

Volume III Number 3
Devoted to the Defense of Christ and the Church
March 1986

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BE STRONG!

Maltbie Davenport Babcock

Be Strong!

We are not here to play, to dream, to drift;
We have hard work to do, and loads to life;
Shun not the struggle - face it; 'tis God's gift.

Be Strong!

Say not, "The days are evil. Who's to blame?"
And fold the hands and acquiesce -oh shame!
Stand up, speak out, and bravely, in God's name.

Be Strong!

It matters not how deep entrenched the wrong,
How hard the battle goes, the day how long;
Faint not - fight on! Tomorrow comes the song.

STRAIGHT PATHS AND CROOKED WAYS

G.K. Wallace

John the Baptizer came to make the Lord's paths straight. How could he make them straight? Who made them crooked? God's paths were straight when they were given to Israel.

The Children of Israel modified the paths of God to suit their own notion. They added one tradition after another. The commandments of God were made of none effect by their traditions. (Matt. 15:6). In almost every case their tradition consisted of an addition to the commandment of God. In thus adding to God's ways they so crooked them that God would no longer fellowship these apostate Jews. Jehovah sent John to straighten out the paths.

He sent a circular letter to all priests and announced in all synagogues that he hoped to unite all factions among the Jews, the Pharisees, Sadducees, Herodians, and requested that they gather in Jerusalem for a great "fellowship meeting." Of course, God would not recognize these sects and said they were hypocrites but John would - he was big and broad.

The meeting resulted in a general good fellowship between them all - all who dared to go, and those who refused to go were accused of not having any interest in unity. Let's start a new paragraph.

It is evident that John did not use the above-mentioned method to straighten the paths of God. He came in the "spirit and power of Elijah" to *turn* the hearts of the fathers - and the *disobedient* to walk in the wisdom of the just." His call was a call to repentance.

The Pharisees who came to his baptism were called hypocrites. These Pharisees felt that they should be fellowshiped by John the Baptist. "We have Abraham as our father," they said in their hearts, and we should be in full fellowship. John told them that was no advantage to them. "Ye offspring of vipers," said John, "repent" and prove that you have repented, by bringing forth "fruit worthy of repentance."

Since Jehovah will not fellowship apostate children until they repent why should we? If the members of the Christian Church desire fellowship with the church of Christ let them repent and bring forth fruit worthy of repentance.

Jesus said, "Every plant which my heavenly Father planted not, shall be rooted up." (Matt. 15:13). The Christian Church sheds tears

over the restoration movement and the divided condition of God's people yet, like Ephraim, they will not repent. It is their practice over which there is division, as their leaders thus admit. They also admit that the things they have introduced are unauthorized by the Word of God. C. C. Crawford, of St. Louis, Missouri, said to me under date of March 15, 1935:

(1) "I do not use them (the Psalms) as an authority for instrumental music in the worship."

(2) "How can one use the Old Testament, you ask, to substantiate the use of mechanical instruments of music in Christian worship? The answer is the same as I gave to question (1) above."

(3) "Upon what grounds may they be used? I reply by saying that I consider their use justified solely on the *Law of expediency* which covers all matters of custom."

If they are so anxious for unity can they not give up a *custom* for peace in

Zion? Let mechanical music, women preachers, women elders, majority rule in the church, societies, and such like be given up and then we may be ready to enter a fellowship meeting.

It is strange that some brethren will fellowship those whom God will not fellowship - those who practice a corrupted religion. Like John the Baptist, they should straighten the paths made crooked by the additions of the Christian Church. These paths can be made straight only by repentance on the part of the people who teach and practice unauthorized things. "Repent ye therefore, and turn again, that your sins may be blotted out."

"Stand ye in the ways, and see, and ask for the old paths, where is the good way, and walk therein." -*The Bible Banner, September 1938.*

INVALUABLE AIDES-DE-CAMP

It pleases us to announce that such venerable men as G. K. Wallace, George W. DeHoff and Guy N. Woods have consented to our printing material from them in address of up-to-date circumstances.

The spirit of *Torch* requires seasoned authors, independent thinkers, unattached to preacher combines and aloof from church politics. *Torch* does not intimidate readers by repetitiousness in authors and materials; rather, we appeal to your studious love of and

search for truth.

The lofty aims of *Torch* are being achieved. We appreciate greatly those sympathetic to our purposes and goals who continue to stand by our work. ***Your ongoing support by sending us clubs of subscriptions today would be of exceptional worth.*** Thank you.

Richard E. Black, Editor

LIFE IN THE SPIRIT (3)

Richard E. Black

Likewise the Spirit also helpeth our infirmities: for we know not what we should pray for as we ought: but the Spirit itself maketh intercession for us with groanings which cannot be uttered. And he that searcheth the hearts knoweth what is the mind of the Spirit, because he maketh intercession for the saints according to the will of God. “Likewise” joins the Spirit to the comfort supplied in the foregoing thoughts on hope, it is a second source of encouragement.

Controversies on Romans 8:26 as to *who* does *what*, and *how* it is performed have occurred in every age. Advocates of the direct indwelling of the Holy Spirit have isolated this text to themselves, as a purely providential proof-text, but without warrant.

Bloomfield, in the early 1800’s, argued for a direct intervention of the Holy Spirit in the prayers of Christians with greater strength than anything I have read from modern pens. We here quote Bloomfield, and will answer his argument.

“The ancient and most modern ones (commentators, REB) take it (pneuma, REB) to mean the *Holy Spirit*; but many recent ones, *animus et sensus Christianus*, which, they say, is personified. This, however, is harsh in the extreme. The objection to the former interpretation, that the office of *intercession* with God belongs to our *Saviour*, not the *Holy Spirit*, has no force; for the intercession here meant is of another kind; which has been well illustrated by Carpzon as follows: The intercession of the *Spirit* differs from the intercession of *Christ* as well in respect of *person* as of *office*. For the Holy Spirit is of the *alios parakletos* promised by Christ, John xiv. 16. The points of difference are these: 1. That the *Holy Spirit* is our *Paraclete*, by virtue of his abiding and dwelling in the heart (v. 37.); but *Christ*, by virtue of his *office*, as *Advocate in Heaven*. (Heb. ix. 24.) 2. That Christ intercedes with the Father *formally*, as *God-man*, *Mediator*, and our *High Priest*, by virtue of his *own merit*. (Heb. vii.

25.) But the Holy Spirit, sent by the *Father* and the *Son* to the faithful, intercedes *effectively* in the *heart*, as our *Helper*, by strengthening us from the efficacy of Christ's merits, and claiming it for us as our own by faith (2 Cor. iv. 12.); by impelling us to prayer, and suggesting to us how we ought to pray (Zech. xii. 10.); by exciting in our hearts aspirations, unutterable by the tongue, to our Heavenly Father (Rom. vii. 26.); finally, by himself praying, as it were, *in us - for us*, so that we by him cry *Abba, Father!*” (Bloomfield, *Greek Testament*, Vol. II, Pg. 53.)

First, the manuscripts do not furnish a term designating the Holy Spirit in Romans 8:26. In fact, the terminology used in the original, *to pneuma*, is more frequently applied to man's own spirit than God's Holy Spirit. The King James translators indicate that application by employing the neuter when in speaking of the Spirit *itself*. Neuter language addresses man's spirit quite effectively, but the masculine *himself* applies to the Holy Spirit as the third member of the Godhead.

Second, the entire argument endeavoring to define a difference between the intercessory offices of the Son and the Spirit has no merit. Intercession is a specific within the generic office of mediation. Since we have only one mediator, we have only one intercessor. The Lord's mediatorial office is far more than an authority through whom God is addressed in prayer. It includes His entire mission, its objective being reconciliation. Hebrews 7:25, 9:24, and 10:12-14 define intercession as ongoing advocacy before the throne of God on our behalf by our High Priest through His sacrifice.

Bloomfield's labored attempt to create differences between mediation and intercession as offices is, in reality, an effort to make them identical in application so as to justify an intercessory office on the part of the Spirit. By so doing, he unwittingly upholds the proposition that *all* action of the Holy Spirit directed toward man is performed *through* the written word. He contradicted his major premise. Mediation involves the binding of a covenant between two opposing parties so eliminating enmity. Intercession carries the concept of continuing mediatorial assistance. Intercession is not the office of the Spirit, Christ is the one that searches the hearts of His people for He is head over all things to the church, and is preeminent.

Third, assertions that the Holy Spirit himself indwells the heart

of Christians are published failures in rightly dividing the word. We must cease applying apostolic texts to all Christians. Every proof text used to promote a personal indwelling is a text specifically limited to the apostles, not to be generally applied to the Christian community. The earlier discussion pertaining to the indwelling of the corporate body settles this matter. See *Torch Of Truth*, Vol. III, No. 2, Pgs. 4-5.

Fourth, the *unutterable groanings* cannot rationally be construed as belonging to the Holy Spirit. Groans stem from pain, and man's deepest pain is born of frustration. The frustration considered in these texts was prompted by persecution against the church. Comfort when under distress is provided when we realize that *our* unutterable groanings, concerns so deep that physical tongue and human wisdom cannot communicate them, will be lifted to God's attention for "he that searcheth the hearts knoweth what is the mind of the Spirit, because he maketh intercession for the saints."

"To make the Spirit here mean the Holy Spirit would have the Holy Spirit searching his own mind. And to make it mean that God knows the mind of the Holy Spirit could have no point - why talk about God knowing the mind of the Holy Spirit who is in heaven with him, when the Holy Spirit is an equivalent of the Spirit of God. It would amount to saying that God knows his own spirit." (Foy E. Wallace Jr., *Mission and Medium of the Holy Spirit*, Pg. 72)

Fifth, it is pure conjecture that the Holy Spirit "impels" us to pray and "suggests" how we should pray, or that he "prays for us." He does not "excite" within us such unutterable groanings, they arise from dedicated Christians without incitement - the force of Romans 8:26 is that when such groanings do occur Christians take comfort in the confidence that the Lord knows and understands our non-communicated yearnings.

And we know that all things work together for good to them that love God, to them who are the called according to his purpose. Inspired assurances encourage to confidence, and confidence bolsters the courage to live in accord with conviction. Paul is lifting the spirit of a downtrodden people with evidence that God neither ignores nor abandons His people. *We know*, prefaces the apostle's statement, relating acknowledgement, and such widespread awareness is founded on intelligent knowledge verified by experience." Notwithstanding the Lord stood with me, and strengthened

me; that by me the preaching might be fully known . . . and I was delivered out of the mouth of the lion. And the Lord shall deliver me from every evil work, and will preserve me unto his heavenly kingdom.”

The *all things* of the text are all things God has done for His people in a general way in past ages consistently working to their spiritual good. Particularly, God, Christ and the Holy Spirit *work together* through the gospel saving those that love God. The combined presence and power of the Godhead, expressed in the gospel, cooperate to produce the preferred result. God’s credibility and the gospel’s power to “save to the uttermost” are here confirmed.

Paul frequently employed varied expressions which complement one another. He places *the Spirit of God, the Spirit of Christ,* and *Christ in you* in corresponding roles in 8:9-10, making them equivalents in result. It is a classic example of inspiration revealing the non-divided state of the Godhead. What is true of one is true of the others, in thought, aim, and indwelling. Splitting one member, the Holy Spirit, from the remainder of the Godhead, to permit a personal or direct indwelling of the Spirit while advocating a representative indwelling of God and Christ, is not tolerated by Paul’s language.

In like manner *them that love God* and *them that are the called according to his purpose*, refer to a single class of people. Their hope, while perpetuated by their love for God, is prompted by His love. “We love him, because he first loved us.” Those that love God are the called of God, and the calling is “according to His purpose” or will, the gospel. Love is founded on obedience to the divine will.” If ye love me, keep my commandments.” Loyalty to His purpose is manifest in continued faithfulness to that will.” If ye *keep* my commandments, ye shall *abide* in my love.”

This call, effected through the gospel, is neither whimsical nor arbitrary. It is revealed in Christ. It should be noted that will and covenant, testament and faith, gospel and grace, love and purpose, are synonyms in Scripture. Synonyms bear alterable shades of meaning which reveal various facets of a word, thought, or system. The call is through the gospel; as an act of grace; prompted by love; conditioned by the terms of His purpose or will; resulting in salvation, the promise of the covenant.” Who hath saved us with an holy calling, not according to our works, but according to his own pur-

pose and grace, which was given us in Christ Jesus before the world began” - 2 Tim. 1:9. "Whereunto he called you by our gospel, to the obtaining of the glory of our Lord Jesus Christ” - 2 Thes. 2:14.

For whom he did foreknow, he also did predestinate to be conformed to the image of his Son, that he might be the firstborn among many brethren. Complex passages are understood by the simple. Difficult texts come to light when students refrain from illogically leaping to a thought not found in the immediate setting. This chapter relates that God’s authority and compassion empower the gospel as the instrument of salvation for both Jew and Gentile. This specific section describes the progression of that salvation from the time God authored and appointed it until its workings in man are accomplished in glory.

Foreknow literally means “to have knowledge of beforehand,” and in particular reference to God denotes a matter known to Him although not revealed to man. Here it defines those whom God knew beforehand would be suited by *character* to “be conformed to the image of his Son.” It is not a predestination text in the Calvinistic vein which specifically designates individual men as either the elect or the non-elect.

Predestinated in the King James Version becomes *foreordained* in the American Standard Version. Neither term is difficult when we abide by actual definitions. Prior approval is meant, but 8:29 qualifies that approval, “to be conformed to the image of his Son.” That provision can *only* be met in obedience to the gospel commission: “That I may know him, and the power of his resurrection, and the fellowship of his sufferings, *being made conformable unto his death*; If by any means I might attain unto the resurrection of the dead” - Phil. 3:7-11.

How is one made conformable to the death of Christ?” Know ye not, that so many of us as were baptized into Jesus Christ were baptized into his death? Therefore we are buried with him by baptism into death: that like as Christ was raised up from the dead by the glory of the Father, even so we also should walk in newness of life” - Rom. 6:3-4. God foreordained a holy character, not individual persons. He foreordained a character that can be cultivated within any willing man; hence, universally opened salvation to “whosoever will.” Gospel obedience, conforming to the image of His Son, is the Divine decree answering to Divine mercy’s purpose of salvation

through the cross of Christ.

Moreover whom he did predestinate, them he also called: and whom he called, them he also justified: and whom he justified, them he also glorified.

Predestined souls have been defined earlier.

The called are those within that foreordained classification of character who respond obediently to the call issued *through* the preaching of the gospel, inviting seekers to come into the blessings or promises of the Kingdom. Both Bloomfield and Thayer so translate *ekalesē* thus enjoining the preaching of the gospel as inherent in calling.

Justification is not effected at the time of predestination. The Holy Spirit would be speaking irrationally by now introducing the objective in hearing the call, justification, if such pardon had been given as Calvinistically theorized at the moment of predestination.

Righteousness, pardon and justification are equivalents to this doctrinal term. They set forth the boundaries of the state of salvation, the Kingdom of Heaven. Forgiveness of sins is by executive declaration; consequently, justification or pardon is “by grace through faith.” Remission admits, grants entrance to, the state of pardon when grace is appropriated through baptism.

Glory is the highest degree of bestowed honor, and speaks of the heavenly dignity granted Christians. Its progress is from the nobility acknowledged in Christians here to the illustrious state of renown in the presence of God hereafter.

What shall we then say to these things? If God be for us, who can be against us? He that spared not his own Son, but delivered him up for us all, how shall he not with him also freely give us all things? The ultimate triumph of Christians over present trials, even the assaults of sin, firmly implants assurance and confidence. God has parted unto us His Son, He will bring the loyal into the glory of eternal life.

Who shall lay anything to the charge of God's elect? It is God that justifieth. Who is he that condemneth? It is Christ that died, yea rather, that is risen again, who is even at the right hand of God, who also maketh intercession for us. The elect are the justified, and we have carefully noted that justification is not served in a random manner. And, since God justifies, what difference or matter is it if man attempts to accuse or condemn?” Whether we live, therefore, or

die, we are the Lord's."

Who condemns? Christ. He is acknowledged as judge who was delivered up to death for our sins. Infidels, agnostics and atheists assert themselves as judge - they condemn Christians and ridicule Christianity. Judgment, however, is by Christ, because of the cross - the cross condemns unbelief.

Who shall separate us from the love of Christ? shall tribulation, or distress, or persecution, or famine, or nakedness, or peril, or sword? As it is written, For thy sake we are killed all the day long; we are accounted as sheep for the slaughter. Love to Christ must never be scuttled by even the worst of physical torments. The eternal destiny of the soul is at stake. No thing outside man, of its own worth or power, is capable of destroying either love or faith. What is of such preciousness to you in this world that it is justifiable to abandon Christ and the church?

Nay, in all these things we are more than conquerors through him that loved us. For I am persuaded, that neither death, nor life, nor angels, nor principalities, nor powers, nor things present, nor things to come, Nor height, nor depth, nor any other creature, shall be able to separate us from the love of God, which is in Christ Jesus our Lord. What a statement of consecration, devotion and loyalty!

There is no God like Jehovah; no Lord like Jesus; no Book like the Bible; no Torment like Hell; no Salvation like the Cross; no Faith like the Gospel; no Church like Christ's; no Hope like Heaven; no Life like the Christian.

"RECEIVE YE THE HOLY SPIRIT [JOHN 20:22-23]

Wayne Price

What meaneth the statement "He breathed on them," and "what did they *receive*" as a result of the Lord's promise?

This is not a mere blowing of one's breath upon others, but instead is a figurative term used quite often in the Scriptures to show life, authority, strength, and the delegation thereof. (Gen. 2:7; Ezek. 37:9; Acts 17:25; Psa. 33:4; Isa. 30:33) Obviously, the "breathing out of cruelty" (Psa. 27:12), and Saul's "breathing out threatenings and slaughter" (Acts 9:1), are figurative expressions. In our text, the Lord Himself is pictured in this symbolic action, well-known to those who knew their Hebrew history, as delegating authority to His apostles.

Were these apostles immediately empowered to “forgive and retain” sins, i.e., proclaim terms of pardon to the entire world? No! Luke 24:46-49 says this was to begin in Jerusalem, after the Apostles had been empowered from on high. (Acts 1:1-8) The first gospel sermon was preached on Pentecost day, and about 3,000 knew by first-hand experience what this “forgiveness of sins” promise really meant. (Acts 2) John 20:22-23 is simply John’s account of the Great Commission. It is another “pointer toward Pentecost” and the *miraculous power* the Apostles would receive on that day.

Since this is another promise of miraculous power to the Apostles, it is reckless for one to wrest the passage from its context (cf. v.23 in particular), and construe it to be a promise of the indwelling of the Holy Spirit in believers today!

A few pertinent questions are helpful to a correct exegesis of any passage: (1) Who is speaking? (Christ), (2) To whom does He speak? (His apostles), (3) What is the occasion? The giving of the Great Commission to this select group of Apostles. - 301 N. Broadway, Marlow, OK 73055.

HOW “THEY” FIGHT

Gorge W. DeHoff

Here are the latest methods of attempting to destroy the influence of any person who differs with you on a question of judgment or who calls to your attention some doctrinal weakness on your part.

1. *Impugn his motives.* If he is young, tell folks he is trying to attract attention and gain publicity. If he is older and well known, tell folks he is trying “to ride back into the limelight.” Above all, never concede that his motives may be good. Of course, you cannot look into his heart but some of your friends will take it for granted that you can.

2. *Write and circulate anonymous lies.* This is a most effective method for any snake in the grass to try as he can operate in the dark instead of the light and doesn’t have to stand behind what he says. Some now say it is sort of like a boomerang though.

3. *Tell folks he is ignorant.* If only they get the idea that you are broad and liberal and tolerant and your opponent is narrow and bigoted then you can strut with dignity and outward calm for many weak in the faith will be deceived. If your severest critic doesn’t have a college degree then be sure to tell it. This will go over big

with those who think more of degrees than they do the Lord.

4. *Whisper that his character is bad.* If he has the goods on your teaching of error and you are not inclined to correct it, just tell that he has broken the seventh commandment. Of course the Savior said, “Go thy way and sin no more” but you are not following the Savior anyway. Be careful in using this method to whisper and never face the man you’re telling lies on. He might mash your nose!

5. *Tell that he is under the thumb of someone else.* Never give him credit for trying to follow the Lord. This method will work on those who admire original thinkers and are tired of “the old style preaching.”

6. *Tell that he doesn't believe in prayer.* This will kill him with the half-sectarian members who think prayer is a substitute for obedience.

7. *Tell that he is not spiritual.* This can mean anything or nothing. It may mean he doesn't shed tears often in the pulpit (perhaps he enters his own closet for private prayer) or maybe he once told a joke in the pulpit. It may simply mean you don't like him. Of course, never let folks know how many sermons he preaches nor how many sacrifices he makes for the church or some might think this had a connection with spirituality.

8. *Tell that you are ignoring him.* The fact that you mention it shows you're not but many folks just love ignorance. You can claim to be way up in the clouds and not noticing those who would point out your error and help you overcome it.

9. *Tell that he doesn't believe in Divine Providence.* It may be that he preaches “All things work together for good to them that love the Lord” and that he believes God watches over us always with tender care but if he doesn't happen to agree with you on some particular point of your idea of the providence of God - just tell that he doesn't believe it at all and someone will believe it (there's one born every minute anyway).

10. *Tell that he is a critic* and that you don't believe in criticism (unless you do it). Sweetly admit that you believe in positive preaching. Of course, you want to make a living off the labors of the pioneers who demolished error but you can just coast and bathe the people in sweetness. Keep them away from Christ's sermon in Matthew 23. Tell them Christ was a lamb (but forget the lion part of it). This will work fine on all members who are ashamed of the

words of Christ.

11. Tell folks that he causes trouble by opposing error. Of course, weeds must be chopped up, sprouts must be cut, etc. - but tell folks to leave error alone and it will die. Ahab accused Elijah of troubling Israel, Christ came to send a sword but if you'll just tell that your critic is causing trouble - even with the truth - and that he lacks "tact," you'll have delivered a solar plexus blow so far as some of your hearers are concerned.

12. Tell that he is pre-millennial. Turn the tables. Beat him to the draw. Lately it's getting to be the fashion to say this about anyone you don't like, even if he's fighting the doctrine. Of course, most premillennialists are ashamed to admit it so this gives you an added advantage.

13. Tell that his financial affairs are shaky. If he went broke during the depression be sure to tell that but never mention the depression - lay it on his extravagance. This method will serve to cover up your own shady financial dealing by putting the attention on the other fellow.

14. Finally, tell that he is cutting his own throat. Many just love throat cutting. It may be that he will still be able to holler after your sounding board is defunct again but lay it on now and you can hold by hook or crook onto some devotees.

These plans are best executed by using them from house to house. That way you can feel a man out and having found out where he stands, pretend to stand with him. Then, too, if you do it in public someone might answer and expose you. Besides you don't believe in argument.

I do not know just how these methods will work out but I do know that they are now being used. I've had them tried on me. Perhaps others will be more gullible but I doubt it. Let servants of the devil peddle their gossip but let us give attention to preaching the Word. -*The Bible Banner, October 1939.*

PREMILLENNIALISM: MODERN JUDAISM

Discussion of religious themes tend to divert to generalities and personalities so blinding honest investigation of principles - a prejudice has been created destroying honorable discussion. Reason, as with mathematics, deduces to the central issue - core of the subject. Only by so operating can one determine either the validity

or the falsity of a proposition. When the central concept of any notion is resolved all secondary arguments or miscellaneous questions are automatically resolved.

Millennialism's Concept

Pursuant our axiom we note premillennialism's published "essential point". The scriptural discrediting of the essential point, in turn, brands as false all satellite notions of the theory - peripheral arguments cannot be established when the central issue is demonstrated to be an error.

The essential point of premillennialism, voiced by R. H. Boll of the millennial movement across our brotherhood during the 1930-1940 era, and being revived by certain voices once more, is as related in the following two points:

1. That the Lord Jesus Christ will return from Heaven.
2. That - if there is ever to be a time - of the restoration of all things (Acts 3:19-21) - when the old curse shall be lifted and thorns and thistles shall cease (Isaiah 55:12-13) - when the nations shall learn war no more (Isaiah 2:4) - when the knowledge of Jehovah shall cover the earth as waters cover the sea (Isaiah 11:9) - when the groaning of creation shall cease (Romans 8:18-23) - when Satan shall be dethroned, bound and imprisoned (Revelation 20:1) - when the kingdom of the world shall become the kingdom of the Lord and of his Christ (Revelation 11:15) - if there is ever to be such a time as that (and the word of God bears that out) - *then Christ must and will come before that time.*

Restoration of the Davidic throne; therefore, the nation or kingdom to Judah, is the crucial point of the theory. Millennialism (mille - thousand; annum - years) is an eschatological (end time) question promoted under two notions. Premillennialism requires the return of the Lord prior to the beginning of the millennium while Post-millennialism has the thousand year reign preceding the Lord's second advent. This paper is positioned in denial and refutation of both; hence, is A-millennial, denies that any form of millennium is taught in the scriptures.

Millennialism's Judaism

The attractiveness, charisma, of this scheme is both materialistic and Judaistic. The misapprehension being that the Kingdom of God, rather than being spiritual, is an earth-bound physical system comprised of the fleshly descendants of Abraham. The answer to mil-

lennialism, positioned in as few arguments and words as possible, follows:

First, Christ announced that His Kingdom was “not of this world”. (John 18:36.)

Second, as early as the ministry of John the baptist the blunder that the Kingdom would be constituted of Abraham’s fleshly line was denied: “And think not to say within yourselves, We have Abraham to our father: for I say unto you, that God is able of these stones to raise up children unto Abraham.” (Matthew 3:9.)

Third, Paul included no exceptions in his statement that the fulfillment of the promise of salvation in Abraham occurred in Christ: “And if ye be Christ’s, then are ye Abraham’s seed, and heirs according to the promise.” (Galatians 3:29.) Such is a spiritual accomplishment, not a national and fleshly one; therefore, Jew and Gentile alike have right of access and entrance into the spiritual Kingdom of God upon identical conditions. “For ye are all the children of God by faith in Christ Jesus. For as many as have been baptized into Christ have put on Christ.” (Galatians 3:26-28.) The class distinctions (Jew, Gentile, male, female, barbarian, Sythian, bond, free) do not prevail - the universality of the gospel commission erases those divisions. Conclusively, the relationship to Abraham is spiritual, not physical.

Fourth, millennialism fails to recognize the distinction between the Old and New Testaments as proclaimed by Christ’s fulfillment of the law and prophets. (Matthew 5:17.) Its insistence that the church is not that spiritual Kingdom Jesus came to establish is contradictory the Lord who declared: “Now is my Kingdom, not from hence.” (John 18:36.) *Now is* places the Kingdom in the present tense, and *not from hence (here)* defines its heavenly or spiritual rather than temporal nature.

Millennialism’s contrary spirit to these truth evidences its Judaistic stance.

Millennialism’s Achilles

Jeremiah prophesied the termination of David’s throne in an earthly Kingdom, and stated the precise time it would cease to exist - the reign of Jeconiah (Coniah). Jeconiah was called a “despised broken idol” and was *written* “childless, a man that shall not prosper in his days: for no man of his seed shall prosper, sitting upon the throne of David, and ruling any more in Judah.”

(Jeremiah 22:28-30.) “Written childless” announces there will be no natural “heir” to the throne - God has intervened - that heirless state brings the line to a stop, breaks it.

Zedekiah, son of Jeconiah, as vassal of Babylonia’s King Nebuchadnezzar, endeavored to reign in defiance of the *written* divine judgment, as an usurper, but was overturned. Ezekiel observed: “And thou, profane and wicked prince of Israel, whose day is come . . . remove the diadem, and take off the crown ... I will overturn, overturn, overturn it: and it shall be no more, until he come whose right it is; and I will give it to him.” (Ezekiel 21:25-27.) The fulfillment is in Christ - *until he come whose right it is* is come. Such language is unmistakable - Christ’s right to the Davidic throne fixes it as a spiritual, not a physical throne. The Kingdom is heavenly, not earthly. “But unto the Son he saith, Thy throne, O God, is forever and ever: a sceptre of righteousness is the sceptre of thy kingdom.” (Hebrews 1:8.)

When Jeremiah stated that no man of Coniah’s seed would prosper ruling on David’s throne in Judah he more than intimates the necessity of the virgin birth of Christ. The virgin birth of Jesus renders the fact that Coniah was written childless regarding the throne of David ineffective. Christ’s genealogy names Jeconiah in Matthew 1, but not in Luke 3. Matthew’s genealogy is regal - of the Kingdom - and traces the Lord’s seed line *through Mary*, (Joseph is referred to as the husband of Mary). This sequence demands acceptance of the virgin birth. Christ was the Son of God - “only begotten of God” - so nullifying the Coniah curse concerning Coniah’s seed not occupying the throne. Jesus has right to the throne of David by virtue the virgin birth. He is the Son of God, not the son of man. Jesus, having been born of God and Mary, total satisfaction of the regal seed line is accomplished while negating the “written childless” injunction set on Coniah.

Peter announces the reign of Christ on David’s throne to be a Heavenly reign: “The Lord said unto my Lord, *Sit thou on my right hand*, Until I make thy foes thy footstool.” Inasmuch as David was not ascended into the heavens, but was entombed in Jerusalem, these empowering words noted the transfer of David’s throne into the spiritual realm and coronated Jesus Christ. (Acts 2:30-35.)

Millennialism’s Consequences

If millennialism is true:

1. The gospel dispensation is thereby annulled. (Hebrews 1:1-2.) If the church is a mere substitute for the Kingdom, and Christ is not yet on the throne, no remission of sins by the gospel if possible.

2. Christ is not now reigning. (Revelation 1:5-6.) Such strips Him of His Kingly title, the name above every name, and His authority as King is yet future, not now constituted. If He is not King He is powerless.

3. God has done the impossible, lied. (Mark 1:14-15.) His prophet, John, announced the impending Kingdom with certain tones: "The time is fulfilled." If the Kingdom was postponed the time was not fulfilled.

4. Christianity is restructured Judaism. (Hebrews 8:4-10.) The clear distinction between Judaism and Christianity is apparent in the physical tabernacle of the Old and the spiritual of the New - "For if he were on earth, he should not be priest, seeing that there are priests that offer gifts according to the law." The prophetic and typical of the Old had to give way to the fulfillment and the actual of the New; the *seen* aspect of the Levitical priesthood gave way to the *unseen* quality of the royal priesthood in Christ.

5. The church is an unessential substitute to the Kingdom. (Ephesians 3:1-11.) Paul, however, announces the church to the Gentiles as the mystery (scheme) of God whereby salvation is granted both Jew and Gentile.

6. The Great Commission is baseless and ineffective. (Matthew 28:18-20.) Why preach a useless gospel to ineligible Gentiles if the law continues and Judaism prevails?

7. Gentiles cannot be saved if millennialism is true. (Acts 15:13-17.)

Acts of the Apostles records not only the salvation of the Jews, but of Gentiles as well. Consider Cornelius.

8. The Lord's mission to earth was thwarted by men. (John 17:4.) He announced, contrariwise, that His mission had been accomplished. Men are not in any position to defeat God's scheme when that plan involves only the function of deity, does not include the contingency of man's obedience.

9. The second advent will not end the world if millennialism is fact. (2 Peter 3:1-10.) Divine revelation prepares man forebodingly for that event, declar

ing without exception or condition that the Lord's return signals the *end* of the material world.

Our affirmation is that the scriptures herein considered obliterate any supposed validity or integrity as ascribed to the notion of millennialism. We now have the Kingdom else the whole of Christianity is a farcical and vain exercise in futility." The law and the prophets were until John: since that time the Kingdom of God is preached, and every man presseth into it." (Luke 16:16.) -R.E.B.

TOO MANY BAPTISMS IN RELIGION!

Richard E. Black

The Lord ordered one baptism — Ephesians 4:5. It is in water — Acts 8:36. Baptism's design, purpose, is into the remission of sins — Acts 2:38, which is synonymous with salvation — Mark 16:16.

Believers are baptized to be saved — Mark 16:16, but the religious world is bent on doing something else, anything else.

Note these errors committed by man in following human creeds rather than simply obeying the plain gospel:

[1] The practice of infant sprinkling — Neither the baptism of infants nor the substitution of sprinkling for immersion is authorized Biblically. There is neither express command nor an example of such. So-called infant baptism does not take faith into account — babes are not believers. "He that believeth and is baptized shall be saved," therefore, all who practice such are saying "He that is baptized shall be saved without faith."

[2] Faith only advocates — The many who so argue are flying in the face of the Great Commission as well. "He that believeth and is baptized shall be saved," therefore, preaching that salvation precedes baptism is equivalent to saying, "He that believeth is saved without baptism."

[3] Christians believe and practice both — The Bible says, "He that believeth and is baptized shall be saved," and there we stand.

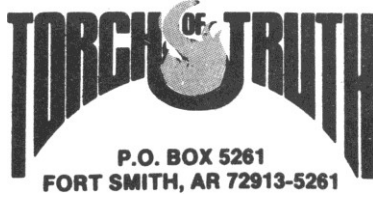
Suppose the text said, "He that believeth and is baptized shall receive five thousand dollars," would one receive the money at the point of faith? or, faith and baptism? There is not a reader that understands the illustration, and that means men understand the text of Mark 16:16 but are unwilling to believe and practice it.

Again, suppose Noah said, "He that believeth and enters the ark shall be saved." Would that have meant that one who believed

was already saved and did not need to enter the ark?

Respecting salvation, the Bible is clear — “He that believeth and is baptized shall be saved.” Respecting damnation, the text is as well clear — “He that believeth not shall be damned.” Damnation depends on very little — unbelief. What do you term it when a person rejects a passage concerning the essentiality of faith to salvation? It is unbelief to reject the baptism passages, too.

Are you going to follow God? or men?



**MEETING THE ISSUES OF THE HOUR
WITH THE EVIDENCES OF THE AGES!**