

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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GOOD MEN GO WRONG AND WHY?

by James H. Smith
Nashville, TN

"And he sought God in the days of Zechariah, who had understanding in the visions of God, and as long as he sought the Lord, God made him to prosper. But when he was strong, his heart was lifted up to his destruction; for he transgressed against the Lord his God, and went into the temple of the Lord to burn incense upon the altar of incense." 2 Chronicles 26:5,16.

The subject in view here is Uzziah, one of the kings of Judah, who was also called Asariah, 2 Kings 14:21. He was young and tender when he began to reign, just sixteen years old, and the Bible says that he did that which was right in the sight of the Lord, according to all his father Amaziah did, 2 Chronicles 26:4. It isn't too unusual for some men to start out good, do that which is right in the sight of the Lord, and then come to a sad end. We find the record of such men throughout the Old Testament, especially. Pride and stubborn will is the primary reason for such misfortune and ruin. Uzziah had so much in his favor; his father before him did that which was right in the sight of the Lord, but not with a perfect heart; and he had Zechariah, who had understanding in the visions of God, to aid and counsel with him; for it says that in the days of Zechariah that he sought God, and the Lord made him to prosper. Some men can stand to prosper, and even to receive a pat on the back, and still remain humble and depend on the Lord, but others cannot, they give away to their pride.

Uzziah had a prosperous reign as long as he sought the Lord. He must have been a brilliant young man, doing that which was right in the sight of the Lord, and the Lord helped him. The land prospered in architecture, agriculture, and the Lord helped him to build up a fighting force to defeat the Philistines, the Arabians, and the Mehunims that were troubling the land; 2 Chronicles 26:6-10. "But when he was strong his heart was lifted up to his destruction" This is what

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THE COVENANTS OF GOD

by Danny Chandler
Belmont, WV

The Bible reveals to us many very important facts concerning the nature and character of God. It tells that God has existed always, and that he will never cease to exist. It tells us that he is good, that he is just, and that he is always truthful. The last item, truthfulness, is of absolute importance to us because it is based upon God's unchanging integrity that we take hope in His promises. As we travel through the Bible we can find many promises that God has made to man. Most have already been kept and the rest are as sure to be kept as if they had already been performed. It is in the understanding of these promises that men often become confused and the inevitable result is that false notions about God's dealings with man arise. It was because of a mistaken understanding of the promise to Abraham that the Jews became entangled in the keeping of the Law and its ordinances and thus missed its spiritual application. Sadly, many people today become entangled and ensnared in their understanding of God's covenants and they, too, miss the spiritual application.

In the 9th chapter of Genesis, God enters into a covenant with Noah and all of creation in which He states that He will never again destroy the earth by water and that no more shall all flesh be cut off by a flood. We can believe this promise because God said it, and he put a bow in the clouds as a token of the covenant He has entered into with all creation.

Before we proceed, let me define two words. First, a **covenant** is "a mutual undertaking between two or more parties with each party binding himself to fulfill his portion of the obligation." Second, a **token** is "some-

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QUARTERLY MISSION REPORT

Eld. Vernon Roark
North Bend Or.

Dear Brethren:

This report is both to thank you all for your prayers and support, and to inform you of my weak efforts as your home missionary to the north west.

I have been trying to serve Hauser Bapt. Church as temporary pastor, with frequent trips to Bethel Bapt. Church in Corvallis, Or. to try and help them, since returning to Oregon last October. I am sorry to report that I have had no success in Corvallis. The church here at Hauser is progressing slowly. We are having some very spiritual services, and the members seem to be growing in grace and enjoying very good fellowship with one another. We have gained four members and expect two or three more to join soon. There are sixteen active members with five or six non members who attend regularly. There were between thirty-five and forty present at our Easter sunrise service, and a good service was enjoyed by all. The church has planned to have a revival meeting starting the eleventh of May. Bro. Jeff Elliott, of California, is to assist the church, and the prayers of all are requested, as there are many lost here. There is a great need, and a promising opportunity, for a pastor here at Hauser. Please help me pray that God will lead someone, and that

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MISSION REPORT

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they would take up their cross and follow Him.

We have just returned from a six day trip to Parma, Idaho, about a thousand miles round trip. The little church there has been without a pastor for over a year and have since stopped holding services. As the church at Hauser is stable, my heart goes out to these people with no place to worship the Lord. I feel strongly that the Lord is leading me to go there and try to revive this field of battle for Him. After talking with the leading members there, we have permission to use the building to conduct services, and their promise to help us get it started again. We have planned to go back the first of June and hold revival services for a week or two, and with any success we plan to remain there until the church gets back on its feet. If I were asked what our most pressing need was, my reply would be someone to help us preach the Gospel of Jesus.

Please continue to pray for us as we try to serve the Lord here in the north west. May his richest blessing ever be yours.

Your Servant In Christ
Eld. Vernon Roark

CORRECTION

In last month's article, "Which Baptist," please note that the reference to Freewill Baptists as Particular Baptists was incorrect. Particular Baptists were also called Regular Baptists.

COVENANTS

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thing that serves to indicate the existence of something that cannot otherwise be seen; something material or external that stands for or signifies something spiritual." (both definitions are from **Websters College Dictionary**) The ring used in a marriage ceremony is a token of the covenant. The ring can be seen by all and is a visible display of the covenant that is made in the heart.

Notice in the above covenant that God took the full responsibility upon Himself and did not require anything on creation's part.

The next covenant we find is in the 15th chapter of Genesis when God renews the promise to Abram that in his seed shall all the nations of the earth be blessed, (that seed is Christ) and that his own natural seed should also inherit the land of Canaan. This passage also tells us that Abram's faith in God's word was counted (accredited to him) for righteousness and that when the actual contractual agreement took place Abram was asleep while God came down as a "smoking furnace and a burning lamp that passed between the pieces". This description of Eastern covenant making shows that God took upon himself the full responsibility of fulfilling the agreement with nothing required on Abram's part. Genesis chapter 17 vs. 1-11 tells us that 14 years later God appeared to Abram and gave him a "token" of the covenant that was already in existence between them. That token or "external sign that stands for something spiritual" was circumcision.

We can find as God began to fulfill his promise to Abraham that he brought forth from Egypt a whole nation (2-3 million) of the natural seed of Abraham. When they were three months into the wilderness, God met with them at Mt. Sinai and entered into a covenant with the whole nation at that time. In Exodus 24 we find that Moses went to the Mt. and received from God the set of rules that were to be used to govern their behavior. This set of rules covered the moral requirements (the Ten Commandments), the religious requirements (external forms of worship), and the social requirements for interaction with each other and with other nations. When Moses had recorded this in a book, he read it to the people and they with one accord said "all that God hath said we will do". Moses then ratified the covenant by slaying a sacrifice and sprinkling the blood upon the book containing the agreement and upon the people themselves. Notice that in this agreement there **was** obligation on both parties. **If** they would obey, **then** God would bless them. As is God's way, He gave them a "token" of the agreement to show externally that they were in covenant with Him. In Exodus 31 vs. 16-17 we find "Wherefore the children of Israel shall keep the sabbath, to observe the sabbath throughout their genera-

tions for a perpetual covenant. It is a sign (token) between me and the children of Israel forever." I have no quarrel with those that wish to honor the sabbath, but let's keep it in its proper perspective and remember that it was part of an agreement between God and the **natural** seed of Abraham and we as Gentiles were not part of that agreement. (cf Deut. 5:15)

As we move on we can find various references from God to the effect that he will some day make a new covenant and at that time "I will make a new covenant. . . I will put my law in their inward parts, and write it in their hearts; and will be their God and they shall be my people. . . they shall all know me, from the least of them unto the greatest of them, saith the LORD: for I will forgive their iniquity and I will remember their sin no more." (Jer. 31: 31-34) Notice that in this covenant God once again takes full responsibility for the performance of the obligations--he says "I will".

The new covenant is an agreement between God and his son Jesus in which Jesus promises to fulfill all the contractual obligations of the old covenant in exchange for ratifying a new covenant. The new agreement is one in which God is to extend all blessings to those who by virtue of their faith in Jesus receive the benefits that **He** obtained by obedience to the old covenant. The document was prepared in eternity past, and when the fulness of time came, God brought forth His son into this world in his prepared vehicle -- the nation of Israel. (thank you Brother Moran for that good thought). The agreement was ratified almost 2000 years and on Golgotha when Jesus signed it with His own blood. When Jesus had completed every requirement of the old agreement" he humbled himself and became obedient unto death, even the death of the cross". When Jesus had cried out "it is finished" he had taken that old covenant and nailing it to his cross with him had made it of no more effect. "And the vail of the temple was rent in twain from the top to the bottom." When Jesus again cried "Father into thy hands I commend my spirit" He rested His case. God being satisfied with all points, fulfilled his part by raising Jesus from the dead as a sign that the transaction was acceptable. Now, we become beneficiaries of that new covenant by faith in Jesus Christ. Our old hearts are removed and a new heart is given us in which we through love, obey the laws of God. God is then the center of our lives and we all know him through personal fellowship. The righteousness of Jesus is given to us and our own sins are removed and remembered no more.. forever.

The rainbow is the token of the covenant with man and all creation that the world will not again be destroyed by water. Circumcision is the token of the covenant God made

with Abraham which when he believed was counted for righteousness. The keeping of the sabbath day was a token of the covenant made between God and the nation of Israel at Mt. Sinai when Israel agreed to obey all that God said. And so, baptism is the token or outward sign of the new covenant that is written upon the heart which has its reality in the faith of the operation of God in the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead! (Col. 2:11-12)

Just as circumcision was a visible sign to the whole world that Israel was a people separated and Holy unto God, so baptism is a visible sign to the whole world that we have died to the old nature and having been buried and raised again with Christ will walk in newness of life and separation unto God. Peter compares our baptism to the flood of Noah by which he was separated from the wicked influence of the old world. We, by baptism are separated from the influences of our old world and transported into the separated world of Christ's called out people—the "church". As circumcision was a visible sign for a visible people—the nation of Israel. So also is baptism a visible sign for a visible people — the church.

The Apostle Paul says in Romans 4:11 that "Abraham received the sign of circumcision as a seal of the righteousness of faith which he had yet being uncircumcised." We who are of the spiritual seed of Abraham have received the sign of baptism, the seal of the righteousness of faith which we had yet being unbaptised.

God is not the author of confusion so let us keep all things in their proper (scriptural) places.

Danny Chandler

REVIVALS

June 8 - Old Paths Baptist Church - Lebanon, TN

Pastor James Shoulders will be assisted by Kenneth Massey. Services each evening at 7:30 p.m. All are invited!

June 22 - Independent Baptist Church - Huntingdon, TN

Pastor Kenneth Massey will be assisted by Elder Harold Eubank. Services each day at 10:30 a.m. and 7:30 p.m. Everyone is welcome.

July 20 - Old Union Baptist Church - Bowling Green, Ky.

Pastor Jerry A. Reynolds will be assisted by Elder Billy Moran. Meeting will continue two weeks with services each night at 7:30 p.m. You are welcome.

COMMENTS AND OFFERINGS

Mr. & Mrs. Johnnie Culbreath
Lafayette, TN

Mr. & Mrs. Cloyd Copas
Bowling Green, KY

Just a note to say we are enjoying the paper. Here is a contribution to help you keep up the good work. Our prayers are with you and the others who are doing such a good job."

Mt. Juliet Baptist Church
Mt. Juliet, TN

David E. Klingeman
1008 E. Prairie
Wheaton, IL

Just a short note to say that since I have been out in Calif. the Voice of Baptists paper has been a real blessing to me and my Family.

Enclosed you will find a small check for the support of the paper. I wish that it could be more, because I enjoy the paper so much! It is a joy to read the good articles and news when you're on the mission field. I pray the paper will continue to prosper. God bless you and your staff.

Your Bro. in the Lord,
Elder Jeff Elliott
5595 Gardendale
South Gate, CA

Clarksburg Baptist Church
Clarksburg, TN

I am enclosing a check for the "Voice of Baptists." We enjoy the paper very much. May God richly bless you and your family.

Harold & Bertie Strait
Indianapolis, IN

Victory Baptist Church
Hendersonville, TN

Enclosed is a check in support of "Voice of Baptists." We receive copies each month and our members enjoy it very much.

Brattontown Baptist Church
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Camden, TN

Bethel Baptist Church
Indianapolis, IN
Nyland Baptist Church
Oxnard, CA
Grace Baptist Church
Hendersonville, TN

Enclosed is a small donation to the "Voice of Baptists." Will be pleased to keep receiving it for we enjoy reading it.

Estel B. Carter
Lafayette, TN

Enjoy the paper very much. Don't personally know all of the writers but appreciate all who teach and stand for the doctrines of truth. Particularly appreciated the article about "Aunt Bide."

Mrs. Ople Leeman
Madison, TN

We are sending a little help on the paper. A lot of people enjoy reading it.

K.D. & Virginia Copas
Bowling Green, KY

We sure do enjoy the paper very much. It keeps us in touch with back home. A donation is enclosed.

Robert & Ruby Jackson
Ochelata, OK

We continue to enjoy and appreciate "Voice of Baptists." Enclosed is a donation to help on the publishing of this fine paper. May God bless.

Mr. & Mrs. Ross Walker
Polk, Mo

I missed my paper last month. Meant to send you a love offering but had to go in the hospital. Pray for us.

Lula Lowe
Indianapolis, IN

ORIGIN OF THE BAPTIST CHURCH

By Kenneth W. Massey

Though known by different names, Baptists claim their origin as a church from the days of Jesus Christ and the apostles.

Thus, we (Baptists) should be willing to furnish sufficient proof or else surrender our claim.

First, I would like to define **church**. "A church of Christ is an assembly of baptized believers joined together in the doctrine and fellowship of the gospel."

(Baptist Succession
by D.B. Ray)

There is not a denomination in all the world, except the Baptist, who claim Jesus Christ, in person, as their founder and head.

Daniel prophesied, "And in the days of these kings shall the God of heaven set up a

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GOOD MEN GO WRONG

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human pride will do if not kept under control. The Bible says in another place, "Pride goeth before destruction, and an haughty spirit before a fall." Proverbs 16:18. Pride and stubbornness are bed fellows, they go together, one follows the other. The king's heart was lifted, not to God, but in self, human pride. Then he became very stubborn. He went into the temple to burn incense that which the priests only were consecrated to do, and this was to his destruction. See 2 Chronicles 26:16-19. The king, Uzziah, had built the country, with the Lord's help, of course; and he had prestige and high standing among the people. And evidently he thought he could just take things in his own hand and do whatever he wanted; but he over stepped his authority and terrible destruction came upon him. God struck him with leprosy, a dreadful disease. When the priest confronted the king and told him, "It appertaineth not unto thee, Uzziah, to burn incense unto the Lord, but to the priests, the sons of Aaron." At this point he became angry; yes, he had a temper, and it cost him his throne and his life. What time he had left he had to live in a several house, being a leper. Once a successful and noble monarch ruling on his throne in Jerusalem, but in the end an unclean leper living in a house separated from society. A person can tear down in a few minutes what he has been building up for many years, if he doesn't watch his step.

Uzziah became famous, for it says, "And his name spread far abroad; for he was marvellously helped." 2 Chronicles 26:15. I guess there is nothing wrong in being famous as long as the person doesn't let it swell his head. The Lord made this man's name spread abroad; the Lord was the One who marvellously helped him and made him strong. When the Lord helps a man and makes even his name to spread abroad, his responsibility becomes greater than ever toward the Lord and the people that he has reached out to. But too many times when the Lord helps a person up and makes him to prosper, he begins to feel self sufficient and fails to give God the glory; as if, I have done it all myself. Even Moses, a great leader of God's people, must have thought at one point that he could just do things his way, and it cost him his life. God told Moses to speak to the rock, but he smote the rock, as he did before, Exodus 17:6. This time God said speak to the rock, Numbers 20:8, but here is how Moses took things in his own hands, as we note: "Hear now, ye rebels; must we fetch water out of the rock" Numbers 20:10. Notice he said, "Must we fetch water out of the rock" He failed to believe the Lord and glorify Him, and here is the sad story: "And the Lord spake unto Moses and Aaron, Because ye believed me not, to sanctify me in the eyes of the

children of Israel, therefore ye shall not bring this congregation into the land which I have given them. God will bless and continue to bless as long as we do things His way, but too many people, even today, think that this will do just as well as that, which the Lord has commanded. The king Uzziah did mighty well until he did something that the Lord didn't authorize, and his heart was lifted up to his destruction!

ORIGIN OF THE BAPTIST CHURCH

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kingdom, which shall never be destroyed; and the kingdom shall not be left to other people, but it shall break in pieces and consume all these kingdoms, and it shall stand forever.

(Daniel 2:44)

The church kingdom came from God, was founded by God, the Son during His personal ministry, and Paul tells us it shall return to God: "Then cometh the end, when he (Jesus) shall have delivered up the kingdom to God, even the Father; when he shall have put down all rule and all authority and power."

(1 Cor. 15:24)

Isaiah prophesied, "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." (Is. 40:3)

The prophet was speaking of John the Baptist. Notice the fulfillment of that prophecy - the angel told Zacharias that John the Baptist was sent "to make ready a people prepared for the Lord." (Lk. 1:17)

John did not establish the church kingdom but prepared the material for Jesus to use in the establishment. I hope we can reason together just here - there is a great distinction between being prepared for heaven and being prepared for church membership. Some have accused Baptists of teaching that it is easier to get to heaven than into a Baptist church. That's not true, and is simply the logic of carnal minded folks. It's much easier to get into a Baptist church than it is to enter the family of God. Here's why: a sinner by nature is at enmity with God, and all he must do to miss heaven and go to hell is just continue on his same way. But that is not so with God's born again child. His nature has been changed. He has become a new creature. He wants to please God! It is his desire to follow the Lord in baptism and true church fellowship.

For you who may believe that the church and God's family are the same in one, let me ask you to explain one thing. How do we have saved people without the church? Abraham, Isaac and Jacob were God's children and the church had not yet been instituted. The parents of John, Zacharias and Elizabeth, were saved without the presence of the church. The way of life had been entrusted to men, but now it would be entrusted to a perpetual institution, the church by Jesus Christ. Who established the church? The Saviour answers once and for all - "I will

build my church, and the gates of hell shall not prevail against it." (Matt. 16:18)

Did the Pope build it? No. Did Martin Luther build it? No. Did Constantine build it? No. Did John Wesley build it? No. Jesus said, I WILL BUILD MY CHURCH. Not only did He establish the church but He continues to edify that glorious house.

When was the church set up? Some say one morning following an all night prayer by Jesus in the mountain. Others say on the first Pentecost following the death of Christ.

Let's reason - if a new church was organized today, we would assign a definite date of origin. According to that thinking we immediately preclude that the first church established must also have an exact day it began. That idea could prevent our notice and acceptance of "the kingdom of God cometh not with observation." (Luke 17:20)

By observation Jesus meant with great outward show. In Luke, chapter six we read of Jesus spending a night praying in the mountain. He then chose twelve to be ordained apostles. A great number of disciples observed their recession from the mountain and a multitude of people were also present. If this was the beginning of the church, it came with observation or an outward show. I believe these twelve were first members of the church, and were made apostles there on the mountain-top.

THE CHURCH WAS SET UP GRADUALLY AND NOT INSTANTLY, which would have attracted much attention.

I offer two reasons for the previous statement. First, Simon, Andrew, James and John were commanded by Jesus to follow Him. (Mk. 1:16-20) Remember now, these men had already been saved and baptized by John the Baptist, or in other words were some of the material John had prepared. You can't be a true follower of the Lord and live outside the church. The opposite is, true followers of the Lord are in His church.

Thus, we conclude that the twelve were in the church first, and then given the apostleship.

Next, let's notice, "and God hath set some in the church: first apostles" (1 cor. 12:28) Could you set an apostle in the church before first having the church? No. So we conclude that Jesus organized the church during His personal ministry on earth.

Where did it start? The first church was made up of Jews and was located in Jerusalem.

Jesus gave the infant church all the laws it would need, finishing the night of His betrayal. He instituted the Lord's Supper ordinance that night, and then said, "I appoint unto you a kingdom, as my Father hath appointed unto me, That ye may eat and drink at my table in my kingdom, and sit on thrones judging the twelve tribes of Israel." (Lk. 22:29, 30)

Then, we find Jesus praying, and these words He spoke to the Father, "I have finished the work which thou gavest me to do." (John 17:4) He had set up "the church of the living God, the pillar and ground of the truth." (1 Tim. 3:15)