

The

Berean Searchlight

Studying God's Word, Rightly Divided

February 2002



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From the Editor to You:



Dearly Beloved,

In the Book of Acts, Luke gives us this interesting insight regarding the travels of St. Paul: “And some days after Paul said unto Barnabas, let us go again and visit our brethren in every city where we have preached the Word of the Lord, and see how they do” (Acts 15:36).

After the apostle planted churches in the cities he visited, he would return a short time later to *confirm* the faith that was initially delivered unto them. This confirmation ministry was critical to the continuation of these newly planted works. It allowed the roots of these assemblies to go more deeply into the fertile soil of God’s Word that they might bear fruit to the honor and glory of God. The components of this ministry included the imparting of new revelations, preaching the Word to validate what had been revealed, and a large dose of encouragement for the saints to stand fast in the faith. These visits also gave an opportunity to address questions and problems that had arisen in the local churches.

With these things in mind, we count it an honor to join Pastor Joe Watkins on a similar mission to the Philippines this coming March (see page 26). Brother Joe ministered with the Filipino people for over thirty years as a missionary under *Things to Come Mission*. While TCM has been active in establishing Grace Bible Schools in the Philippines, Joe and TCM have consistently followed Paul’s example. That is, they planted local churches and trained leaders from among those within the assemblies. Therefore, these churches have eventually become indigenous, which means they do not have to rely upon the mission to supply pastors or other types of assistance. We believe this is the better part of wisdom, for this reason: Should the Filipino government ever expel our American missionaries, as we’ve seen other countries do, these works will be able to continue in their absence.

Through the years, TCM has used our literature to help ground the Filipino saints in the preaching of Jesus Christ according to the revelation of the Mystery. In fact, there are a greater number of *Searchlight* readers in the Philippines than any other foreign country. So we are looking forward to visiting these dear saints to encourage them in the faith. Lord willing, we will be ministering Paul’s gospel to pastors, teachers, elders, and the churches in Cebu, Ozamis, and the newly established work at Bataan. We have also been invited to speak at the Luzon *Grace Youth Conference*.

Please pray for us that God will open a door of opportunity to further establish these saints in the preaching of the Cross. “Now unto Him that is able to do exceeding abundantly above all that we ask or think, according to the power that worketh in us, unto Him be glory in the Church by Christ Jesus throughout all ages, world without end. Amen” (Eph. 3:20,21).

Paul M. Sadler
President

From Pennsylvania:

"Thank you for your monthly magazine the *Berean Searchlight*. I have had many questions answered for me and always feel spiritually uplifted after reading your wonderful articles."

From Illinois:

"Thank the Lord for *BBS*. Wouldn't have it any other way but the Pauline way. May the Lord bless all of you at *BBS*."

From Michigan:

"I am extremely grateful for the understanding of the Word rightly divided. In this time of chaos throughout the world, I feel strengthened with the knowledge of the gospel of Grace as my foundation. I thank God and your ministry for this peace." (With all of life's uncertainties, only the believer can have the peace of God, which passes all understanding, because he places his trust in the sovereignty of God. Ed.)

From Ohio:

"Thanks for all the excellent articles that were in the *Berean Searchlight* which arrived yesterday. We really appreciate them. May the Lord continue to bless all of you."

From Pennsylvania:

"I look forward to the *Berean Searchlight* every month. I hope you will always have the opportunity and the resources to tell people how important it is to rightly divide the Word of God. It means a lot to me."

From Indiana:

"I am so blessed by receiving the *Searchlight* every month."

From India:

"Christian greetings from *Light Ministries India*. Thank you very much for your books that I received on November 10, 2001....I was really blessed by going through your magazine. Please keep sending it to me, even in the days to come."

From Florida:

"I thought I would write to say that I greatly appreciate everyone of you for what you have committed yourselves to. It is no easy task. Before I got serious about studying God's Word, I was hopelessly confused, even when I started to study the Pauline epistles. It wasn't until I read Pastor Stam's book, *Things That Differ* that my eyes and heart were finally opened. I have been studying and rightly dividing the Word of truth now for 3 years." (Pastor Stam shared with me one time that *Things That Differ* was taken from his class notes when he taught at the *Milwaukee Bible Institute*. He had planned to do a sequel, but the years crept up on him. Ed.)

From Illinois:

"I would like to say that we enjoy the *Berean Searchlight* so much and always look forward to receiving it. All the articles in it are so good and especially the last one, *The Forgiveness of Sins* by Pastor Ken Lawson. Your article on *The Prediction of the Cross* was also super."

From New York:

"I pray for *BBS* and for each one there. I pray the dispensational message will be given and that many more people will come to that belief and knowledge."

From Nairobi, Kenya:

"I would like to thank the *BBS* for its life-changing ministry for many years. I have personally grown spiritually from one level to the other through this wonderful magazine, that is, the *Berean Searchlight*. This magazine has shed the light of the gospel to thousands and thousands of people all over the world. Many have come to know the gospel of the grace of God through this valuable magazine."

From Tennessee:

"We're so thankful for men like you that are teaching the Bible rightly divided. May God bless you and keep up the good work. This is not much money but use it any way you see fit."

From New York:

“How I wish I were near your organization to help me to grow. No one is of the same mindset up here. There are three of us who get together and use your material, so we are where we are because the Lord has put us here for some reason. After I got to thinking about it, it is hard to find anything that covers it all like Brother Stam’s *Things That Differ*. I spend a lot of time in that and do enjoy it so much. The simplicity of the gospel is truly a blessing, as Paul said.”

From Florida:

“Thank you all for being there, doing for Him, with a double portion of appreciation for Pastor Sadler. Maybe soon will be THE TIME.”

From Kentucky:

“It is difficult to find truth today. Thank you for your work in proclaiming God’s truth as He gives you strength to do so.”

From Connecticut:

“Again I must say thank you. Your ministry has been a rich blessing to our church and me. Like I said before, I had seen the truth of this as I read Ephesians 4:5. But the confirmation of these things from Pastor Stam’s books (I own all of them now) and your tapes has helped lay a solid foundation for rightly dividing the Word of truth....Like I mentioned before, I preached in many Baptist Churches for many years, but since I’ve seen the truth of the ‘one baptism’ and the revelation of the Mystery....I have not been invited to preach again.” (There’s always a cost for standing for the truth, but the eternal dividends are out of this world! Ed.)

From Florida:

“Thank you for the Thanksgiving newsletter and the wonderful opportunity to help continue your work for our Lord.”

From Nova Scotia, Canada:

“Thanking you for sending me your monthly booklets. They are very helpful. This is a one-time donation as my finances and health are poor. I may not be able to send anymore but I wanted you to know how much I appreciate your faithfulness over the years. God bless.”

From Tennessee:

“I appreciated very much Pastor Ken Lawson’s article in the November issue about forgiveness and especially the section on its personal application.” (We have often said, it is one thing to know the truth, but it’s an entirely different matter to apply it to our lives. Ed.)

From Illinois:

“Thank you for sending the *Berean Searchlight* to me for so many years. I look forward to it each month.”

From Michigan:

“I have been so happy with all I have learned by reading your literature. I hope that this letter gets to the right place because I appreciate your literature so much and I want my donation to go to the right address. Keep up the good work you are doing. We really need it.”

From Wisconsin:

“I am very thankful for God’s grace and the freedom we have to worship God in America. I am enclosing a year-end gift to help with the *Berean Searchlight*. I enjoy reading it. God bless you.”

From South Carolina:

“I have been so greatly blessed by your literature and all the books I have received over the years. I really enjoy your messages. The Lord always provides some answer in your magazine each month corresponding to a particular need He provides for. I look forward to the *Searchlight* each month. The Lord is using you mightily. God bless each of you a zillion times over.”

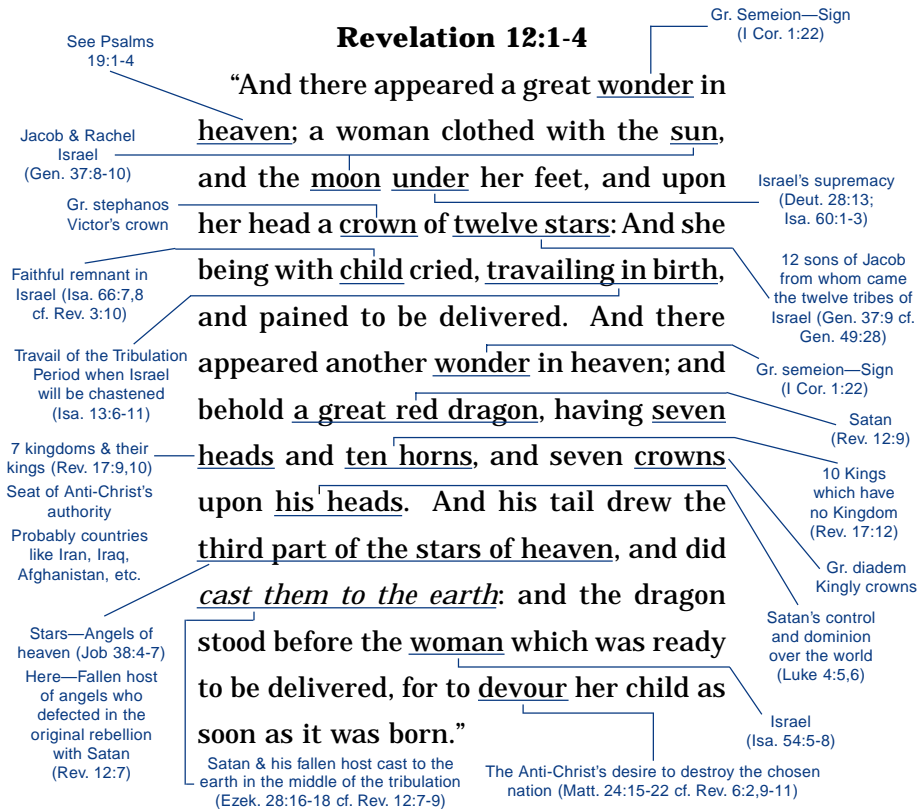
“These [Bereans] were more noble than those in Thessalonica, in that they received the Word with all readiness of mind, and searched the Scriptures daily, whether those things were so.” —Acts 17:11

A Page From Pastor Sadler's Notes

Things To Come

Many Bible teachers are convinced that the Book of Revelation is a sealed book, therefore it cannot possibly be understood. But the very first passage of the account states: "The Revelation of Jesus Christ, which God gave unto him, to show unto His servants things which must shortly come to pass; and He sent and signified it by His angel unto His servant John" (Rev. 1:1). Notice it is the Revelation or *unveiling* of Jesus Christ, as the Judge of all the earth.

Even though the Apostle John purposely used symbolic language under the supervision of the Holy Spirit, the Revelation can be understood by those who know the Lord, for these things are spiritually discerned. Thankfully we are not left to our own reasoning regarding the symbols that were used by the apostle. They are often interpreted for us in other parts of the Word of God. Always remember, the best commentary on the Bible is the Bible itself!



If we are truly following the pattern of the Apostle Paul's ministry, then we, too, must proclaim the whole counsel of God. Here we see the wisdom of God, simply because a proper understanding of the Book of Revelation will give us a greater appreciation of the grace of God.

The Life and Letters of the Apostle Peter

II Peter 1:1-9

By Paul M. Sadler



“Simon Peter, a servant and an apostle of Jesus Christ, to them that have obtained like precious faith with us through the righteousness of God and our Savior Jesus Christ: Grace and peace be multiplied unto you through the knowledge of God, and of Jesus our Lord.”

—II Pet. 1:1,2

Warning: If the Word of God is believed, it will point you to the Savior who will save you from your sins; if read, it will comfort you; if studied rightly divided, it will free you from the traditions of men; if applied to your life, it will keep you from unsound teaching and give you liberty in Christ.

As we begin our journey through the Second Epistle of Peter, the Apostle Peter is going to successfully guide his hearers through a minefield of apostasy. The false teachers who brought in these “damnable heresies,” as Peter calls them, were jeopardizing the very existence of what was remaining of the Kingdom Church. Thus, the *purpose* of this writing is to challenge those who were saved under the kingdom gospel to stand fast in the face of false teaching. Furthermore, the warnings sounded throughout the epistle are even more relevant for the coming day of the Lord. Like First

Corinthians, Second Peter is a letter of *correction*.

THE OLD FISHERMAN

Perhaps the most beloved of all the Christian hymns we sing is *Amazing Grace* by John Newton. It is said that until his death at the age of eighty-two he never ceased to marvel at the grace of God that so dramatically changed his life. As the years took their toll, it is reported that he was approached to consider retiring from the ministry due to a failing memory. Mr. Newton replied, “What, shall the old African blasphemer stop while he can still speak? My memory may be nearly gone, but I remember two things: That I am a great sinner and that Christ is a great Savior!”¹

Peter could have related to the words of John Newton as he looked back over his life. He writes, “Simon Peter, a servant and an apostle of Jesus Christ.” Interestingly, Peter introduces himself to his readers, not merely as “Peter” (as found in I Peter 1:1), but “Simon Peter.” “Simon” was his Hebrew name, while “Peter” was the Greek name that was given to him by our Lord (John 1:40-42 cf. Matt. 16:18). The combination of the two names suggests that Peter was *reminiscing* about the wonderful change Christ had made in his life.

The Psalmist says, “We spend our years as a tale that is told” (Psa. 90:9). A tale is an interesting story. Some lives are short stories, cut off by an untimely death, while others are full-length novels. In Peter’s case it was the latter. His life was a fascinating drama filled with unforgettable acts. As Simon he was a brash,

impetuous Galilean fisherman, wandering aimlessly through life without a shred of hope. But all that changed the day his brother Andrew introduced him to the Messiah. That day transformed his life and set him on a road which would turn the world upside down. He was to become the chief among the twelve apostles of the kingdom, a valiant defender of the way, the truth, and the life.

But now, as he reminisced, Peter knew the hour of his departure from this life was at hand. It was sunset! Death would soon lay its icy grip upon his shoulder, fulfilling the Lord's prediction of martyrdom (John 21:18,19 cf. II Pet. 1:14). Before Peter leaves the scene, however, he has some strong words for those who would corrupt the Lord's people with unsound doctrine.

Peter identifies himself with his countrymen in the following fashion: "a servant and an apostle of Jesus Christ." Peter's self-description here is significant, seeing that he states his positions by order of importance. With the sun also setting on the kingdom program, his apostleship is moved into a secondary role. He saw himself first as a bondservant of Christ, whose ministry was to *confirm* the faith that was initially delivered unto them. In regard to his apostleship, this letter was probably his last official act as the apostle of the circumcision (Gal. 2:7,8 cf. II Pet. 3:1).

"This second epistle, beloved, I now write unto you; in both which I stir up your pure minds by way of remembrance." If we compare I Peter 1:1 with II Peter 3:1, it is clear that Peter was writing to his countrymen a second time, who were *scattered strangers* (Gr. *Diaspora*). That is, "sojourners of the dispersion" throughout Pontus, Galatia, Cappadocia, Asia, and Bithynia. The phrase, "of the dispersion," is *distinctly Jewish*

and specifically refers to the Jews who were living in other nations outside the Promised Land.

The date of this writing was probably around 67 AD, shortly after the martyrdom of the Apostle Paul, since Peter speaks of "*all* his epistles" being in circulation (II Pet. 3:16), which would have included II Timothy, Paul's swan song. According to Church history, it is believed that Peter also suffered martyrdom under Nero, which had to be prior to June of 68 AD when the emperor committed suicide.



Nero—AD 37-68

THOSE OF LIKE PRECIOUS FAITH

Peter addresses his hearers as those who "have obtained like precious faith with us through the righteousness of God and our Savior Jesus Christ." The term "precious" here is almost exclusively associated with the Prophetic Program. In fact, it is one of Peter's favorite words. He uses it seven times in his epistles, and for good reason. We must remember that his countrymen, including himself, had been driven out of their homeland into hostile countries, which meant they were hated, persecuted, and executed without a cause. Consequently, their *Savior* was precious; their *faith* was precious; their *redemption* through the blood of the Lamb was precious; and the *promises* they clung to were most assuredly precious.

But there is another reason Peter uses this term so frequently, a reason that is often overlooked. In the Old Testament it states: "And the child Samuel ministered unto the LORD before Eli. And the Word of the LORD was *precious* in those days;

there was no open vision" (I Sam. 3:1). In time past, when the Lord was silent it meant He was displeased with His people. When this took place, the Word of the Lord became more precious because it was the only means to know the mind and will of Jehovah.

Since Israel was being set aside nationally for her unbelief, God was no longer speaking to her through visions as He had done at Pentecost. Thus, the promises found in Peter's writings became even more precious to those Israelites who had believed (II Pet. 1:4 cf. 3:3-9). Under the administration of Grace, the heavens are silent for a completely different reason. Today God is carrying out His secret purpose, which is detached from the miraculous manifestations and visions of the Prophetic Program. So we, too, must look to the written revelation, Paul's epistles in particular, to understand the will of God for the Church, which is His Body (Col. 1:9,10,25-28).

"To them that have obtained like precious faith with us through the righteousness of God and our Savior Jesus Christ." When Peter says they had "obtained like precious faith with us," he wants us to understand that his readers had believed the same gospel he and the other kingdom saints had received. Thus, "like precious faith" is synonymous with "the apostles' doctrine" taught by the twelve on the day of Pentecost (Acts 2:42).

But what exactly is the apostles' doctrine? Clearly it is the *Great Commission*—the terms of salvation being: repent, believe on the name of Christ that He is the Messiah of Israel, and be water baptized for the remission of sins. In addition, they were to render *obedience* to all the Lord taught during His earthly ministry (Matt. 28:16-20; Mark 1:14,15;

John 20:31; Acts 2:38). In short, both Peter and his hearers had believed the kingdom gospel.

"Grace and peace be multiplied unto you through the knowledge of God, and of Jesus our Lord. According as His divine power hath given unto us all things that pertain unto life and godliness, through the knowledge of Him that hath called us to glory and virtue" (II Pet. 1:2,3).

The grace and peace that Peter speaks of here should not be confused with the Apostle Paul's salutations. Peter taught the *prophesied* grace of God that would come to Israel (I Pet. 1:10), which primarily had to do with salvation from her enemies (Luke 1:67-75). This grace will be fully bestowed upon the chosen nation when the Prince of Peace returns to establish His kingdom. Then, and only then, will there be peace upon the earth (Isa. 9:6,7). With the promise of His Coming a confident expectation, it is little wonder that Peter declared that this grace and peace be *multiplied*—*Thy kingdom come, Oh Lord!* "Thy will be done in *earth*, as it is in heaven."

Peter understood that this grace and peace would be multiplied in the hearts of his hearers through the knowledge of God. He adds, "according as His divine power hath given unto us all things that pertain unto life and godliness, through the knowledge of Him that hath called us to glory and virtue."

Twice in these two passages the apostle emphasizes the importance of having a *fuller* knowledge of God. With the majority of the prophets and apostles of the kingdom having passed from the scene, Peter directs his countrymen to the *written* revelation of God, where they could grow in the grace and knowledge of the Lord Jesus Christ. Seeing that these offices were left vacant, this is strong

evidence against apostolic succession, simply because the written Word of God was now to be their final authority (II Pet. 1:19-21). A deeper understanding of the Scriptures would also serve as a safeguard against the insidious heresies the false teachers were seeking to spread among them. The best defense against error is to be grounded in the truth!

“Whereby are given unto us exceeding great and precious promises: that by these ye might be partakers of the divine nature, having escaped the corruption that is in the world through lust” (II Pet. 1:4).

If you were living continually in the face of death, as these saints were, the promises of God would become exceedingly great and precious. This will be especially true of future Israel during the Tribulation period. While the promises of the Abrahamic, Davidic and the New covenants were cherished, the specific ones Peter highlights are the promise of the Second Coming of Christ to destroy Israel's enemies, and the promise of a new heavens and a new earth wherein dwelleth righteousness (II Pet. 3:3-9,13).

THE TRANSFORMED LIFE

“That by these ye might be partakers of the divine nature, having escaped the corruption that is in the world through lust.” The moment these saints were born again they became partakers of the divine nature. This does not imply that they were joined to the essence of God, but rather they *shared* in the nature of God, which enabled them to have communion with Him. The nature of a dog is to return to its vomit. To share in the nature of God is to partake of His holiness, virtue and glory. The standard is the same in every dispensation; God wants His people to be holy, as He is holy.

This is what made it possible for these saints to “escape the corruption that is in the world through lust.” Although the term “subtract” is not used here, it is certainly implied. In fact, Peter uses mathematical terms quite frequently—in the first five verses of this letter he multiplies, subtracts and adds. Once the Spirit of God regenerated these saints, a number of unseemly things they had once indulged in were *subtracted* from their lives. They escaped the corruption that comes through lust or “unlawful desires.” This is a *principle* that is true of us as well.

For example, before I was saved I had an obsession with classic cars. I had restored a 1963 Chevy Impala that was the envy of every car buff in town. It was candy apple red with a 327 V-8 engine, which put out over 400 horsepower. You could hear me coming three blocks away. The sun rose and set on that car. At the time, it was a status symbol, but a fading glory. I couldn't understand why everyone didn't own a '63 Chevy. But after I came to know Christ, God *subtracted* that desire from my life. God changes our attitude and gives us new priorities upon our conversion. Now I'm grateful if I merely have transportation so I can carry on the work of the ministry.

I was also a sports fanatic back in those days. If you lived in Pittsburgh, then you were a diehard Steelers fan. Our family had season tickets, so I had an opportunity to see the great Bobby Lane play at Forbes Field. Years later I watched as Terry Bradshaw threw the “Immaculate Reception” to Franco Harris! The steel curtain was impressive. I knew every player on the team and what their passing, tackling, and kicking percentages were. But after I came to know Christ these things became but a fading memory. Unimportant!

You see, at the Judgment Seat of Christ, it really isn't going to matter whether or not Terry Bradshaw has a higher completion percentage than Brett Favre. That's the stuff of which *wood, hay, and stubble* is made. What will *count* is what I have done for Christ that brings honor and glory to Him. Please don't misunderstand me, I still enjoy attending an occasional baseball or football game with my boys or friends. But when I leave the stadium I leave the game behind. God has given me a whole new perspective on the matter. Some desires are subtracted immediately from our newfound life in Christ, while others are gradually phased out over time. Now our desire is, or at least should be, to have a *fuller* knowledge of Him!

"And beside this, giving all diligence, add to your faith virtue; and to virtue knowledge; and to knowledge temperance; and to temperance patience; and to patience godliness; and to godliness brotherly kindness; and to brotherly kindness charity. For if these things be in you, and abound, they make you that ye shall neither be barren nor unfruitful in the knowledge of our Lord Jesus Christ. But he that lacketh these things is blind, and cannot see afar off, and hath forgotten that he was purged from his old sins" (II Pet. 1:5-9).

Peter now instructs his hearers to "add" to their faith seven things—moral excellence, knowledge, self control, patience, godliness, kindness and love. The number seven, of course, is the number of spiritual perfection. It was Peter's desire that these saints be complete and have a well-rounded knowledge of the whole counsel of God. Although some of these virtues are attributes that the world seeks after to become more refined and cultured, "whatsoever is not of faith is sin" (Rom. 14:23).

"The standard is
the same in every
dispensation; God
wants His people to
be holy, as He is holy."

If these things abounded in them it was an evidence that they were *bearing fruit*. These seven virtues were the fruits that sprung forth from the new nature they possessed. This is another distinction between the kingdom gospel and the gospel of the grace of God. Today, believers may or may not bear fruits; therefore, it is sometimes difficult to ascertain whether or not someone is saved. Paul says regarding good works *after* salvation, "For we are His workmanship, created in Christ Jesus unto good works, which God hath before ordained that we should walk in them" (Eph. 2:10 cf. II Cor. 9:8-11). Notice believers "*should* walk in them," implying that they may not always increase in the fruits of righteousness.

Under the kingdom gospel this wasn't an option, it was an absolute necessity. As Peter says, "neither be *barren* nor unfruitful in the knowledge of our Lord Jesus Christ." Our Lord cursed the barren fig tree because it was of no profit. Thus, He emphatically declared, "Beware of false prophets, which come to you in sheep's clothing, but inwardly they are ravening wolves. Ye shall know them by their fruits....Even so every good tree bringeth forth good fruit; but a corrupt tree bringeth forth evil fruit. A good tree cannot bring forth evil fruit, neither can a corrupt tree bring forth good fruit. Every tree that bringeth not forth good fruit is hewn down, and cast into the fire. Wherefore by their fruits ye shall know them" (Matt. 7:15-20).

With the storms of apostasy gathering strength, this is a solemn warning to those who would deceive the sheep of God. It is also a guideline that both past and future Israel could use to determine who were the false teachers among them (II Pet. 2:1-3). If those of their number only bore a very small amount of fruit, it was an indication that there was life, but that they didn't take the things of the Lord seriously. Peter calls these

saints blind because they had forgotten that they had been purged from the very sins they were again committing. As it has been said, one who forgets his past sins is likely to lapse back into them.

To Be Continued!



Endnote

1. *101 Hymn Stories* by Kenneth W. Osbeck, Kregel Publications, Grand Rapids, Michigan, Pages 28-30.

Question Box

"We both know that no one can legitimately practice Mark 16:16-20, but to what extent will God perform His own miracles of healing in our dispensation?"

We wholeheartedly agree that God is not using His servants today to perform miraculous manifestations. Those who claim otherwise fail to understand that the signs, miracles, and wonders of the Acts period ceased with the completion of the Word of God (I Cor. 13:10 cf. Col. 1:25).

Usually the answer to our pleas for deliverance from an affliction is the same that the Apostle Paul received from the Lord, "My grace is sufficient for thee: for my strength is made perfect in weakness." God's grace and strength is always more than adequate to sustain us through whatever circumstances we might be called upon to endure. Thus, may our response be that of the apostle's: "Most gladly therefore will I rather glory in my infirmities, that the power of Christ may rest upon me" (II Cor. 12:9).

While God has not promised us physical healing in the dispensation of Grace, this in no way diminishes from His sovereignty. Therefore, if He so chooses to *intervene* in our affairs to further His purpose, who are we to question the counsel of His will? Paul besought the Lord not once, but *three times* regarding his infirmity and received the above response each time. However, when he and the saints petitioned the Lord concerning his coworker, Epaphroditus, the apostle wrote the following to the church at Philippi:

"For he longed after you all, and was full of heaviness, because that ye had heard that he had been sick. For indeed he was sick nigh unto death: but God had mercy on him" (Phil. 2:26,27).

Notice it was the Great Physician who had *mercy* on Epaphroditus. Clearly it was the Lord who raised him back to sound physical health. "Giving thanks always for all things unto God and the Father in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ." Please see Pastor Kiszonas' article on page 15 for a more comprehensive study on the subject of unanswered prayer in the administration of Grace.

—Pastor Sadler

How to Please God

By Cornelius R. Stam

There are “many infallible proofs” that the Bible is the Word of God, God’s written revelation to mankind. One of these proofs is the element of prophecy.

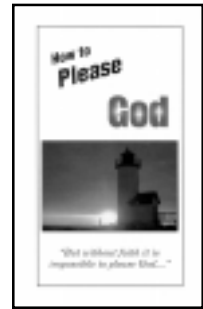
Only God knows what shall be, and His prophetic clock has always been right on time. The present futile attempts of world leaders to establish lasting peace is but another confirmation of the many Bible predictions that this age of Christ’s rejection would be marked by “wars and rumors of wars” and that lasting peace will not be established until the “Prince of Peace” returns to take the throne (Isa. 2:4; 11:1-5; Jer. 23:5; Zech. 14:1-4; Matt. 24:3-7,27; Acts 1:9-11; Rev. 1:7).

But, if we could advance proof after proof to back the unbeliever into a corner; if we could tie him up in knots with our arguments until he cried: “I give up! You are right and I am wrong!” would this save his soul or gain him acceptance before God?

Indeed not, for God wants to be *believed* and salvation is a gift to be *received* by *faith*. Thus the Bible declares that “*without faith it is impossible to please Him*” (Heb. 11:6).

There is nothing in all the world that will haunt a man like the fear that God may be displeased with him, nor is there any joy comparable to the assurance that He is pleased. It is foolish, however, to suppose that we can please God with the things we *think* He desires. We must give Him what *He says* He desires, and He tells us again and again in His Word that it is *faith* He desires most of all. He wants us to *trust* Him, to take Him at His Word.

The Bible tells us at length how God loved us and came to this world as God the Son to die on Calvary’s cross for our sins, but, alas, instead of taking Him at His Word, thousands turn away from His gracious offer, “going about to establish their own righteousness” (Rom. 10:1-4). They do “good works” and make great sacrifices, thinking that a God of love will surely accept their efforts and overlook their sins. But this is presumption, not faith. How can a just God overlook sin? We should thank Him that, in His matchless grace, He Himself *paid* for our sins so that we might be free, and that salvation can now be received by faith as “the gift of God” (Rom. 6:23).



“It is foolish, however, to suppose that we can please God with the things we *think* He desires. We must give Him what *He says* He desires, and He tells us again and again in His Word that it is *faith* He desires most of all. He wants us to *trust* Him, to take Him at His Word.”

Let us beware of confusing faith with presumption. Cain *presumed* that God would accept his attractive sacrifice instead of the prescribed one, but God refused both him and his offering (Gen. 4:3-5). Pharaoh *presumed* that he could take his armies through the Red Sea as Moses had done, but he led them all to destruction for presuming upon God (Heb. 11:29). Naaman the leper, refused God's way of cleansing, saying: "*I thought...*" but the great general remained a leper until he humbled himself and took God at His Word (II Kings 5:1-14).

And now, what about *you*? Are you still going about to establish your own righteousness; still trying to make yourself acceptable to God? Then I know something about you: You do *not* have the assurance or joy of salvation. How can you, for

there will always be the fear that you are not doing well enough to please God, and the greater dread that in justice "*God requireth that which is past*" and will call you to account for your past sins.

Why not please and honor God by *believing* His Word and trusting in Christ as your Savior?

"For BY GRACE are ye saved, THROUGH FAITH...it is THE GIFT OF GOD; NOT OF WORKS, LEST ANY MAN SHOULD BOAST" (Eph. 2:8,9).

"For I delivered unto you first of all that which I also received, how that Christ died for our sins according to the Scriptures; and that He was buried, and that He rose again the third day according to the Scriptures" (I Cor. 15:3,4).

"Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ, and thou shalt be saved" (Acts 16:31).



GETTING THE MESSAGE OUT

If you enjoyed Pastor Stam's article, we are pleased to inform you that it is also available in tract form. A package of 100 (new glossy format) is \$5.00. Don't forget, orders up to \$20.00, please add \$2.00—orders over \$20.00, add 10 percent for postage and handling. Thank you!



STAND FAST

Christians are being told that they must be ready to move *fast* with this fast-moving world, ready to change their approach and their methods, if not their message, to keep up with the times.

We believe that God would rather have us concerned about *standing* fast than about moving fast.

"Wherefore take unto you the whole armour of God, that ye may be able to withstand in the evil day, and having done all, to stand.

"Stand therefore..." (Eph. 6:13,14).

—C. R. Stam

The following article was written by our good friend Dennis Kiszonas. Brother Dennis is the *Executive Director of Grace For Today*, a nationwide radio ministry located in New York City. We're sure you are going to be spiritually enriched by Pastor Kiszonas' insight on the issue of unanswered prayer in the age of Grace. —Ed.

The Answer to the Problem of Unanswered Prayer

By Pastor Dennis Kiszonas

The phone rang right after the *Grace For Today* broadcast; the caller was a listener from Far Rockaway in Queens.

"I called just to let you know that I used to believe in God, but I don't believe any more," she said. I asked her why she had lost her faith and she related to me this experience:

A few years ago, she and her husband were attending a Bible believing church in Queens. One day her husband, who wasn't feeling well, came home from the doctor's office with some bad news. The doctor told him that he had cancer. They went to their church and told the pastor and asked everyone to pray for her husband's recovery.

Their church prayed for him. Other churches prayed for him. The pastor prayed and the elders prayed. All the time they were praying, her husband was slowly becoming weaker as the cancer continued to spread.

But her pastor continued to encourage them, "Just have faith, God will heal." The pastor quoted verses from the Bible:

"So Jesus answered and said to them, 'Assuredly, I say to you, if you have faith and do not doubt, you will not only do what was done to the fig tree, but also if you say to this mountain, Be removed and be cast into the sea, it will be done.

And whatever things you ask in prayer, believing, you will receive'" (Matt. 21:21-22).

So the pastor said, "Have faith and do not doubt; God will heal."

"If you abide in Me, and My words abide in you, you will ask what you desire, and it shall be done for you" (John 15:7).

The pastor said, "God promises, 'You will ask what you desire, and it shall be done for you.' Believe it; trust God and He will heal."

As her husband continued to suffer and the sickness grew worse, she followed the teaching in the Letter of James and called for the elders to come and pray:

"Is anyone among you sick? Let him call for the elders of the church, and let them pray over him, anointing him with oil in the name of the Lord. And the prayer of faith will save the sick, and the Lord will raise him up. And if he has committed sins, he will be forgiven" (James 5:14,15).

Her pastor continued to encourage her, "You see, the Bible says that the prayer of faith will save the sick and the Lord will raise him up. Believe it, and God will heal."

Eventually her husband died. The pastor had to try to explain this failure, and told her that it must be that she did not have enough faith, or maybe there was some secret sin in her life, or maybe her husband

wasn't really a Christian. Obviously something was wrong.

She had no explanation. She had tried her best to believe, she knew of no secret sin, and she always thought that her husband was a real Christian. She came to the conclusion that the Bible must not be true, that there really is no God and that all that she once believed was not true. At least it didn't work when she needed it.

This sister in Christ is an extreme example, perhaps the most extreme that I have ever talked to, but there are many Christians who are quietly, in their own hearts, troubled about unanswered prayers. Why is it that these promises, "whatever you ask, whatever you desire," do not work in their own experience? Some preachers keep saying, "Just have enough faith, and God will do it." But many a Christian knows that it just doesn't work that way.

What is the real answer to the problem of unanswered prayer?

We begin to find the Bible's answer when we notice that all these promises are found only in certain parts of the Bible. In the Four Gospels—Matthew, Mark, Luke and John—there are many promises about answered prayer; "if you believe." But we notice that in the Four Gospels, the Lord Jesus was only ministering to the nation of Israel. When a Gentile woman came with her request to the Lord, He wouldn't even speak to her, and told His disciples that He "was sent only to the lost sheep of the house of Israel" (Matt. 15:24). He had come as their Messiah, and to fulfill all the promises made to the nation of Israel in the Old Testament. God had promised them a kingdom in which there would be peace, prosperity, health, life, and no more fear.

But when the Prince of Peace came, the nation of Israel rejected Him. From the cross, their King prayed for His people, "Father, forgive them, they know not what they do." And so, in the beginning of the Book of Acts, we read how God offered forgiveness to the nation of Israel. In fact, in Acts 3:19-21, Peter tells the people of Israel that if they would repent for their sin of rejecting their Messiah, God would not only forgive them, but send Jesus back for them, and all that He had promised them concerning that Kingdom of Peace and prosperity and health, He would now fulfill for them.

"Repent therefore and be converted, that your sins may be blotted out, so that times of refreshing may come from the presence of the Lord, and that He may send Jesus Christ, who was preached to you before, whom heaven must receive until the times of restoration of all things, which God has spoken by the mouth of all His holy prophets since the world began" (Acts 3:19-21).

Yes, they had rejected their King and Messiah, but He had prayed for them, and God was giving them a second chance. How would they respond to the Holy Spirit's offer of pardon and the coming again of the Messiah and His Kingdom?

We don't have to read very far in the Book of Acts to begin to see that they would not repent, they would not accept God's offer of forgiveness and the coming of the Kingdom. In Chapter four of Acts the Apostles are arrested; as we read on they are arrested again, threatened, beaten up, and finally Stephen, the Spirit-filled deacon, was actually murdered by the leaders of Israel. They had rejected the King, and now they rejected the message of forgiveness. As a result, God "cast away"

the nation of Israel, for a time (See Rom. 11:15).

“For if their being cast away is the reconciling of the world, what will their acceptance be but life from the dead?” (Rom. 11:15).

The nation of Israel was “cast away” for a time, and the Kingdom they waited for was “put on hold.” Those great prayer promises made to Israel would also be put on hold for a future time.

“You can ‘search the scriptures’ but you won’t find this new message, because it was ‘hidden in God’ until the Lord revealed it to Paul for you and me today.”

But then the Lord did something that had never been prophesied or promised. Instead of unleashing His wrath upon the world, He reached down in utter grace and saved the man who was leading the rebellion of the nation of Israel. He saved His greatest enemy, a man named Saul, who would now become the Apostle Paul. The enemy—he called himself “the chief of sinners”—was saved by the grace of God and sent to the Gentiles with a message that had never been revealed before. Listen to Paul explain what the Lord Jesus revealed to him from heaven:

“For this reason I, Paul, the prisoner of Christ Jesus for you Gentiles—if indeed you have heard of the dispensation of the grace of God which was given to me for you, how that by revelation He made known to me the mystery...” (Eph. 3:1-3).

The Lord Jesus Christ had a “mystery”—which simply means a “Secret”—and He revealed this new

message, this “dispensation of the grace of God” to this new apostle. Paul often writes about this special ministry given to him, that he was not preaching the same thing as the others before him, but that the Lord Jesus had revealed something new, something different to him.

“To me, who am less than the least of all the saints, this grace was given, that I should preach among the Gentiles the unsearchable riches of Christ, and to make all see what is the dispensation of the mystery, which from the beginning of the ages has been hidden in God who created all things through Jesus Christ...” (Eph. 3:8,9).

The Lord Jesus revealed to Paul “the unsearchable riches of Christ.” The Kingdom blessings were promised and written about all through the Old Testament, but now the Lord revealed a program of blessings that were “unsearchable.” You can “search the scriptures” but you won’t find this new message, because it was “hidden in God” until the Lord revealed it to Paul for you and me today.

Now, let’s see what the Lord Jesus told Paul about how prayer works today in the dispensation of grace. Here’s where we find the answer to the problem of unanswered prayer!

We begin with a passage in Paul’s letter to the Romans where Paul begins to explain what the Lord told him about prayer today under grace, and why we don’t get everything that we pray for today:

26 “Likewise the Spirit also helps in our weaknesses. For we do not know what we should pray for as we ought, but the Spirit Himself makes intercession for us with groanings which cannot be uttered.

27 “Now He who searches the hearts knows what the mind of the

Spirit is, because He makes intercession for the saints according to the will of God.

28 “And we know that all things work together for good to those who love God, to those who are the called according to His purpose” (Rom. 8:26-28).

For those of us in the dispensation of grace, God never promises that He will give us everything that we ask. You can abundantly prove this by simply reading through the letters written by the Apostle Paul. He wrote thirteen letters, from Romans to Philemon, and we never read a prayer promise like “Whatever you ask,” or “ask what you desire.” Instead we read that “We do not know what to pray for as we ought” (Rom. 8:26).

God has promised to “work all things together for good” in our lives, but He hasn’t revealed HOW He is going to do that. He has promised it, and we take that by faith and believe that He is working all things—even the “tragedies” of life—together for good for us; but we often don’t see it. But as Paul wrote, “We walk by faith and not by seeing.”

Since we don’t know how God is going to work all things for good, we don’t know exactly how to pray. How could God promise us that He will answer all our prayers, if He tells us up-front that we don’t even know what to pray for?

Paul’s letters contain many testimonies of unanswered prayers. People flock today to hear testimonies of answered prayers, but Paul writes of many of his unanswered prayers! He knew how to pray in the dispensation of grace, and didn’t become discouraged when he didn’t receive what he asked for. He believed that his Father in heaven had everything under control and

was working all things together for his good. He gives us a great testimony of unanswered prayer in 2 Corinthians 12:8-9.

7 “And lest I should be exalted above measure by the abundance of the revelations, a thorn in the flesh was given to me, a messenger of Satan to buffet me, lest I be exalted above measure.

8 “Concerning this thing I pleaded with the Lord three times that it might depart from me.

9 “And He said to me, ‘My grace is sufficient for you, for My strength is made perfect in weakness.’ Therefore most gladly I will rather boast in my infirmities, that the power of Christ may rest upon me.

10 “Therefore I take pleasure in infirmities, in reproaches, in needs, in persecutions, in distresses, for Christ’s sake. For when I am weak, then I am strong” (2 Cor. 12:7-10).

We see in verse 7 that God allowed Paul to suffer with this “thorn in the flesh,” some physical suffering that even came from Satan, but God allowed it for a good purpose in Paul’s life. But Paul pleaded for the Lord to remove the problem. Don’t we always pray, “Fix it, Lord!”? We find Paul praying, pleading three times, for the Lord to fix his problem.

And then the Lord spoke, and He didn’t say, “Whatever you ask you’ll receive, if you have faith!” No! Not at all. The Lord told Paul that His grace would be enough, sufficient for him—and His grace means His power working in Paul’s life. “My power is made perfect in your weakness.” We always want the Lord to just fix the problem; He wants to show the sufficiency of His grace, and the magnificence of His power working in our lives so that we can “bloom wherever He has planted us!”

Paul's whole attitude about suffering changed as a result of this prayer experience. He says that he learned to take "pleasure [!] in infirmities, in reproaches, in needs, in persecutions, in distresses, for Christ's sake. For when I am weak, then I am strong."

We need to learn that it is not God's will to take away all our problems, to fix all our weaknesses, to remove all our needs, but it is God's will in all the circumstances of our lives to give us all the grace and strength that we'll need to live through the problems, and even to rejoice in them!

Paul prayed for the Colossian saints:

"For this reason we also, since the day we heard it, do not cease to pray for you, and to ask that you may be filled with the knowledge of His will in all wisdom and spiritual understanding...strengthened with all might, according to His glorious power, for all patience and longsuffering with joy" (Col. 1:9-11).

He prayed that these saints would be "filled with the knowledge of God's will" and the result would be that they would be "strengthened with all might [wow!], according to His glorious power [think of that!], for all patience and longsuffering with joy."

"Patience" here speaks of endurance and perseverance in the face of life's circumstances, while "long-suffering" speaks of having a "long fuse" on our tempers when faced with unpleasant people in our lives, and Paul says to do this all with "joy!" God doesn't promise to take away all our problems, to answer all our prayers—we don't even know what to ask for—but He does promise to give us the grace and strength that we'll need to live under the

difficult circumstances of life, and to live with the difficult people of life, and to do it all with joy.

That's God's picture of being "strengthened with all might according to His glorious power." It's living in the midst of trying circumstances and difficult people that would drive anyone else crazy, but instead of despair, there's joy. That's real power, and grace—and the Lord Jesus says to us today, "My grace is sufficient for you wherever you are, and whatever your problems may be, I'm working it all together for good, and My power is being made perfect. It reaches its greatest expression and demonstration when you are weak, but miraculously, you find that by faith you are 'strengthened with all might...for patience and longsuffering with joy.'"

"God doesn't promise to take away all our problems...but He does promise to give us the grace and strength that we'll need to live under the difficult circumstances of life...."

Paul never forgot the lesson that the Lord taught him from his "thorn-prayer." Many years later Paul would write to the Philippians out of a prison cell—near the end of five years spent in prison for the Lord:

11 "Not that I speak in regard to need, for I have learned in whatever state I am, to be content:

12 "I know how to be abased, and I know how to abound. Everywhere and in all things I have learned both to be full and to be hungry, both to abound and to suffer need.

13 "I can do all things through Christ who strengthens me" (Phil. 4:11-13).

Paul says that he has learned the secret of contentment, he knows how to abound, and also how to be abased. God does not promise us today, living in the dispensation of grace, that He is going to fix all our problems, but He does promise us grace more than enough to make us able to rejoice through it all. So Paul writes that everywhere and in all things he has learned how to cope, and more, how to cope with joy. And the secret? "I can do all things through Christ who [constantly] strengthens me." We can almost hear those words from years before still ringing in Paul's heart, "My strength is made perfect in your weakness" as Paul writes, "I can do all things through Christ who strengthens me."

When the woman from Far Rock-away prayed for her husband and had everyone praying for him, if only her pastor had understood how to "rightly divide the word of truth" (2 Timothy 2:15), realizing that the prayer promises in the Four Gospels are not given to us today, living under grace in the dispensation of grace, but were made to Israel with their Messianic Kingdom in view. Even in the Letter of James where he writes about the "prayer of faith," and how God would heal the sick, we need to read the first verse of James' letter, and see that he is only writing to "the twelve tribes scattered abroad." This is not "our mail" in the Bible. We can read it and study it and learn from it, but we need always to remember that the twelve tribes and the chosen nation are today "on the outs with God," and these promises, their promises, don't work today.

But the Lord Jesus saved a new apostle, the Apostle Paul, and sent him to us with a new message even

"There can only come disappointment, discouragement and spiritual ruin when we claim a promise that God never made to us."

more wonderful, the message of grace (Eph. 3:2). Should we pray today? Of course! Listen to Paul encouraging the saints to pray:

"Rejoice always, pray without ceasing, in everything give thanks; for this is the will of God in Christ Jesus for you" (1 Thes. 5:16-18).

But we can only rejoice and give thanks always when we understand what the Lord is doing in the dispensation of grace and in our lives today. God's people are destroyed when they are told that God's plan is to fix all their problems, because the Lord never said that to the Apostle Paul for us in the dispensation of grace. There can only come disappointment, discouragement and spiritual ruin when we claim a promise that God never made to us. But what joy and what freedom there is when we begin to learn to hear the Lord's promises for us today in this wonderful time called the "dispensation of the grace of God!"


We close this brief study of prayer in the dispensation of grace with one more prayer promise for us today found in Ephesians 3:20-21....

"Now to Him who is able to do exceedingly abundantly above all that we ask or think, according to the power that works in us, to Him be glory in the church by Christ Jesus to all generations, forever and ever. Amen."

We pray in our ignorance (Rom. 8:26), we do not know what to pray

for as we ought. We ask and we think we know what would be best. But Paul says here that God is able to do above all that we ask or even think. In fact, He is able to do “exceedingly abundantly above all that we ask or think.” But notice carefully how God is going to do that in your life: “according to the power that is at work in us.” His power and strength and grace are sufficient for us in every circumstance of life. That power is available to work

in us if we will only believe it and trust Him. He is able to do in us, above all that we ask or even think, for it is nothing less than “resurrection power” that is at work in us.

When we “walk by faith” and allow Him to “fill us with the knowledge of His will” and “strengthen us with all His might,” then Paul says, “To Him be the glory in the church by Christ Jesus forever and ever. Amen.” May He be glorified in your life and mine today. 

For those who would like additional information about the radio ministry of *Grace For Today*, or to receive copies of this article in booklet form, you can contact Brother Kizonas directly at: *Grace For Today*, P.O. Box 798, Times Square Station, New York, NY 10108. The ministry can also be reached via the Internet: <www.gracefortoday.org>.

A Bag of Potatoes

“One of my teachers had each one of us bring a clear plastic bag and a sack of potatoes to class. For every person we’d refuse to forgive in our life, we were to choose a potato, write on it the name and date, and put it in the plastic bag. Some of our bags, as you can imagine, were quite heavy.



“We were then told to carry this bag with us everywhere for one week, putting it beside our bed at night, on the car seat when driving, and next to our desk at work. The hassle of lugging this around with us made it clear what a weight we were carrying spiritually, and how we had to pay attention to it all the time to not forget, and keep leaving it in embarrassing places.

“Naturally, the condition of the potatoes deteriorated to a nasty slime. This was a great metaphor for the price we pay for keeping our pain and heavy negativity. Too often we think of forgiveness as a gift to the other person, and while that’s true, it clearly is also a gift for ourselves!”

“And be ye kind one to another, tenderhearted, forgiving one another, even as God for Christ’s sake hath forgiven you” (Eph. 4:32).

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By C. R. Stam

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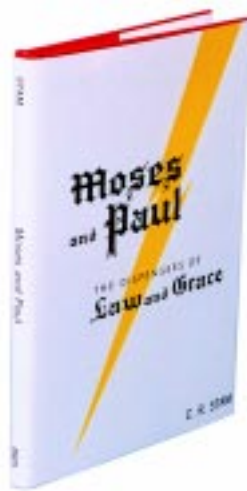
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The Lake of Fire

By W. Edward Bedore, Th.D.

Executive Director, *Berean Bible Institute*

The **Lake of Fire**, or **Hell** is a literal place of everlasting fire that was originally created by God as a place of punishment for Satan and the angels that followed him in his rebellion against God (Matt. 25:41). Because it is referred to as the place of “*outer darkness*” we believe that it is most probably located at the farthest reaches of the creation. Hell,* or Gehenna in the Greek (Gr.—γεέννα), is described in Scripture as a “*furnace of fire*” (Matt. 13:42); “*everlasting punishment*” (Matt. 25:46); “*the mist [gloom] of darkness*” (I Pet. 2:17); “*the blackness of darkness*” (Jude 13); the “*hurt of the second death*” (Rev. 2:11 cf. 20:6,14; 21:8); “*a lake of fire burning with brimstone*” (Rev. 19:20; 20:10; 21:8).

While Hell was created for Satan and the other fallen angels, the unsaved of humanity from all ages will be with them in this place of torment where “*there shall be wailing and gnashing of teeth*” (Matt. 13:42).

While there is no one in the Lake of Fire at this time it will one day hold a vast multitude. The first residents of this place of righteous retribution will be the Beast (Anti-Christ) and the False Prophet who at the end of the Tribulation will be “*cast alive into*

a lake burning with brimstone” (Rev. 19:19-20). Joining them will be the unsaved of the nations who survive the Tribulation (Matt. 25:31-32,41-46). Also, at Jesus Christ’s return to earth the rebel Israelites, i.e., unbelieving Jews, who survive the Tribulation will be denied entrance into the Millennial Kingdom, we would presume to join their Gentile counterparts in the “*place of everlasting fire*” (Eze. 20:33-38 cf. Matt. 25:29-31,45-51). Then, at the end of the Millennial Kingdom of Jesus Christ, Satan will be “*cast into the lake of fire and brimstone, where the beast and the false prophet are, and shall be tormented day and night forever and ever*” (Rev. 20:10). And finally, the unsaved dead will be raised to be judged before the Great White Throne by Jesus Christ and cast into the Lake of Fire (see Rev. 20:11-15).

Jesus Christ suffered the horror of the cross in order to make sinners righteous and save them from the horrors of Hell. Those who reject Him as their Savior instead will be judged by Him according to their works of unrighteousness. The blood of Jesus Christ provides the only way of escape from the everlasting fire of Hell.

* Although the Greek word *hades* (ᾗδης) is rendered hell in our English Bibles it is not the same place as *gehenna*. Hades is the temporary abode of the lost between the time of their physical death and the Great White Throne Judgment.

NEWS AND ANNOUNCEMENTS

GRACE TV MINISTRY: Our dear Brother Gary Smith is producing a TV program for Thurston County, Washington, based on rightly dividing the Word of truth. The name of the program is "Speaking the Truth in Love." The broadcast airs on cable Channel 22 in Olympia/Tumwater, and Channel 29 in Lacey/East Thurston County at 5:30 p.m. every Sunday evening. The program is also rebroadcast on these stations at 7:00 p.m. on Tuesdays. The Public Access Channel reaches about 50,000 homes, so let's pray for Brother Smith as he shares the riches of God's grace from Colossians. If you would like to contact Gary, he can be reached via e-mail <gasmith10@juno.com> or phone: (360) 923-2391.

HOLDING FORTH GOD'S WORD OF LIFE is now holding Bible studies at the home of Brother David Marcukaitis at 8005 W. 146 Ave. Cedar Lake, Indiana. For directions and times of meetings, please contact: Mr. & Mrs. David Marcukaitis at (219) 374-4603. May God richly bless these dear folks as they faithfully proclaim the gospel of the grace of God.

NEW LOCATION: The *Berean Grace Bible Church* is now meeting in the *West Suburban Christian Academy* located at 1721 Northview Road in Waukesha, Wisconsin. Sunday School is at 9:30 a.m. followed by the Worship Service at 10:30 a.m. Contact Doug and Sonja Cox for further details or questions (414) 258-8304 or e-mail <dougcox@execpc.com>. Brother Doug writes, "We stand strong for the Grace Message and invite residents, guests, and travelers to come and worship with us. Pray for us as we seek a new pastor for our congregation."

NEW LOCAL CHURCH: Our dear Brother Tim Stonecipher, a former Baptist Pastor, and a loyal group of Grace believers have formed a new assembly. Pastor Tim shared with us the following news: "We are excited to report that our fellowship has begun. It has proven to be more of a joy than we had imagined. Seventy of us held services for the first time on November 14, 2001. We are meeting on Sunday at 9:45 a.m. and Wednesday at 6:30 p.m. We often wonder if there are those around our area that would be interested in fellowshipping with us. We are located in Paducah, Kentucky. On the map one will find Paducah located in the far west of the state. For more information call (270) 554-0808 or e-mail at <stonecipher6@cs.com>. These will connect you to the pastor, Tim Stonecipher. We would love to see you at *Gracelife*."

AS YOU PLAN YOUR SUMMER ITINERARY, the dates for *Rocky Mountain Grace Camp* this year are August 19-24, 2002 at *Long's Peak Inn*, Estes Park, Colorado. For brochures, directions, or more information, please contact: Kevin and Jessica Sadler at (262) 268-0940.

THE CELEBRATE GRACE CAMP will be held July 8-12, 2002 at *Camp Colorado* located about one hour SW of Denver. In addition to the sound preaching of the Word, there's good fellowship, food, and fun, not to mention the low cost! For reservations and additional information, please call, write, or e-mail Jerry & Judy Worthley, 0627 Co. Rd. 3, Canon City, CO 81212. Phone: (719) 276-2469\E-mail: <JerNJudy@Eudoramail.com>. Happy camping!!

HONORABLE MENTION: The lighthouse picture that appears on the front cover of this issue was taken by Mr. James Bayliss. James is a freelance photographer who has traveled extensively around the country to capture some of the most unique sights you will ever see on film. If you would like to receive more information about his work, he can be reached at <baylissstudio@gg/bbs.com> or phone: (715) 467-2677.

*The picture of the lighthouse that appears on the front cover was taken by Mr. James Bayliss of Scandinavia, WI. The *White River Lighthouse* is located in White Lake, Michigan.

Missionary Journey to the Philippines

Things to Come Mission has invited BBS to join them for a two week ministering tour in the Philippines

March 16-31, 2002

The cities where meetings are being arranged are:
Manila, Cebu, Clarin, Ozamiz.

Guest Speakers:

Joe Watkins, Executive Director of *Things to Come Mission*
Paul M. Sadler, President of the *Berean Bible Society*

The tour will also include:

- The Commencement Exercise at the *International Grace Bible Institute*
- A Local Church Dedication in Ozamiz
- The *Annual Youth Conference* for the Island of Luzon

For additional information, please contact: Pastor Joe Watkins, *Things to Come Mission*, 2200 English Ave., Indianapolis, IN 46201, or e-mail: <tcmusa@tcmusa.org>, or phone: (317) 262-8806.

Have you Prayed for Your Missionaries Today?

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