

The **BEREAN SEARCHLIGHT™**

Studying God's Word, Rightly Divided

December 2021



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This month's cover features Marblehead Lighthouse in Lakeside Marblehead, Ohio.

The **Purpose** of the *Berean Bible Society* is to help you understand, enjoy, and apply 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 transformation of 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.

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The Berean Searchlight (ISSN 0005-8890), December 2021. Vol. 82, 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,

We have a staff Christmas luncheon every year at *Berean Bible Society*. These are fun and memorable times together. For the past couple years, we have had a meal brought in to BBS, and my wife, Jessica, furnishes us with activity sheets to entertain us while we eat. These activities include matching a Christmas carol lyric with its corresponding title, word scrambles, and Christmas trivia.

Following our meal, I lead a devotion from God's Word. We set aside time to consider the wonder of God taking on flesh to be our Savior. 2 Corinthians 8:9 expresses so well what we remember at this time of the year: "For ye know the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, that, though He was rich, yet for your sakes He became poor, that ye through His poverty might be rich."



Then comes the big game, the Super Bowl of our Christmas fun: Christmas card memory, which is like the old card game *Concentration*. I hope I don't sound too proud when I say that I have *dominated* this game for the last two years. My wife buys around 50-60 different Christmas cards, two of each card, and she cuts them all in half along the fold. Then all the halves get turned face down, mixed up, and laid out on two big tables. Then the players take turns finding pairs of matching covers and pairs of the matching inside Christmas greetings. You have to keep a sharp eye when the cards are turned over and have a good memory of where you eventually see matches.

The first year we played this game, I won handily, to the dismay of all. The second year, the entire staff ganged up on me to see if collectively, adding all their matches up together, they could beat me. But it was to no avail. This year, I know they are gunning for me and are confident they can take me down. However, I'm remaining cool under pressure and poised to conquer the big game once again. Who says Christians don't have any fun! We have more joy in this world than anyone, all because of our blessed Savior and the bright hope we have in Him.

From all of us at *Berean Bible Society*: my wife and myself, Pastor Ricky Kurth, Pastor Jim Tollar and his wife, Missy, Christine Mulholland, Randy Wiskirchen, my mother, Vicki, and my daughter, Katelyn, we wish you and yours a blessed and merry Christmas in the Lord!

Grace and peace,

Pastor Kevin J. Sadler, President

Interpreting Circumstances



An excerpt from *Daily Transformation* (see ad on page 28)
by John Frederickson

When soldiers are behind enemy lines during war, communication with commanding officers and artillery is critical. During World War II, the U.S. Army directed Privates Ben Yahzee and Charlie Whitehorse to communicate with superiors on the radio using “The Navajo Code.” It was based on the Navajo language, containing a code embedded within each message. Even other native Navajo soldiers could not decipher its meaning. Only these two men could properly interpret each transmission and in turn enable their counterparts to act accordingly.

When King Saul saw David as a threat to his reign, he pursued David with an army of trained soldiers, intending to put David to death. David had done nothing to deserve such treatment. He had been a loyal and valuable subject. While David and his men hid in a cave, Saul came in alone. This was David’s opportunity to slay the one seeking his life and ascend to the throne. His men even urged him to do so, interpreting this circumstance as God fulfilling a promise to David to “deliver thine enemy into thine hand” (1 Sam. 24:4). However, David was very careful not to haphazardly interpret his circumstances by the counsel of other men, nor by his emotions, which surely would have drawn him into revenge out of self-preservation. Instead, he told his men that it would be wrong for him to slay the Lord’s anointed king (vv. 6,10). David was wise to choose not to interpret God’s will merely by his circumstances. He believed principles in God’s Word essentially “forbid that I should do this thing unto my master” (v. 6). He believed God had already revealed His will in Deuteronomy 32:35-36, when the Lord explained, “To Me belongeth vengeance and recompense...For the Lord shall judge His people....” This meant it would be wrong for David to “get even” with this wrongdoer from within his nation. Instead, David turned Saul over to the Lord and trusted the Lord to take care of his present needs.

In Christian circles today, it has become common for believers to almost flippantly interpret God’s will by their emotions, the counsel of others, or by circumstances which are often manipulated to one’s preferences. There is a better way! Like David, we need to develop a pattern of interpreting God’s will by God’s Word. We are behind enemy lines in Satan’s territory, where interpreting God’s will accurately, through Paul’s letters, is essential. Trust God’s Word to give you clear direction, and then act accordingly.

The Fullness of the Time



PASTOR KEVIN SADLER
BBS President

The Promised Seed

“But when the fulness of the time was come, God sent forth His Son, made of a woman, made under the law” (Gal. 4:4).

The coming of the Son of God to this world happened entirely according to God’s perfect timing. From the very beginning, God promised to send a Seed. After Adam and Eve’s fall in the Garden of Eden, God promised that one day a Seed of the woman would come to deal with the serpent, Satan.

“And I will put enmity between thee [Satan] and the woman, and between thy seed and her Seed; It shall bruise thy head, and thou shalt bruise His heel” (Gen. 3:15).

Genesis 3:15 predicted that Satan would bruise the heel of the Seed of the woman. Bruising the heel indicates a serious injury and one of terrible suffering. When Christ went to the Cross and suffered there, this was the fulfillment of Satan bruising the

heel of the Seed of the woman. However, at the same time, Christ bruised Satan’s head, which meant that Christ dealt Satan a fatal blow, destroying and defeating him at the Cross.

The time between this prophecy and the advent of the Seed of the woman was a good, long time: about 4500 years. But when the fullness of the time came, in God’s precise moment in time, the Savior came to this world and, by His finished work, crushed Satan just as God predicted (Col. 2:15).

God’s initial promise to Satan regarding the Seed of the woman was followed 2000 years later by the promises God made to Abraham, of his being the father of a great nation (Gen. 12:2) and of the land to be given to his seed (Gen. 12:7; 13:15).

Galatians 3:16 explains, “Now to Abraham and his seed were the promises made. He saith not, And to seeds, as of many; but as of one, And to thy seed, which is Christ.” The stress on seed, not

seeds, in this passage was made by Paul to remind us that the blessings promised to Abraham would ultimately come through a single Seed: the Messiah. Abraham was promised both *a* seed, a great family that would proceed from his line, and *the* Seed, one Individual through Whom all the promises made to Abraham would be fulfilled.

In Abraham's and Sarah's old age, their son, Isaac, was miraculously born of them. His miraculous conception foreshadowed the miraculous conception of God's own Son that was to come. Abraham had a son, Ishmael, with Sarah's handmaid Hagar, but God made it clear that His promises, of a land and a great nation that would be a blessing to all the earth, would be fulfilled through Isaac, the child of promise: "for in Isaac shall thy seed be called" (Gen. 21:12 cf. Rom. 9:6-8).

From Isaac, Jacob was born, who had twelve sons. Here the prediction of the promised Seed became more specific. Before Jacob died, he prophesied concerning the future of his twelve sons. Of his son, Judah, he said,

"The sceptre shall not depart from Judah, nor a lawgiver from between his feet, until Shiloh come; and unto him shall the gathering of the people be" (Gen. 49:10).

To Judah's line belonged national prominence and a "scepter," or a kingship, regal command, and sovereignty. The dynasties of David, Solomon, and others came from the tribe of Judah. Rulership would continue in this tribe "until Shiloh come," the

one also called "the Lion of the tribe of Juda" (Rev. 5:5), and He would then rule forever. Through "Shiloh," the Messiah, "and unto Him," the people would gather in the Promised Land in the millennial kingdom.



"Christ's coming and birth at Bethlehem was not an accident; it was an appointment."

Over 800 years later, the prediction of the Seed narrowed again, when God promised David that one day his Seed would sit on his throne in an everlasting reign.

"And when thy days be fulfilled, and thou shalt sleep with thy fathers, I will set up thy Seed after thee, which shall proceed out of thy bowels, and I will establish His kingdom. He shall build an house for My name, and I will stablish the throne of His kingdom for ever" (2 Sam. 7:12-13).

Although David's son Solomon did build a temple, this promise pointed forward to *the* Seed of David, the Messiah, whose "kingdom shall be established for ever" (v. 16). And the angel Gabriel told Mary of the Child to Whom she would give birth, "the Lord God shall give unto Him the throne of His father David: And He shall

reign over the house of Jacob for ever; and of His kingdom there shall be no end” (Luke 1:32-33). Thus, God’s promise of a Seed narrowed from Adam, to Abraham, to Isaac, to the tribe of Judah, to the house and lineage of David.

Then some 500 years later, Daniel was given divine revelation as to the exact time frame when “Messiah the Prince” would come (Dan. 9:24-27): the prophecy of the 70 weeks (490 years). This time period began at “the going forth of the commandment to restore and to build Jerusalem” in 444 B.C. and continued 483 (Jewish, lunar) years until “the Messiah the Prince” came riding into Jerusalem at His triumphal entry (Mark 11:7-11).

What started in Genesis continued throughout the thousands of years of the Old Testament. God promised again and again that He would intervene in history, that one day He would send the Messiah to Israel. There was an ever-narrowing stream of prophecy. The promises of the Seed became more and more specific, until finally, “the fulness of the time was come,” and “God sent forth His Son.”

Christ’s coming and birth at Bethlehem was not an accident; it was an appointment. Jesus Christ came at God’s appointed time, not a moment too late, and not a second too early. The first Christmas miracle started long before Bethlehem. It took place over many centuries as God worked, foretold, and prepared Israel for His Son’s coming.

The phrase, “the fulness of the time,” refers to something that is

complete and fully developed, like an apple that has budded, grown, and ripened until it is ready to be picked, at *the fullness of the time*.



The word “time” is translated from the Greek word *chronos*, from which we get our word, *chronology*. A chronology is a record of the orderly progression and the sequential order in which events occur over time.

We see by all this that God didn’t just decide on the spur of the moment to take advantage of an opportune time. Rather, God planned and set in motion the sequence and development of historical events until, from His perfect viewpoint and understanding, the time was right. The fullness of the time describes a moment in history when all things were in place, that time when the stage was perfectly set for God to send His Son into the world.

The Seed of the woman, the Seed of Abraham, the Seed of David came just as God said He would, because God is faithful. And as the prophecies of old foretold concerning Him, He was miraculously born of a virgin (Isa. 7:14), and He was born in

Bethlehem (Mic. 5:2). And when Christ was born, hope was born.

The Course of Abia

“There was in the days of Herod, the king of Judaea, a certain priest named Zacharias, of the course of Abia: and his wife was of the daughters of Aaron, and her name was Elisabeth” (Luke 1:5).

We know that Christ was not born on December 25. We don't know the exact date. We don't have to know the exact date. The important thing is to remember that He did come and the reason He came: “Christ Jesus came into the world to save sinners” (1 Tim. 1:15). While we don't know the date of Christ's birth, we can figure out the approximate time of year when He was born.



First, we know that Christ wasn't born in December because Luke 2:8 tells us, “And there were in the same country shepherds abiding in the field, keeping watch over their flock by night.” The shepherds were “abiding” or remaining outdoors overnight in the fields with their flocks of sheep. It would be too cold in December for them to do this.

Next, the mention of “the course of Abia” in Luke 1:5 gives us a time frame for Christ's birth. Within the worship and service of the temple, there were different courses for the priests. In 1 Chronicles 28:9-13,21, we learn that, in preparations for Solomon to build the temple, King David created a schedule for the year, or “courses” (vv. 13,21) by which the temple could be staffed by the priests and Levites.

David created 24 courses (1 Chron. 24:1-19). In this schedule, each priest served one week. Additionally, all the priests came to Jerusalem for the three feasts required of all Jewish men: Passover, Pentecost, and Tabernacles. Thus, the priests would serve at the temple twice every year according to their assigned course, and then three more times during the required feasts, for a total of five weeks per year.

The Jewish calendar begins in the spring in the month of Nisan, which coincides with parts of our March and April. Luke 1:5 informs us that John the Baptist's father, Zacharias, was a priest and that he served during “the course of Abia.” According to 1 Chronicles 24:10, this was the eighth course. Two required feasts would be observed and would interrupt the schedule at this time of the year: Passover and Pentecost. This puts the course of Abia at the tenth week of the Jewish calendar year, which would be anywhere from mid-May to mid-June on our calendar. Let's split the difference and say June 1.

Zacharias's wife Elizabeth had been barren and both of

them were beyond child-bearing years (Luke 1:7). As Zacharias was serving during his course, the angel Gabriel appeared and told Zacharias that he would have a son. Zacharias wasn't convinced it was true though, so Gabriel struck him dumb. From that moment, Zacharias couldn't speak until his son was born and named John (vv. 8-23,57-64). Nine of our months, or 40 weeks, or 280 days from June 1 would be March 7, right at the beginning of the Jewish year, or the month of Nisan, which is approximately when John the Baptist was born.

“And in the sixth month the angel Gabriel was sent from God unto a city of Galilee, named Nazareth, To a virgin espoused to a man whose name was Joseph, of the house of David; and the virgin's name was Mary” (Luke 1:26-27).

“In the sixth month” refers to the sixth month of Elisabeth's pregnancy. This is when Gabriel appeared to Mary and told her that she would give birth to the Christ. Therefore, John the Baptist was born about 6 months before Christ. He wasn't older than the Lord, however, because Christ is from eternity! (Mic. 5:2).

Six Jewish months, or 180 days, after John's conception on June 1 is November 27. This is approximately when Gabriel appeared to Mary. Nine of our months, or 40 weeks, or 280 days after November 27 is September 3, which is the approximate date on our calendar when Christ was born.

There are variables in all this, including that Mary was told that she was expecting “in the sixth

month” of Elizabeth's pregnancy, not *after* six months. Also, there are variables of a week or days here or there within the Jewish calendar and their leap years. And how long after Gabriel's visits did Elisabeth and Mary conceive? But with all this taken into consideration, it's safe to say that the Lord was born sometime between early September and early October.



An additional proof for this time of year is that Christ ministered for 3 1/2 years after His baptism at age 30 (Luke 3:21-23). The crucifixion took place at the Passover in March-April; half a year before that is September-October. Being born sometime in September and then dying on the cross and rising again in early April accounts for the 1/2 year of the 3 1/2 years. And shepherds would still be abiding in the fields keeping watch over their flocks in September!

Made of a Woman under the Law

“...God sent forth His Son, made of a woman, made under the law” (Gal. 4:4b).

All of us at one time or another have moved. It's not a pleasant experience. It takes a lot of work

and there are many details to handle. There is the toil of packing, lifting, leaving your old place in decent shape and getting your new place ready. Then you have to turn on the utilities, change your mailing address, and so on. It's quite an ordeal!



Then stop and think of Christ's move in leaving heaven and coming to this earth. He left His high and glorious place with God the Father (John 1:1-2; 17:5) for a humble feed trough (Luke 2:7). He left heaven's majesty for earth's misery. He left the purity and goodness of heaven to live among sin, disease, and crime. He left the adoration of angels to face the sneers and mocking of man. He left the splendors and joys of heaven knowing His destiny was Golgotha to give Himself as a sacrifice for our sins. He left all this willingly, out of love, because the fullness of the time had come for Him to move from heaven to earth as God manifested in the flesh, to be the sinner's Savior.

Under grace, God's movement is always toward us. In providing for our salvation, God's Son moved toward us even while this world, then and now, moves away from Him. He came to where we

were so that He might lift us up to where He is. He doesn't say, "Climb up here!" He doesn't say that because we can't. He came down to where we are, and by being lifted up at the Cross, He lifts us up to His presence when we trust Him and His finished work. This is the miracle of the gospel.

"God sent forth His Son," because Christ pre-existed from eternity past in the Father's presence (John 17:5). God sending Him forth testifies that Jesus Christ is 100 percent God and is co-eternal with the Father.

"God sent forth His Son," and then He was "made of a woman." As God, the Lord was sent. As a man, He was made of a woman (Isa. 9:6). Christ was both 100 percent God and 100 percent man. "Made of a woman" emphasizes Christ's humanity. If Christ had been only a man, it would be pointless to say that He was born of a woman. Everyone is made of a woman! The reason it is noted in the Lord's case is that it testifies to His unique Person as God being sent from heaven and taking on flesh for us. And in being "made of a woman," Christ fulfilled the promise in Genesis 3:15 that He, the Redeemer, would be the Seed of the woman.

As a man, Christ was "made under the law." This emphasizes the program under which the Lord lived and ministered in the four Gospels. It teaches us that within the Gospel accounts, we have the record of Christ's life and ministry "under the law."

Many believers think they should attempt to follow Christ and live by His teachings in


Matthew, Mark, Luke and John. But that ministry of Christ and His teachings were based in the law of Moses. Today, we “are not under the law, but under grace” (Rom. 6:14). We need to submit ourselves to God’s will in this current dispensation. We are properly following Christ when we follow His grace teachings for the Body of Christ, found in the letters of Paul.

Living under the law, Christ was accountable to the law of God. He was born under it, and born with a responsibility to keep it. And He instructed others to keep the law as well (Matt. 23:3). Like every person in Israel at that time, Christ had the responsibility to obey God’s law, but like no other person, He obeyed it *perfectly*.

Christ “was in all points tempted like as we are, yet without sin” (Heb. 4:15). His sinlessness made Him the perfect sacrifice for sins.

With no sins of His own to die for, in His grace and love, God took all our sins and placed them on His beloved Son, our blessed Substitute, and so “Christ died for our sins” (1 Cor. 15:3).

Theologian J. I. Packer (1926-2020) wrote this: “The Christmas message is that there is hope for a ruined humanity—hope of pardon, hope of peace with God, hope of glory—because at the Father’s will Jesus Christ became poor, and was born in a stable so that thirty years later He might hang on a cross. It is the most wonderful message the world has ever heard, or will hear.”¹

Do you have the true hope that comes from trusting the gospel that Christ died for our sins and rose again? 

1. J. I. Packer, goodreads, accessed November 3, 2021, <https://www.goodreads.com/quotes/5190433-the-christmas-message-is-that-there-is-hope-for-a>.



Safe at Home

Pastor David Adams went to be with his Lord and Savior in October. Pastor Adams became pastor of *First Grace Gospel Church* of Ashtabula, Ohio, in 1974 and, along with his wife, Marilyn, faithfully served the Lord there for 45 years.

I had the privilege of meeting Pastor Adams at a Bible conference hosted by his church in 2018. His example that weekend taught me what it means to be “instant in prayer” (Rom. 12:12). A couple times during the conference when, in the natural course of conversation, a need or concern was raised, he’d stop right there and say, “Let’s pray about it right now.” He bowed his head and started praying immediately before I even realized what was happening!

Pastor Adams authored a three-part series entitled “Bible Contrasts” in the September 2014, December 2014 and January 2015 *Searchlights*. These articles were made up of short, contrasting pairings of truth from the Bible that he had originally published in local newspapers to promote Paul’s gospel. Because the series was helpful to so many of our readers, we published his work in booklet form with his blessing. Please keep Marilyn, Pastor Adams’s wife of 58 years, and his family in your thoughts and prayers.

—Pastor Kevin Sadler

Where Berean Bible Societies

FEBRUARY—GERMANTOWN, WISCONSIN
Singles Conference at BBS

FEBRUARY—INVERNESS, FLORIDA

MARCH—SUN CITY WEST, ARIZONA

APRIL—LENA, WISCONSIN

APRIL—GILLETT, WISCONSIN
Northern Grace Youth Camp

MAY—ALPHA, KENTUCKY

JUNE—TIPP CITY, OHIO
BBF Summer Conference

JULY—ANAHEIM, CALIFORNIA

AUGUST—LARAMIE, WYOMING

AUGUST—COPE, COLORADO

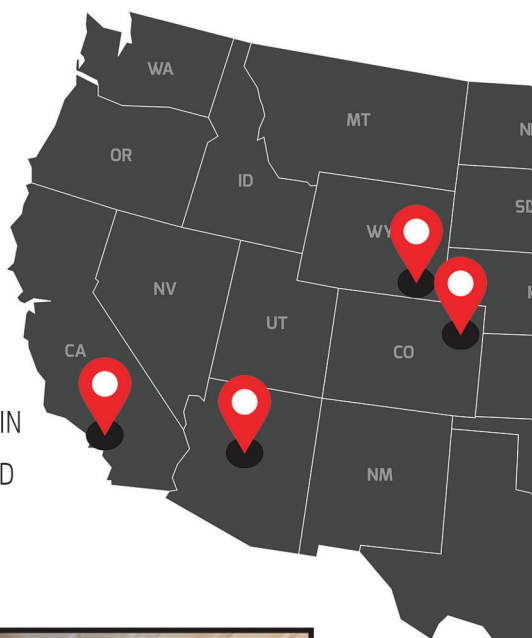
SEPTEMBER—STEGER, ILLINOIS

SEPTEMBER—LANCASTER, WISCONSIN

OCTOBER—CUMBERLAND, MARYLAND

OCTOBER—ALPHA, KENTUCKY

NOVEMBER—ASHTABULA, OHIO



ty has travelled in 2021





MOTHER TO MOTHER

This is the time of year that we celebrate the birth of our Lord Jesus Christ. As believers in Christ, we don't worship the Babe in Bethlehem's manger, we worship our risen, glorified Lord of Heaven, and thank God He came! The world doesn't know our Savior, but that is all the more reason to speak out and share Him in every way we can. May we use the holiday as a testimony for His honor and glory!

As a mother, Mary comes to my mind when I think of the birth of Christ. Mary was young, a virgin chosen by God, who was very spiritually minded. We aren't sure of how much Mary understood of what was happening to her, but she put her trust in God (Luke 1:46-56). May we all have faith that strong.

We know that God must have a sense of humor, because He created man in His image, and we certainly have or should have a lighter side. That night long ago Mary gave birth to a perfect, sinless, spotless baby, with no sin nature. I don't know about you, but my three babies were precious and perfect *as they lay sleeping*. But when they woke, the sin nature woke too! Impatience, temper tantrums, selfishness were automatic. Disobedience was always there as they grew. There was a constant need to teach them to do what was right.

However, Mary didn't have any of that as our Lord grew up. He was God!! He was perfect and obedient to the Father. But the Scriptures say that Mary went on to have children with Joseph (Matt. 13:55). Can you imagine the shock she had when her babies with sin natures were born? Maybe only a mother would think of this, but that had to be a real eye-opener!! However, I'm sure there were many chuckles along the way as well. Someday in eternity I look forward to meeting Mary, and asking her, "Mary, can we talk?" —Vicki Sadler

Question Box

"If Jews were required to sell all they had and give all the proceeds to the poor (Luke 18:22), why was Joseph rich (Matt. 27:57), and why did Zacchaeus only give half (Luke 19:8)?"

They weren't required to sell all until Pentecost (Acts 2:44,45). That's when Barnabas did it (4:32-37). One of the reasons he was singled out as having done so may be to let us know when they did it.
—Pastor Ricky Kurth

Christianity Is



PASTOR ROBERT **BROCK**
Guest Writer

INTRODUCTION

“What is Christianity?” To answer this question, another must be asked, namely, “What is Judaism?” This is because the Bible teaches BOTH. The purpose of this article is to show what the Bible teaches about both, thereby answering our questions.

Christianity is not Judaism and Judaism is not Christianity. There are two separate God-given systems of worship found in the Bible. It is misleading to attend church and hear the preacher preach Judaism under the guise of Christianity. Christianity is not an outgrowth of Judaism but a new, dynamic revelation of God's will for this Dispensation in which we live. Christianity was revealed to the Apostle of the Gentiles, Paul, by the risen Lord Jesus Christ.

Even though there are similarities of thought in these two systems of worship and some of them will be listed, yet it is displeasing to God to emphasize only the similarities and neglect the differences. The differences are so important that it is very necessary that they be outlined for us. Those who have a responsibility in teaching the Bible are to present the **WHOLE COUNSEL OF GOD RIGHTLY DIVIDED** (Acts 20:27; 2 Tim. 2:15).

THE PERPETUITY OF ISRAEL

It is appalling to see so much of organized religion believing that God is finished with the earthly Nation of Israel. I can't understand how Christians can accept the traditions of theologians when the Bible

gives so much evidence to the contrary. Let me show you some of the Scriptures which teach the eternalness of Israel.

1. Israel Loved With Everlasting Love

“The LORD hath appeared of old unto me saying, Yea I have loved thee with an EVERLASTING LOVE: therefore with lovingkindness have I drawn thee” (Jer. 31:3).

This is one of the great verses of the Old Testament, and it teaches that God will always have a place in His heart for Israel. Israel, even though separated from God now, will in the future become the WIFE of the Lamb (Rev. 19:7-9). If God could permanently stop loving Israel, then maybe He could stop loving us, His Church, the Body of Christ. Awful thought, isn't it?

2. Israel Is the Elect Nation With an Eternal Name

“For Jacob my servant's sake, and ISRAEL MINE ELECT...” (Isa. 45:4).

“Even unto them will I give in mine house and within my walls a place and a name better than of sons and of daughters: I will give them an EVERLASTING NAME that shall not be cut off” (Isa. 56:5).

Since when will the elect ever be the non-elect? This is a terrible thought, too, but that is the implication of those who teach that God is through with the earthly Nation of Israel.

3. The Ordinances of the Universe Prove It

“Thus saith the LORD, which giveth the sun for a light by day and the ordinances of the moon and of the stars for a light by night...if those ordinances depart from before Me, saith the Lord, then the seed of Israel also shall cease from being a Nation before Me forever” (Jer. 31:35,36).

I can still see the sun, moon, and stars in the sky every day. How about you?

4. An Everlasting Covenant Is Made With Israel

“Incline your ear and come unto Me. Hear, and your soul shall live; and I will make an EVERLASTING COVENANT with you, even the sure mercies of David” (Isa. 55:3).

See also Isaiah 61:8; Jeremiah 32:40; Ezekiel 16:60; 37:26; and Hebrews 13:20.

5. God Has Not Cast Away His People

“God hath not cast away His people which He foreknew...” (Rom. 11:2).

And then in this same chapter of Romans, Paul wrote about the FUTURE salvation of Israel in verse 26.

These promises of God to Israel are not addressed to the Body of Christ, God's Church in this Age. The Church IS NOT spiritual Israel. This phrase—spiritual Israel—which is supposed to be taken from the teaching of Romans 9:6 and Galatians 6:16, means just what it says: the spiritual ones within the Nation of Israel who believed the Gospel of the Kingdom.

Of course, you all understand that I believe the word “everlasting” means just that. This cannot be debated, for God is called the “Everlasting God” in Isaiah 40:28.

THE PRESENTATION OF THE LORD JESUS CHRIST

Both the gospel of the Kingdom and the gospel of the grace of God are centered around the person of the Lord Jesus Christ. This is one truth they have in common (His Saviourhood is an example of this). But let's see how else He was presented.



Judaism

The Gospel of the Kingdom also presented the Lord Jesus Christ as the MESSIAH and KING OF ISRAEL. When the wise men came to Jerusalem, they inquired about Him who is born KING OF THE JEWS (Matt. 2:2). When Herod heard this, he demanded of the scribes and priests where CHRIST should be born (Matt. 2:4). Christ is the Greek equivalent of the Hebrew “Messiah,” and the term “Messiah” includes the idea of King. This is a very important presentation of the Lord Jesus Christ to Israel. He is their only hope, and when He comes back to reign over Israel and the world, it will be as KING of kings and LORD of

LORDS (Rev. 19:16). These two titles, out of many, many titles of our Lord, are distinctly dispensational. The bulk of the testimony concerning His earthly ministry centers around His position as Messiah and King of Israel.

Head of the Body of Christ



Christianity

Under the Gospel of the grace of God, there is one title that stands out prominently, and is mentioned only in Paul's epistles; and that is the title—HEAD of the Body, the Church. This is stated four times (Eph. 1:22,23; 5:23; Col. 1:18; 2:19). He is Saviour and Lord, to be sure, but the term “Head” suggests a relationship of Christ to His own in this Dispensation which never existed in any other age. The head controls the body in the physical realm; so Christ should control each believer. The Headship of

Christ should be taught to every one who has been saved by the Lord Jesus Christ.

THE SOCIAL SETUP

Judaism

The Gospel of the Kingdom is a social gospel; that is, a gospel that is meant to reform society, a gospel that is to play an important part in the total structure of society. This is seen in part in Matthew 28:19,20:


“Go ye therefore and teach ALL NATIONS, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit: teaching THEM [*the nations*] to observe all things whatsoever I have commanded you: and lo, I am with you alway, even unto the end of the world” [*age*].

In the social structure of Israel, religion and government were bound together as a unit. Religion and politics were inseparable. For practical purposes, the Law of Moses was divided into three parts: (1) The Moral Law, (2) The Social Law, and (3) The Ceremonial Law.

When Christ comes back to set up the Kingdom of Heaven upon the earth, He will rule as King of kings and Lord of lords. He will be the Messiah, and the whole earth will be under His rule. Religion and politics will be Divinely united. This will be known as a THEOCRACY—God ruling over the earth. See Matthew 19:28.

Today, we see an increasing amount of activity on the part of organized religion in trying to reform society, trying to enter into politics. Why? Because organized religion wrongly teaches of a Judaeo-Christian heritage. They are trying to fulfill the commission quoted above that belongs to another age altogether. And in so doing, Christianity has been weakened to the point where it has almost no power in its message. The organized church is floundering around wondering what to do, wondering which way to go. And in the meantime, this world keeps on getting worse and worse, just as Paul predicted (2 Timothy 3). Society is not being reformed and the religious organizations are not going to do it. The church at large is not following the will of God in respect to its ministry, and God is not blessing its efforts.

Christianity

So what is the answer? GET BACK TO PAUL!! HE is the Apostle of the Gentiles!! The will of God for this Age was revealed to him. The gospel message is the Gospel of the Grace of God, and this gospel concerns itself with INDIVIDUALS, not with nations. Individuals are to be redeemed, saved by the blood of the Lord Jesus Christ. He died for you and for me (Gal. 2:20). God is now calling out from among the human race the Body of Christ. Sure, we go to the nations to preach the gospel, but we go there to reach LOST INDIVIDUALS, not to reform the government and society with a Jewish program. Just remember, Judaism is a national message; Christianity is an individualistic message. 

Don't Put This Difference Aside!

PASTOR RICKY KURTH
Searchlight Editor

One day a teacher asked her class, "What's the difference between ignorance and apathy?" One defiant little boy replied, "I don't know, and I don't care!"

By contrast, the Apostle Paul talks about a difference that all Christians should know and care about, when he wrote that salvation is

"Not by works of righteousness which we have done, but according to His mercy He saved us, by the washing of regeneration, and renewing of the Holy Ghost" (Titus 3:5).

That's quite different than how things were in time past. Under the law, men *were* saved by faith plus works of righteousness, as we see when the psalmist prayed:

"LORD, who shall abide in Thy tabernacle? who shall dwell in Thy holy hill? He that walketh uprightly, and worketh righteousness" (Psa. 15:1,2).

We know that David was primarily thinking of the "*sacrifices of righteousness*" that Moses talked about (Deut. 33:19), for elsewhere he wrote:

"Offer the sacrifices of righteousness, and put your trust in the LORD" (Psa. 4:5).

Offering a sacrifice was one of the righteous works a Jew could do, and then trust that the Lord would save him in response.

But we know that there were *other* righteous works that Jews had to perform to be saved under the law, for Paul reminded the Gentiles in Colosse,

"...you, being dead in your sins and the uncircumcision of your flesh, hath He quickened together with Him, having forgiven you all trespasses" (Col. 2:13).

Under the law, Gentiles were spiritually dead in their sins, *and* spiritually dead in the uncircumcision of their flesh. This demonstrates how circumcision was *yet another* righteous work that Hebrews had to perform to be saved under the law.

But we know that circumcision and sacrifices weren't the *only* works that God's people in Israel had to perform to attain righteousness, for Luke described

the parents of John the Baptist by saying,

“...they were both *righteous* before God, walking in *all* the commandments and ordinances of the Lord blameless” (Luke 1:6).

If a circumcised Hebrew offered sacrifices, kept the sabbath, observed the diet laws of Leviticus 11 and the feasts of Leviticus 23, and walked in all the other tenets of the law, he could trust that the Lord counted him as “righteous” as John’s parents.

But Paul, “the apostle of the Gentiles” (Rom. 11:13), declared that salvation *today* is by grace (Rom. 3:24; 4:16), adding, “and if by grace, *then is it no more of works*” (11:6). It wouldn’t make sense to say that salvation was “no more” of works if it was *never* of works. It once was, but now isn’t, and that’s a difference that shouldn’t be put aside when men choose to put aside their differences!

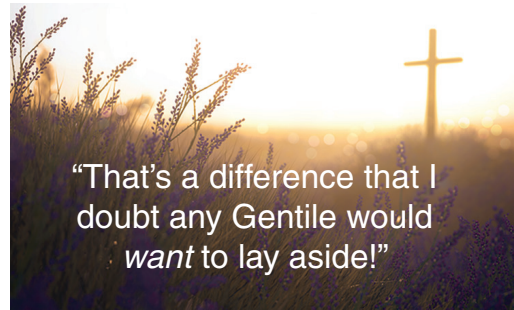
Different Strokes for Different Folks

But if God didn’t save us by works of righteousness, how *did* He save us? According to the rest of Titus 3:5, it was “*according to His mercy* He saved us.” This too is different than how things were in time past. Under the law, God’s mercy was reserved for *Jews*, as we see when the psalmist wrote:

“Let *Israel* hope in the LORD: for with the LORD there is *mercy*, and with Him is plenteous redemption. And He shall redeem *Israel* from all his iniquities” (Psa. 130:7,8).

Under the law, Ezra declared that “His mercy endureth for ever

toward Israel” (Ezra 3:11). Under grace, Paul wrote, “the kindness and love of God our Saviour *toward man* appeared” (Titus 3:4)—even us Gentiles—when “according to His mercy He saved *us*” (Titus 3:5). That’s a difference that I doubt any Gentile would *want* to lay aside!



“That’s a difference that I doubt any Gentile would *want* to lay aside!”

Titus 3:5 goes on to explain how God was *able* to have mercy on unclean sinners like us. It was “by the washing of regeneration” (Titus 3:5). That leads us to *still another* difference that shouldn’t be laid aside.

In time past, Jews under the kingdom program received mercy *when they were baptized*, and their bodies were “washed with pure water” (Heb. 10:22). Back then Jews were told, “be baptized, and wash away thy sins” (Acts 22:16). When Ananias told that to Saul there, it showed he knew nothing of God’s new program that the Lord was about to reveal to Paul. Under that program of grace, we receive God’s mercy “by the washing of regeneration” (Titus 3:5), *not* by the washing of water baptism.

The reason Paul could call the carnal Corinthians “saints” (1 Cor.1:2) is that they were

“washed...*by the Spirit*” (6:11), the Spirit who regenerated them when they believed the gospel, *not* because they were washed by a preacher with water baptism. That’s why he wrote that our regeneration involves “the renewing of the Holy Ghost” (Titus 3:5), for we are as washed by the Spirit as the Corinthians were.

These are differences that all Christians should know and care about, lest their ignorance and apathy adversely affect *the very gospel of salvation* we must accurately present to the lost, the gospel of salvation by grace through faith apart from works of righteousness.

Speaking of the Holy Spirit, Paul added,

“Which He shed on us abundantly through Jesus Christ our Saviour” (Titus 3:6).

God Shed His Love on Thee

Now when Paul says something was “shed” on us, I think he is talking about “the kindness and love of God our Saviour toward man” that he mentions in verse 4. I think that because about the only other time Paul uses that word “shed” is in Romans 5:5, where he wrote,

“...*the love of God is shed abroad in our hearts by the Holy Ghost which is given unto us. For when we were yet without strength, in due time Christ died for the ungodly*” (vv. 5,6).

Since Paul told the Romans that *the love of God* “is shed abroad in our hearts,” I think he is saying the same thing to Titus. In Titus 3, however, we learn

that *the reason* we were “without strength” to save ourselves is that “we ourselves...were sometimes foolish, disobedient, deceived, serving divers lusts and pleasures, living in malice and envy, hateful, and hating one another.” Sin like that left us totally and utterly without the strength necessary to save ourselves.

Did you notice that in speaking of the love of God that He shed on us abundantly, Paul mentioned the Holy Ghost to both Titus and the Romans? We usually don’t think too much about the work of the Spirit in saving us, but each member of the trinity played a role in our salvation. God the Father *planned our salvation* before the foundation of the world (2 Tim. 1:9; Titus 1:2). God the Son *accomplished the work of our salvation* on the cross of Calvary. And when you believed the gospel, God the Spirit *shed the love of God abroad in your heart* by applying the blood of Calvary’s cross to your sinful soul, “renewing” you (Titus 3:5) by making you a “new man” (Eph. 4:24).



So every day when you wake up and look in the mirror and all you see is your old man, the man

that just can't seem to live for the Lord, remember that that's not what *God* sees when He looks at you! He sees you *as a whole new man*. All you have to do is try to make your life match how He sees you. And the way to do that is to remember what the Bible says in Colossians 3:9,10, where Paul tells us,

“Ye have...put on the new man, which is renewed in knowledge after the image of Him that created him.”

When you got saved, God made you a new man. But when you fall into sin and disobedience to God's Word, you need to *renew* your new man. Paul says the way to do that is to be “renewed in knowledge,” i.e., a knowledge of God's rightly divided Word. That's the only way to learn to reflect the image of the Lord who *created* your new man.

God Isn't Chintzy With His Love

When Paul goes on to say that God shed His love and kindness on us “abundantly” (v. 6), that word is the adverb form of the verb *abound*. And the word “abound” means *overflowing*, as when Paul told the Philippians,

“I have all, and abound” (Phil. 4:18).

That was the apostle's way of saying, “I have all I need, *and then some!*” The Philippians had sent him a financial contribution (v. 17) that *overflowed* his needs.

So when Paul then said that God *shed His love on us* abundantly, He was saying that His love and kindness is all we need for our salvation, *and then some!*

God's love and kindness *overflows* all of our spiritual needs. And He gave us this abounding love,

“That being justified by His grace, we should be made heirs according to the hope of eternal life” (Titus 3:7).

When the apostle says that saving us by His love and mercy “justified” us, that word means *to be made just*, of course. But if you're not sure what the word “just” means, compare how God told His people in Israel,

“Ye shall do no unrighteousness in judgment...in weight, or in measure. *Just* balances, *just* weights...shall ye have” (Lev. 19:35,36).

“...you're one of
the few people
on planet
earth who see
this difference
clearly...”



In those days, when you went to buy grain or other commodities, merchants put a pound of lead on one side of the balances and filled the other side with grain until the scale balanced. If you were a dishonest and unjust person, you'd use weights that *weren't* “just.” That is, they didn't weigh an exact pound.

So “just weights” spoke of *exactness*. And when it comes to our sins, God demands that we be *100 percent just*, that we have *exactly* no sins, before He will let us into Heaven. When He puts

His righteousness on one side of the scales and your life on the other side, your righteousness has to match His *exactly*.

Problem Children

And as I'm sure I don't have to tell you, *that's a problem*. It's a problem for *all* the children of Adam, and always has been, as we see when the oldest book in the Bible asks,

"How then can man be justified with God? or how can he be clean that is born of a woman?" (Job 25:4).

Even way back then, people knew that man is *way* too sinful to be just with God. The psalmist agreed, saying,

"O LORD...enter not into judgment with Thy servant: for in Thy sight shall no man living be justified" (Psa. 143:1,2).

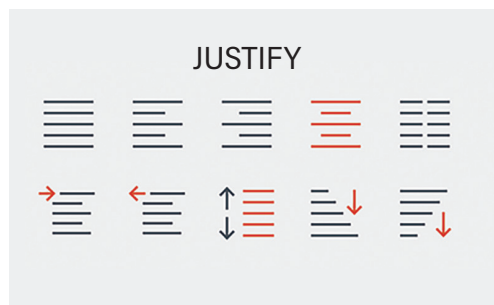
The only solution to the problem of our sin was for God to have Christ *pay* for our sins on the cross. Speaking prophetically of what God the Father would see as His Son hung on the cross, Isaiah said of Him,

"He shall see of the travail of His soul, and shall be satisfied: by His knowledge shall My righteous servant justify many; for He shall bear their iniquities" (Isa. 53:11).

When men come to know Christ in any dispensation, God *justifies* them—makes them *just* and *exactly* *sinless* in His sight.

We find a wonderful illustration of justification when we compare a paper typed on a typewriter to a page printed by a computer in "justification" mode. The page typed on a typewriter

has a left-hand margin that is straight as an arrow, but a right-hand margin that is all over the place. A computer can type that way as well, but with the stroke of one of the control keys, the computer can *justify* your work and make the right hand margin as razor sharp as the left.



That's a perfect illustration of what God did for you when He saved you. Before that, your personal righteousness was all over the place. Some days you were pretty close to perfect, but other days you were *far* from perfect. But *every* day it could be said of you that you had "sinned, and come short of the glory of God" (Rom. 3:23). The glory of God is that He has never sinned, and before you were saved you fell short of that glory.

But when God saved you by His mercy and grace, He *justified* you, making your life as straight as the life of the Lord Jesus in His sight. That's what Paul meant when he wrote,

"For He hath made Him to be sin for us, who knew no sin; that we might be made the righteousness of God in Him" (2 Cor. 5:21).

According to that verse, *God Himself* is no more righteous than

we are, for we are *made* His righteousness in Christ. Now that's what I call *justified!*

And back in our text in Titus 3, Paul says,

“That being justified by His grace, we should be made heirs according to the hope of eternal life” (v. 7).

As I'm sure you know, an “heir” is someone who *inherits* something. We'd all love to be the heirs of billionaire Bill Gates, but his children are his heirs, not us. But Paul says,

“The Spirit itself beareth witness with our spirit, that we are the children of God” (Rom. 8:16).

The Spirit doesn't bear this witness out loud, of course, for now that the Bible is complete, God is no longer speaking to men in an audible voice. The Spirit bears witness *in His Word* that we are God's children,

“And if children, then heirs; heirs of God...” (Rom. 8:17).

If you're saved, you're an heir of God! That beats being an heir to a billionaire *hands down*.

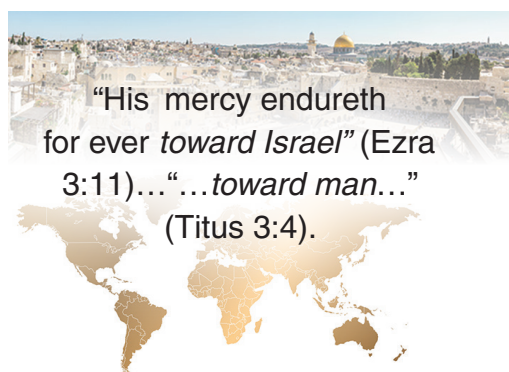
The Meek Will Inherit the Earth

But maybe you're wondering what exactly it is that we inherit from God as His heirs. Well, in the beginning, God created two things, the heaven and the earth (Gen. 1:1). So by virtue of creation, God *owns* those two things. This works out pretty well, because He has two heirs: the people of Israel and the Body of Christ. God told Abraham, the father of the people of Israel, “that he should be heir *of the world*” (Rom. 4:13),

the earth. James added that “the twelve tribes” of Israel to whom he wrote (James 1:1) would be “heirs *of the kingdom*” which God promised to those in Israel that loved Him (James 2:5), the kingdom of heaven on earth.

And being heirs of God's kingdom on earth meant more than just getting to *live* in that kingdom, it meant *owning* that kingdom. John told Abraham's seed in Israel that “God...hast made us *kings and priests*: and we shall *reign on the earth*” (Rev. 5:9,10). Kingdoms are owned by the kings that reign over them, and the kingdom of heaven on earth will be owned by the people of Israel. The earth is their inheritance!

But the kingdom of heaven on earth isn't the only kingdom God owns. He also owns a kingdom *in heaven*, and you and I and all other members of the Body of Christ are going to inherit *that* kingdom!




Of course, “flesh and blood cannot inherit” a kingdom that is beyond the stars (1 Cor. 15:50), for our frail bodies are not equipped to live outside of earth's atmosphere.

But at the Rapture, *“we shall all be changed*, in a moment, in the twinkling of an eye” (vv. 51,52). When our bodies are changed and “fashioned like unto His glorious body” (Phil. 3:21), they will be well-equipped to inherit our inheritance of God’s kingdom in heaven.

But as grand and as glorious as that sounds, that’s not even the best part of our inheritance, and the earth isn’t the best part of Israel’s inheritance. When God promised the earth to Abraham, He vowed to give him the Promised Land, the command post of the earth, saying, “to thee will I give it, *and to thy seed for ever*” (Gen. 13:15). God promised Abraham and his seed that the land

of Israel would be “an *everlasting* possession” for them (Gen. 17:8), and for Abraham to *possess* the land forever, he was going to have to *live* forever! He understood that, and so should you about your inheritance in Heaven. That’s why Paul closes our text by asserting that we’ve been made heirs of God “according to the hope of eternal life” (Titus 3:7).

That’s the best part of our inheritance, an inheritance that we obtained in a different way than men obtained it in time past. As a grace believer, you’re one of the few people on planet earth who see this difference clearly, so be sure to tell someone about it *today*.

You’ll *both* be eternally glad you did. 



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“Please find enclosed a check to help support the ongoing ministry of your publication, the *Berean Searchlight*. I want to give back to a ministry I have fully enjoyed, and has made my life richer for it.”

From Missouri:

“Thanks again for all you do to get the Word out so people like me can understand it. I watch you every day on YouTube.”

From Indiana:

“Your ministry has been a major blessing to my life, my spiritual growth, and learning about rightly dividing. I’ve been listening to Pastor Kurth’s teachings on the Book of Acts and 1 and 2 Timothy....God willing, I hope to be a grace pastor and work in the ministry full time one day.” (We hope so too! –Ed.).

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“I was just about to write you on John 14:1-3, until I thought of just going to *Berean Bible Society* and just putting in the verses of John. And MP3 Lesson 65, popped up, called ‘Heart Trouble,’ and you covered every question I had.”

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"I am writing to say thanks for the booklet you send me monthly. I love it!"

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"I'd like to make this donation to show my appreciation for the *Berean Searchlight* which I receive in NZ and the good information on right division which you bless us with."

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"A few years ago, when I was first coming to learn the Bible, rightly divided, you helped me a great deal and answered many of my questions. Thank you! I read your most recent article in the *Searchlight* called 'The Temple Hour of Prayer.' I really enjoyed reading this, and it helped me to see what the gospel message was during Jesus' earthly ministry."

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"I moved and can't get *Transformed By Grace* any more, so my son-in-law hooked up YouTube on my 65" TV, and its like Pastor Kevin is in the room with me!" (At 6'3", the boss needs no magnification! -Ed.).

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"I've read and reread your teachings and listened over and over to your preachings on the Abrahamic covenant....I thoroughly understand

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From Connecticut:

"I love the *Searchlight* and all of C. R. Stam's writings....I'm trying to share with others who really want to understand their Bibles, and clear up all the confusion in the Christian community that leads to doubts about God's Word. There are so many interpretations on the same Scriptures! It just amazes me how the Word of God just fits together the way it does and makes so much sense when you understand the dispensations!"

From New Mexico:

"I just wanted to say thank you so much for your *Two Minutes* devotionals that come each day. You are encouraging my heart, and it gives me a desire to dive into the Word. I particularly love devotionals by Cornelius Stam."

From our Inbox:

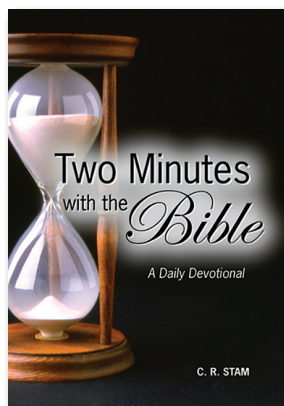
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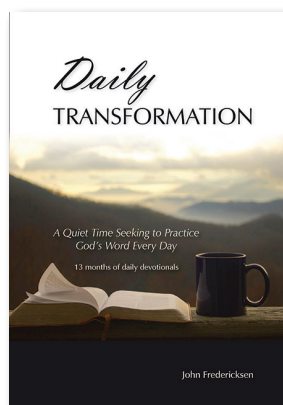
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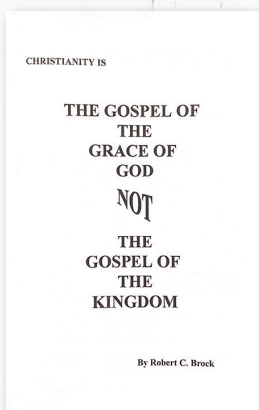


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News and Announcements

Beat the Winter Blues with a trip to Arizona! *Grace Bible Church* of Phoenix is hosting a *Things To Come Mission* conference January 28-30, and Pastor Kevin Sadler will be one of the speakers. To learn more, call host pastor Josh White at (623) 252-4002. Then, as long as you're making the trip to Arizona, plan to stay for the February 4-6 Bible conference at *West Valley Grace Fellowship*. Pastor Kevin plans on that, and you'll get more bang for your Arizona buck if you stay to hear his messages. Pastor Mark Dilley is the one to contact with questions about this second entry of our January doubleheader: jjdster@gmail.com; (623) 377-3071.

It's not too early to contact us regarding speaking engagements for 2022. Hosting a Bible conference is a great way to generate interest in the grace message in your area that can lead to the formation of a new grace work. If you already have a grace church, holding special meetings that feature BBS speakers can attract people in your area to your assembly when they read about them in the *Berean Searchlight*. So if you would like to invite BBS president Pastor Kevin Sadler or *Searchlight* editor Pastor Ricky Kurth to your neck of the woods in 2022, there's no time like right now to get the ball rolling. Just call us at (262) 255-4750, or email us at Berean@bereanbiblesociety.org, and we'll put you on the schedule.

Type Carefully! Sometimes when I answer a Bible question on our website's "Ask a Question" link, my answer bounces back. That means the person asking the question didn't enter a correct email address. This is also a problem when our readers try to make donations, place orders, subscribe to *Two Minutes With the Bible*, or our monthly email notification of the posting of the latest issue of the *Berean Searchlight* on our website. We hate to have people think we are ignoring them when they don't get a response from us, so please spell your email address with care, and be sure to try again if you've emailed us in the past and didn't hear back from us.

Read Your Bible Through in 2022: Just visit our website and click on the "Bible Study" tab, then scroll down to the "Bible Reading Plans" link. We offer a couple of different schedules that can help you read a little of the Bible each day, and finish with glee by 2023!



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TCM Bible Conference, January 28-30, 2022, Phoenix, AZ

Arizona Bible Conference, February 4-6, 2022, Sun City West, AZ



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2 Corinthians 8:9

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