

The Remnant

*“Even so then at this
present time also there
is a remnant according to
the election of grace.”
Romans 11.5*

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SPIRITUAL FAITH vs. NATURAL FAITH

In the late eighteenth century there occurred two significant doctrinal revisions in the accepted Christian faith that resulted in the rise of the modern evangelical, or mission, development. First, there was a denial that Christ had saved His people from their sins; and second, the notion that the spiritual birth actually modified the natural or physical man. Coupled together, these two errors created a frenzy of excitement among the masses and spawned endless numbers of “benevolent institutions” as necessary auxiliaries to the “Church.” Even today, the increase of these innovations seem as endless as when they first began.

THE FIRST ERROR

The early novelties were mission societies, Sabbath schools, tract societies, and theological schools (See the Black Rock Address, 1832); and at present they have expanded to include enlistment crusades and outreach programs, praise bands, praise dances, and praise stompers, family faith centers (gyms), televangelism, and every other program designed to “save souls for Christ,” etc.

The foundational premise for all these carnal activities is that the natural man has the ability inherent within his nature to change himself from what he was created to something superior and spiritual. This ability, they believe, opens a door to every persuasive

influence one may use to achieve the regenerating power to save a sinner.

The New Testament Christian faith taught that Christ Jesus “**saved His people** from their sins.” Paul could speak readily of Christ “*who hath saved us, and called us with an holy calling, not according to our works, but according to His own purpose and grace, which was given us in Christ Jesus before the world began*” (2 Timothy 1:9, etc.). We call the reader’s attention to the past tense expressed in this passage. He “hath saved” us—already. The apostle gave the proof of that in the next verse: “*But is now made manifest by the appearing of our Saviour, who hath abolished death, and hath brought life and immortality to light through the gospel: whereunto I am appointed a preacher, and an apostle, and a teacher of the Gentiles*” Verses 10,11.

We see the same past tense expression in this passage: “*For if, when we were enemies, we were reconciled to God*”—see the past tense here? How were we so reconciled? He tells us: “*by the death of His Son,*” which tells us both how and when the saints were reconciled: that is, when Christ died. (Romans 5:9-10). “*Much more, being reconciled, we shall be saved by His life.*” Again, we find him using this same expression in 2 Corinthians 5:18: “*And all things are of God, who hath reconciled us to Himself.*” How did He reconcile us? Again, both the way and the when are stated: “*by Jesus Christ, and hath given us the ministry of reconciliation; to wit, that God was in Christ, reconciling the world unto Himself, not imputing their trespasses unto them; and hath committed unto us the word of reconciliation.*” In other words,

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God reconciled us (past tense) by the death of His Son and has given the ministry the word, or message, of this reconciliation in Christ. The angelic annunciation was: “*Joseph, thou son of David, fear not to take unto thee Mary thy wife: for that which is conceived in her is of the Holy Ghost. And she shall bring forth a son, and thou shalt call His name Jesus: for He shall save His people from their sins*” (Matthew 1:20-21). This Son of Mary said, “*For I came down from heaven, not to do Mine own will, but the will of Him that sent Me. And this is the Father’s will which hath sent Me, that of all which He hath given Me I should lose nothing, but should raise it up again at the last day* (John 6:38,39).” And again He said in His intercessory prayer: “*I have glorified Thee on the earth: I have finished the work which Thou gavest Me to do* (John 17:4).” The most fundamental message of the gospel is that Christ Jesus is the **Savior of sinners**. That message is that He did in fact finish His appointed task, and hence, salvation is a completed work of free and sovereign grace.

We are bombarded with the concept that “Jesus saves,” on bathroom walls, freight cars, overhead bridges, and tree signs along our highways; yet nowhere in the Scriptures is this word “saves” found. Nor should a Bible believer expect to find it there, for it isn’t in the right tense to be sound doctrine. However, it is totally consistent with the doctrinal innovation of Andrew Fuller, William Carey, and the evangelical movement.

Their innovation was very simple: “Christ’s blood was sufficient for the sins of all mankind; but efficient for the elect only” they taught. “The atonement of Christ put all mankind in a savable condition where the influence of the gospel could reach them.” That position, minus the “efficiency for the elect only,” is the foundation of all evangelical endeavors today. And this foundation is strictly heresy. It denies outright that Christ has saved His people from their sins, as the angel told Joseph He would do (Matthew 1:21), and it denies that He has reconciled His people to Himself by His sacrificial death. According to this theory, no one is yet saved until some preacher, missionary, tract, or humanly devised program effectually impresses his mind and heart to accept Christ as his Savior. This was an enormous modification of the gospel of Christ.

THE SECOND ERROR

In addition to this innovation in the doctrine of the atonement of Christ, the second error was also necessary to create this worldwide and enduring frenzy. That is, that the new birth modified the carnal *nature* of man, *i.e.* physically changed him.

Formerly, Baptists understood that spiritual life was an *addition* to the natural man. The natural man remained a natural man, but had by the new birth experience “put on a new man,” or became a “new creature.” Is there a contradiction between these two views? Yes! According to the innovation, the natural man possesses all that he needs to make a commitment to the Christian faith. It teaches that man is not entirely *dead* in trespasses and sins; that he still has a “*spark of divinity*” in him, or an amount of faith by which he might exercise and achieve the new birth experience. It teaches that the “old man,” becomes a “new man” in regeneration.

With this view, all the above mentioned devices are instruments, or *means and measures*, to enable the natural man to be born into a spiritual man—to become “a born-again Christian.”

These two innovations struck deeply into the minds of the masses and created an enormously sentimentalist movement. It became known as the “social gospel,” “new divinity,” or “benevolent movement.” The humanism of Erasmus triumphed over the Reformation of Luther, and Christianity was impaled by the new theory and nearly received a death-blow. It thrilled the imagination of man: he was not helpless in

salvation, or useless in creating a “better world.” It coincided with the rise of *socialists societies* created by humanists, idealists, and utopians of all sorts and shades. But alas! Two hundred years later and the world’s system is more rotten than before!

(William Carey, the first *missionary* sent out by Andrew Fuller’s *rope-holding society* planted the first communist society in India! This nation is the second largest socialist nation on earth today. He was more successful in this than his *mission* endeavors. By the way: Indian “Christians” with the “Gospel of Thomas” met him when he arrived at the docks in India!)

This was a *world secular movement*. It was intercontinental in scope, and produced multiple facets, some of which manifestations were: the rise of antichristian socialism, utopian societies, temperance leagues, methodist societies, millenarian societies, Mormonism, mission organizations, paupers’ societies, plain-clothes societies, international imperialism, Bolshevik and Menshevik societies, International unionism (the Comintern), suffragettes, Christian Restoration movement, ecumenical movements (United Churches of Christ), and temperance leagues; and among Baptists: the organization of local, state and national conventions, the World Baptist Alliance, youth organizations, brotherhoods and women’s societies, day care centers, and Christian academies, to name only a few.

All the above are designed to raise humanity to a supposed higher order; and in the religious mode, to impress the human mind and motives to embrace “Christianity,” “Islam,” or some other “benevolent” creed. The latter is based upon a false premise: that **the natural man can renovate itself from within**. These were the innovations that created such a massive and dynamic movement.

Previous to this movement, religion was considered a *static*, or stabilizing element in society. Now it became a *dynamic*, or destabilizing element in society. Man did not have to passively wait upon the Holy Spirit to move first in salvation; he could take the initiative himself. Salvation need no longer be an individual experience: society itself could be saved, and men *en masse* saved wholesale. What a thrill that was, which swept the nations of the earth! Salvation now is viewed as a mixture of grace and works; and works take the precedent over grace! Let us briefly examine this point.

The writer is not misrepresenting the evangelical movement's premise. He takes them at their own word. Universally and repeatedly, the followers of the *new divinity school* (New School) insist that every man has the obligation to exercise faith *in order to* salvation, and they refer to that natural faith that every man has by nature. They insist that he is obligated to exercise that "faith" in his own salvation, and call it "*saving faith*." They universally and repeatedly exhort natural men to "*repent and let go and let God save you*." They use all the talents, programs, and trickery necessary to influence the mind and heart of every man they come up with to "*let God save him*," and threaten the penalty of a blazing hell upon him if he refuses. Their creativity is boundless! We do not misrepresent the evangelicals: this they all admit, and insist that it is necessary to one's salvation. Therefore, we must conclude that they believe the natural man **has all that is necessary to do these things by their inherent nature**. The Christian doctrine challenged by this view is the doctrine of "original sin," or "total depravity of man." According to the new divinity, man's depravity is somewhat less than *total*. His spiritual and moral condition is less than "*dead in trespasses and sins*." Both Arminians and Calvinists alike act with regard to gospel preaching as if there is a conduit through the natural ears of a natural man into the natural heart that will influence a spiritual renovation. (Even among some Primitive Baptists one may hear that any religious devotion is an evidence of spiritual life, whether it is the worship of a stump, a Buddha, a statuette, or a "holy icon.")

Man by nature is capable of engaging in the worship of gods, idols, and sacred relics. Cain was no less *religious* than Abel; but his religion was vain and rejected by the Lord God (Genesis 4:1-8). Man by nature is capable of repentance, or changing his course of behavior towards new and better directions; but as profane and fornicating Esau found, he may seek God's blessings with tears, and not be heard (Hebrews 12:16). Man by nature may do *socially* good works, and yet hear that awful sentence: "*depart from Me, ye that work iniquity, for I never knew you* (Matthew 7:23)." Man may exercise the highest of human faculties, the conscience, and yet find that even his best is defiled (Titus 1:15). By nature, the human body, soul, and spirit are pronounced "*dead in trespasses and sins* (Ephesians 2:1)." He can do all these counterfeit things and not come one hair-breath closer to salvation!

He misses the mark farther than he would if he did nothing!

The evangelical will reply to this by saying, "The sinner can believe, and if he believes, he *will be* saved. The Bible says so!" James answers this squarely: "*Thou believest that there is one God; thou doest well: the devils also believe, and tremble* (James 2:19)." Stating this in contemporary American: "So you believe? Rah, Rah, Rah! Then trembling devils are saved too?" It is right here that the evangelicals, whether Arminian or Calvinist, stumble: they make *belief* and *natural faith* synonymous. Following Martin Luther's view that justification "is by faith only," and then confusing this natural faith for "saving faith," they conclude that the ability to be saved is found in the nature of man. To them it is certain: man can believe!

The Scriptures clearly demonstrate that the faith that is "*of the operation of God*" (Colossian 2:12) is not found in man by nature. As Paul taught: "*for all men hath not faith* (2 Thessalonians 3:2)." How then do some men come by this faith? "*It is the gift of God*" (Ephesians 2:8). The Holy Spirit must *first* quicken the dead elect sinner to spiritual life before any spiritual act, or fruit, may be manifested. Such a quickened sinner has spiritual life and the fruits of that life are then produced. *Faith* is listed as a "*fruit of the Spirit*" (Galatians 5:22).

This faith is needful in believing, spiritually, in the Lord Jesus Christ and is connected with one's sanctification. All of God's elect were "*chosen to salvation through sanctification of the Spirit and belief of the truth* (2 Thessalonians 2:13)." Old Baptists didn't write that passage. They only believe it as written! The Lord Jesus, in His charge to Saul of Tarsus, said in part that He was sending him to preach to the Gentiles "*that they may receive forgiveness of sins, and inheritance among them which are sanctified by faith that is in Me* (Acts 26:18)." Throughout his ministry, Paul understood that justifying faith was totally different from natural faith. That the faith, as the Lord told him, "**is of Me**," and was that faith that justifies a sinner. This became his theme. In speaking of imputed righteousness, he wrote: "*Even the righteousness of God which is by faith of Jesus Christ unto all and upon all them that believe* (Romans 3:22)." To the Galatians plagued by work-mongering legalists, he wrote: "*Knowing that a man is not justified by the works of*

the law, but by the faith of Jesus Christ, even we have believed in Jesus Christ, that we might be justified by the faith of Christ, and not by the works of the law: for by the works of the law shall no flesh be justified (Galatians 2:16).” He declared that the spiritual life and faith by which he lived was that of Christ. *“I am crucified with Christ: nevertheless I live; yet not I, but Christ liveth in me: and the life which I now live in the flesh I live by the faith of the Son of God, who loved me, and gave Himself for me (Galatians 2:20).*” That this faith is totally different from that found in the nature of man is sustained by it being by the promise of God. *“But the scripture hath concluded all under sin, that the promise by faith of Christ might be given to them that believe (Galatians 3:22).*” That is the blessing, and condition, of all the elect of God, for again he wrote: *“For ye are all the children of God by faith in Christ Jesus (Galatians 3:26).*”

It was an integral part of the eternal purpose of God that His elect be justified by Christ’s faith. *“According to the eternal purpose which He purposed in Christ Jesus our Lord: in whom we have boldness and access with confidence by the faith of Him (Ephesians 3:11,12).*” Paul was not concerned about having a natural faith or a moral suasion to sustain him. Rather, he would *“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 (Philippians 3:9).*”

As John closed out his revelation to the churches, he too, made note of this peculiar faith, writing, *“Here is the patience of the saints: here are they that keep the commandments of God, and the faith of Jesus (Revelation 14:12).*” If one traces back to the origin of all acts, they either must go back to the natural man, or to the Spirit of God in man. It is still the truth of the Scriptures, that the natural man possesses only what is natural. As Jesus told Nicodemus, *“That which is of the flesh, is flesh.*” He never suggested that it could ever be anything but flesh in this life. He never suggested how the man could be “born from above”; just that he had to be if he entered, or saw, the kingdom of God. So, too, *“that which is of the Spirit is spirit.*” Only the Spirit can produce spiritual fruit. *“But the natural man receiveth the things of the Spirit of God: for they are foolishness unto him: neither can he know them, because they are spiritually discerned (1 Corinthians 2:14).*” As long as that text remains in the Holy

Scriptures, we must conclude that justifying faith is solely of the operation of God, through the Spirit, and that faith is no less than the faith of God, or the faith of the Son of God who loved us and gave Himself for us. How superlative this faith is to any the Old Man can produce under all the schemes of religious devotees bent on saving souls and boasting in their fleshly wisdom and works.

The seventeenth and eighteenth century thrill has not yet abated. It has multiplied converts to anti-Christ, and has grown into an enormous tax-exempt, duty-free, religious enterprise. We submit our opinion that what Jesus considered true of the Pharisees of His day, can be said with equal propriety to the evangelical Pharisees in our day: *“for ye are like whited sepulchres, which indeed appear beautiful outward, but are within full of dead men’s bones, and of all uncleanness,”* or again, *“ye generation of vipers, how can ye escape the damnation of hell (Matthew 23:27 &33)?”* Pardon me here: I am only quoting the Lord Jesus.

The truth is that all efforts of the best of men to penetrate the natural man to bring about a spiritual creature within are a complete failure. Look at their “converts.” Can it be truly said that they are *“elect according to the foreknowledge of God the Father, through sanctification of the Spirit, unto obedience and sprinkling of the blood of Jesus Christ (I Peter 1:2)”*? Or, as already cited elsewhere: *“because God hath from the beginning chosen you to salvation through sanctification of the Spirit and belief of the truth: whereunto He called you by our gospel, to the obtaining of the glory of our Lord Jesus Christ (2 Thessalonians 2:13,14)”*? Would it be better said of them: *“And the woman was arrayed in purple and scarlet color, and decked with gold and precious stones and pearls, having a golden cup in her hand full of abominations and filthiness of her fornication. And upon her forehead was a name written, MYSTERY, BABYLON THE GREAT, THE MOTHER OF HARLOTS AND ABOMINATIONS OF THE EARTH (Revelation 17:4-5)”*? *“By their fruit you shall know them.”*

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OFFER OR INVITATION

Many who profess to be Christian speak prolifically of the offers and invitations made by the great, three-in-one God to His quickened and made-alive children, under the present Gospel dispensation. Please carefully study the following King James Version (KJV) Bible verses and mark an answer for each, as to whether it is an offer or invitation, but do not go beyond the last one in searching for the answer, without answering each one:

1. (Matthew 5:16) Let your light so shine before men, that they may see your good works, and glorify your Father which is in heaven.

Offer _____ Invitation _____

2. (Matthew 6:33) But seek ye first the kingdom of God, and His righteousness; and all these things shall be added unto you.

Offer _____ Invitation _____

3. (Matthew 7:7) Ask, and it shall be given you; seek, and ye shall find; knock, and it shall be opened unto you.

Offer _____ Invitation _____

4. (Matthew 11:28) Come unto me, all ye that labour and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest.

Offer _____ Invitation _____

5. (Matthew 11:29) Take my yoke upon you, and learn of me; for I am meek and lowly in heart; and ye shall find rest unto your souls.

Offer _____ Invitation _____

6. (Mark 8:34) Whosoever will come after me, let him deny himself, and take up his cross, and follow me.

Offer _____ Invitation _____

7. (Luke 11:9) And I say unto you, Ask, and it shall be given you; seek, and ye shall find; knock, and it shall be opened unto you.

Offer _____ Invitation _____

8. (Luke 12:31) But rather seek ye the kingdom of God; and all these things shall be added unto you.

Offer _____ Invitation _____

9. (John 21:19) Follow me.

Offer _____ Invitation _____

10. (Revelation 3:20) Behold, I stand at the door, and knock; if any man hear my voice and open the door, I will come in to him, and sup with him, and he with Me.

Offer _____ Invitation _____

11. (Revelation 22:17) And whosoever will, let him take the water of Life freely.

Offer _____ Invitation _____

Now that you have answered all the above, proceed.

I have not been able to find any passage in the KJKV Bible, including the above eleven, in which Christ made or makes an offer or invitation to His children. (Some Primitive Baptists preach that God issues offers and invitations, even displaying them in their articles of faith, e.g., Article 6 of the Lower Mayo Primitive Baptist Association contains mention of the “offers” of mercy.) The above eleven, and other such passages, indicate Christ is speaking to His children, not making offers or invitations, but issuing commands. Commands issued by Christ to His children are not the authoritarian type issued by a person in command of an earthly organization or military unit. Christ issues commands in a loving manner, as loving and caring parents do to their child, to His children who have been spiritually quickened and made alive. Psalm 42:8 declares the LORD will command His loving kindness in the daytime, and in the night His song shall be with me, and my prayer unto the God of my life. Christly commands to His Children manifestly brought about through the operation of the Holy Spirit are those of loving kindness, because He has loved them with an everlasting love: therefore with loving kindness has He drawn them (Jeremiah 31:3).

Commands by Him are effectual in that He has declared His word would not return to Him void but accomplish that which is pleasing to Him (Isaiah

55:11). Offers and invitations are subject to acceptance in part or whole or rejection in part of whole by an individual, and in the sense of godly, spiritual matters, if an individual could overrule God, in part or in whole, this would indicate the operation is in the realm of works controlled by the human and not controlled by God. We know God is all powerful in all matters, does not rely or wait upon anyone to initiate or respond toward Him, “and all the inhabitants of the earth are reputed as nothing; and He doeth according to His will in the army of heaven, and among the inhabitants of the earth; and none can stay His hand, or say unto Him, What doest thou (Daniel 4:35)?”

When you enter into your closet to pray, please remember me, and at least part of your petition is that the Great Commander will continue to make known His commands toward us in loving kindness; knowing all His commandments are sure (Psalm 111:7).

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Editor’s Note: The following editorial by Elder Gilbert Beebe was also sent along with the above article.

INVITATIONS OF THE GOSPEL

By Elder Gilbert Beebe, 7/15/1846

MUCH is said about them, and spirited controversy is often raised in deciding whether they are made to the world indiscriminately or only to the children of God. Few have paused to inquire at the sacred oracle, whether there be invitations of any kind in the Gospel or not. If there are invitations in the Gospel, where are they? What are they? And unto whom are they addressed? These are questions which naturally enough arise, and which the reader may feel but little doubt that he is able to answer satisfactorily; but before he attempts the task let him duly consider what it is that constitutes an

invitation. Take for example any message that God has ever communicated to man, whether in the law or in the Gospel, and to make of it an invitation, the compliance with the message must rest entirely on the volition of the person or persons addressed. Nothing beyond the simple issuing of the invitation can depend on the will of him from whom it proceeds. Is this the case in regard to any thing which God has spoken in the Gospel? Or has God in any case in the law or in the Gospel sent a message concerning the result of which His will has nothing to do? Impossible; for He “worketh all things after the counsel of His own will,” and it is God that worketh in His children, both to will and to do according to His good pleasure.

The difference between a call or command, and an invitation, may be illustrated thus: A man may say to his neighbor, “Will you oblige me with your company,” etc. Here it is plain to see that the will of the individual alone is to determine whether the other party shall be gratified. But if a magistrate issues his warrant or summons, and in the name of the people of the state or nation commands the immediate attendance or personal appearance of a person, the will of the summoned person is not consulted, and therefore the message is not an invitation, but a summons with authority. Even the character of a message expressed in the same words takes the form of an invitation or a command, according to the will that governs it. A man may say, Come unto me, all ye that thirst, and I will give you drink. This would be an invitation, because the man supposed to give the invitation has no power to compel a compliance; all the power to determine is with the person addressed. But when God speaks the word, it stands fast; when He commands, it is done. His words are clothed with omnipotent power, as when He commanded, saying, “Let there be light.” He did not invite light, for no will but His own was consulted, and He said, “Let it be,” and it was. Jesus our Lord did not *invite* Lazarus to come forth from his grave, although the same words, if spoken to a living person and left optional with such person, whether to comply or not, would have been but an invitation; but, spoken as they were by Christ, and addressed to one who had neither power to will nor to do, could imply nothing like an invitation.

When Jesus stood and cried, "If any man thirst, let him come unto me and drink," He no more invited the thirsty, than He invited the light when He said, "Let there be light." In the first place there is not a soul on earth that does or can thirst for the living waters which flow from Him until He quickens it, and makes it thirst, and when made to feel its thirst, and even when *the tongue faileth for thirst*, it can no more approach the living fountain than it can make a world, until Jesus applies, not the invitation, but the word, "Come unto me." His words are spirit and they are life; and His sheep hear them, and they know His voice, and they follow Him; because they have no power or even disposition to resist their Shepherd's voice.

The calling of the saints is nowhere in the scriptures denominated an invitation. He *calleth* His own sheep by name, and leadeth them out. If He only invited them they would have to get out themselves, or stay behind. But when He calls, the dead hear His voice (not His invitation), and they that hear shall live.

How would it suit the condition of a poor, lost, helpless soul, one that feels his poverty, inability and impotence, to read the word thus: The hour is coming, and now is, when the dead shall be invited to live, and they who accept the invitation shall live. And when He inviteth forth His own sheep He goeth before them, provided they accept the invitation.

It is perfectly in keeping with every feature of arminianism for workmongers to talk of invitations of the Gospel, because the very term implies the willing and the doing power to be in the creature. But it is neither in harmony with the doctrine or experience of the saints of God to so speak of His communications to them as to imply that He has yielded up the government to them; that He has hinged the effect and result of His communications on their will instead of His own will. It is derogatory to His character, it reflects on His wisdom, power, and grace, and the term should be expunged from the vocabulary of Bible Baptists.

—Elder Gilbert Beebe
7/15/1846

EDITOR'S NOTE

Earlier this year we promised that, if it were made possible, we would republish the article on "The Resurrection of the Dead," by Elder Jonas C. Sikes, one of the members of the presbytery that organized and constituted Saints Rest Predestinarian Primitive Baptist Church of Dallas, Texas, and one of her first pastors over one hundred years ago. We here make good on our promise.

Brother Hoyt Sparks, using his computerized scanning equipment, has helped us by furnishing the following copy of Elder Sikes' article, for which we thank him and thank our God. The article as printed below and on the following pages is copied directly from Elder R. Lester Dodson's 1943 book, "The Resurrection of the Dead."

THE RESURRECTION OF THE DEAD

ELDER J. C. SIKES
Sulphur Bluff, Texas

(Article appeared in the Signs of the Times of June and July, 1941)

There is no truth more plainly taught in the Bible than the resurrection of the dead. Any man who can read can see that the Bible plainly teaches that the bodies of men who die and are buried in the earth shall be raised from the dead when Christ appears the second time unto salvation, whether he believes it or not. Some one is ready to say, You are wrong, for Paul says the resurrection of the dead is a mystery, and a mystery is something which we do not understand. Paul did not say the fact that the dead shall be raised is a mystery. The mystery is how it can be done in a moment, in the twinkling of an eye. Men who have died and have molded to dust, and perhaps their dust has been scattered to the four winds of the earth, will, at the word of God, be reassembled and changed to immortal beings, in a moment, in the twinkling of an eye. The mystery is not that the dead shall be raised incorruptible, but is how it can be done so quickly. Listen to Paul's state-

ment. He says, "Behold, I shew you a mystery: We shall not all sleep [die], but we shall all be changed [from natural to spiritual], in a moment, in the twinkling of an eye, at the last trump: for the trumpet shall sound, and the dead shall be raised incorruptible, and we shall be changed." Nothing could be more plainly stated than the fact that at that time, which is at the last trump, the dead shall be raised incorruptible, and both the living and the dead shall be changed, in a moment, in the twinkling of an eye. And he then tells just what kind of a change that shall be, for he follows this by saying, "For this." Mark the word "this." It means something that is present, or near in place or time. And Paul meant to tell the saints at Corinth that his, and also the corruptible and mortal body of each of them, which they then possessed, must, at the last trump, be raised from the dead, and be changed from corruption to incorruption, and from mortal to immortal, and he therefore said, "For *this* corruptible *must* put on incorruption, and *this* mortal must put on immortality." If people who read would stop and study the meaning of the language used in what they have just read they would avoid many mistakes which they often make which oftentimes lead to confusion. The foregoing quotation is a full sentence in Paul's discourse on the subject of the resurrection of the dead, and a clear understanding of each word in the sentence will give a clear understanding of what it is that shall be raised from the dead. The first word in this sentence is "for," which is here used as a conjunction, joining that which follows it with that which had just gone before, and means the same as "therefore." The next word is "this," which means that which is present, or near, in space or time. The next word is "corruptible," which means that which may be corrupted; that may become putrid; subject to decay and destruction; as our bodies are corruptible. This word cannot be applied to our bodies after they have died, putrified and come to a state of corruption. Christ died, but his body did not see corruption. But David's body did see corruption. (See Psalms xvi. 9, 10; Acts ii. 25-32.) This proves that the word "corruptible," as it occurs in this text, can only be applied to a human body before decomposition sets in. This is proven by the Scriptures themselves in the promise God made to David concerning Christ. He said, I will not leave his soul in hell, neither will I

suffer my Holy One to see corruption. The Jews then, as they do now, believe that it meant David, their king, should arise from the dead and occupy his throne as a literal king, and all the dead of national Israel should be raised from the dead, and all Israel be gathered together into one place and live forever with David as their king. But Peter, on the day of Pentecost, denied this, and said, Men and brethren, let me freely speak unto you of the patriarch David, that he is both dead and buried, and his sepulcher is with us unto this day. Therefore, being a prophet, and knowing that God had sworn with an oath to him, that of the fruit of his loins, according to the flesh, he would raise up Christ to sit on his throne. He, seeing this before, spake of the resurrection of Christ, that his soul was not left in hell, neither his flesh did see corruption. This settles forever what is meant by the word "corruptible." It means the fleshly body of a man, which is subject to corruption after it dies, but in the case of Jesus did not see corruption, nor did the bodies of Enoch and Elijah, nor will the bodies of any of God's people who are alive on earth at the second coming of Christ, when he shall appear the second time without sin unto salvation from the last enemy to be destroyed, which is death, see corruption. See Heb. ix. 27, 28; 1 Cor. xv. 25, 26, and you will see that I am right on this point.

The next word in the text which we are considering is "must," which means to be obliged; to be necessitated, etc. It is the strongest word in our language we can use to express absolute necessity. In this text it means that the end under consideration cannot be attained without it. What is it that *must* be done? This corruptible *must put on* incorruption. "Put on" here means to invest with, as clothes or covering, as to put on a cloak. So this corruptible must be clothed in incorruption before the aimed at can be attained. And following the next sentence after this one we are told what it is that shall come to pass when the things herein mentioned as that which *must* be done, have taken place.

The next word in the sentence is "incorruptible," which means that cannot corrupt or decay; not admitting of corruption, as gold is incorruptible. Spirits are supposed to be incorruptible. Our bodies shall be changed into incorruptible and immortal substances. Wait. See Webster. There are two more words in the sentence which I have not yet given the authori-

tative definition of, and they are “mortal” and “immortality.” Mortal, as an adjective, means subject to death; destined to die; as man is mortal. As a noun, it means man; being subject to death; a human being. The last, and only word in this sentence which I have not given you the definition of, is the word “immortality.” It means the condition or quality of being immortal; exemption from death and annihilation; unending existence. Thus, I have given the meaning of every word in this sentence as they are given by our standard authors. They certainly show that the word “corruptible” cannot mean a human body which has been dissolved by putrefaction. Neither does the word “mortal” mean a dead body. This sentence, therefore, proves beyond a shadow of a doubt that Paul was talking to the saints at Corinth about his and their then present living, fleshly, mortal and corruptible bodies when he said, For this corruptible must put on incorruption, and this mortal must put on immortality. Therefore a certain scriptural saying can never come to pass until these things take place, for Paul goes on to say, So when *this* corruptible shall have put on incorruption, and *this* mortal shall have put on immortality, then (and not until then) shall be brought to pass the saying, Death is swallowed up of victory. O death, where is thy sting? O grave, where is thy victory? Why any one who can read cannot understand the only meaning the words contained in this sentence will admit of, I cannot understand. The reason I have taken so much pains to define and bring out the meaning of each word in the sentence contained in the twenty-third [fifty-third—Ed.] verse of this chapter is that I might leave no room for a doubt as to what is meant by the resurrection of the dead. When you have found the exact meaning of the language used in this sentence you may know of a truth that every other inspired truth in the Bible on this subject is in perfect harmony with it.

The third verse above this one, in view of what is contained in this verse, is easy to understand. It says, Now this I say brethren, that flesh and blood cannot inherit the kingdom of God; neither doth corruption inherit incorruption. This means that our natural, physical, mortal, flesh and blood body must undergo the change already mentioned and discussed before it can inherit the kingdom of God. The body, after it has died and gone into a state of corruption,

cannot, while in that state, inherit incorruption. No, it must be changed; not exchanged. This is absolutely proven by the next verse, which I have already quoted, which begins by saying, “Behold, I shew you a mystery: We shall not all sleep [which means die], but we shall be changed [both the living and the dead must be changed. The living from their mortal state to a state of immortality, and the dead from a state of corruption to an incorruptible state], in a moment, in the twinkling of an eye, at the last trump: for the trumpet shall sound, and the dead shall be raised incorruptible, and we shall be changed.” I do not know how language could make anything plainer than Paul has made this matter. He starts out in this chapter, after the caption of his letter, with an argument, affirming the resurrection of the dead, based on the resurrection of Christ.

Now let us go back to the beginning of this chapter, and read it verse after verse, commenting on each verse as we go, and see whether or not we can arrive at an exact conclusion as to what, or whose body, or bodies, he had under consideration in his affirmation of the resurrection of the dead. Follow me closely, dear reader, and test carefully what I say, and if I do not present the exact meaning of the language in what I quote, please write me and call my attention to my mistake, that I may reconsider and correct it, if indeed I have made a mistake.

Paul begins this chapter by saying, “Moreover, brethren, I declare [in the present tense] unto you the gospel which I preached [in the past tense] unto you, which also ye received [in the past tense], and wherein ye stand [in the present tense].” We learn in this first verse that Paul was at that time preaching unto them the same gospel that he had preached unto them before, and which they had received, and wherein they yet stood. There are two things in this verse that we should keep in mind. First, that whatever it was that Paul had preached unto them, and which they had received, and wherein they were yet standing, Paul called it the gospel, and let me add just here that there can be no gospel of Jesus Christ if the dead are not to be raised. The name Jesus means Saviour, and the angel told Joseph that He should save his people from their (in the plural) sins. And I know of no people who are sinners except the offspring of the earthly Adam, who died at the age of nine hundred and thirty years, because he was a sinner. It was the

creature man which God made of the dust of the ground who died at that age, and it was the mortal body that died, and this is the kind of people Paul is discussing the resurrection of, for he speaks of them as being mortal and corruptible. So the next verse says, "By which also ye are saved, if ye keep in memory what I preached [in the past] unto you, unless ye have believed in vain." There is a saving power in the gospel to the saved, but not to the unsaved. (See 1 Cor. 1. 18.) In the next verse Paul says, "For I delivered unto you first of all that which I also received, how that Christ died for our sins according to the scriptures." He is here referring to what he said at the first, as what he had preached to them in the past, and that they had received it and were still standing in that belief. But a little later he found some who did not accept what he was then preaching, and he asked them how they could say what they were saying, since the first could not be true unless what he was then preaching to them was true. The next verse goes on to say, "And that he was buried, and that he rose again the third day according to the scriptures." In the foregoing verse he continued to tell them what he preached unto them first of all, and which they had accepted, and still believed it, and in the next four verses he is telling how many people saw Jesus after his resurrection, the greater part of whom he said remained unto this present, but some are fallen asleep. Keep in mind that he means by "the greater part remain unto this present, but some are fallen asleep," that the greater part are yet alive, but some of them have died. It is common with him, and with many of the scriptural writers, to speak of the dead as being asleep, and especially when they are talking about the resurrection of the dead. He ends that part of it by saying, "And last of all he was seen of me also, as of one born out of due time." Then he does not mention the resurrection in the next three verses. They are given to statements concerning himself. But he begins the twelfth verse by saying, "Now if Christ be preached that he rose from the dead, how say some among you that there is no resurrection of the dead?" Keep in mind the fact that they are not differing as to whether or not Christ had risen from the dead, for he affirms that he had preached the resurrection of Christ from the very first of his preaching among them. He says that he did that first of all, and he says

that they received it and were still standing in that belief. So it was not the resurrection of Christ which some were now denying, for in the next verse he follows that statement by saying, "But if there be no resurrection of the dead, then Christ is not risen." Let me here say that the phrase in this verse does not mean, *If Christ did not rise in the past*, nor that he, or any one else, is now, at the present time, rising from the dead. The language will not admit of such a conclusion. And, beside this, the expression in the twenty-ninth verse, which says, "Else what shall they do which are baptized for the dead, if the dead rise not at all?" "What shall they do?" is in the future, and "if the dead rise not at all" is in the future tense. This thought of the future resurrection of the dead bodies of the saints runs through this entire chapter, and is found clearly indicated in almost every place in the Old and New Testaments where the resurrection of the dead is mentioned. Job tells us that it shall not take place until the heavens be no more. This places it at the time of the second coming of Christ, when, Peter says, the heavens shall pass away with a great noise (2 Peter iii. 10), and which John saw take place in his vision on the isle of Patmos (Rev. xx. 11), where he said, "And I saw a great white throne, and him that sat on it, from whose face the earth and the heaven fled away; and there was found no place for them." And he saw, immediately following this scene, the resurrection of the dead, both small and great, all of whom stood before God to be judged; and he saw all places which held the dead, give them up, among which places was the sea, for he said, "And the sea gave up the dead which were in it." We surely ought to understand what kind of dead the sea will give up to be judged, for they are now going down by the thousands almost daily. Job was certainly inspired, for the time set by him is fully corroborated by these writers fifteen hundred years after he wrote.

But back to Paul. He said in the next verse, "And if Christ be not risen, then is your preaching vain, and your faith is also vain." Why was the preaching of the apostles vain if Christ had not been raised from the dead? It was because he had been preaching that Christ died to save them from their sins, but that end could not be accomplished by a dead Christ. For Paul said in Romans v. 10, "For if, when we were enemies, we were reconciled to God by the

death of his Son, much more, being reconciled, we shall be saved by his life." If he remained dead we could not be saved by his life. This will be made more evident as we go on down. The next verse says, "Ye, and we [the ministers] are found to be false witnesses of God; because we have testified of God that he raised up Christ: whom he raised not up, if so be that the dead rise not." Paul is here arguing that if the dead should fail to rise, then the entire end for which Christ died would be a failure, and all they (the ministers) have preached is but a farce and a falsehood, and there is nothing to it.

The next three verses say, "For if the dead *rise not*, then is Christ not raised: and if Christ be not raised, your faith is vain; ye are yet in your sins. Then they also which are fallen asleep in Christ are perished." The direct consequence that could possibly befall God's people is, and will continue to be a fact, if the dead are not to be raised in the future. And the reason is made very plain in these three last verses. "For if the dead rise not, then is Christ not raised: and if Christ be not raised, your faith is vain; ye are yet in your sins." There can be only one reason why Christ should not have risen from the dead, if he did not rise, and that would be that he failed to satisfy the law for those for whom he died. Jesus himself said, "Think not that I am come to destroy the law, or the prophets: I am not come to destroy, but to fulfill. For verily I say unto you, Till heaven and earth pass, one jot or one tittle shall in no wise pass from the law, till all be fulfilled." Christ went under the law to redeem his people from under it, so neither he nor his people can ever be freed from under it, and rise from the dead, unless he fulfilled it to its last jot and tittle. If he failed to do this he is perished, and all they which are fallen asleep in him are perished, and all the rest of mankind at their death will perish forever, because he failed to satisfy for their sins. Their faith is vain; they are yet in their sins. And he follows this up by saying, "If in this life only we have hope in Christ, we are of all men most miserable." He means by that saying that God's people suffer more in this life than the wicked do. (See Psalms lxxiii. 3-6.) Their hope in Christ is that in the resurrection they will be delivered from the bondage of corruption into the glorious liberty of the children of God. (See Romans viii. 18-25). They also hope they will then obtain the

salvation which is in Christ Jesus, with eternal glory. But if Christ did not rise he failed to put away their sins by the sacrifice of himself, and they are yet in their sins, and are left without hope and without Christ, and are of all men most miserable. But thanks be unto God, who giveth us the victory through our Lord Jesus Christ, Paul did not leave us without hope, for the next verse says, "But now is Christ risen from the dead, and become the firstfruits of them that slept." In my mind's eye and ear it seems that I can almost see him and hear him triumphantly waving his blessed right arm, with something in his glorious hand, and shouting, "I am he that liveth, and was dead; and, behold, I am alive for evermore, Amen; and have the keys of hell and of death." A most glorious truth is this, for he hath said of his people, by the mouth of the prophet Hosea, "I will ransom them from the power of the grave; I will redeem them from death: O death, I will be they plagues; O grave, I will be they destruction: repentance shall be hid from mine eyes." Meaning he will not turn from this promise and fail to fulfill it. Paul, in what I have already quoted, tells us just when this promise shall be brought to pass. He says, "So when this corruptible shall have put on incorruption, and this mortal shall have put on immortality, *then* shall be brought to pass the saying that is written, Death is swallowed up in victory. O death, where is thy sting? O grave, where is thy victory?" It is wonderful how those Old Testament writers and the New Testament writers are so perfectly agreed on this subject.

I mean, if the Lord is willing, to continue to write on this subject until I have commented upon every place in the Scriptures which I think will throw any light on the subject, and as it will be too long to print in the *Signs* I aim to publish it in pamphlet form, with this article in the beginning of it, and I would like for all who read this, and would like to have one of them, to write me, so I can enroll their names and know when I have enough to meet the expense of getting it out. The price will be as low as it can be to pay for getting it out and handling it. I mean to show that the end for which God made everything which was, and is, is to make manifest, or make known, his eternal glory, the riches of which can never be made known without the resurrection of the dead. For Paul said, "What if God, *willing to shew his wrath*, and to *make his power known*, en-

dured with much longsuffering the *vessels* of wrath fitted to destruction: and that he might *make known the RICHES of his glory* on the *vessels* of mercy, which he had afore prepared unto glory. Even us, whom he hath called, not of the *Jews* only, but also of the *Gentiles*. ”

You will note that I have put certain words in italics, to which I wish to call special attention, and have put the word “riches” in small capitals, and have italicized the phrase “of his glory,” to show that the RICHES of his glory can only be known on the vessels (Note this word “vessels”) of mercy, which he had afore prepared unto glory. This will not take place until the Son of man shall come in his glory, and all the holy angels with him, and he shall be seated upon the throne of his glory to judge the quick (living) and the dead, and God shall call for all nations to gather before him to be judged. He will then “say to the north, Give up; and to the south, Keep not back: bring my *sons* from far, and my *daughters* from the ends of the earth; even every one that is called by my name; for I have created him for my glory, I have formed him; yea, I have made him.” I will show that all the foregoing applies to the outward man, the flesh, which perisheth; while the inward man, which consists of two parts, which are called the spirit and soul, is renewed day by day. Those inward parts are where Jeremiah says God promised to put his laws. (Jer. xxxi. 33) Paul said to the Thessalonians, “And the very God of peace sanctify you *wholly*.” Meaning every part of you, and named them, by saying, “And I pray God your *whole* spirit and soul and body be preserved blameless unto the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ.” Then he adds the blessed part of it, by saying, “Faithful is he that calleth you, who also will do it.” Does any one think that man’s whole spirit, soul and body will be preserved blameless in God’s account unto the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ, and then God will condemn the body to everlasting annihilation? I do not. Back in creation, where God made man, when he stretched forth the heavens and laid the foundations of the earth, he formed man’s spirit in him, and if you will consult Deuteronomy xxix. 29, you will not ask any one what he formed it of. And I have never read of the spirit or soul of man dying and returning to dust, or of being buried, and a promise that they should be raised up at the last day. Jesus taught that

men can kill the body, but they cannot kill the soul (Matt. x. 28). And I aim to show that the work of changing man from the image of the earthy and conforming him to the image of the heavenly is begun *in* man while in this life, and will not be completed until the day of Jesus Christ. Paul said to the Philippians, that he was confident of this very thing, that he which had begun a good work *in* them would continue it until the day of Jesus Christ (Phil. 1. 6).

I mean to try to present the exact scriptural teachings on these things, if God is willing. I also aim to show that the resurrection of the dead bodies of the saints was the foundation of the hope of the prophets, of Moses, of the fathers and of Paul, and that the entire end and aim for which God created all things will be a failure if the dead do not rise in the glorious image of his blessed Son. John said, “Beloved, now are we the sons of God; and it doth not yet appear what we shall be: but we know that, when he shall appear, we shall be like him; for we shall see him as he is.” Then he added, “Every man that hath this *hope* in him, purifieth himself, even as he is pure.” From this we see that this was the hope of John, and the believers of his day, and it is my only hope for a blessed immortality beyond this life. I am in my eighty-third year, and this doctrine grows sweeter to me as I approach nearer the end of this life.

When I begin the continuation of this subject, I will leave off the last part of this article, and go back to where I left it at the twentieth verse of the fifteenth chapter of 1 Corinthians, and finish the investigation of that chapter, for there is much more proof in that chapter to substantiate the position which I have herein taken. I will bring in those things which I have proposed to prove, at the proper time and place.

If any wish to write me concerning this article, they will please address me at Sulphur Bluff, Texas, R. F. D. 1, Box 65.

I remain a poor old sinner, but in hope of eternal life, which God, who cannot lie, promised before the world began.

Elder J. C. Sikes
1941

Editor’s note: Please do not write to Elder Sikes at the Sulphur Bluff address he gave in 1941. He has long since been relocated to a far better home that does not receive mail from this world.

Decrees of God and Predestination “Telescopic Foreknowledge”

On Saturday, May 14, 2005, Elder Stanley Phillips had written:

I've received my...remarks on J. C. Sikes' section on "Telescopic" foreknowledge. In that section, he seemed at his best. If one admits the foreknowledge of God, he then has a true problem with predestination if he thinks it is limited to three or four things!

To this, Brother Robert V. replied:

I haven't read this and am not familiar with Sikes' term "telescopic" foreknowledge. I would look forward to hearing what he has to say.

I recently asked a question at a church that does not accept God's predestination to the degree I do. I was kin to all of them, so I guess I got away with it!

I asked, disregarding predestination for the moment, is it possible for something that God foreknows to not come to pass?

Silence answered. And then the subject was changed.

Robert V.

On Tuesday, May 17, 2005, Elder Phillips responded:

Dear Robert,

I'll take time this A.M. to answer the part on "telescopic foreknowledge." I had never heard it expressed this way, but it fits the concept perfectly of a foresight of a nondirected, nondetermined, and otherwise atheistic string of events.

Here is Elder Sikes:

"When I was a small boy I had never seen an elephant. I lived near the turnpike between one county seat and another. There was a circus passing from one town to the other on the turnpike. Nearly everybody went out to the little village on the highway to see the circus, and especially the elephants, pass. The turnpike was perfectly straight for several miles. The merchants at the place had a telescope. Many of the larger ones present, who had never seen an elephant, looked

through the telescope and saw the elephants at a distance and learned how they looked BEFORE they got there. But we little fellows had to wait until the elephants got there to see, and thereby learn how they looked. However, what the older men knew about how the elephants looked they learned by seeing them BEFORE they got there, just as we little fellows learned it by seeing them WHEN they got there. They learned how they looked by the TELESCOPIC VIEW that they got of them BEFORE they got there. All Arminians in the universe who pretend to believe in the foreknowledge of God, claim He learned how things will be in time by seeing them coming BEFORE HAND, just as these people learned how the elephants looked by seeing them coming before they got there. Under that theory, God as truly LEARNED what He knows about actions of men by foreseeing them acting, as we learned it when seeing them act. Accordingly, their view is that God as surely learned from the creatures themselves as we learned it from them beside the turnpike. The difference is this: He has a telescopic vision and we have not. All of you that teach that God foreknows things because He looked down before time and saw them coming, stand up here and behold your ugly old Arminian faces in the Bible looking-glass. Here it is: "Who taught Him knowledge and shewed unto Him the way of understanding?" Answer thou Him, will you? If a vision should open up to you so that you could look down to the tenth generations and see the people of that time in action just as they will be when that time shall arrive, YOU WOULD LEARN FROM THEM by foreseeing them in action, just what their actions will be at that time. You learn it FROM THEM just as surely as those who live at that time and see them in action will learn it from them." Unquote.

The rest of that chapter is sublime! Either these events in time are in the determinate counsel of God, or they are not. If they are not, they will take place in time whether God foresaw them or not; whether God is or not; whether Satan controls them or not. This kind of "foreknowledge" is no better than the atheists' theory of evolution - in fact, they are the same. By the way, Texan, let me tell you a true story from my first visit to the Southeast Texas Predestinarian Primitive Baptist Association at Buna, Texas in 1970. I was at LSU working towards my doctors degree and not knowing where a Predestinarian church was, I took a

1936 copy of a Minute of that association. I started calling those towns asking the telephone operator to connect me to the family names I found in the old minute. In order to sort out the Limited from the Absolute Predestinarians, I asked “Are you an Absoluter”? They would hang up! Presently, one answered, “No, but my daddy is.” He gave me his number and I called him. He invited me over and gave me direction. I arrived at Kirbyville as the folk there were getting into their cars to go to church at Buna. One told me, “Just follow us,” and I did. We entered the meeting house, and an old sister who was blind was already inside. She called out: “Elder Elmo, where is that young elder that is to preach tonight?” He answered, “There is no young elder that is to preach here tonight!” She said, “Yes there will be - I saw him preaching here tonight.” The elder turned to me and asked, “Are you a minister?” I answered, “Yes, I am an ordained Predestinarian Old School Baptist elder.” He told the sister: “Yes, he is here!” I had never in my life ever been to Texas, met anyone of these brethren and sisters, nor even heard of any of them. I am fully persuaded that God Himself communicated that information to that sister - for there was no other means available for her to have guessed it. Brother Robert, the “Biano” that is on our mailing list knows of this: His father was driving the lead car that night that I followed!

—Stan P.

ADVERTISEMENTS AND NOTES

STATUS OF ELDER PHILLIPS’ BOOK “God’s Decree and Predestination”

We who have received a first-run copy of Elder Phillips’ book, “God’s Decree and Predestination” are deeply impressed and thankful that the Lord has blessed him to assemble what is to date one of the most complete compilations of sermons and articles on the doctrine of Absolute Predestination. That, of course, is within, but not entirely limited to, the context of the Old School Baptists or Absolute Predestinarian Primitive Baptists of the United States of America for the last two hundred years or so. I would hope a brief description of the ground covered

in this book would whet the appetite of each of our readers to get a copy for themselves. The contents of this two-volume set are as follows:

The first 239 pages of the first volume are the writings of Elder Jonas C. Sikes, one of the foremost and ablest Predestinarians of his day. This is followed by 84 pages from Elder Phillips’ able pen, and the first volume is closed with “A Discourse Upon the Decrees of God,” by Hercules Collins, written in 1696.

The second volume includes writings from John Gill, Isaac Backus, Christopher Ness, Abel Morgan, Samuel Trott, Frederick Keene, W. T. Judy, Frank Beck, James Wells, Gilbert Beebe, Silas Durand, J. B. Bowden, John C. Hall, J. W. Fairchild, P. H. James, William M. Smoot, J. R. Hatcher, Sylvester Hassell, and J. W. Gilliam, and excerpts from the *Anglican Communion* and the *Baptists’ London Confession of Faith* (chapter III) of 1689. The time frame spanned by these writers is, then, from 1689 to the present, or over three hundred years. Four of the writings are from the 1700s, five are from the 1800s, and ten are from the twentieth century, thoroughly documenting the fact that the doctrine was well established during those times.

Elder Sylvester Hassell, mentioned as one of the writers reprinted in Elder Phillips’ anthology, is well known for his valuable book, “History of the Church of God.” No one is perfect, however; not even Elder Hassell. He wrote, and is quoted in Elder Phillips’ collection as saying that the phrase “the absolute predestination of all things...does not occur in uninspired literature before the year 1832.” A minor highlight—or I think rather a major one—is when Elder Phillips documents no less than three times writers as early as the mid-1500s and into the 1700s referred to **absolute predestination**.

(The point here is not that there were *only* three, as, indeed, there were others contending for this article of faith throughout history. The point is, Elder Hassell, taking the Conditionalist side of the predestination controversy, either wittingly or unwittingly misrepresented the truth of the history of the doctrine. Any **one** of Elder Phillips’ three examples would disprove Elder Hassell’s contention. Elder Phillips concludes the matter thusly: “This seems hard to believe about the collector of the History of The Church of God!”)

As for the present disposition of “**God’s Decree and Predestination**,” the first printing is sold out, or

virtually so. A new one-volume edition with slightly smaller print is soon to be forthcoming, Lord willing.

Elder Phillips writes:

The two volume hardcover book on “God’s Decree and Predestination” published by The Predestinarian Press (edited by Stanley C. Phillips) is now depleted. Work is in progress to issue the second edition in a single volume, hardcover, with a 14 font size (slightly smaller print than in the present edition) and with larger pages.

At this present time, it appears the new edition will be approximately 460 pages, and sell for \$35.00 or less. The lead article is by Jonas C. Sikes of Texas.

If you have ordered the book and found it of value, the Publisher would appreciate you mentioning the forthcoming edition to others. Also, he would like to hear from you, particularly if you have found errors that need to be corrected in the new edition.

If anyone reading this would like a copy reserved for them, or sent as a gift to someone, please contact Stan Phillips, Publisher.

Stanley C. Phillips
1159 County Road 420
Quitman, MS 39355-9572

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Editor’s Note: I have already found this book to be invaluable, from both the doctrinal and historical standpoints. Personally, I do not think this book can be overrated. We would urge anyone with an interest in the doctrine of our Lord Jesus Christ (absolute predestination is an integral part of the doctrine of Christ) to contact Elder Phillips as soon as possible about getting your copy of **“God’s Decree and Predestination.”**

**“PAGAN FESTIVALS” BOOK
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We are happy to announce that a limited supply of the book, **“The Pagan Festivals of Christmas and Easter,”** by Shaun Willcock, is available again. This was a much-appreciated book among *The Remnant’s* readers when we advertised it

a few years ago. Now, a few copies of this concise, 64-page booklet are available once more. Copies may be ordered directly from *The Remnant* at

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NOTE: Lord willing, our series on the subject, **“IS JESUS GOD?”** will be continued in the September-October issue of *The Remnant*.

AN ARMINIAN ASKED SOMETHING

A brother writes: *Just a note to ask you a question. An Arminian friend of mine asked something I’ve never heard before. I did not have an answer. “If all things were predestinated before the world began, why was it necessary for Christ to die?”*

It seems our brother was discussing more than the question “Why did Christ die?” with his Arminian friend.

FIRST, WHAT IS AN “ARMINIAN”?

Before addressing the question of why was it necessary for Christ to die, let us look at the definition of an *Arminian*.

First of all, every once in a while it is needful to say something about what an Arminian is *not*. An *Arminian* is not an *Armenian*. Many who write about the **Arminian** doctrinal issue misspell the word as *Armenian* (spelled with an “e”) when and where they mean *Arminian*. An *Armenian* is a citizen of **Armenia**, a nation of almost three million people located in southwestern Asia, north of Iran, and northeast of Turkey. Armenia is slightly smaller than the State of Maryland. The definition of an *Arminian* (spelled with an “i”) follows below, and has nothing to do with one’s native country. (Facts about the nation of Armenia are through the courtesy of the CIA World Fact Book web site, www.cia.gov.)

An *Arminian* is one who generally believes any natural religion that in one way or another says *the salvation of the sinner is brought about by the cooperation of God and man*, as taught by Jacobus (James) Arminius. It is that position we hear every day that says, “God has done His part to save man; now, you and I must do our part.”

Whether the Arminian says that the work of salvation is 99% of God and 1% is left up to man, or 1% is of God and 99% is man saving himself, or 50% each, God and man, it makes no difference—it is still Arminianism. **Arminianism’s defining characteristic is saying salvation is partly God’s work and partly man’s.**

The principle of Arminianism did not begin with James Arminius, the man whose name is identified with it. This false *free will* doctrine began with Satan in the garden of Eden, as recorded in Genesis 3.1-5. It first **questions** God (verse 1), then it **contradicts** God (verse 4), and finally it **replaces** God with man, saying, “Ye shall be as gods (verse 5).” Since the days of Eden, free will has been the doctrine held in common by atheists, agnostics, and almost all worldly religions.

Nor is the term “Arminianism” merely an attempt at derogatory name-calling on our part. Millions of people actually glory in the term, loving to be called Arminians, as they stand opposed to the doctrine of God’s free and sovereign grace.

For one example: Shortly before he entered an Episcopalian monastery, a man sent me a copy of Daniel D. Corner’s “The Believer’s Conditional Security,” a 761-page attack on the doctrine of the preservation of the saints. Mr. Corner is an avowed proponent of Arminianism and defender of it.

For other examples, should you want them: Go to your favorite book-supplier and ask what textbooks on “**Arminian theology**” are available. Barnes and Noble offers “Systematic Theology for the Twenty-First Century: From an **Arminian** Perspective,” by Harry C. Grubbs (January, 2002; Mount Olive College Press, Free Will Baptist Outreach Service).

Hastings Books lists “The Grace of God, the Will of Man, **A Case for Arminianism**,” by Clark H. Pinnock, with 26 other titles by the same author.

At the Bellevue College web site, one of their recommended texts is “Foundations of **Wesleyan-Arminian** Theology” by Mildred B. Wynkoop. [Bold emphases supplied in all book titles.—Ed.]

This list is representative only, to prove the point. There are over nine hundred places listed on “the web” that deal in books about Arminianism, pro and con. Many denominations, such as the Free Will Baptists and the Wesleyan Methodists noted above, and lots of others, embrace and openly endorse Arminianism.

TO ADDRESS THE QUESTION

“If all things were predestinated before the world began, why was it necessary for Christ to die?”

For one thing, the death of Christ on the cross was one of the things that were predestinated before the world began. “Now is my soul troubled; and what shall I say? Father, save me from this hour: but for this cause came I unto **this hour** (John 12.27).” “And now, O Father, glorify thou me with thine own self with **the glory which I had with thee before the world was**...Father, I will that they also, whom thou hast given me, be with me where I am; that they may behold my glory, which thou hast given me: for **thou lovedst me before the foundation of the world** (John 17.5, 24).” “Forasmuch as ye know that ye were not redeemed with corruptible things, as silver and gold, from your vain conversation received by tradition from your fathers; but with **the precious blood of Christ, as of a lamb without blemish and without spot: Who verily was foreordained before the foundation of the world**, but was manifest in these last times for you, who by him do believe in God, that raised him up from the dead, and gave him glory; that your faith and hope might be in God (1 Peter 1.18ff).” “And all that dwell upon the earth shall worship him, whose names are not written in the book of life of **the Lamb slain from the foundation of the world** (Revelation 13.8).”

All these words of Christ and His apostles, about *before the world was, before the foundation of the world, foreordained before the foundation of the world, slain from the foundation of the world*, and a *specific hour* for which the eternal Son of God came (His crucifixion)—all these sayings are references to God’s predestination, in particular the predestination of the atoning death of Christ Jesus for His saints.

“For of a truth against thy holy child Jesus, whom thou hast anointed, both Herod, and Pontius Pilate, with the Gentiles, and the people of Israel, were gathered together, for to do whatsoever thy hand and

thy counsel *determined before* to be done (Acts 4.27f).” That “determined before” is from the exact same word that is twice translated “predestinate” in Romans 8.29f and twice translated “predestinated” in Ephesians 1 (verses 5 and 11).

Don’t ever let any Conditionalist or other free-will get away with telling you that “only *people* are predestinated and not *events*,” because—so their argument runs—Romans 8.29-30 says “*whom*” (not *what*, they point out) He did predestinate, and in Ephesians it is “*us*” and “*we*” (the “*who*,” and not the “*what*”) who have been predestinated.

Acts 4.27-28 disproves their argument immediately: God’s hand first **gathered** Herod, and Pontius Pilate, with the Gentiles, and the people of Israel together (note: they did not “gather” themselves!), and His counsel **predestinated whatsoever was done**—namely, the brutalizing and murder of Jesus of Nazareth on the Roman cross. This passage in Acts 4 is as plain as language can make it that God’s predestination covers whatever comes to pass, as well as who does it, and who is affected thereby.

Now, If all things were predestinated before the world began, why was it necessary for Christ to die?

The Lord God Almighty set up the entire creation so as to demonstrate His attributes to all sentient or sensible beings in it, be they angels or men, saint or reprobate.

“What if God, **(1) willing to show (2) his wrath, and to make (3) his power known**, endured with much **(4) longsuffering** the vessels of wrath fitted to destruction: and that he might make known the riches of **(5) his glory** on the vessels of **(6) mercy**, which he had **(7) afore prepared** unto glory, even us, whom he hath called, not of the Jews only, but also of the Gentiles (Romans 9.22-24)?” Here are seven of God’s divine attributes and works—His will, wrath, power, longsuffering, glory, mercy, and predestination—that are directly demonstrated before all creation in the gospel of Jesus Christ and His salvation of His people.

That is the very point of both the creation and predestination. Chief among these attributes are His love, grace, mercy, righteousness, holiness, power, and sovereignty—seven things (and there are many more) about which an Arminian knows nothing. Do not expect an Arminian to understand this, however, because “...the natural man receiveth not the things of the Spirit of God: for they are foolishness unto him:

neither can he know them, because they are spiritually discerned (1 Corinthians 2.14),” and Arminianism is the religion of the natural man.

1. God’s love is distinguishing, personal, and effectual. Do not expect an Arminian to understand this. The Arminian thinks God’s love must be impartial, impersonal, and ineffectual in order to be “fair” to all members of Adam’s posterity.

2. The grace of God is effectually applied to those whom He loves. Do not expect an Arminian to understand this. The Arminian thinks the grace of God is ineffectually *offered* to all sinners, and he believes it must be so offered, equally and without discrimination, in order for grace to be “just” and “impartial.”

3. God’s mercy is applied in the same way; that is, the mercy of God is effectually imparted to the objects of His love and grace, and it likewise is not in any way “offered” to the sinner. However, we must not expect an Arminian to understand this, because he is too busy thinking of how “unfair” it would be for the Lord to be merciful to someone who was unaware of his standing in need of God’s mercy.

4. God’s righteousness and holiness must be satisfied, either by the sinner (which is impossible) or by Jesus Christ as their substitute acceptable to God. In God’s economy—getting back to the Arminian’s original question—God so designed His creation that from the foundation of the world the Lord Jesus was predestinated to die as the Lamb slain for those whom He loved, thereby paying for their sins. This demonstrates the Lord’s love, grace, and mercy in such a glorious way as it otherwise could not have been demonstrated if we had not, by His decree, fallen into sin, ruin, and spiritual death. The death of Christ vindicates God’s holiness and righteousness because a substitute acceptable to God has suffered and paid for the sins of His people. Do not expect an Arminian to understand this. Arminians think they can be righteous, holy, and even sinless if they choose to be.

One of the Arminian’s chief problems is that he has not the slimmest notion of his own wretched depravity and his need of a Savior, or his total inability to procure such a Savior. Do not expect any Arminian to understand this, however, short of a creative miracle of God in his life. When that miracle of grace comes into his life, he will then no longer be an Arminian.

—C. C. Morris

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The following is an outline of principles the readers of *The Remnant* may expect to see maintained in this publication. Under no circumstances do the publishers or writers for *The Remnant* seek to delineate herein a standard of doctrine or views to be imposed upon the readers. Rather, we set these principles before the readers that they may know what general principles guide our efforts. All attempts at declaring articles of faith will be marred by prejudices and frailty, and ours are by no means any exception.

We believe these principles are, in the main, harmonious with the articles of faith published by predestinarian associations and churches of the old order of Baptists known as Primitive, Particular, or Old School Baptists the world over.

1—The eternal existence, sovereignty, immutability, omnipotence, and perfections of Jehovah God; He has revealed Himself as the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit, and these sacred Three are One; Jesus Christ was and is God manifest in the flesh, and in Him dwelleth all the fullness of the Godhead bodily;

2—The Old and New Testaments in their original languages are the verbally inspired word of God, and they are the complete and only valid guide of faith and practice; the King James Version is the preferred English translation;

3—The will of the eternal God is the first cause of all causes;

4—The absolute predestination of all things;

5—The eternal personal election of the redeemed in Christ, before the world began, and their eternal, vital union with Him; their number is fixed, certain, and sure, and can neither be increased nor diminished; their fall

in their federal head Adam into spiritual death, total depravity, and just condemnation; their utter inability to recover themselves from this fallen state;

6—The blood atonement and redemption by Jesus Christ are for the elect only, and are both efficacious and effectual in accomplishing the will and purpose of God to reconcile His people unto Himself;

7—The sovereign, irresistible, effectual work of the Holy Spirit in quickening the elect of God; the new birth is by the direct operation of the Holy Spirit without the use of any means;

8—The final preservation, perseverance, and eternal happiness of all the sons of God, by grace alone;

9—No works are good works other than those which God Himself has so designated; none of the works called good are left up to men to perform or not, at the creature's discretion; nor do the works of the creature, either before or after regeneration, result in merit accruing to his account in God's sight;

10—The peaceable fruits of righteousness are the certain result of God's working in His people both to will and to do of His good pleasure, and His people will be found walking in paths of righteousness for His name's sake;

11—The separation of church and state;

12—The principles outlined in the Black Rock Address of 1832;

13—The bodily resurrection, first of Christ, and also that of all the dead;

14—The final and eternal judgment; and,

15—The bliss of the redeemed and the torment of the wicked are both eternal and everlasting.