

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**

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NEAR TO GOD, OR AFAR OFF, WHICH?

By James H. Smith
Nashville, Tenn.

"But it is good for me to draw near to God; I have put my trust in the Lord God, that I may declare all thy works." Psalm 73:28

In this Psalm I believe that the writer expresses the feeling of all true believers, for all who truly know Him would like nothing better than to be near to the Master, for we know very well what is good for us. Too many Christians these days are following afar off, like Peter did at one point. (Luke 22:54) and certainly they can get themselves into a very miserable state. The apostle Peter was a saved man, and I believe he loved the Lord, but because he feared for his life he followed afar off, and then he even denied that he knew Jesus; and for this he went out and wept bitterly. (Luke 22:62)

In the text the writer makes this thing of drawing near to God a personal experience. "But it is good for me to draw near to God." In matters of Christian service you can't sit back and have somebody else to do your part. What the other fellow does is not going to put you any closer to the Lord. You may have a faithful and devoted wife, or husband, or parents, brother, sister, or even a very faithful pastor who faithfully preaches the Word of God, but unless you get in line, like they are, you are not going to experience that close walk with the Lord. You will just be trying to graze on a dry pasture, and they will be grazing on the green.

FELLOWSHIP

To draw near to God is the way to have fellowship with Him, and our fellowship with our heavenly Father is one of the greatest blessings of all time. Back-

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ORIGINAL SIN

By W. T. Russell
Bowling Green, Ky.



We believe that God created man in finite holiness according to the Scriptures. In contradistinction from Infinite Holiness we mean that man's creation was with certain boundaries and limitations. The creature could not be equal with God without being God. Only in image and likeness of God was man created. This, I would like to point out does not mean substance in form. The reason being that God is a Spirit, and Jesus told his disciples, "Handle me, and see that a spirit hath not flesh and bones as ye see me have." Luke 24:39 See also John 4:24, "God is a Spirit: and they that worship him must worship him in spirit and in truth."

Jesus by incarnation took upon himself the likeness of sinful flesh, being born of a woman. In this state, he had a body of flesh and bones. That body was crucified, went to the grave and the third day rose again, and after forty days ascended back to the right hand of God. He stands between God and man today in that glorified body.

However, we are not to assume that God is to be thought of as possessing a form as mortal man possesses. Then, what did God mean in Genesis 1:26 when he said, "Let us make man in our image, after our likeness:?" Since God is a Spirit and has not flesh and bones, and we, his creatures, do have flesh and bones, then we cannot be like God in this respect. So, there must be another meaning to likeness and image. The answer lies in the fact that God made man an intelligent being like himself; also, he created the

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Bethel Association Convenes

Sept. 15-17

The 21st. annual session of the BETHEL MISSIONARY BAPTIST ASSOCIATION will convene with Fellowship Missionary Baptist Church of 1032 S. Holmes in Indianapolis, Indiana, Friday evening, Sept. 15, 1978 beginning at 7 p.m., E.S.T. Elder Calvin Perrigo will bring the Introductory Sermon with Bro. Nathan York delivering the Memorial Sermon on Saturday and Elder Kenneth Massey preaching the Doctrinal Sermon on Sunday. The services on Saturday and Sunday will begin at 10 a.m., E.S.T.

The host church and all of the churches representing in Bethel Assoc. extend a welcome for visitors to join us as we endeavor "to promote the union of the faith of the Gospel with our educational and mission interests." (Bethel Association Constitution, Article 7).

"AND TRULY OUR FELLOWSHIP IS WITH THE FATHER, AND WITH HIS SON JESUS CHRIST."
1 John 1:3

VOICE OF BAPTISTS

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ONE MAN'S OPINION

By Kenneth W. Massey

QUESTION: "Will all Jews return to Palestine before the second advent of Christ?"

ANSWER: No.

It isn't a reasonable thing to teach that all natural Jews will go to Palestine for many will not want to go, others could not even afford to go, and many would not be physically able to go. The Lord is not coming back to institute a Kingdom, but to deliver up to the Father the one He instituted while walking on this earth. (I Cor. 15:24). If people could understand the difference in natural Jews and spiritual Jews, many conjectures and insinuations would be swallowed up in the harmonious teachings of God's Word. Realizing it isn't good journalism to answer a question with a question, nevertheless, I must ask, "where in scripture is the teaching that all natural Jews will return to Palestine before the second advent of Christ? No man knows when Jesus shall return (Matt. 25:13).

BETHEL CHURCH PLANS GOSPEL SING

Everyone is cordially invited to come to Bethel Missionary Baptist Church of 1501 Pleasant St., Saturday, September 23, 1978 at 7 p.m., E.S.T. for an evening of gospel singing. The TOMES FOUR of Louisville and the PARABLES of Indianapolis will be the special guest singers.

SOME REASONS.....



"Why God does not answer prayer."

By Calvin Perrigo
Indianapolis, Ind.

This article is intended to bring to view some Bible teachings on the reasons for unanswered prayers and, also, to encourage the continuation of all honorable requests toward God.

Many people have become discouraged, dissatisfied, disappointed and even disagreeable because some prayer effort has not been answered. The aftermath of an unanswered prayer can be devastating and can affect the lives of many people. The effect of an unanswered prayer may cause people to say, "WHY GO ON?", or they may blame God. Sometimes it is rather easy to charge an ever loving, powerful God with the responsibility of an unanswered prayer when it is really our own fault.

God may not answer our prayer because we fail to make some acknowledgements in the beginning of the petition. From Matthew 6:9 thru 15, we should after this manner pray; address ourselves to our heavenly Father, the one that lives in heaven; the father whose name is Hallowed, (to be revered as Holy). His will should be as important in our hearts as it is in heaven. We must acknowledge our dependence upon him, even to asking him for our daily bread. Are we truly that dependent upon our God when we pray? We need to feel a forgiving attitude toward our debtors as we pray to a forgiving God. It is very important to recognize his everlasting power and glory. God's abilities need to be vivid in our mind and heart as we humble ourselves to him in prayer.

If we can recognize these things as we start our prayer, we should have confidence in him. He can answer prayer!

Prayers that are prayed amiss will not be answered. God is not obligated to answer if we desire something just to consume it upon our own lust. (James 4:3) Some people, in their minds, have reversed the reason for their being alive on this earth. Our prayers can be directed to God for our pleasure. Man, along with all the creation, was created for God's pleasure (Revelation 4:11). Therefore, if our prayers do not have God's pleasure as their goal, they may go unanswered.

Avoid praying amiss, you can utilize your prayer time to a greater advantage if you forget about self-advantage. Paul did not waste any more time in asking

God to remove his thorn in the flesh after God gave him the information about the sufficiency of his grace (II Cor. 12:7-9). Prayers not asked in faith will not be honored, therefore, they are not answered. Plain and simple information is supplied in the first chapter of the epistle of James on this necessity. We should not expect anything if we do not believe that God can deliver. Ponder over the fifth, sixth, and seventh verses of James, chapter one, if your needs are not supplied after praying. Faith in God's ability is important. Our life style may be the reason for so many unanswered prayers. How often do we over look the importance of the word, "RIGHTEOUS," when we read or quote James 5:16? The effectual fervent prayer of a righteous man availeth much. We may feel it is out of our reach unless we read verse 17, also. Elias was human as we are, subject to like passions.

The iniquities of Israel had caused a separation to come between them and God. Their sins had caused God's face to be hid from them and he would not hear them (Isaiah 59:2). More information along this type error is supplied in Zechariah 7:13. God cried, the people did not hear. Then the people cried and God would not hear. Do you think it would be different with us today? I plead with you to read Proverbs chapter 1, verses 24 thru 33 as we continue. If we regard iniquity in our heart, we should know that the Lord will not hear us when we pray (Psalms 66:18). To have power in prayer it is necessary to have a forgiving spirit within ourselves. Jesus, from the cross, and Stephen under the hail of stones are clear examples of this forgiving nature.

Prayer that is not according to God's will shall not be answered. Can we know the will of God in our life? Yes, if you pray to know it in order to do his will you can know what God has for you to do. If you just want to know his will so you can decide if you will obey or not you should not expect an answer. Read Colossians 1:9 and 10.

SILOAM ASSOC.

The 26th. annual session of the SILOAM MISSIONARY BAPTIST ASSOCIATION will meet with the Mt. Zion Missionary Baptist Church, Friday, Sept. 30th. at 10 a.m., C.D.T.

Elder Jerry A. Reynolds, Elder Kenneth Davis, and Elder E. G. Williams, will preach the annual sermons.

The church is located at Holland, Ky. just six miles east of Scottsville.

ORIGINAL SIN*(Continued from page 1)*

spirit of man, making him a spiritual being with an immortal soul that would exist forever. This to me is the meaning of the image and likeness of God.

With this likeness and image, man had freedom of choice, since he possessed intelligence, he was responsible to his maker to stand or fall on his own merits. We must understand there had been no cause for grace to intervene, although Adam was made subject to sin, he had not sinned, but stood finitely holy in God's sight until the day he transgressed God's holy law. So, it cannot be said that Adam fell from grace, for he stood upon his own merits, and by choice, not by constraint, transgressed the law!

How long Adam and Eve lived before breaking that one law, we are not told, but, by estimation, it must have been approximately one hundred years. The only reason I bring this up is to prove that Adam had the ability, in his holy state, to have kept the law. If he was able to resist partaking of the forbidden fruit for a week, a month, or a year, he proved his ability to restrain himself from sin. We are clearly shown by Paul's communication with Timothy that Adam was not deceived, but the woman being deceived was in the transgression. This proves beyond question that Adam voluntarily and knowingly violated the law with absolute knowledge of the penalty.

It seems to be so hard for some people to understand the universal effect that Adam's transgression had on all his posterity, when if they would only consider for a minute that the seed of the whole human race was in and extended in Adam. So, the entire human race sinned and fell in Adam. So, not only Adam was corrupted by sin, but the whole human race became inherently corrupt and totally depraved. This simply means that the entire human race was deprived of rectitude, debased morally, and morally corrupted.

Therefore, the necessity of the virgin birth of Jesus Christ, the second Adam, which we certainly must understand in order to be informed on the doctrine of substitution.

We must ever keep in mind that it was Adam to whom the law was given and upon whom the responsibility rested and not upon Eve. Eve was just as much a descendent of Adam as any one of his children, and what she did in transgressing the Law of God effected no one except herself. For proof of this doctrine read Genesis 2:22, 23, "And the rib which the Lord God had taken from man,

made he a woman, and brought her unto the man. And Adam said, This is now bone of my bones, and flesh of my flesh: she shall be called Woman, because she was taken out of Man."

In Genesis 3:15 God said, "the seed of the woman would bruise the serpents head". Notice also in Gal. 4:4, "But when the fulness of the time was come, God sent forth his Son, made of a woman, made under the law."

We see from the above that the promised redeemer could not be of the seed of the man, because it was by man death came upon all men, and not by the woman. No human being could have been the father of Jesus Christ without passing on his nature of inherent depravity. God made choice of a virgin whose name was Mary, and Jesus was begotten by the Holy Spirit, and was the only begotten Son of God. Being begotten of God, Jesus by-passed the fallen nature of Adam, and did not possess inherent depravity.

That Jesus was God manifested in the flesh is without question, for the prophets testified to that fact, "Therefore the Lord himself shall give you a sign; Behold a virgin shall conceive, and bear a son, and shall call his name Immanuel." Now, in Matthew 1:22, 23 we read, "Now all this was done, that it might be fulfilled which was spoken of the Lord by the prophet, saying, Behold a virgin shall be with child, and shall bring forth a son, and they shall call his name Emmanuel, which being interpreted is, God with us." Therefore, Jesus was God-man.

By virtue of the above, Jesus became the substitute for Adam, and God laid on him the iniquity of us all. The law of God was just, and the penalty was just as much so as was the law. The penalty being death, which penalty had to be paid, Jesus took it upon himself to take Adam's place as his substitute and, as our High Priest, offer himself in sacrifice, thus satisfying the broken law, thereby removing forever the Adamic sin. This sacrifice, however, did not remove that corrupt nature inherent upon the human race. Although, Jesus shed his life's blood on the cross as the only medium by which the human race might be cleansed from all sin. While the Adamic sin is unconditionally removed from us by the death of Christ, the remission of our sins, for which we are all individually responsible, requires conditions on our part.

The conditions: The sinner must hear the gospel, believe it to be the truth, and under Godly sorrow for sin, repent

*(Continued on page 4)***IN SPIRIT
AND
IN TRUTH**

By Jerry A. Reynolds
Davisville, W. Va.



Somewhere there is a balance of spirit and truth that must be found in order to accomplish what God intended for his church. It seems to be man's natural inclination to be extreme regarding religion and to go overboard in some direction. He rarely learns that any direction in which he leans too far in this boat on the raging sea of life will result in the same fall into it. Some Baptists lean toward the extreme of Campbellism, which denies the spiritual power of God by advancing the importance of the written word to a degree of error. Other Baptists lean toward the extreme of Pentecostalism, which denies the power of God in the written word, disregarding its rigid boundaries while its disciples go ignorantly soaring about in the world of spirits all of which they suppose to be holy. Why should we lean at all? We are the Lord's churches. These leanings are a source of contention among us which ought not to exist. We should labor carefully to correct the imbalance put in by those who have handed us this divine institution. If we accept all of the errors of our forefathers and add to theirs our own errors we cannot help but do worse than they did. Our descendants, in following our example are likely to lose all that is right.

The iniquity of other religions nearby will naturally taint us if we do not use utmost diligence to keep the faith as it was once delivered unto the saints and by them passed on down to us. None of us is righteous or wise enough to be justified in radical thinking and arrogant behaviour. We are to esteem the other better than self and with pure water of truth in humble spirit to wash the feet of each other clean of the filth accumulated from wading through the world of iniquity. If we would so serve one another and be served as Jesus commanded, the architect of the earth's only divinely designed organization has so built into it checks and balances that it cannot help but remain sound and prosperous.

Only by the Spirit can we understand the truth of God's word and only by his word can we remain after the right spirit. These two are inseparable. All true worshippers must worship him in both.

NEAR TO GOD

(Continued from page 1)

sliders don't have fellowship with the Lord. When God's children harbor sin in their lives and fail to confess their sins, their fellowship with God is broken, and they can't even pray; and what a tragic thing that is! The Bible says, "The backslider in heart shall be filled with his own ways." (Proverbs 14:14). And what a miserable thing that is, to be filled with your own way; not God's way, but your own! Backsliding doesn't mean that the person has lost his relationship with God, but it does mean that he has lost his fellowship with Him. I feel that today a lot of preaching needs to be done to backsliders, to Christians who are out of fellowship with God. I have attended revival efforts, and strong efforts they were, but there would not be a move, and I couldn't help but think that what was needed at that particular time was preaching to backsliders instead of lost sinners. If God's people would get on good terms with the Master, sinners could see something attractive about their Christianity and would desire to have such an experience. But when sinners see these cold, pleasure seeking, Sunday Christians, and sometimes not even Sunday, sitting in the pews, they don't see anything very desirable. And sometimes you can hear them say, if that is Christianity, please excuse me.

A person out of fellowship with God is sometimes very hard to deal with. They are cool toward those who would like to help them get back to the service of the Lord, and they can say some very hard things about those who are trying to serve; they find fault and are rather critical. In some cases these hardened backsliders are harder to deal with than a hardened sinner. But why can't they realize what a blessing it is to draw near to the Lord and be in a position where they can talk with Him daily, and enjoy His wonderful presence? Some people can be very stubborn, however, and in some cases so stubborn that God sees fit to lay them flat on their back in a hospital somewhere. But this isn't because God loves to see His children suffer, but it is a sure sign that He loves them. "For whom the Lord loveth He chasteneth, and scourgeth every son whom He receiveth." Hebrews 12:6. Yes, our heavenly Father can and does chastize His children, but the end He sees in this is to bring us close to Him; and when it gets to hurting very bad we can understand what He is trying to do for us.

THE SECRET OF POWER

There are many powerless churches

and powerless individual lives today, and this condition seems to be getting worse. Where is the power? God hasn't changed, His power hasn't changed one bit, but the trouble is that His people are not close enough to Him to experience and enjoy this greatest of all powers. You can get people to join the church by over persuasion, or by having socials and various kinds of worldly entertainment in the church, but you can't have a true convert without the power of God. And may I add, if churches keep inviting the world into the churches, and keep adding on things that will keep people entertained, especially the young people, the time will soon come when there will be nothing left but a social club. There was a time when the churches were winning the world, but now it seems that the world is making some progress in winning the churches. When we get out of step with God and in step with the world the power is gone. We are in the world, of course, but not of the world (John 15:19) and we are not to be conformed to the world. (Romans 12:2). Though we are in the world, we aren't to act like the world and follow its customs and practices. When we do we lose our power to win people out of the world for the Lord.

We must have power with God in order to have power with men. I know that the Bible says that the Gospel is the power of God unto salvation to everyone that believeth (Romans 1:16). But we might have a hard time getting people to even listen to the Gospel if we don't have any power with them, or don't have any influence over them, which influence God enables us to have over them. How well we remember the case of Jacob and Esau! Esau hated Jacob and vowed to kill him, but Jacob was alone with the Lord one night as he journeyed from Haran back to his father's house in the land of Canaan. It was the Lord in the form of a man, "And Jacob was left alone; and there wrestled a man with him until the breaking of the day." This man that wrestled with Jacob must have been the Lord in the form of man, because after this experience Jacob said, "For I have seen God face to face, and my life is preserved." See Genesis 32:24-30. But the main point that I would like for you to see in this experience is in Genesis 32:27, when the Lord asked Jacob about his name, "And He said unto him, What is thy name? And he said, Jacob. And He said, Thy name shall be called no more Jacob, but Israel; for as a prince hast thou power with God and with men, and hast prevailed." Now notice that He said, "Thou hast power with God and

with men." Note, first of all, that he had power with God, secondly, power with men. Now, if you will, notice what all of this availed for Jacob. He had been afraid to meet his brother Esau, because he had vowed to kill him, but when Esau saw Jacob he ran to meet him, as the Scriptures say, "And Esau ran to meet him, and embraced him, and fell on his neck, and kissed him; and they wept." Genesis 33:4. You see, Jacob alone with the Lord that night is what made the difference, for the Lord said to Jacob, "For as a prince hast thou power with God and with men, and hast prevailed."

CONCLUSION

As I look at conditions today, in a spiritual sense especially, we might want to blame a lot of people for our predicament, but I believe the main cause for our unfortunate situation is that God's children have gotten so busy with the affairs of this life that we are out of touch with God, our source of power. I wonder how many of us have time, or take time, to daily take some time out to be alone with God, like Jacob be alone with our dear Master. We know, as the Psalmist said, "But it is good for me to draw near to God." However, would you take a little time out from this busy life to draw near to Him? You are not going to enjoy that nearness unless you give Him some of your time.

ORIGINAL SIN

(Continued from page 3)

toward God and believe in (or on) Jesus Christ as his only and all-sufficient Saviour. By faith in Jesus Christ and his shed blood, the sinner's sins are blotted out, to be remembered against him no more forever, and by virtue of this faith in Christ, the righteousness of Jesus Christ is imputed unto him.

Concerning Abraham, it is written in Romans 4:20-25, "He staggered not at the promise of God through unbelief; but was strong in faith, giving glory to God; And being fully persuaded that, what he had promised, he was able also to perform. And therefore it was imputed to him for righteousness. Now it was not written for his sake alone, that it was imputed to him; But for us also, to whom it shall be imputed, if we believe on him that raised up Christ our Lord from the dead; Who was delivered for our offences, and was raised again for our justification." Also, notice Phil. 3:9, "And be found in him, not having mine own righteousness, which is of the law, but that which is through the faith of Christ, the righteousness which is of God by faith."