise men of his day, who themselves passed it on to the fraternity of wise men in future generations.

But while this prophecy explains the timing of Messiah, what about the star they saw in the east? What does it have to



*“Coming to see the Messiah
was easy to talk about but
harder to achieve!”*

Notice carefully that Daniel was one of the wise men! But before all the wise men could be executed, God revealed the dream and the interpretation to Daniel, and he arranged to tell the dream to the king (Dan. 2:24). After telling him the dream and the interpretation (2:25-45), Nebuchadnezzar became a believer in the God of Israel saying, “Of a truth it is, that your God is a God of gods, and a Lord of kings, and a revealer of secrets, seeing thou couldest reveal this secret,” and he appointed Daniel “chief of the

do with the coming of Messiah? There are several possibilities. The wise men were astrologers—star-studiers! Perhaps they saw a special star in the night sky, one that was not supposed to be there according to their charts. Or, perhaps they knew something of the messianic prophecy of Balaam, the only Gentile prophet recorded in Scripture before Christ. Himself an “easterner” from the town of Pethor on the Euphrates River, Balaam gave this prophecy concerning a coming Jewish leader:

“I shall see Him, but not now: I shall behold Him, but not nigh: there **shall come a Star out of Jacob, and a Sceptre shall rise out of Israel**, and shall smite the corners of Moab, and destroy all the children of Sheth. And Edom shall be a possession, Seir also shall be a possession for his enemies; and Israel shall do valiantly. **Out of Jacob shall come He that shall have dominion**, and shall destroy him that remaineth of the city.”—Numbers 24:17-19.

Perhaps Daniel shared these passages with the wise men of his day. If so, it would explain why the wise men, renowned for their astronomy, knew to associate a special star with the coming Messiah King. They came to Jerusalem, the city of the kings, looking for more answers.

Traveling to Jerusalem from Babylon

Note carefully that the Scripture does not say that they “followed” the star to Jerusalem. Rather, they saw it from the east (Matt. 2:2). This is an important

detail, as we will see, and one that people often get confused.

Coming to see the Messiah was easy to talk about but harder to achieve! The distance between Babylon and Jerusalem was about 570 miles. However, the biblical and historical evidence suggests that no road existed to link the cities in a straight line. The common route that the Babylonians used to travel to Jerusalem, which was 1500 miles long, had them travel far to the northwest and then south again through Syria and Galilee until they finally arrived “out of the north” (Jer. 1:14-15).

The route the wise men took was perhaps the same one Ezra’s group had taken hundreds of years earlier from Babylon in their journey to re-establish temple worship in Jerusalem. The established routes were known to have thieves who would ambush travelers on the road. This was such a concern for Ezra that he declared a fast to ask God’s favor on their trip (Ezra 8:21,31-32). The danger was so great he would have asked the king for a military escort, but he was “ashamed” to look faithless after assuring the king that God would protect them (v. 22). But if the specter of a hazardous journey worried Ezra, you can bet it worried the wise men too! They had expensive gifts they needed to protect and, remember, no star to follow!

Israel Caught Off Guard by Her Messiah

The people of Israel, to their shame, were completely ignorant concerning their newborn Messiah

(Matt. 2:3). To their shame, a band of Gentiles from a pagan land had to break the news to them. We are not told how many wise men came. Due to the number of gifts recorded, tradition holds that three wise men came, but that is all but impossible. These were not rugged outdoorsmen; on the contrary, these were “white collar” men. They would have needed a military escort, porters, animal caretakers, cooks, and other service-oriented people. The band was probably dozens of people, if not hundreds. Perhaps the size of the party was why “all Jerusalem” was troubled when they arrived (Matt. 2:3).

However, the reason Herod was troubled is clear. Herod saw the Christ child as a threat to his reign. He had no intentions of relinquishing the crown to anyone. Herod had violently shown that even his own bloodlines would not come between him and the crown.



Imagine how the wise men must have felt to arrive in Jerusalem and see so much indifference, so much apathy. They probably started to doubt themselves. Maybe they were wrong about the Messiah being born. Maybe the star meant something else. Surely

if He had been born there would be more excitement in Israel! Where was the rejoicing? Instead, all the wise men had observed in Jerusalem was ignorance and alarm. They must have been very discouraged.

Herod decided to deal with the wise men personally and privately (2:7-8). He inquired “diligently what time the star appeared,” that is, “exactly” when it appeared. He wanted to exterminate the child, whom he considered competition, and needed to know the child’s age; He was under two years old. Herod granted them passage to find the child, sending them to Bethlehem where the Messiah was supposed to be born (Matt. 2:4-6). They were no doubt dejected, discouraged, confused and frightened, but the wise men set out for Bethlehem nonetheless.

But God is faithful! Just as the wise men turned south towards Bethlehem, God used the mysterious star to guide them supernaturally. But why? Bethlehem was notoriously small, certainly small enough to find the child without any supernatural help (Micah 5:2). The answer is this: Jesus wasn’t there, and hadn’t been for at least a year! His family had been traveling at the time of His birth (Luke 2:1-6). On the 41st day of Jesus’ life, after visiting the Jerusalem temple in accordance with the Law, the young family returned home to Nazareth (Luke 2:39). The star which the wise men had only “seen” in the east now “went before them” (Matt. 2:9) leading them to “where the young child was”—Nazareth! Little wonder

they “rejoiced with exceeding great joy” (2:10) as they traveled north to the correct location and not south to another dead end!

Gifts from the Wise Men

When they arrived at Jesus’ house in Nazareth, the wise men worshipped Him and gave Him three symbolic, and practical, gifts—gold, frankincense and myrrh. Symbolically, each gift corresponded to a role that the

mentioned in Scripture alongside other fine materials (Lev. 5:11, 1 Chron. 9:29, Neh. 13:5). Myrrh, an embalming fluid, would have had great monetary value to the Egyptians, who were known even then to mummify their dead (Gen. 37:25).

Their goal of worshipping the Messiah completed, the wise men turned for home “another way” (Matt. 2:12). Their return journey would have taken close to a year, and been no less harrowing than the first leg of the trip!

And so ends the amazing story of the wise men. With a little imagination, and by comparing Scripture with Scripture, we can know quite a lot about these faithful men. They sacrificed years of their lives just to worship the Messiah for just a few fleeting moments.

Can you think of anyone in the Bible with more faith than these men? I cannot, and I’m left asking myself some hard questions: Would I risk so much time and effort based on old information for a chance to worship the Messiah? Would I travel 3000 robber-infested miles, deal with maniacal monarchs and endure harsh elements just for a brief glimpse of Him? Would I use my own money to try to see Him, not knowing for sure I even would, or could? Is my faith that strong? I’m not so sure it is. Today, as we enjoy the free access to God purchased by the Messiah at the cross, may we ever and always reverence and worship the Lord Jesus Christ just as the wise men did so long ago. Merry Christmas!




Messiah would fill: gold for Christ as King, frankincense for Christ as Priest, myrrh for Christ as suffering Prophet. Jesus Christ is the only person in the Bible to fill all three roles.

However, the gifts also divinely addressed the short-term financial needs of the young family. A gift of gold from wise men to a baby king is not surprising at all. The biblical evidence is clear that Mary and Joseph were poor (compare Luke 2:22-24 with Lev. 12:8). They would very soon need the money since they would have to escape in the middle of the night to travel 150 miles to Egypt, presumably leaving all their belongings behind (Matt. 2:13). Frankincense is also mentioned frequently in the Bible. We know that it was an expensive gift because it is usually

PARASKEVIDEKATRIAPHOBIA

By Pastor Ricky Kurth



If you don't know what that is, I can't say as I blame you. If I were a smart aleck, I might "explain" that paraskevidekatriaphobia is a derivation of *triskaid-ekaphobia*, but that would probably leave most of our readers just as befuddled. But the latter is *the fear of the number thirteen*, and the former refers to the more specific phobia of *fear of Friday the 13th*.

Before you start thinking that people with these phobias should just grow up and get over it, you might want to consider how society itself contributes to this fear. You've never stepped off the elevator on to the thirteenth floor of a tall building, simply because the highly educated architects that design our skyscrapers superstitiously refuse to include one. If that old movie made it seem rational that Kris Kringle was Santa Claus by noting that the United States Post Office directed mail to him, it's easy to understand how buildings without a 13th floor make a fear of the number 13 seem rational as well.

The effects of paraskevidekatriaphobia are claimed to be extensive. Since many Americans refuse to fly or conduct business on a Friday the 13th, it is said the economy suffers an estimated 800 million dollar loss every time this date rolls around. Back in the 1930s, the influence of this phobia even reached the highest office in our land, as FDR refused to travel on Friday the 13th.

It may surprise you to learn that the origin of this phobia finds its roots in the Bible, when thirteen men observed the last supper. One was a traitor, and tradition (wrongly) holds that the Lord was crucified a few hours later on a Friday.

What's the cure for paraskevidekatriaphobia? An old joke says if you can pronounce the word, you're cured! In 1913, a pastor tried to cure people by officiating at Friday the 13th weddings without charge. But since superstition is the veneration of something that deserves none, a better way to help people overcome this superstition is to do what Paul did when he encountered some superstitious people (Acts 17:22) and preach the death, burial, and resurrection of Christ (v. 23-31). The world considers Paul's gospel to be superstition (Acts 25:19), "but unto us which are saved it is the power of God" (1 Cor. 1:18). Paul's use of the present tense here shows his gospel is more than just "the power of God unto salvation" (Rom. 1:16). Once we are saved, his gospel "is" *still* the power of God to help us overcome "the spirit of fear" with the spirit "of...a sound mind" (2 Tim. 1:7), a mind made sound by a full knowledge of Paul's gospel.

I Will Not Forget Thy Word

A New Years Challenge

By Pastor Kevin Sadler

"I will delight myself in Thy statutes: I will not forget Thy Word" (Psa. 119:16).

A man went to his doctor for his yearly check-up. The doctor noticed that he looked a little worried, so he asked if there was anything bothering him. The man replied, "Actually, yes there is. I seem to be getting forgetful. I can never remember where I've parked my car, where I'm going, what I'm supposed to do once I get there...if I get there. Sometimes I catch myself with a jar of mayonnaise in my hand, while standing in front of the refrigerator, and I can't remember whether I need to put it away, or start making a sandwich. So, you see, I really need your help. Is there anything I can do?" "Yes, there is one thing," the doctor said. "What's that?" asked the man. The doctor answered, "Pay me in advance!"

New Years is our yearly reminder of the things we need to prioritize and remember so we

don't forget the important things in our lives. There are always priorities and resolutions about working less, losing weight, quitting bad habits. But putting God first, reprioritizing our lives so we do this, is vitally important.

One way we put God first is by prioritizing our marriages and families. God wants us to care for, nurture, and provide for those relationships where we make the deepest impact, among those closest to us in life in the home. God has given us our families and spouses as a gift, and He wants us to give them our time and ourselves.

We also put God first by commitment to the local church and attending and serving others there. Our personal time with the Lord is also a very important way that we put God first in our lives.

Leroy Eims writes this: One spring, my family and I were driving from Fort Lauderdale to Tampa, Florida. As far as the eye

could see, orange trees were loaded with fruit. When we stopped for breakfast, I ordered orange juice with my eggs. The waitress said, "I'm sorry, I can't bring you orange juice. Our machine is broken." At first I was dumbfounded. We were surrounded by millions of oranges, and I knew they had oranges in the kitchen. Orange slices garnished our plates. Juice was not the problem. We were surrounded by thousands of gallons of juice. The problem was they had become dependent on a machine to get it. Christians are sometimes like that. They may be surrounded by Bibles in their homes and libraries, but if something should happen to the Sunday morning service, they would have no nourishment for their souls. The problem is not a lack of spiritual food, but that many Christians depend on others and don't know how to get it for themselves.

God wants us to know Him. We know Him through His Word. He has given us His Word so we may know Him for ourselves. We don't get zapped with understanding and knowledge in anything in life. It takes time to learn things, whether it's the things we learn in school, on the job, in our hobbies, and just about life in general in this world. We grow in our knowledge and understanding. It doesn't happen overnight. But many don't have the patience to learn and grow with God's Word that they might give to other things in life.

However, as we patiently, faithfully, consistently spend time with God's Word, we grow, our

knowledge and understanding increases, and we go deeper and deeper into the glories of knowing God, knowing His character, nature, and His plans, purposes and will. The Apostle Paul's heart's desire was "That I may know Him" (Phil. 3:10). The Bible has rightly been called "A Him Book," because it is all centered on and focused on Him, the Lord Jesus Christ. To "know Him" we need to know the Word.

Let Me Not Wander

"Wherewithal shall a young man cleanse his way? by taking heed thereto according to Thy Word. With my whole heart have I sought Thee: O let me not wander from Thy commandments" (Psa. 119:9,10).

The psalmist asks a question and answers it himself. He simply asks, how shall a person clean up his life? The answer: by heeding God's Word. By obeying God's way, our ways and lives can be cleaned up, changed, and made right. As it's been said, "The Bible was not just given for our information, but for our transformation."

The Bible is a book to be heeded and obeyed by faith, knowing that it contains supreme wisdom in all that it teaches. We must humble ourselves and submit to it, knowing that God has the answers and will guide us into the way that's best for our lives.

The psalmist with his "whole heart" seeks God, and he seeks God as God desires, by wholeheartedly devoting himself to His Word, not wandering from its commandments. The farther we wander away from the Word,

the farther we wander from God, and a distance comes into our relationship with God, practically speaking. The opposite is true as well, the more time we spend in the Word, the closer we become to the Lord. By his desire not to wander from the Word, the writer is declaring his desire to not wander from the Lord, and to be close and near to the Lord in life.

This is a good challenge for all of us in the coming new year: to resolve not to wander, to make a wholehearted commitment with God's help to get into God's Word this year on a regular basis, knowing that this will lead to nearness to the Lord. With this challenge is an encouragement to make it realistic on yourself so you don't give it up after a period of time, as with so many New Years resolutions. We need to make Bible reading a part of our lives, for it to fit naturally into the flow of our lives, making it something we know needs to be a priority so that we don't neglect it or forget it. But do what works for you. Don't follow the model of others. Do what works in your life so that you're in God's Word regularly.

Listen to the Bible on CD if you have trouble reading. Or listen and read at the same time. Use Daily Reading Planners if they work for you, or make your own plan. Use a Bible with larger print. Use a Bible app on your phone. Set a time or do it spontaneously. Read while you're waiting somewhere. Read God's Word anytime, anywhere.

When you're reading God's Word, if you don't understand something, write down your

questions. Oftentimes the Bible answers itself as you keep reading. Or bring your questions to church and ask your pastor. Or ask Pastor Ricky Kurth. He's our "answer man" here at *Berean Bible Society* and is good at his job.



Prioritize your time with God's Word, because God wants us to prioritize Him as first in our lives. He wants us to have the heart of the psalmist here not to wander and to wholeheartedly seek Him and His Word.

Hidden in My Heart

"Thy Word have I hid in mine heart, that I might not sin against Thee" (Psa. 119:11).

The writer also hides God's Word in his heart. He internalizes it, and it changes his life. God's Word is our defense against sin to keep it out of our lives. God's Word gives us strength in life. The closer we stay to the Lord and His Word, the farther we stay away from sin.

It's been rightly said that "The most important Book in the world is the Bible. The most important place to put it is in the heart." God's Word is filled with challenges and exhortations to

implant God's truth in our hearts. Proverbs 4:4 says "Let thine heart retain My words." Proverbs 7:3 speaks of writing the Word "upon the tablet of thine heart." Job 22:22 says, "Lay up His words in thine heart."

Having God's Word hidden in your heart changes your attitude and outlook on life. Your thinking changes and you become observant about what's important, about why this world and people are the way they are, and of this world's deep need of Christ. Having God's Word hid in the heart, your faith is solidified, your hope is strengthened, and your love increases.

Hiding God's Word in our hearts also reminds us of the importance of Scripture memorization. Scripture memorization is not like Trix cereal: just for kids! We all need to do this. It's



for all ages. Memorization pays great spiritual dividends. It strengthens your prayer life. It sharpens your witnessing. Your counsel will be in demand having God's Word always on the tip of your tongue.

Turn to a passage that speaks to you, that has helped you, and commit that passage to memory.

You can learn isolated verses, but consider doing whole sections of Scripture, chapters. Doing this you get the flow of thought God has in mind. Scripture memorization can be an incredible testimony of your love for the Lord and His Word and its importance to your life.

Teach Me

"Blessed art Thou, O Lord: teach me Thy statutes" (Psa. 119:12).

The writer then praises God and asks Him to teach him. This request to be taught and led deeper into the Word is a request to be led into a deeper, fuller knowledge of God. To know God is the greatest thing to know in life! We each have a personal, individual responsibility and need to know Him and grow in His Word. Look for avenues to help you. Use the distance studies from *Berean Bible Institute*. Volunteer to teach a Bible study which drives you deeper into the Word when you must present it to others.

This verse reminds us that when we get into God's Word ourselves that we should pray when we read. Pray a simple prayer. It doesn't have to be a long, glorious prayer. Just a short, simple, to-the-point prayer, like v. 12: "Teach me Thy statutes." It's been said that "The Bible is the only Book where the Author is with you every time you read it." Ask the Holy Spirit, the Bible's Author, to show you things, to teach you, to help you understand His Word.

One of the Holy Spirit's ministries under grace is illumination.

He enlightens us to the truths in His Word. Illumination has to do with the Spirit enlightening us to spiritual meanings and what God's truth means to us *personally*. The illumination the Spirit gives is about understanding what it means to your life. Illumination is about heart-change, not just mind-filling and knowing facts. True spiritual understanding takes place as the truths of God's Word travel from the head to the heart and change both our thinking and our heart. In Ephesians 1:17,18, the Apostle Paul prayed,

"That the God of our Lord Jesus Christ, the Father of glory, may give unto you the spirit of wisdom and revelation in the knowledge of Him: the eyes of your understanding being enlightened."

The goal of the Spirit's work of enlightenment and giving wisdom and knowledge, helping us make connections, understand spiritual meanings, is to increase our "knowledge of Him." Knowing Christ and being more like Him is what truly changes us and transforms our lives.

Rejoicing in Thy Testimonies

"With my lips have I declared all the judgments of Thy mouth. I have rejoiced in the way of Thy testimonies, as much as in all riches" (Psa. 119:13,14).

The Word, which the psalmist has hid in his heart, now comes out through his lips in declaring it to others. He declares the Word with his lips, which he says, first came from the "mouth" of God who breathed it out. God wants us to be His mouthpiece to share His

Word with others. The psalmist's deep delight in the Word led to his desire to share its truths with others. His deep belief and trust in what God's Word says made him want to pass it on. Evangelism and sharing the Word is not something that should be done from compulsion, but is an overflow of joy at the good news you fully trust and know to be the truth.

The psalmist lifted up his voice and spoke it *out* to others, and then lifted his voice *up* and rejoiced to God for His Word, rejoicing in it because he has found it of greater worth and value than all the riches of this world.

A number of years ago a story appeared which told of a man who picked up a beautiful rock from a North Carolina stream bed and used it as his cabin doorstep for three years. Then a geologist, who was hiking in the area, stopped at the cabin and noticed the doorstep,



which he immediately recognized as a huge lump of gold. In fact, it proved to be one of the largest gold nuggets ever found east of the Rockies, a 17-lb nugget.

The Bibles we own are of *eternal* significance and value. The Bible is much more than decoration for a table, or another book

for the bookshelf, or a place to put pictures or important papers. So many unknowingly don't know the treasure they have in owning a Bible. It is the very Word of God. It is His wisdom, His revelation to man. The Bible is a mine of exhaustless wealth.

In some things we should be content, but when it comes to the Bible, we should never be satisfied with how much we know. For those who patiently, consistently search and learn the Word, there is *always* more treasure for God to reveal to us and in which for us to rejoice. It's important to read God's Word, but this reminds us that it's also important to study it, to dig into it. There are riches on its surface when you read, but there are even more, greater riches as you dig in deeper and study it closely.

You see the results of spending time in God's Word in all this, as you see blessing in v. 12 and joy in v. 14. As a result of closeness to God's Word, and thus a closer relationship to the Lord, it results in joy, blessing, comfort, and encouragement. People search for these things in many other places, but we find these things by spending time in the Word of God.

I Will Meditate

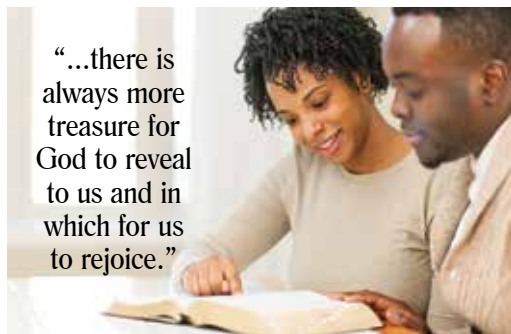
"I will meditate in Thy precepts, and have respect unto Thy ways. I will delight myself in Thy statutes: I will not forget Thy Word" (Psa. 119:15,16).

The psalmist dedicates himself to meditate on God's precepts. Meditating is just thinking about the Word and passages of Scripture, rehearsing what you've

learned in your mind. Meditating is about contemplating God and His Person, considering His overall plans and will and how it all fits together, thinking about what He's saying to you personally.

Often the Spirit illuminates truth in those moments, when you make spiritual connections and other verses and truths come to mind. You can do this at work, laying awake at night, cutting the grass, doing dishes, etc. God's desire for us to meditate shows He wants His Word on our minds at all times.

"...there is always more treasure for God to reveal to us and in which for us to rejoice."



The writer says he'll meditate on God's "precepts." The term "precepts" speaks of instructions from a superior to those under Him regarding the duties they are to perform. This is a definition of what God's Word is. Thus we are to "respect" His ways, knowing that the Superior who has given the Word is the One who is Superior above all.

The duties that we are to perform, however, are something we must obey as we rightly divide God's Word (2 Tim. 2:15). All Scripture is *for us*, and is profitable for doctrine, reproof, for correction, instruction, and is all for our learning (2 Tim. 3:16; Rom.


15:4), but not all Scripture is written directly to us.

God gave Israel precepts that they were to perform under the law, and God has given the Body of Christ duties and precepts we are to perform and obey under grace. We must rightly divide between God's instruction for Israel and His instruction for the Body so that we rightly apply God's Word to our lives. Thus as we read, study, meditate, and apply God's Word we must do so in light of Paul's letters of grace and the Word rightly divided.

A simple breakdown of the Word, rightly divided, is that the Old Testament and the Gospels (Genesis-John) were written to the nation Israel according to God's plans for them and their earthly kingdom hope. Acts is a transition book from Peter to Paul and from Israel to the Body of Christ. Paul's epistles (Romans-Philemon) are our letters for today and are Christ's direct commands for the Body of Christ

under grace in accordance with our heavenly hope. The letters of Hebrews through Revelation are letters for Israel, after the dispensation of grace and the Rapture, for their direct application in the Tribulation and in the Kingdom.

Finally the psalmist says he would "delight" himself in God's Word. God's Word is not, as some suppose, God trying to take away delight and joy in life. Instead God's Word *gives this* to our lives as we obey it.

"I will not forget Thy Word." That's a resolution to make for this coming year in 2017. Not forgetting the Word is about not forgetting the Lord and our relationship with Him. And as we don't forget the Lord, we can never forget what He has done for us, which the truth of God's Word declares, that Christ died for our sins and paid our sin debt in full, and He rose again for us, that we might have eternal life and an eternal home in heaven. 

The Best Response to Problems

When the King of Assyria sent a threatening and blasphemous letter to King Hezekiah, he had an exemplary response for a believer in any dispensation. He went immediately to the Lord in prayer, literally spreading the letter before the Lord. He begins by acknowledging God's greatness and the gravity of his situation. Then he asks the Lord to intervene on Judah's behalf. But his stated reason was NOT merely so that their burdens would be lifted. He asks for deliverance from these invaders "that all the kingdoms of the earth might know that Thou art the LORD God, even Thou only" (2 Kings 19:19). In other words, he wanted God to be glorified and lost souls drawn to Jehovah. While reading this passage, it causes the student to wonder: How much more effective would our prayers be and how much more frequently would they be answered if this was our true motive in prayer?

—Pastor John Fredericksen



2 Kings
18:33-19:19



BBS Letter Excerpts

From Florida:

"I've been introduced to the Word rightly divided...a lot of questions are now being answered...I was introduced to Christ's awesome work on the cross as a child but unfortunately it has taken more than 30 years before I was exposed to this new doctrine...This new information causes my hungry spirit to rejoice as it satisfies an internal life-long hunger that has burned inside me... Your studies have given me solid ground from which to build...Your ministry has blessed my life."

From Lesotho:

"I am 22 years old, the founder of *Faith Action Ministries*...I have been reading your messages about grace and others, and I am still shocked by the truth I got. I could not sleep. I kept on meditating on them the whole night. These series have enlightened my knowledge in Christ as a young minister. I am now ready to share the gospel of the dispensation of Grace with my Church and other ministers in my country."

From California:

"I used to own a great book. A book that I loved to read and let others read...This book...helps teach men and opens their understanding to Bible truth...The name of the book is *Things That Differ*. This book is awesome and helps to set men straight on what God says and means...I really need this book...besides the Bible this was my best tool."

From Indiana:

"You have given me hope, and a new focus. I was just so hurt and angry...May God bless you richly for your knowledge and patience with this foolish woman. I love your articles and sermons, and I will listen to one some more today." (It is wise, not foolish, to seek Biblical counsel.—Ed).

From Colorado:

"Thank You so much. You have helped me to understand a lot. I love your daily Bible studies and the *Berean Searchlight*. I understand Right Division and the Mystery and am so glad to have been introduced to it. It makes the Bible come alive and understandable."

From Illinois:

"I got the book (*God's Meaning in Matthew*), and I kind of hesitated about reading a book that size, but I put that thought out of my head. It was a wrong thought, and so I started to read it. Now I have trouble putting the book down, even when my wife calls out that dinner is ready." (The spirit of Job 23:12 lives!—Ed).

From Pennsylvania:

"A friend turned me on to some of ya'll's literature and I *loved it!* You really break the Scriptures down to make them much more understandable. Could you please put me on your mailing list and send me a catalog? Also, could you please answer three questions for me...."

From Washington:

"I would like to order John Fredricksen's new commentary *God's Meaning in Matthew*...Thank you for your continued faithfulness to our Lord and the Word, rightly divided. What a blessing Pastor Kevin's ministry has been!"

From Ohio:

"I have never read an article on the subject of Christian counseling like the one...in the March *Searchlight*. I too have seen and felt the pain of incompetent counseling received from pastors who do not rightly divide the Word...God help the church to receive the insight of this wisdom and begin to minister to one another."

From Arkansas:

"I wanted to thank you for your prompt and in-depth answer to my question about Obadiah 15 and 16. The reason I asked is that we were having a Bible study with another couple and...the lady asked me what the last line in verse 16 meant, and I didn't have a good answer...Your promptness 'blew me away'...Please add the lady to the *Searchlight* mailing list at her request."

From our Inbox:

"At your suggestion, I'm now enjoying my second year of reading the Bible through. I've been truly blessed and my walk with the Lord has been enriched." (It's almost time to start again on January 1!—Ed).

From Canada:

"Just read today's email: 'The Faith of Jesus Christ' by Pastor Cornelius R. Stam. Again I applaud Pastor Stam for making it so easy to understand the love of Jesus."

From our Inbox:

"I just read your article here about what the Bible means in telling Christians 'to judge or not to judge' by Paul Sadler. Good article! I wish more people would read it. I've saved it as a help when I need to explain to other believers what the Bible means in saying, 'Judge Not.' I'll also be emailing a portion of it to a friend."

From Rhode Island:

"Thank you so very much for sending me the *Searchlight*. I have been learning a lot about rightly dividing the Word of God, and also the different dispensations in the Bible!"

From our Inbox:

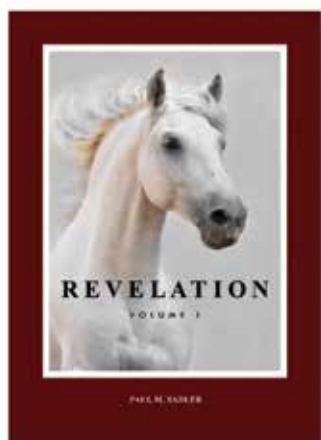
"In March, I called to ask to have the *Searchlight* magazine sent to me. I just received the first issue which was March and was wondering if you could send me the February issue. A friend of mine receives your magazine, and said the February issue talks about the first half of the discussion on dispensationalism...."

From Oklahoma:

"I was so blessed and encouraged by Pastor Kevin's article in the August *Searchlight*, his in-depth look at Isaiah 41:10. This wonderful message from our personal, caring God really touched my heart. It was a message I would love to share with others. Do you have any plans to reprint this article in booklet form? I continue to pray for Pastor Kevin and his family and especially his mother in the loss of his father and her husband. I count it a privilege to have known Pastor Paul." (This article will be included in a new upcoming booklet entitled *Grieving With Hope*.—Ed).



"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

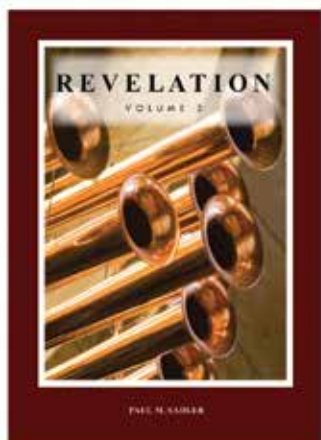


Revelation Volume 1

by Paul M. Sadler

Hardcover 208 pages

Price: \$12.00 plus s&h*
(Reg. \$12.50)



Revelation Volume 2

by Paul M. Sadler

Hardcover 228 pages

Price: \$12.00 plus s&h*
(Reg. \$14.00)

Quantity Discount

Receive a 25% discount off the regular price when you buy five or more books of one title by C.R. Stam or Paul Sadler.

One discount applies.

It's Here!

For those who have been eagerly anticipating *Revelation Volume 3* like a child on Christmas Eve, the wait is over!

Pastor Kevin Sadler recently put the finishing touches on this work written primarily by Pastor Paul Sadler. The fourth and final volume is planned for release next year.

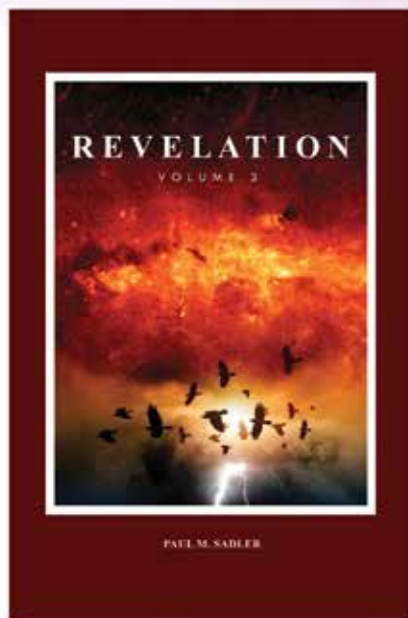
New! **Revelation** **Volume 3**

by Paul M. Sadler

Hardcover 228 pages

Price: \$10.00 plus s&h*

(Reg. \$14.00)



Are you ordering books for Christmas gifts? **Please order by December 15th.**

OFFERS END DECEMBER 31, 2016

*Orders up to \$30, add \$4 for shipping and handling; orders over \$30, add 15%
Wisconsin residents, please add 5.6% for sales tax on books and postage.

(262) 255-4750 or www.bereanbiblesociety.org



News and Announcements

Special Meetings: As *Kettle Moraine Bible Church* of West Bend, Wisconsin, searches for a pastor, your editor has agreed to minister the Word at two Sunday morning sessions on January 8, 2017. If you are a pastor looking for a church, or a Bible teacher who would like to join the list of faithful men who are filling the pulpit at KMBC, contact Randy Wiskirchen at rcwisk@gmail.com.

Don't Be Shy! Just because you've never had a representative from *Berean Bible Society* speak at your special meetings or Bible conference, don't let that keep you from getting in touch with us about it! Our conference schedule for 2017 is almost full, but we're leaving a date or two open, hoping to hear from some saints whose faces we've never seen in the flesh. There's no better way to call attention to your church or Bible study group among readers of the *Berean Searchlight* than to have us announce some BBS meetings at your church or a conference room near you. Email us at berean@bereanbiblesociety.org, or call us at (262) 255-4750, and let's put some plans in motion!

Pastoral Opportunity: If you are a pastor looking for a church, *Massillon Calvary Chapel* of Massillon, Ohio, just might be looking for you! But you'll never know unless you get in touch with Sean Richards at sjrich889@outlook.com. Tell him BBS sent ya!

It's Almost Time to finish reading Revelation 22 and turn back to Genesis 1 to begin your *Read Your Bible Through In A Year* plan all over again! Various plans are available online to help you start on January 1 and pace yourself so as to ensure you'll be finishing God's Word next December 31. There is simply no better way to draw closer to God than to read His Book, and there is no age that is too young to start. At the church your editor pastors, a 6-year-old boy just finished a read-through of Paul's epistles that he began when he was 5! There is no worthier New Years Resolution you can make than to plan to read "every word that proceedeth out of the mouth of God" in the coming year (Matt. 4:4).



Cape Neddick Lighthouse is located in York, Maine. The tower is lined with brick and sheathed with cast iron. It stands 41 feet tall but the light is 88 feet above sea level because of the additional height of the steep rocky islet on which it sits. It is commonly known as *Nubble Light* or simply *The Nubble*.

PRICE LIST

BIBLE STUDY BOOKS BY C. R. STAM

(Hardcovers)

Acts, Dispensationally Considered, Volume 1	\$21.50
Acts, Dispensationally Considered, Volume 2	21.50
Colossians (Commentary)	14.50
I Corinthians (Commentary)	12.50
II Corinthians (Commentary)	12.50
Divine Election and Human Responsibility	10.50
Galatians (Commentary)	14.50
Hebrews, Who Wrote It and Why?	10.50
Holding Fast the Faithful Word <i>Out of print</i>	14.50
Man, His Nature and Destiny	12.50
Pastoral Epistles (Commentary)	12.50
Paul, His Apostleship and Message	11.50
Romans (Commentary)	16.50
Sermon on the Mount, The	10.50
Thessalonians (Commentary)	12.50
Things That Differ	13.50
True Spirituality	11.50

Paperbacks

Baptism and the Bible	\$9.00
Lord's Supper and the Bible, The	7.00
Moses and Paul	7.00
No Other Doctrine	9.00
Our Great Commission	9.00
Things That Differ, English or Spanish	10.00
Two Minutes with the Bible	11.00
Twofold Purpose of God, The	7.00

WORKS BY PAUL M. SADLER

Exploring the Unsearchable Riches of Christ (Hardcover)	\$12.50
Life and Letters of the Apostle Peter, The (Hardcover)	13.50
Oneness of Marriage, The (Paperback)	8.00
Paul's Epistle to the Ephesians (Hardcover)	16.50
Paul's Epistle to the Philippians (Hardcover)	12.00
Revelation, Volume 1 (Hardcover)	12.50
Revelation, Volume 2 (Hardcover)	14.00
Studies in James (Paperback)	10.00
Triumph of His Grace, The (Hardcover)	13.50
According to the Scriptures (Booklet)	2.00
Are You Secure? (Booklet)	2.00
Historical Beginning of the Church, The (Booklet)	3.00
Key to Understanding the Scriptures, The (Chart)	0.50
Supernatural Sign Gifts of the Acts Period, The (Booklet)	4.00
Trials and Temptations (Booklet)	2.00
Uncertain Trumpet of Water Baptism, The (Booklet)	2.00
Miracles of Calvary, The (DVD)	15.00
What It Means to Be a Grace Believer (DVD)	15.00

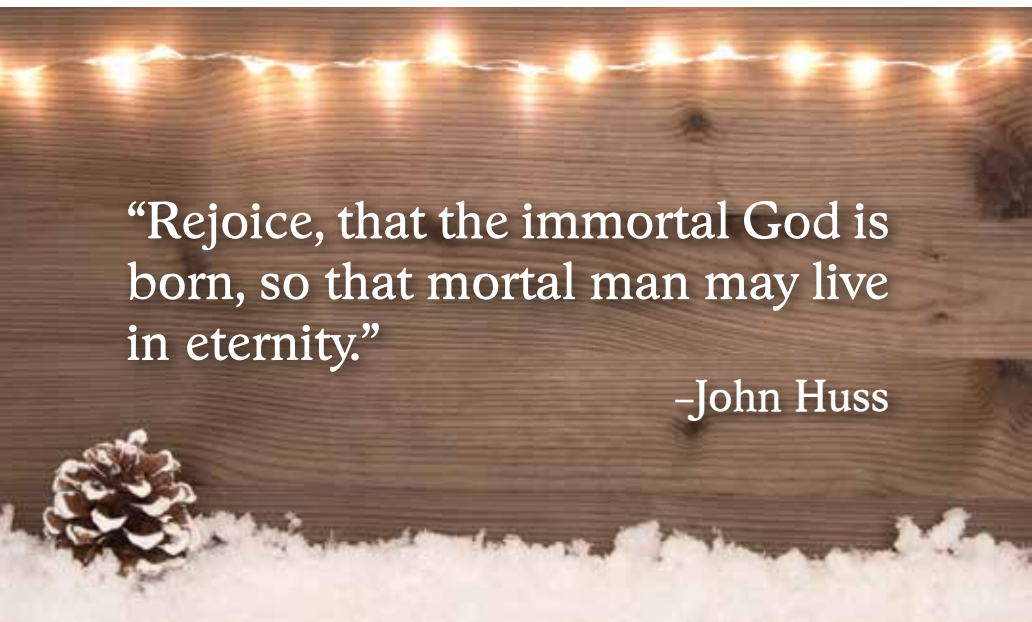
Orders up to \$30.00, please add **\$4.00** for Postage and Handling

Orders over \$30.00, please add **15%** for Postage and Handling

Foreign orders must be remitted in U. S. currency

THE BEREAN SEARCHLIGHT
N112 W17761 MEQUON ROAD
PO Box 756
GERMANTOWN, WI 53022-0756

PERIODICALS
PAID AT GERMANTOWN, WI
AND ADDITIONAL MAILING OFFICES



“Rejoice, that the immortal God is
born, so that mortal man may live
in eternity.”

—John Huss