

Voice of Baptists

"The voice of him that crieth in the wilderness, Prepare ye the way of the Lord, make straight in the desert a highway for our God." Isaiah 40:3

VOL. 1

APRIL, 1978

NO. 1

THE VOICE OF HIM THAT CRIETH IN THE WILDERNESS

By W. T. Russell

"The voice of him that crieth in the wilderness, Prepare ye the way of the Lord, make straight in the desert a highway for our God." Isaiah 40:3

The person in search of truth surely must recognize this voice of prophesy and seek the answer to this question: Of whom does the prophet speak?

The Ethiopian eunuch read about a man in Isaiah 53, and asked Philip in Acts 8:34, "I pray thee, of whom speaketh the prophet this? Of himself or some other man? The eunuch's question was answered by Philip in verse 35. "Then Philip opened his mouth, and began at the same scripture and preached unto him Jesus." In this manner, the eunuch learned about Jesus the Saviour of the world.

In connection with Isaiah 40:3, we read in Malachi 3:1, that Jesus by the pen of Malachi said, "Behold, I will send my messenger, and he shall prepare the way before me, and the Lord, whom ye seek, shall suddenly come to his temple, even the messenger of the covenant whom ye delight in: Behold, he shall come saith the Lord of hosts."

Here we read of two messengers, one to precede the other for the purpose of preparing the way for him. By going back to Isaiah 40:4, 5, we learn that the voice crying in the wilderness is the same as the messenger in Malachi 3:1, as it explains regarding the preparation of the way, "Every valley shall be exalted, and every mountain and hill shall be made low: and the crooked shall be made straight, and the rough places plain: And the glory of the Lord shall be revealed, and all flesh shall see it together: for the mouth of the Lord hath spoken it."

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SALVATION, YESTERDAY AND TODAY

By John A. Keen, Jr.

"The thing that hath been it is that which shall be; and that which is done is that which shall be done: and there is no new thing under the sun." Ecclesiastes 1:9

These words, recorded probably by Solomon, are often used in connection with the thought that from generation to generation there are no problems to overcome that have not been previously encountered; there are no new sins, only a continuation of old ones. Surely the outward appearance of sin will change with each generation but the underlying causes remain the same. Man, because of his corrupt nature, must contend with greed, selfishness, envy, strife and other forms of ungodliness in every generation.

This verse of scripture also suggests there are no new solutions to these age old problems. In fact, we should expect the solution to problems in ages long ago to be just as effective in solving the same problems today. One such problem is man's separation from God because of sin and his hoped for reconciliation, in other words, the salvation of lost sinners.

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FIRST ISSUE

After several months of prayer and serious consideration of whether enough interest existed for another religious publication to find its' place among the list of those which have made and are making noted contributions to the Cause of Christ, a definite embarking upon the sands of journalistically explaining the word of God has arisen within us to the point, that, here it is - VOICE OF BAPTISTS.

The life and future of this endeavor will depend upon the fact, that, there are yet Baptist people, and also others, who wish to broaden their knowledge to a deeper and fuller understanding of the Scriptures. It shall ever be the chief aim and sole purpose of this instrument to harmonize "thus saith the Lord" throughout both the New and Old

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CONSCIENCE

By Charles R. Moore

Thank God for the civil liberty that is afforded the citizens of the United States of America under the First Amendment to the constitution. These few words "Congress shall make no law respecting an establishment of religion, or prohibiting the free exercise thereof;" have proven to be the greatest restraint that mortal men have ever conceived of in their fight against the forces of Satan. The twentieth chapter of Revelation speaks of a period of time in the which Satan will be bound, that is, restrained from using the forces of civil authority to persecute the church as he had done during the period of the dark ages which are revealed in the earlier chapters of Revelation. (Chapters 6 through 16.)

During the Colonial period of American history this was not the case.

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VOICE OF BAPTISTS

Editor

Kenneth W. Massey
1501 Pleasant St.
Indianapolis, Ind. 46203

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Indianapolis, Ind.

STAFF WRITERS

James H. Smith
1169 Hunters Lane
Nashville, Tennessee 37207

Charles R. Moore
26210 Janet Court
Roseville, Michigan 48066

John A. Keen, Jr.
1027 White Ave.
Brownsburg, Ind. 46112

ONE MAN'S OPINION

QUESTION: Do you believe in a limited atonement?

ANSWER: By Kenneth W. Massey

No. ". . . we trust in the living God, who is the Saviour of all men, specially of those that believe." (1 Tim. 4:10)

The verse of scripture stated proves beyond doubt that Christ provided all the sacrifice necessary to lift any and all sinners from the bondage of Satan. However, since some have rejected Him according to scriptures and died without hope, all are not saved, but rather all invited to come to God the Father by way of God the Son, who died to make Himself the Saviour of all men. It is quite evident from the scripture that the God-man of God in the flesh is a special Saviour to those who trust or believe in the merits of His death. God has provided enough love, grace, mercy, power, gospel, blood, longsufferingness, kindness, pureness, knowledge and Holy Ghost to reach the vilest sinner that will turn from the powers of Satan unto God. If a limited atonement was Biblical, Jesus would have said this in the golden text of the Bible - John 3:16, "For God so loved the world, that he gave his only begotten Son that **some can be saved, but others cannot because Jesus did not go to the cross for them.**" The truth is - "that whosoever (anyone) believeth in him should not perish, but have everlasting life."

God would be a respecter of persons, if this doctrine were true. Notice, "there is no respect of persons with God." (Romans 2:11)

Thus, Jesus Christ shed all of His blood to redeem a lost world from sin. The price is paid; the door is open, but God does not force men to choose, and neither does he make an invitation

without having provisions to fulfill his promise. Therefore, the atonement is unlimited, that the gospel terms for salvation (repentance toward and faith toward Jesus Christ) in either being met or neglected would determine the final state of man in eternity.

FIRST ISSUE

(cont'd from page 1)

Testaments. Perhaps, one will be enabled hereby to stand up a little better for just one of those precious, blood-bought doctrines in the face of stern opposition. "To Him be the glory and honor forever. Amen." (1 Tim. 1:17)

It is truly a pleasure to introduce to you the selected team of staff writers who shall be coming into your lives to help further the education of you and your children in "those things which are most surely believed among us."

Elder James H. Smith - Bro. Smith has served as evangelist, foreign and home missionary, teacher, pastor, and staff writer for "Baptist Faith and Missions." He is presently serving as pastor of Mt. Calvary Missionary Baptist Church of Nashville, Tennessee.

Elder Charles R. Moore - Bro. Moore is a converted Mormon. He has served as evangelist, missionary and pastor, and is currently beginning a new pastorate with Grace Missionary Baptist Church of Roseville, Michigan.

Elder John A. Keen, Jr. - Bro. Keen is now serving in his first pastorate with Grace Missionary Baptist Church of Fishers, Indiana. He has also served as evangelist and missionary.

This circulation shall be a monthly publication without subscription rate. Any donation offered in the spirit of love will be gratefully received to promote the furtherance of this work. A regular feature of the paper will include a column entitled "ONE MAN'S OPINION." In this column, you, the readers, may send your Bible-related questions and request which writer you prefer to make the answer. Please cooperate in this manner that we may keep the door of communication open between us.

All subscriptions should be sent to:
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1501 Pleasant Street
Indianapolis, Indiana 46203

A hearty thank-you is sent on its way to each of you who have already helped in the planning or preparation of this initial issue, and our thanks is conveyed in advance to any who may befriend this publication in the months ahead.

SALVATION

(cont'd from page 1)

This problem has existed from the garden of Eden to this present day. Each generation and more particularly each person who has reached an age when they became accountable to God for their actions have had to deal with this problem. The Bible gives us a record of some men and women who have overcome this problem and won the victory as well as some of those who have been swallowed up in defeat. God, who is the same yesterday, today and forever and who is no respecter of persons, has a plan of salvation for men that has never been altered, changed, or set aside for any man or for any generation. God's Holy Word, old and new testament, clearly sets forth and illustrates this never changing plan of redemption for sinful man.

The way of salvation is clearly set forth by the Apostle Paul to the Ephesian brethren in the 20th chapter of the book of Acts. Paul was on his way to Jerusalem when he sent for these brethren. Realizing he would never see them again, Paul told them with Spirit filled words that he had kept back nothing from them that was profitable but had testified to both Jews and Greeks of "repentance toward God, and faith toward our Lord Jesus Christ." This is God's plan for sinful men to be reconciled to Him.

Some would suggest that God had a different plan of salvation for men in old testament times but Paul told Timothy that from his childhood he has known the holy scriptures (Old Testament), "which are able to make thee wise unto **salvation through faith which is in Christ Jesus,**" II Timothy 3:15. Paul tells the Corinthian church in II Corinthians 4:13 that we have the same spirit of faith as David had in Psalms 116:10 when he said he believed. David testifies, in this Psalm, of his appeal to God for the salvation of his soul. He clearly was responding to that Godly trouble and sorrow his soul was experiencing. But, David does not stop at this point. He testifies in verses 7 and 8 of finding that peace from God he so diligently sought for when he says, "Return unto thy rest, O my soul; for the Lord hath dealt bountifully with thee. For thou hast delivered my soul from death." This is David's testimony of salvation by repentance toward God and faith in Christ. Critics may ask, "where is the record of his repentance toward God?" or "how could any old testament character have had faith in Christ?" The Apostle Paul gives us our reply to the first question in II Corinthians 7:10, "For godly sorrow worketh repentance to

salvation." This statement connects repentance to David's trouble and sorrow. The second question arises from an opinion that Christ is only a new testament character. But Jesus said, "Before Abraham was, I am", and "I am the way" (John 8:58 and John 14:6). There has never been but one plan of salvation. The way of salvation is the same today as it was yesterday. There is in fact, with respect to God's plan of salvation, "no new thing under the sun."

TRUTH SUCCESSFULLY DEFENDED

Last November at Tyndale Armory in downtown Indianapolis, Elder W. T. Russell (Baptist) met John Welch (Campbellite) in discussing God's Plan of Salvation. Elder Russell taught by precept and example that the Lord of Hosts has saved men by grace through faith throughout the history of the world. The theory of baptism being essential to salvation was proven to be just that, nothing but a theory of man. As a direct result of this religious debate, a lady, who had once been an agnostic, was converted afterwards at home. "For we can do nothing against the truth, but for the truth." II Cor. 13:8

THE VOICE CRIETH

(cont'd from page 1)

In verses 6-8, the cry of the voice is explained, "The voice said, Cry. And he said, What shall I cry? All flesh is grass, and all the goodliness thereof is as the flower of the field: The grass withereth, the flower fadeth, because the Spirit of the Lord bloweth upon it: Surely the people is grass. The grass withereth, the flower fadeth: but the word of our God shall stand forever."

So, this voice was a preacher of the word of God, whose identity and preaching we find in the third chapter of Matthew. Verse 1, "In those days came John the Baptist preaching in the wilderness of Judea, And saying, Repent ye: for the kingdom of heaven is at hand. For this is he that was spoken of by the prophet Esaias (Isaiah) saying, The voice of one crying in the wilderness, Prepare ye the way of the Lord, make his paths straight."

For further confirmation concerning this VOICE; see John 1:19 and 23, "And this is the record of John, when the Jews sent priests and Levites from Jerusalem

to ask him, Who art thou? He said, I am the voice of one crying in the wilderness, Make straight the way of the Lord, as said the prophet Isaijah."

Now, since the scriptures tell us who the voice is: Where did he come from?

The indisputable answer is given in John 1:6, 7, "There was a man sent from God whose name was John. The same came for a witness, to bear witness of the light, that all men through him might believe. He was not that light, but was sent to bear witness of that light."

We learn from this that John was the man with the voice who fulfilled Isaiah 40:3-5 and Malachi 3. He was God's messenger, the preparer of the way before the Lord, and being sent from God on a mission, he must have been a missionary. John himself declared he was sent. Hear him, John 1:33, "I knew him not: but he that sent me to baptize with water, the same said unto me: Upon whom thou shalt see the Spirit descending, and remaining on him, the same is he which baptizeth with the Holy Ghost. And I saw and bare record that this is the Son of God."

JOHN'S MISSION

In Luke 1:76-80, "And thou child, shalt be called the prophet of the Highest: for thou shalt go before the face of the Lord to prepare his ways: To give knowledge of salvation unto his people by the remission of their sins, Through the tender mercy of our God; whereby the dayspring from on high hath visited us. To give light to them that sit in darkness and in the shadow of death, to guide our feet into the way of peace." Also, See Luke 1:17, "And he (John) shall go before him (Christ) in the Spirit and power of Elias (Elijah) to turn the hearts of the fathers to their children, and the disobedient (unbeliever) to the wisdom of the just, to make ready a people prepared for the Lord."

HIS NAME

In the first chapter of Luke we read about a priest whose name was Zacharias, of the course of Abia, and his wife was of the daughters of Aaron. They were both righteous before God. They had no children as his wife Elisabeth was barren. We also learn in verse 13 that Zacharias had prayed they might have children, maybe even a son. And while Zacharias executed the duties of the priests office an angel appeared on the right side of the altar of incense, and when Zacharias saw him he was troubled and fear fell upon him. But, the angel assured him there was no reason; to fear, that his prayer was heard, and his wife would bear him a son, and that he was to call his name John.

Zacharias questioned the possibility of the fulfillment of the angel's announcement; and the angel told him he was Gabriel, sent to bring him the glad tidings, but because of his doubt or unbelief of the angel's words, he would be dumb and not able to speak until these tidings were performed.

When he came out of the temple, the people marvelled that he had tarried so long in the temple, supposing that he had seen a vision, for he beckoned unto them and remained speechless.

To be continued in May issue. The June issue will have "The Bridegroom's Voice" by W. T. Russell.

SINGING

Grace Miss. Baptist Church of Lantern Road, Fishers, Ind. will have a gospel singing featuring the Gospel Way Quartet. Services will be held Saturday evening April 1 at 7 p.m. You are invited.

GOSPEL SING

Cockriel Family will be singing at Fellowship Miss. Baptist Church of 1032 S. Holmes St., Indianapolis, Ind., Sat. evening, April 1. Service begins at 7 p.m. Everyone is welcome.

SPRING REVIVAL ANNOUNCEMENTS

APRIL 2

Fellowship Miss. Baptist Church - 1032 S. Holmes St., Indianapolis, Ind. Elder Terry Foster of Kansas City, Mo. will assist Pastor Calvin Perrigo with Elder Tommie Lankford of Pleasant Shade, Tenn. directing song service. Services each evening at 7 p.m.

APRIL 16

Grace Miss. Baptist Church - Lantern Road, Fishers, Ind. Elder W. T. Russell of Bowling Green, Ky. will assist Pastor John A. Keen, Jr. Services each evening at 7 p.m.

APRIL 30

Bethel Miss. Baptist Church - 1501 Pleasant St., Indpls., Ind. Elder W. T. Russell will assist Pastor Kenneth Massey. Services each evening at 7 p.m.

CONSCIENCE

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But to the contrary, property belonging to Baptist Churches was confiscated by the civil authority and the proceeds turned over to the established religion. Baptist ministers were arrested, jailed, tried, sentenced and the sentence executed for no other charge than preaching the gospel without a license. For tens of decades the cry had been "LIBERTY OF CONSCIENCE" and finally it was realized with the adoption of the First Amendment in 1791.

It appears that having been denied liberty of conscience for so long, that after receiving this wonderful civil liberty, many people let the pendulum swing to the opposite extreme and forgot to learn the difference between "liberty of conscience" relating to civil law, and "duty and obedience" relating to God's Commandment. With that observation in mind, the writer is of the opinion that many members of Baptist Churches should reexamine their concept of the term CONSCIENCE.

A misunderstanding of the meaning of the word conscience has no doubt played a major role in the division of churches and the establishment of false churches. Following a bit of man made doctrine which states that the conscience is a God given monitor within the person, many people have decided to let their own conscience guide them rather than the inspired word of God. The writer wishes to go on record here as denying the afore stated doctrine. Conscience is NOT a gift from God but is rather the product of ones education. The important thing about ones conscience is the NATURE of it. Every rational minded accountable person has a conscience. The question is, does that conscience please God? Is it a good conscience or a bad conscience? The Bible speaks of people with defiled, weak, seared consciences and on the other hand it speaks of people with good, pure consciences, which of course the two types are antipodes.

I think that it would serve very well to give a definition of our English word conscience just here. From Webster's New Twentieth Century Dictionary, Unabridged Edition we find: "CONSCIENCE n. (French conscience, from Latin conscientia, a joint knowledge, feeling, from conscire; from com-, together with, and scire, to know.) 1. Knowledge or feeling of right or wrong; the faculty, power, or principle of a person which decides on the lawfulness or unlawfulness of his actions, with a compulsion to do right; moral judgement

that prohibits or opposes the violation of a PREVIOUSLY RECOGNIZED ETHICAL PRINCIPLE." This definition from Webster is the exact meaning of the New Testament Greek word "suneidesis" (see Thayer's Greek-English Lexicon) and was properly translated by our English word conscience.

According to the afore stated definition I am sure that you are able to see that the type of conscience that a person has is dependant upon the principles that he has been taught. Is not this the very reason that Jesus placed such strong emphasis upon teaching them to observe all things whatsoever I have commanded you? If your conscience is to please God, then your conscience must be based upon the truth of God. Because to whatsoever degree a person does not believe the truth of God, to that same degree will his conscience be impaired and unable to guide him PROPERLY in making moral judgements of right or wrong. If the principles that we believe are not in complete accord with the teachings of the inspired word of God, we are subject to commit error and our consciences never condemn us.

The Holy Spirit leads the children of God (Romans 8:14), but the same Holy Spirit that leads God's children also inspired the Holy Men of God to write the Bible. The Holy Spirit certainly would not lead someone to do something contrary to what He has inspired men to write in the Bible. This is the way that our consciences can guide us as to whether or not we are following the proper spirit. The Bible teaches us (1st John 4:1) to try the spirits of what sort they are, the Holy Spirit, or evil spirits, or perhaps just our own WANT TO spirit. Some times "self" is the most difficult obstacle that we have to overcome. But if we could learn the truth of God's inspired word and make them the basis from which our consciences operate, no doubt we could all have good consciences and our lives would reflect the inward happiness that is the result of having a good conscience toward God.

JESUS CHRIST CAME TO SAVE SINNERS

By Henry Smith

"This is a faithful saying, and worthy of all acceptation, that Christ Jesus came into the world to save sinners, of whom I am chief." I Timothy 1:15.

The above statement in Scripture clearly teaches that there are sinners in the world, and that they need to be saved, because no such statement would have ever been made if there had not been sinners to be saved, or needed to be saved. Whether men can realize it or not, the fact still remains that they need to be saved. "All have sinned and come short of the glory of God" Romans 3:23. Sin has its wages and the wages is death, and man just can't lift himself out of the situation. So someone had to come to save us, and thank the Lord that He came to save; He came to save sinners, not good men, or those who think they are good, but Jesus actually came to save sinners. Our text says, "This is a faithful saying, and worthy of all acceptation" and I would admonish you, dear reader, to accept this saying, because it is the Word of God, and it is truly a faithful saying.

(to be continued in May issue.)

MARION COUNTY SINGING CONVENTION -

will convene with Fellowship Miss. Baptist Church of 1032 S. Holmes Ave., Indpls., Ind. for each month beginning the first Sunday afternoon in April and continuing throughout 1978. Services each month at 2 p.m.

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