

The **Berean Searchlight**

Studying God's Word, Rightly Divided

May 2008



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The **Purpose** of the *Berean Bible Society* is to help you understand and enjoy the Bible. The **Mission** of BBS is to exalt the Lord Jesus Christ by proclaiming the whole counsel of God according to the revelation of the Mystery. Our **Goals** are to *evangelize* the lost, to *educate* the saved in “rightly dividing the Word of truth” (II Tim. 2:15), to *energize* their Christian lives, and to *encourage* the local church.

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From the Editor to You:



Dearly Beloved,

Little did we realize when we launched the *Berean Bible Society's* website in 1998 how far-reaching this arm of the ministry would become. We average approximately 30,000 visits to the site each month. In addition, the total pages viewed during the course of any given month averages around 80,000. With such a large audience, the gospel of the grace of God has a worldwide exposure.

The BBS website enables you to research just about any biblical subject. We have archived all of the *Berean Searchlights* back to January 1999. Using the "Search Engine" you can access articles by Pastor Stam, your Editor, Pastor Kurth, and numerous other Grace Authors. You can also review a vast wealth of materials by Pastor J. C. O'Hair, one of the Founding Fathers of the Grace Movement. Simply type the word, phrase or passage you are looking for and a list of articles will appear where it can be found.

Another treasure trove of information is the addition of the *Scripture Index* for all the *Berean Searchlights* from 1987 through 2007. Our good friend, Roger Newell, painstakingly undertook this project, for which we are eternally grateful. It was truly a labor of love. If you are wondering how one of our Grace Pastors or Bible teachers would address a particular passage, this area of the site will point you to which issues of the *Searchlight* the reference appears.

Dave Allen, another dear friend who volunteered his time, deserves a special word of thanks as well. Brother Allen has single-handedly produced our *Books on Tape* by Pastor Stam and yours truly. The cassette versions of these works are currently for sale on the site and in the very near future they will be available in a CD format. Pastor Stam's *Bible Time* messages on CD can also now be purchased online.

For your convenience, all of the *Berean Bible Society's* literature can be ordered from the website, which includes the monthly "Book Specials" that appear in the *Searchlight*. We accept *MasterCard* and *Visa* for all orders and donations, if you feel so led of the Lord to give a gift. If you haven't visited the BBS website recently you'll want to do so without delay. And don't forget to sign up to receive our daily devotional, *Two Minutes With the Bible* via email.

We frequently update the site and we are always adding something new. Let us know what you think! By the way, if you have any suggestions as to how we might improve the site, please feel free to contact us. Thanks for being such a good friend of the work, and may God continue to richly bless your faithfulness in sharing Paul's gospel with others.

Yours in His matchless grace,
Paul M. Sadler, President

What about Global Warming?

By John Willson



We hear much about average temperatures on earth rising, ice caps melting, and impending disaster from rising sea levels. Many blame pollution caused by industry, vehicles and planes, and other gases we produce. They say that melting ice will submerge coastal cities and bring catastrophe to the earth.

However, many scientists point out that average temperatures have been rising and falling for centuries. From 1850 to 1950 there was a warming trend, but in the mid 1900's temperatures cooled, prompting warnings of a new ice age. However, in recent years average temperatures have risen. But most of earth's climate is controlled by the oceans which cover 70% of the earth's surface. The slowness of water to change in these great depths has a controlling effect on our atmosphere.

We do have Bible passages that show us this global warming scare is false. Genesis 8:22 says, "While the earth remaineth, seed time and harvest, and cold and heat, and summer and winter...shall not cease." So we will have cold and winter, as God promised. Job 38:8-11 says it was God "who shut up the sea with doors, when it brake forth...and brake up for it My decreed place, and set bars and doors, and said, Hitherto shalt thou come, but no further: and here shall thy proud waves be stayed." These verses say God has decreed the shorelines of the continents will not be changed by rising oceans. When God spoke to Job of the various aspects of His creation in this chapter, He said, "Knowest thou the ordinances of heaven? Canst *thou* set the dominion thereof in the earth?" (Job 38:33). We see here that *God's* ordinances control this earth and all of the universe.

Hebrews 1:3 states that the Lord Jesus is "...upholding all things by the word of *His* power..." This convinces us that the Father and the Son are in control of all creation. Those who know God and the Bible will not be deceived by the widely promoted teaching that man is causing global warming.

We know from Isaiah 45:18 that God created the earth to be inhabited, and that means temperatures will remain steady at least for the prophesied 1000-year reign of Christ (Rev. 20:3,4). But many today fear a global warming disaster because they have no knowledge of God and His Word. "The fear of the Lord is the beginning of knowledge" (Prov. 1:7). The warning they need to fear is written in Hebrews 9:27, "It is appointed unto men once to die, but after this the judgment." The good news is they will be free from fear if they believe I Corinthians 15:3,4 "...Christ died for our sins...was buried, and...rose again... according to the Scriptures."

The Mysteries of the Kingdom



By Paul M. Sadler

THE WATCHMAN

“But if the watchman see the sword come, and blow not the trumpet, and the people be not warned; if the sword come, and take any person from among them, he is taken away in his iniquity; but his blood will I require at the watchman’s hand.”

—Ezek. 33:6

Most cities in biblical times were walled fortresses that provided a security barrier around the city. These walls were so massive that houses were oftentimes built into the sides of them near the top (Josh. 2:15). It was from this vantage point that the *watchman* of the city was posted to warn the inhabitants of impending danger. If he failed to do so, or if his trumpet gave an uncertain sound, he was ultimately responsible for any loss of life. Under the law, it was a life for a life. Being a watchman was serious business!

In like manner, spiritual leaders are to be watching over those

who sit under their ministries. It is their God-given responsibility to rightly divide the Word of truth according to II Timothy 2:15. Sadly, many of these watchmen have sounded an uncertain trumpet in the Church, leaving many believers in Christ confused and disoriented. For one reason or another, the vast majority of these spiritual leaders are *unwilling* to acknowledge the apostleship and message of Paul, which will have grave consequences at the Judgment Seat of Christ.

Those who fail to rightly divide the Scriptures usually confuse the *Mysteries of the Kingdom* with the *Mystery* that was committed to the Apostle Paul. This is a common error among Bible teachers and commentators. For example:

C. I. Scofield states: “The seven parables of Matthew 13, called by our Lord ‘the mysteries of the kingdom of heaven’ (v. 11), taken together, describe the result of

the presence of the gospel in the world during the present age.”

Oliver B. Green states: “The number ‘seven’ in the Bible stands for completeness, and the parables that set forth the mysteries of the Kingdom give a complete view of the present dispensation....”

Warren Wiersbe states: “The seven parables describe for us the spiritual course of the ‘kingdom of heaven’ in this present age.”

We strongly disagree! Whatsoever God has separated let no man join together. When the Lord delivered these seven parables to His disciples, the Church, the Body of Christ was yet a secret hidden in the mind of God; therefore they must be interpreted in view of the prophetic program in which they are found. However, while the primary interpretation belongs exclusively to *Israel*, there are spiritual and moral applications that can be drawn from these teachings *for us today*.

HIDDEN TRUTH

“And the disciples came, and said unto Him, Why speakest thou unto them in parables? He answered and said unto them, because it is given unto you to know the mysteries of the kingdom of heaven, but to them it is not given” (Matt. 13:10,11).

When we study Matthew, Mark, Luke, and John we are not studying four different gospels, as some suppose. Rather, we are studying one gospel, the *gospel of the kingdom*, from four different vantage points. The proper designation then, when referring to the Gospels would be *the gospel according to Matthew*, etc. While Matthew, Mark, Luke, and John

introduce us to the earthly ministry of Christ, their narratives are merely an extension of the Law and the Prophets.

The disciples of our Lord were intrigued when the Lord began to speak to the multitude in parables, which prompted the inquiry: “Why speakest thou unto them in parables?” Here it is very important to distinguish between a “fable” and a “parable.” A *fable* is a “fictitious story of supernatural happenings.” Usually animals or insects talk to one another and act like humans. The story is not true and could never be true, but it does teach some type of lesson. A good example is Aesop’s Fable of *The Ant and the Grasshopper*:

The Ant and the Grasshopper

“In a field one summer’s day a grasshopper was hopping about, chirping and singing to its heart’s content. An ant passed by, bearing along with toil an ear of corn he was taking to the nest.

“Why not come and chat with me,” said the grasshopper, “instead of toiling and moiling in that way?” “I am helping to lay up food for the winter,” said the ant, “and recommend you to do the same.” “Why bother about winter?” said the grasshopper; “we have got plenty of food at present.”

“But the ant went on its way and continued its toil. When the winter came the grasshopper had no food and found itself dying of hunger, while it saw the ants distributing every day corn and grain from the stores they had collected in the summer. Then the grasshopper knew: *It is best to prepare for the days of necessity.*”

Obviously the story is a *fable*. It is clearly a fabrication! Grasshoppers do not speak to ants and ants do not carry whole ears of corn back to the nest. But we do learn from the life of the ant that it is important to plan ahead.

A parable, on the other hand, is taken from a real-life experience. It is always true or it could be true. Many of our Lord's parables were based on facts, such as the Prodigal son: "*a certain man had two sons.*" In the parable of the "wheat and tares" the Lord was probably recalling a time when he passed through one of the fields in Palestine. But even if this wasn't the case, it was a common occurrence to see a field with both wheat and tares intermingled.

A parable always implies a *comparison*. It is something that is placed alongside to illustrate a truth. For example, the "wheat" in the parable of the wheat and tares represents the *saved* while the "tares" speak of the *unsaved* that will be removed from the earth prior to the kingdom. So then, the parables we will be considering are *true*, they actually took place in the Lord's time, or they could have taken place. Every detail of a parable is not necessarily meant to be interpreted. Words and phrases are often added to segue to the next main point. As we will see, there is usually one primary thought the Lord would have His hearers grasp from each parable.

"Therefore speak I to them in parables...And in them is fulfilled the prophecy of Isaiah, which saith, By hearing ye shall hear, and shall not understand; and seeing ye shall see, and shall not perceive" (Matt. 13:13,14).

Even though the *kingdom* had been revealed in time past, there were various aspects of it that were kept secret from the foundation of the world (Matt. 13:34,35). In the phraseology of the *mysteries of the kingdom*, the term "mysteries" doesn't have the idea of something that is mysterious or baffling. Rather, the word *mysterion* in the original language simply means a *secret*, something that was unrevealed. It is a spiritual truth intentionally hidden until revealed through a divine revelation. Interestingly, when the Lord begins to address these matters He does so in parables, which purposely *hide the truth* from the unbelieving multitude. This was by design!

Because those "without" were so dull of hearing our Lord chose to speak to them in parables, not in order to blind them, but to pique their interest. He was merely attempting to get their *attention* again! With this in mind, when the Lord states, quoting Isaiah: "By hearing ye shall hear, and shall not understand," they had heard and were continuing to *hear* about the kingdom, but the deeper things of God they did not understand, because they were withheld from them until they responded to the Messiah.

"And seeing ye shall see, and shall not perceive," He wanted them to *see* the fact of the kingdom of God, but hide from them the mysteries of the kingdom. This latter part is what they could "not perceive." You see, one of the purposes of speaking in parables was to engage men to inquire what the meaning was, thus drawing them *back* to the Messiah. But, they

had to have a *willing* heart. As we know, “faith cometh by hearing and hearing by the Word of God.” Therefore, the desired end was that they would respond favorably by turning to the Lord.

While the mysteries of the kingdom were kept from those who were pondering whether or not Christ was the Messiah, these mysteries were *revealed* to those who did believe on Him, as we see represented in the lives of the disciples (Mark 4:34). These new revelations of course would have furthered their understanding, especially in relation to the spiritual things of the kingdom of heaven.

The main theme threaded throughout the seven parables is the *nature* of the kingdom to come. As the theme is developed, we are to understand that there is *one* primary lesson being taught in each parable. For example, when we sort through the subject matter of the parable of the sower, the main thought the hearer is left with is the importance of *bearing fruit*.

THE PARABLE OF THE SOWER

“Behold, a sower went forth to sow; And when he sowed, some seeds fell by the way side, and the fowls came and devoured them up” (Matt. 13:3,4).

The parable of the sower speaks of four types of soil that represent four different kinds of hearers. Essentially we are going to see that the soil is either good or bad; consequently, the hearers fall into one of these two categories. The sower is Christ or those who faithfully proclaimed the good news of

the kingdom (Matt. 4:23 cf. 13:19). The seed that was sown is the Word of God, as it related to the earthly ministry of Christ to *Israel* (Matt. 15:24 cf. Luke 8:11).

“And when he sowed, some seeds fell by the way side, and the fowls came and devoured them up” (Matt. 13:4).

Some of the seed that the sower flung from his sack fell on the edge of the path alongside the field. This soil was nearly impenetrable and speaks of the hearer who heard the truth, but refused in his heart to give it a fair hearing. Thus as quickly as he received it Satan came along and sowed indifference to the words of the preacher, thus plucking the truth out of his heart like a bird that picks up the newly scattered grass seed in your yard (Matt. 13:19 cf. Luke 8:12).



We might call this an *intellectual faith*. This hearer could tell you the story of Adam and Eve in the garden, but had no understanding whatsoever as to its spiritual significance. He heard the truth, but was like the man who is more interested in building new barns to increase his material wealth (Luke 12:18). There was no spiritual fruit in this hearer’s life, because there was no life.

“Some fell upon stony places, where they had not much earth: and forthwith they sprung up,

because they had no deepness of earth: And when the sun was up, they were scorched; and because they had no root, they withered away” (Matt. 13:5,6).



The seed that fell among the rocks where there was only a thin layer of soil speaks of the hearer that received the good news at once with great joy. They were initially thrilled with the prospects of what they had heard, but when they began to suffer adversity because of the Word they soon became disenchanted. Like the sprout that shrivels up and dies when it is scorched by the sun, these types of hearers had no spiritual roots, but merely an empty profession (Matt. 13:20 cf. Luke 8:13).

We would call this an *emotional faith*. You will recall the time the Lord came to Jerusalem during the Passover. At that time many believed on His name “when they **saw** the miracles which He did” (John 2:23). These hearers were swept away by the shouts of praise and the emotion of the moment when they saw the miraculous signs and wonders He performed. Interestingly the Lord did not commit Himself to them because He knew their hearts were not right with God. It wasn’t long thereafter that they were *offended* and “walked with Him no more” (John 6:60-66). These hearers

may have had an emotional experience in Messiah, but it wasn’t long before what appeared to be life withered away, and that which remained was blown across the desert floor, no longer to be found. They ultimately rejected the Word of Life. Dead plants with dead roots do not produce fruit.

“And some fell among thorns; and the thorns sprung up, and choked them” (Matt. 13:7).

These seeds fell into ground that was conducive for life and growth. The problem was before the sower had an opportunity to sow his seed, thorns and thistles had already taken root in the soil. Since the weeds had a head start the good plants that came from these seeds struggled to bear fruit. If you have ever planted a vegetable garden you can relate to the sower’s dismay. Because of the curse, weeds and thorns flourish choking the life out of everything around them. They draw all the moisture and nutrients from the soil, leaving the vegetable plants struggling to bear fruit. What fruit that does appear on the vine is usually scant at best.

“He also that received seed among the thorns is he that heareth the Word; and the care of this world, and the deceitfulness of riches, choke the Word, and he becometh unfruitful” (Matt. 13:22).

We would call this an *unproductive faith*. The Word did take root in the life of this type of hearer and even began to bear some fruit *after* he was saved. But the cares and riches of this world drew his attention away from spiritual things and eventually he became unfruitful. This strongly implies

that early on in his life there was fruit, but it never came to maturity because of his worldly ways.



The Lord indicates here that this hearer fell into the trap of the *deceitfulness of riches*. It has been said that riches *always* deceive “because they seem to promise happiness, security, and freedom from care and anxiety. So subtle is this deception that almost everyone is persuaded of it, even the people of God.” The hearer who was lulled into this false sense of security failed to redeem the time wisely in regard to what was really important in life; consequently, he will suffer terrible loss in the coming kingdom.

“But other fell into good ground, and brought forth fruit, some an hundredfold, some sixtyfold, some thirtyfold” (Matt. 13:8).

As the sower spread his seed a large part of it fell into the fertile soil that had been prepared in advance to receive the seed. The seed immediately took root and brought forth fruit in varying degrees. The abundance of fruit was dependent on the depth of the soil into which the seed fell and the amount of moisture the plant received over a period of time. At the ingathering when the crops were harvested the sower was pleased to find fruit that was both plentiful and mature.

“But that on the good ground are they, which in an honest and good heart, having heard the Word, keep it, and bring forth fruit with patience” (Luke 8:15).

We would call this a *productive faith*. This, of course, describes the hearer who gladly heard the Word of the kingdom and readily received it into his heart. Notice that he not only received it, he also *kept it*; that is, he was willing to stand fast for the truth in the face of opposition. This hearer was deeply rooted in kingdom truth and desired to order his life according to the Sermon on the Mount, which served as the charter of the kingdom. As a result, he was not deceived by the uncertain riches of this world, but laid his treasures up in heaven where thieves can never break in to steal them. He consistently followed the charter’s instructions to forgive in order to be forgiven (Matt. 6:12,19,20).



The fruits of this type of hearer were plentiful, simply because he saw the importance of rendering obedience to the commands of the Messiah, especially the command to “love one another” (John 13:34). When the Lord returns in glory to establish His kingdom of righteousness upon the earth, He will say to these hearers “Well done, good and faithful servant; thou hast been faithful over a few things, I will make thee ruler over

many things: enter thou into the joy of thy Lord” (Matt. 25:23).

Notice there were degrees of fruit bearing among this last group of hearers. Some bore fruit a hundredfold, some sixtyfold, while others only thirtyfold. The variation in the amount of fruit in the lives of these believers was determined by their degree of commitment to the things of the kingdom. Even here we see how the cares of this world, pleasures, and the deceitfulness of riches hindered some of these saints from yielding their fullness.

A MISNOMER

The parable of the sower clears up a common misunderstanding among the Lord’s people. There are many who believe that simply because one is a descendant of Abraham he is surely saved. After all, the Jews are God’s people! However, this was not true under the kingdom gospel, nor is it true today. This particular parable teaches that some rejected the gospel, while others believed it and bore fruit. The teaching of John the Baptist confirms that “they are not all Israel, which are of Israel.” John said the following to the multitude of Israelites that came to him to be baptized:

“O generation of vipers, who hath warned you to flee from the wrath to come? Bring forth therefore fruits worthy of repentance, and begin 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” (Luke 3:7,8).

While John’s hearers were required to do works of repentance

to restore their broken covenant relationship under the former dispensation of the Law, they also had to respond to the Messiah in *faith*, for without faith it is impossible to please God. When the Scriptures declare that “all Israel shall be saved,” we are to understand this in the context of all *believing* Israel will be saved.

In addition to good works being an expression of faith, as required under the kingdom gospel, according to the parable of the sower they were also an evidence of a righteous life after salvation. This is why the Lord instructed the kingdom saints accordingly: “by their fruits ye shall know them.” This was especially true in regard to false teachers (Matt. 7:20). A good tree doesn’t produce corrupt fruit.

Today “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). We too are called upon to produce fruit in the form of good works after we are saved. But please note that today believers, “*should* walk in them,” which implies they may or may not do so. It is God’s desire that every member of the Body of Christ bear fruit to His honor and glory; however, we are not under the law but under grace. Of course we expect to see fruit in the life of a believer, but sadly this may not always be the case. Therefore, there may be times when we have difficulty ascertaining whether or not someone knows the Lord. That’s the nature of grace! Grace doesn’t demand a fruitful life; it beseeches us to live a godly life in Christ Jesus.

To Be Continued!



40th Anniversary

Annual Berean Bible Fellowship Conference



Location: *Cedar Lake Bible Conference Center*
Cedar Lake, Indiana

Dates: June 14-19, 2008

Theme: *“Stand Fast in the Liberty”* (Gal. 5:1)

Bible Hour Teacher: Pastor David Siegmann

Guest Speakers from around the country will be present to proclaim the riches of God’s grace!

Music Directors: Mr. & Mrs. Jim Wade

At the Piano: Mrs. Virginia Shriver

Accommodations: BBF recommends that reservations be made early, although accommodations are often available for latecomers. For reservations, write or phone: *Cedar Lake Conference Center*, Reservations Manager, PO Box 665, Cedar Lake, IN 46303, or phone: 219-374-5941.



Facilities for travel trailers, motor homes, and tent camping include electric/water hook-ups, dump station, showers, etc.

For additional information or to receive a brochure, please contact Pastor Floyd Baker at 812-490-4156 or bakerpastorf@aol.com. You can also call BBS at 262-255-4750.

LOT

A Lesson to Worldly Believers

By Cornelius R. Stam

You can't take it from him. He was a *righteous* man. The Bible says so. II Peter 2:7,8 calls him "*just Lot*" and "that *righteous man*," and testifies how upset he was "with the filthy conversation of the wicked," and how "seeing and hearing" their wickedness, "his righteous soul" was "*vexed... from day to day with their unlawful deeds.*"

More than this can be said for Lot, for this same passage of Scripture cites Lot's case as an example of God's grace in saving His own, while delivering the ungodly to judgment, "*chiefly them that walk after the flesh in the lust of uncleanness, and despise government*" (Ver. 10). What a picture of the Sodomites of our day!

But this is not *all* that the Bible says about Lot, for the Scriptures also set him forth as an example of believers who fail to live *separated* lives and will be saved only "so as by fire" (I Cor. 3:15).

ABRAHAM AND LOT

When Abraham (then still called Abram) followed the call of God in leaving the pagan surroundings of Ur of the Chaldees, "*Lot went with him*" (Gen. 12:4). Some years later, however, there was "strife between the herdmen of Abram's cattle and the herdmen of Lot's cattle" (Gen. 13:7), and fearing that this might lead to strife between him and Lot, Abram magnanimously said:

"Is not the whole land before thee? Separate thyself, I pray thee, from me. If thou wilt take the left hand, then I will go to the right; or if thou depart to the right hand, then I will go to the left" (13:9).

Failing to respect his uncle's position, Lot "lifted up his eyes," and beholding the plain of Jordan, "well watered everywhere...even as the garden of the Lord," chose the best for himself. The record declares: "*Then Lot chose him all the plain of Jordan*" (Ver. 11).

Lot actually lost, however, by choosing the best for himself, for the record goes on to say:

“And the Lord said unto Abram, after that Lot was separated from him: Lift up now thine eyes, and look from the place where thou art northward, and southward, and eastward and westward:

“For all the land which thou seest, to thee will I give it, and to thy seed for ever” (Vers. 14,15).

Thus Lot was to lose that well-watered plain of Jordan, and Abraham and his seed were to possess it along with much more to the north, south and west!

LOOKING TOWARD SODOM

“...Lot dwelled in the cities of the plain, and pitched his tent toward Sodom” (Gen. 13:12).

Lot had come with his uncle Abraham when God had called him out of the pagan surroundings of Ur, but here he was interested in *another* pagan city—and an extremely wicked one, for Genesis 13:13 states that “*the men of Sodom were wicked and sinners before the Lord exceedingly.*”

Note: Lot “*pitched his tent toward Sodom,*” so that he could have it always in sight. Why? What were his motives? In the light of II Peter 2:7-9 it is extremely doubtful that he was tempted by Sodom’s *sin*, yet it is equally doubtful that he did not *know* what kind of city Sodom was. Perhaps there were other things about Sodom that interested him; the glamour of city life, its commerce, its culture—for remember, Satan often sets his traps with bait that in itself is wholesome and attractive.

Perhaps, though, Lot hoped to introduce the inhabitants of Sodom to the true God and so reform the city. Such a conclusion might well be drawn from II Peter 2:7-9, when compared with the Genesis record.

In any case, he had pitched his tent toward Sodom. It was Sodom he saw as he emerged from his quarters in the morning. It was Sodom he saw as he sat by the tent door in the evening. It was news of Sodom he kept hearing from his herdsmen and from travellers who passed by.

DWELLING IN SODOM

Whatever the reason, the pull of Sodom was insistent and strong for later, when an alliance of kings made war with the kings of Sodom and Gomorrah and overcame them, Lot was *living in Sodom*. The record reads:

“And they took Lot, Abram’s brother’s son, who dwelt in Sodom...” (Gen. 14:12).



If Lot’s desire had been to bear the knowledge of the true God to Sodom he had come to the right place. And the record would seem to indicate that he did this, for the passage in II Peter 2 portrays him as “vexed” from day to day with

their “filthy conversation” and their “unlawful deeds.”

Well, what was so wrong about this? Do we not send missionaries to foreign lands with the gospel? Yes, but Lot had *identified* himself with the Sodomites. His uncle, Abraham, still dwelt in tents, ready to pull up stakes at any time to follow God’s leading. Not so Lot. Like the neo-evangelicals of our day, he felt that he should “become involved” with them—in the neo-evangelical sense. Certainly Lot now found himself “where they are,” but not with God’s approval.

INVOLVED IN SODOM’S POLITICS

Lot’s involvement with Sodom had not helped either him or Sodom, for both had been taken captive by other pagan kings. Yet, after Abraham had rescued his nephew in the defeat of Chedorlaomer and his allies, we find Lot back in Sodom again and now as one of its rulers, for Genesis 19:1 states:

“...and Lot sat in the gate of Sodom....”

This phraseology is used often in the Hebrew Scriptures with reference to the rulers, who generally were also the judges.

If we followed the neo-evangelical line of reasoning we should conclude that Lot did a noble thing in accepting a position in Sodom’s political set-up. How they keep urging us to “get involved” in this world’s politics! We need more Christians in government and politics, they say, more people to raise their voices against the wickedness of the day.

But the neo-evangelicals should reappraise their position in this matter. Lot *was* now one of Sodom’s rulers, sitting with them at Sodom’s gate. Moreover, he *must* have raised his voice against the gross wickedness that surrounded him, for “just Lot,” this “righteous man,” was vexed day after day with Sodom’s sin. But his influence fell short of the mark.

Eli, the high priest, spoke out against the wickedness of his sons (I Sam. 2:23-25), yet God rebuked him for doing nothing more, saying “[*Thou*] *honorest thy sons above Me*” (Ver. 29), and as a result both Eli and his two sons were killed in one day.

And what of Lot and wicked Sodom? His influence as one of its rulers was nil. His protests were ignored. His attempts to launch reforms were overruled, and Sodom went right on its wicked way. What should Lot have done under these circumstances? The answer is: He should not have been found in these circumstances in the first place, but now at this late date, he should at least have resigned his position and left Sodom becoming, like Abraham, “a stranger, and a pilgrim in the earth.”

What honor was there in being the one righteous voice in a totally corrupt government? Did not his associations nullify his testimony? Sad sight: “Just Lot” sitting in the gate of—*Sodom*, the most immoral, ungodly city on earth! Like the downfall of many a spiritual man, this had all begun with something so seemingly trivial, but had now turned out to be something so big and terrible.

DRIVEN FROM SODOM

In response to the intercession of Abraham, Lot's "separatist" uncle, God drove Lot and his family out of Sodom—and just in time.

Indeed, when "Lot...spoke unto his sons-in-law...and said, Up, get you out of this place, for the Lord will destroy this city...he seemed as one that mocked unto his sons-in-law" (Gen. 19:14).

"And when the morning arose, then the angels hastened Lot, saying, Arise, take thy wife, and thy two daughters, which are here; lest thou be consumed in the iniquity of the city" (Ver. 15).

Even this warning was not summarily obeyed. The record goes on to say:

"And while he lingered, the men laid hold upon his hand, and upon the hand of his wife, and upon the hand of his two daughters; the Lord being merciful unto him; and they brought him forth and set him without the city" (Ver. 16).

Even then, the angels' warning: "*Escape for thy life; look not behind thee,*" was met with Lot's "*Oh, not so, my Lord,*" and still more "stalling" and still more divine mercy. But the judgment did fall, for finally we come to that awful passage:

"Then the Lord rained upon Sodom and upon Gomorrah brimstone and fire...and He overthrew those cities, and all the plain, and all the inhabitants of the cities, and that which grew upon the ground...and Abraham gat up early in the morning to the place where he had stood before the Lord: And he looked toward Sodom and Gomorrah, and toward all the land of the plain, and

beheld, and, lo, the smoke of the country went up as the smoke of a furnace" (Gen. 19:24-28).

A LESSON FOR US

The new evangelicalism of our day encourages believers in the rejected Christ to become involved with the world that rejects Him. Its top figures play "buddy buddy" with the political leaders of the world, participate in worldly TV shows with ungodly and immoral performers, give undue recognition to a godless educational system and to apostate religion. And all this to "reach souls for Christ"! They have brought the Church into the world and the world into the Church to such a degree that it is often difficult to distinguish between the two. Performers in the entertainment world, and unregenerate politicians speak in generalities about their "faith" and religious devotion, while men of God, who should know better, hold up as examples of great Christians personalities who are still "of the world" in the fullest sense but have "a testimony for Christ."

But all this is contrary to the Word of God, and He abhors it. We thank God for graciously saving some who still remain worldly in their walk, but we do *not* believe that their worldliness makes them better witnesses to the world *in any sense*. We believe rather that their testimonies encourage worldliness in the Church.

Here we must press home a basic truth that has been reiterated again and again by those who are convicted about the condition of the Church: We must

press it home because so large a proportion of the Church has not been listening and soon it may be too late.

In every age God's people have been called to separate themselves from this world system. In the list of heroes of faith found in Hebrews 11, Lot is not mentioned, but Abraham and his household are, and it is said of them that they *"confessed that they were strangers and pilgrims on the earth"* (Heb. 11:13). Just before His crucifixion our Lord said to His apostles:

"If the world hate you, ye know that it hated Me before it hated you.

"If ye were of the world, the world would love his own, but because ye are not of the world, but I have chosen you out of the world, therefore the world hateth you" (John 15:18,19).

The Apostle Paul, in urging the saints to be truly consecrated to Christ, pleads:

"And be not conformed to this world; but be ye transformed by the renewing of your mind..." (Rom. 12:2).

To the permissive Corinthians he writes:

"Be ye not unequally yoked together with unbelievers..."

"Wherefore come ye out from among them, and be ye separate,¹ saith the Lord, and touch not the unclean thing; and I will receive you" (II Cor. 6:14-17).

And to the Jewish believers of the dispersion, Peter writes by inspiration:

"Dearly beloved, I beseech you as strangers and pilgrims, abstain from fleshly lusts, which war against the soul" (I Pet. 2:11).

SAVED, BUT "SO AS BY FIRE"

It is hard to understand why neo-evangelicals are pressing their unscriptural involvement with the world when despite their well-meant efforts, society is becoming more and more like Sodom and Gomorrah.

For such involvement Lot barely escaped with his life. Yes, *he* was saved, but his home, his riches, his Sodom friendships and his efforts to change Sodom all went up in smoke.

"They have brought the Church into the world and the world into the Church..."

This, we believe, is the meaning of the term *"so as by fire,"* found in I Corinthians 3:15. Referring there to the believer's service as a Christian, the apostle declares that some will suffer loss when their works are reviewed at "the judgment seat [Gr., *bema*] of Christ." *"The fire,"* he says, *"shall try every man's work of what sort it is"* (Ver. 13). Concerning those who do *not* build aright, he says:

"If any man's work shall be burned, he shall suffer loss; but he himself shall be saved, yet so as by fire" (Ver. 15).


Here we have, as it were, a man fleeing naked from a fire. Yes, he has been saved, but all he has worked for all his life has gone up in flames and he barely escapes with his life.

We fear that this will be the case with many a modern Lot.

Once-great men of God who have followed Lot's course with its permissiveness, its ill-conceived and unscriptural methods to promote the cause of Christ, and its erroneous views of God's attitude toward this world system; these, all of them, will be saved, yes, but will see all their efforts and "accomplishments" as Christ's witnesses go up in the flames of His searching scrutiny.

Mid all the confusion and spiritual apathy of our times, may God help us, who bear the name of Christ, to live for Him in Godly

separation, so that at the close of this life we may be able to say with Paul: "*Henceforth there is laid up for me a crown*" (II Tim. 4:8).

This will not hinder our efforts to evangelize the lost. Rather, it will gain their respect and increase the effectiveness of our witness. 

Endnote

1. "Separation is not from *contact* with evil in the world or the Church, but from complicity with and conformity to it." (Note on Page 1234 of the old *Scofield Reference Bible*).

Question Box

"Why did it take the laying on of hands for the Holy Spirit to come on the believers who were baptized in Acts 8:9-17?"

Our founder, Pastor C. R. Stam, answers this well in his *Acts, Dispensationally Considered*. As Pastor Stam points out, the believers here who had been baptized, but had not received the Spirit promised in Acts 2:38, were Samaritans, members of the ten tribes of Israel. According to prophecy these ten tribes must be reunited with the two tribes of Judah (Ezek. 37:15-19), for the Lord had promised the 12 apostles that they would reign with Him over "the *twelve* tribes of Israel" in the kingdom (Matt. 19:28).

But it was not enough that the ten tribes of Israel be reunited with the two tribes of Judah. The ten tribes of Israel had apostatized from the faith centuries before when they made Samaria their capital and set up their own temple at Mt. Gerizim. They must now renounce all of this and recognize Jerusalem as the seat of God's authority. And so they did not receive the promised Spirit until two apostles from Jerusalem came and prayed for them with the laying on of hands.

Two apostles were enough, of course, since "in the mouth of two or three witnesses shall every word be established" (Deut. 17:6; 19:15; II Cor. 13:1). Indeed, the Lord had instructed the apostles that where "two or three" of them were gathered together in His name, they had the authority to act officially in His absence (Matt. 18:18-20).
—Pastor Kurth

The Goal of the Gifts

By Pastor Ricky Kurth

From a message delivered October
2007, at the *Berean Bible Fellowship*
Fall Conference in Evansville, Indiana



After our Lord rose from the dead, and before He ascended into Heaven, He commissioned His apostles to go into all the world and preach the gospel (Mark 16:15). Those who believed the gospel and were baptized would be saved (v. 16), and empowered with certain supernatural abilities, known as *spiritual gifts*:

“And these signs shall follow them that believe; In My name shall they cast out devils; they shall speak with new tongues;

“They shall take up serpents; and if they drink any deadly thing, it shall not hurt them; they shall lay hands on the sick, and they shall recover” (Mark 16:17,18).

While the early disciples indeed displayed nearly all of these gifts, it is obvious to most Christians that believers *today* no longer possess these supernatural powers. We believe that this is because these gifts uniquely qualified those saints to preach the gospel safely during the Great Tribulation, but that the coming of the Tribulation was put “on hold” with the introduction of the dispensation of grace. The purpose of this article will be to show how these gifts will equip the saints to meet the unique challenges that will be present in the Tribulation period. In so doing, we also intend to demonstrate how in the *absence* of these unique challenges, there is no need for these gifts in the present dispensation.

Let us now consider these gifts one by one, in the order in which they are enumerated in our text above. The ability to cast out devils is mentioned first, and so we must begin with a brief study of this controversial subject.

Demon possession is not mentioned in the Old Testament, and so there must be a reason for the sudden appearance of this phenomenon

during our Lord's earthly ministry. We believe the reason to be Satan's propensity to imitate God and counterfeit whatever it is that He is doing. A simple example of this proclivity can be seen in a comparison of prophets and apostles. In the Old Testament, God had prophets, and so Satan countered with *false* prophets (Jer. 23:31,32). It is not until we come to the New Testament that we read about "false *apostles*" (II Cor. 11:13; Rev. 2:2), for it is not until then that God introduced the office of apostle.

This helps us understand why it is that demon possession did not appear until the New Testament. When John the Baptist preached that "the kingdom of heaven is at hand" (Matt. 3:2), he was referring to the kingdom of heaven that God intended to establish on earth. In this kingdom, God's people would be filled with His Spirit and supernaturally *controlled* by Him (Ezek. 36:27). To counter this endeavor, Satan could not personally indwell different men, for he is not omnipresent. Opting for the next best thing, he commanded the members of his fallen host to possess different men. With this process the adversary hoped to raise up an army to be present on the earth, ready to oppose the army of Spirit-filled believers God was about to raise up at Pentecost (Acts 2:4). This then is why demon possession did not appear until the New Testament, for Satan does not attempt to counterfeit what God is doing until God actually starts doing it.

"...God does not give spiritual gifts for our amusement..."

In the present dispensation, the filling of the Spirit is a *goal* as opposed to a *gift* (Eph. 5:18), and men are not supernaturally *controlled* by the Spirit as they were at Pentecost. And since God is not filling men with His Spirit in the controlling sense today, Satan has consistently ceased his efforts to possess and control men as well. In the absence of demon-possessed men today, there is no *need* for God to empower believers with the ability to cast out demons. And the absence of this need is the reason for the absence of this power among believers today, for God does not give spiritual gifts for our amusement, but rather to equip believers to meet specific needs.

Mindful that some may be doubtful about the absence of demon possession today, we pause to present what we consider to be further evidence. The Apostle Paul tells us that the believer who is equipped with the inspired Word of God is "thoroughly furnished unto all good works" (II Tim. 3:16,17), and the casting out of devils would certainly be a good work. Yet nowhere in Scripture are we given instructions as to *how* to cast out devils. If then the Bible equips us to do every good work we need to do, and it does *not* equip us to cast out devils, we believe it is safe to conclude that the *need* for casting out devils does not exist in the present dispensation.

It could be argued that those who cast out devils in our Lord's time did so seemingly without any instructions, but were rather equipped only with the empowerment of His command. To this we would reply that believers today do not operate under the commission of Mark 16, and we have likewise received no empowering command from the Lord through the apostle of the Gentiles to cast out devils. This too forces us to conclude that there is no *need* for the power to cast out devils today, and in the absence of a need for this gift, the gift itself has not been given to us.

Moving on, the gift of *tongues* was likewise a gift that was given to empower believers to meet a specific need. The gift of tongues was a supernatural ability that enabled a believer to speak in a language he had never studied in order to be able to communicate a message from God to those of other tongues (Acts 2:4-11). This gift was needed at Pentecost, for "there were dwelling at Jerusalem Jews, devout men, out of every nation under heaven" (Acts 2:5). In the Tribulation that will come to pass after the Rapture brings an end to the present dispensation that has interrupted God's prophetic program, the gift of tongues will enable God's Tribulation saints to fulfill His commission to preach the gospel to every creature in all the world (cf. Matt. 24:14). This gift will continue to be available to God's people when in the kingdom "ten men shall take hold *out of all languages* of the nations, even shall take hold of the skirt of him that is a Jew, saying, We will go with you: for we have heard that God is with you" (Zech. 8:23). In that day, the gift of tongues will enable Israel to be the kingdom of priests to the nations of the world that God intends them to be.

However, in the present dispensation, God has not chosen the people of one nation and one language to be His channel of blessing and bring the gospel to the world, but is rather raising up men in *every* nation to accomplish this purpose. Because of this, there is no need for the gift of tongues in the present dispensation. And in the absence of a *need* for this gift, God is not *supplying* this gift to believers in the present dispensation of grace.

Continuing on in our text, the next gift the Lord predicted that believers would have is the ability to "take up serpents" (Mark 16:18). Like the gift of tongues, invulnerability to snake venom would be a handy thing to have in any dispensation. However like the gift of tongues, this gift will furnish the Tribulation saint to meet a *specific* need in that day. In Revelation 9:17-19 we read,

"And thus I saw the horses in the vision, and them that sat on them, having breastplates of fire, and of jacinth, and brimstone: and the heads of the horses were as the heads of lions; and out of their mouths issued fire and smoke and brimstone.

"By these three was the third part of men killed, by the fire, and by the smoke, and by the brimstone, which issued out of their mouths.

“For their power is in their mouth, and in their tails; for their tails were like unto serpents, and had heads, and with them they do hurt.”

The presence of such demonic *serpent-like* creatures on earth during the Tribulation will present a formidable challenge to God’s people in that day. However, the filling of God’s Spirit at that time will give men the invulnerability to snakebite that will enable them to continue to serve the Lord, even in the face of such a supernatural threat to their lives.

Once again we see how a gift of the Spirit will uniquely empower God’s Tribulation saints to meet the spiritual challenges that will be present in their day. However, in the absence of these serpent-like creatures in the present age, there is no *need* for this specific gift at the present time. And since there is no need for the gift, we contend that God is not giving this gift to believing members of the Body of Christ.

The Lord also predicted that “if they drink any deadly thing, it shall not hurt them” (Mark 16:18). Who among us wouldn’t want to possess this gift, especially when traveling in countries where we are warned, “Don’t drink the water”! However, this gift also will have a particular application during the coming Tribulation.

In John’s vision of that great and terrible day, we read of a judgment he saw fall on “the rivers, and upon the fountains of waters” (Rev. 8:10). This judgment caused that “the third part of the waters became wormwood” (v. 11). While earlier judgment affected the salt water “sea” (v. 8,9), the contamination of the “rivers” and “fountains” will affect man’s supply of fresh drinking water, and so we read that “many men died of the waters” (v. 11). Excluded from this number, however, will be those Spirit-filled believers endowed with the ability to drink any deadly thing without harm.

As we look around today, however, we can’t help but notice the complete absence of any “great star from heaven, burning as it were a lamp,” falling into the rivers and contaminating the fountains of waters. In the absence of this judgment today, there is no need for the spiritual gift that will render men impervious to its effect. And once again, in the absence of the *need* for this supernatural gift, God is not today *giving* this gift to His people.

It should be pointed out that the power to take up serpents will help believers overcome the power of a *Satanic* threat to their life, while the power to drink deadly things will render them resistant to a *God-given* judgment. If the reader is wondering why God would send such a judgment, we propose the following.



Notice that the wormwood waters “were made *bitter*” (Rev. 8:11). This calls to mind a strange passage of Scripture found in Numbers 5:11-31. Under the Law, if a man suspected that his wife had been unfaithful, he was instructed to present her to the priest, who would cause her to drink some “*bitter water*” that he had prepared for this purpose. If she was guilty of infidelity, a curse would enter into her bowels causing her thigh to rot and her belly to swell. We believe this to be a parallel passage to Revelation 8:11.

If it be pointed out that this passage differs in that the woman is not said to *die* from drinking the bitter water, we would respond that death is implied, if not explicitly stated. We have to wonder how long one could live with a rotting thigh. To this we would add that under the Law, a woman who had been proven guilty of unfaithfulness was condemned to die by the hand of Israel (Lev. 20:10; John 8:5). And so we contend that this passage is indeed analogous to Revelation 8:11.

If it be asked why God would administer such a test in the Tribulation, we would reply that *spiritual* fidelity will be an important issue in that day. As in the past, God’s people will be His espoused bride, who will be expected to remain faithful to Him (Jer. 2:2 cf. Matt. 24:12,13; Rev. 2:4). These saints will be severely tempted to be *unfaithful* to the Lord and commit spiritual fornication (Rev. 2:14,20,21; 14:8) with “the great whore...the mother of harlots” (Rev. 17:1-5). In that day, Spirit-filled believers will not be harmed when they drink the deadly bitter waters, but those who “say they are Jews, and are not” (Rev. 2:9) will fail the test and die. We propose that this is the reason God will send this judgment during the Tribulation.


The final spiritual gift the Lord predicted would follow them that believe is the ability to “lay hands on the sick” and enable them to “recover” (Mark 16:18). Like the others, this gift is, as they say in the world of advertising, “often imitated, never duplicated.” It too would be a handy gift to have as believers today continue to groan and travail in pain together with all creation (Rom. 8:22). However, this gift is also particularly suited for the ages to come, as we shall see.

In Exodus 19:5,6, the people of Israel were told that they are destined to become “a kingdom of priests.” However, like the sacrifices that they brought, Jewish priests *themselves* had to be *without blemish* (Lev. 21:17). If a man was “blind” or “lame,” for instance, he could not be a priest in Israel (v. 18-23).

As we fast-forward to the New Testament, the Lord Jesus Christ began His public ministry by preaching “the kingdom of heaven is at hand” (Matt. 4:17), and He meant that kingdom in which the people of Israel were destined to be a kingdom of priests. As He looked around, He couldn’t help but notice that many were “blind” and “lame” in Israel, and hence did not qualify for the priesthood. The purpose of His healing ministry among them then was not *merely* to prove His deity

and compassion, but *also* to render them fit for service as priests in the kingdom.

However, in the present dispensation of grace, God is not now preparing His people Israel to be “kings and priests” to “reign on the earth” (Rev. 5:10). He is rather training members of the Body of Christ with His Word to fulfill *their* destiny to someday reign with Christ in the heavens (I Thes. 4:13-18; Eph. 1:21-23) where we will “judge angels” (I Cor. 6:3). In the absence today of the need for unblemished priests, there is a corresponding absence of the gift of healing among believers. Yet again we see how the spiritual gifts that the Lord promised would follow them that believe are particularly suited for Israel’s program and her future.

In conclusion, this brief study is not meant to be an exhaustive refutation of the claims that our Pentecostal brethren make in defense of the spiritual gifts of Mark 16. We rather trust that the reader will add these few thoughts to the arsenal of spiritual weaponry with which we must equip ourselves to draw the attention of the Body of Christ away from imagined spiritual gifts back to “*the preaching of Jesus Christ according to the revelation of the mystery*” where it belongs. 

Revelation graphic, page 22: ©iStockphoto.com/Gord Home



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“Thank you so much for this *Two Minutes* article, for this verse came to me some time ago when I was in ‘dark times.’ I believe strongly God really showed me this ‘for such a time as this’ at that time. He seems to send this to me frequently, and today, from you.”

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From New Zealand:

“Thank you for spending the time and effort to answer my question regarding the church and the New Covenant. Your answer was very helpful and has, I believe, steered me in a better direction. I am going to study this further.”

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“I enjoyed the summer conference at Cedar Lake tremendously, and found the books that I bought there to be interesting and helpful.”

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“Never in my wildest dreams did I expect to run across a recording of J. C. O’Hair on the web...He was my childhood pastor at *North Shore Church*...I remember those summer Sunday evenings when after the evening service we held an outdoor service on the steps of the church. I was probably only 10 or 11 but I recall handing out tracts to the crowds as passers-by stopped to hear the gospel...To listen to his conversations with my dad probably did more for my faith than a hundred sermons.”

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“I enjoyed your Song of Solomon article so much that I tipped off another lady to read it.”

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“*Our Great Commission* was a wonderful series that deserves a lot of extra attention, and I’m doing just that!”

From Wisconsin:

“The pro-life article by Ken Lawson was very well written.”

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From Pennsylvania:

“I am afraid the high cost of living has finally caught up with me. I was hoping to keep giving the same amount that I gave when I was working. I made it 5½ years, but I’m afraid I’ll have to reduce my giving. The oil company is getting it now.”

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“I love the *Searchlight*, especially the *Mailbag*. Such wonderful things are happening in spite of all the opposition to the Lord, all over the world.”

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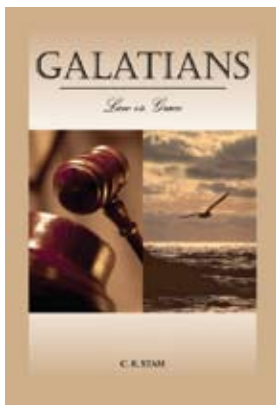
“I am so pleased that the Lord God is continuing to supply the way to provide for the gospel of Grace to go on. It is a pleasure for which He is still using me and my husband (now home with Him).”

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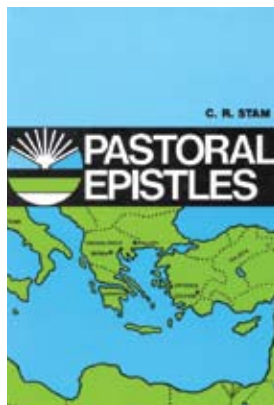
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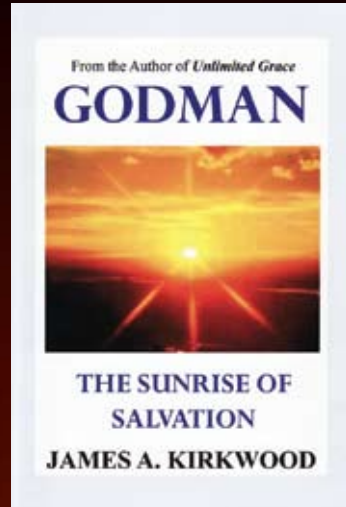
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NEWS AND ANNOUNCEMENTS

Another *Two Minute Milestone*: More people than ever before are taking time each day to spend *Two Minutes with the Bible*, thanks to our daily e-mail devotional. It seems like just a few months ago we were able to report that the number of people receiving *Two Minutes* had topped a thousand, and now we are close to 2500! Why not encourage your friends to sign up for *Two Minutes with the Bible*. It is a great way to share the Grace message! Just have them visit www.bereanbiblesociety.org and click on “Daily Devotional.”

This Year’s *Grace Believer’s Bible Conference* is scheduled for July 25-27. Once again Pastor Ken Lyon and the gracious saints at *Bitely Community Church* invite you to be their guest for a weekend filled with singing, special music, and the sound teaching of God’s Word, rightly divided. For further information, give Pastor Lyon a call at (231) 745-9595.

It’s Smoky Mountain Bible Conference Time! *Grace Bible Church* of Hendersonville, North Carolina, will once again play host to hungry Bible students eager to study God’s Word, rightly divided. Mark your calendar for May 23-25, and contact Pastor Curt Crist: emailcurtcrist@yahoo.com, (828) 606-9055.

Pastoral Opportunity Knocks: Our good friends Orvel and Wilma Baldrige report that their little country church is looking for a Grace pastor to lead them in rightly dividing the Word. If you are interested, and willing to relocate to Tahlequah, OK, contact Orvel at obaldridge@cablelynx.com.

Opportunity Knocks Twice: *Beacon of Grace Bible Church* in St. Catherine’s, Ontario, is looking for a pastor. Just minutes from scenic Niagara Falls stands one of the *true* wonders of the world, a church that proclaims the unadulterated gospel of the grace of God, and the Word, rightly divided. For further information, contact Jim Bartkiw at (905) 562-7170.

This month’s back cover quote was contributed by our good friend Diane Neubauer. What a great reminder of how Martin Luther valued the epistles of Paul! We would also like to acknowledge and thank Meg Clifford for last month’s good quotation from C. H. Mackintosh.

Our cover lighthouse photo was taken by Julie Button, an Australian journalism student who hopes to become a professional photographer. One of only three black lighthouses in the world, the *Fort Queenscliff Lighthouse* and fort were built during the Australian Gold Rush to discourage privateers from attacking the gold-laden ships passing through the treacherous mouth of Port Phillip Bay.

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“Those who want to be first-class scholars in the
school of Christ want to pick up the language of
Paul.”
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