

# The Berean Searchlight

Studying God's Word, Rightly Divided

June 1999



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By C. R. Stam

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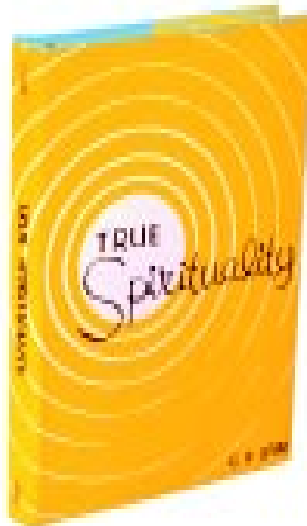
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## From the Editor to You:



Dearly Beloved,

In the unsettling times in which we live, it is comforting to know that the peace of God, which passes all understanding, will keep our hearts and minds. This knowledge enables us to continue in the Lord's service without being pre-occupied about what may or may not happen in the world. Your prayers and faithful support is a testament to this, for which we are most grateful.

This spring we added a P.O. Box to our address to help simplify things for our readership. While the north and west coordinates of the address are great when visiting Milwaukee, they are somewhat cumbersome for those who write to us with regularity. One dear brother recently wrote to say, "Is there anything you can do about that painfully long address? That's enough to give you writer's cramp!" AMEN! Beginning this month, if you have a question, request, or you're simply placing an order, it will only be necessary to use the following address:

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How's that for service? Of course, if you are using the *Business Reply* envelope, simply drop it in the mail, all the pertinent information is already provided. **Please note**, however, if you are sending a package it will be necessary to use the street address (located on Pg. 3), especially if you are sending it UPS.

We also just received word from the telephone company that our *area code* is going to be changed this fall. Anyone who lives near a metropolitan city has probably experienced this at one time or another. With the explosion of the Internet, cellular phones, and faxes, the phone company is scrambling to meet the need. This means everything that our phone number appears on will have to be *changed*. As you can see, there's never a dull moment here at *BBS*.

Thanks so very much for your patience with us as we make these adjustments. Hopefully, they will help *simplify* things when it's all said and done. God's very best as you keep holding forth the Word of life.

Paul M. Sadler  
President

**From Massachusetts:**

"May God continue to bless your important work and strengthen you mightily to continue to stand firm and preach Paul's gospel of grace, teaching and admonishing all the saints to study the Word, rightly divided."

**From Florida:**

"I am respectfully requesting that my name be added to your mailing list to receive the *Berean Searchlight*. Brother Manuel Diaz introduced me to the *BBS*. He has been studying the Word, rightly divided for over 14 years and has been a blessing to my studies. He has shared many books by Pastor Stam and has suggested I purchase *True Spirituality*. Please send it at your earliest convenience as I will be eagerly awaiting its enlightenment."

**From Tennessee:**

"My February issue of the *Searchlight* was lost in the mail. Please send me a copy if it is available. I want to stay up on the supernatural gifts." (The Pony Express is normally reliable, but occasionally they lose a saddlebag. If you do not receive your *Searchlight*, please contact us and we'll be happy to send you another one. Ed.)

**From Pennsylvania:**

"The *Berean Searchlight* has been a real blessing to my husband and me. We will be praying for you as you continue to carry the Grace message everywhere."

**From Arkansas:**

"God bless you dear people for your kind and quick response. Your literature was here today. Will follow your advice to respond after I have a chance to read over your material."

**From Illinois:**

"I enjoy the *Searchlight* and always get a blessing so I read it many times over. Would also like to have our friend put on your mailing list. She does not know the Grace message or rightly dividing but she is open and interested."

**From New York:**

"We praise the Lord for your insights on Paul. The February *Searchlight* sure did open my eyes as to what I was so confused about. I can't thank you enough for the article on *What Difference Does It Make?* The references on page 18, 5th paragraph with all the Scripture references and page 20 where you said what so many churches were doing in trying to harmonize those Scriptures; i.e. reading Paul's gospel back into the Kingdom gospel. How I thank the Lord for showing me this wonderful truth through you people. I was so confused for so long. I was talking to myself and answering too. How simple and plain you made it. God bless you for the *real good news*."

**From Arizona:**

"I enjoy every issue of the *Searchlight*. I'm passing them on to my daughter. God bless your labors."

**From Maryland:**

"I thank you so much for your dedication to printing the truth in book form so others like myself can read and grow and mature in God's word. Thank you and may God continue to encourage and bless you in your service for Him."

**From New York:**

"It is such a blessing to be able to get the message of God's wonderful grace in printed form from you to teach us and to strengthen and feed us spiritually." (Some of the unsound doctrines being promoted today are enough to give you spiritual indigestion. Ed.)

**From California:**

"Please send me one copy of the book, *Exploring the Unsearchable Riches of Christ* by Paul Sadler. I want to share it and *Things That Differ* with some friends who have been coming to the Bible study class I got started here in this retirement facility several years ago. They need to see the importance of rightly dividing the Scripture. The *Berean Searchlight* has meant much to me for many, many years."

**From New York:**

“Please accept the enclosed small donation to help further your urgent and important work to spread the Word of God as far as possible with the *Berean Searchlight*. I enjoy receiving each publication and feel it is nourishment for all who read it—spiritually and otherwise.”

**From Michigan:**

“Please use this donation where needed. I have been receiving the *Searchlight* for some time now and enjoy it very much. Since coming to the truth of God rightly divided, I understand the grace of God also has some responsibilities (actually many as an ambassador for Christ) which I need to grow in, one of which is the financial support of the Berean ministry. Again, thanks for the *Searchlight* and your books and pamphlets that I enjoy reading, that not only bring peace and understanding but conviction to serve our Lord Jesus Christ because of His love and faithfulness.” (We have often said that it is a privilege to understand the Mystery, but with it comes the responsibility to share it, pray for those who teach it, and support it financially. Ed.)

**From New York:**

“May God enable you to keep the message going out that Paul was given from the risen Lord Jesus Christ.”

**From Arizona:**

“Enclosed is a small gift to be used in any way you see fit—you know where it is most needed. We are going to try to send this amount each month and trust that the Lord will provide the funds. We are convinced that every dollar we can send to help you spread the Gospel of the Grace of God will benefit all of us for eternity—most of all those who come to know Jesus Christ as their personal Savior through the efforts of the *Berean Bible Society* and *Berean Bible Institute*.”

**From Maryland:**

“I learn a great deal from the *Berean Searchlight* and my understanding of many Scriptures is becoming clearer. Thank you so much for your faithfulness and diligence to spreading the truth of good news—the *Lord’s gospel*.” (The higher we ascend in Paul’s revelation the more clearly we see the exceeding riches of His grace. Ed.)

**From Florida:**

“I have a prison ministry here and I need another order of *Things That Differ*. The books must be paperback because they don’t allow hard backs in the dorms. I am sending \$.... Please pay the shipping charge out of this and send the remainder in books. These are a tremendous help in getting the truth out.”

**From Illinois:**

“I thank God for your ministry in rightly dividing the Word. The *Berean Searchlight* has proven to be a blessing in the knowledge of God’s Word.”

**From Pennsylvania:**

“Thank you for the *Berean Searchlight*. Truly it is a lighthouse to our souls. I’m so thankful to have the opportunity to receive this precious little booklet in these troubled times. Enclosed is my gift to help support the work there. Will send more in the future. May the Lord really bless you as you labor for Him.”

**From Iowa:**

“I really enjoyed the *Searchlight* this time. The article on the physical suffering of our Savior made me more thankful of what Christ has done for me. Christ’s terrible suffering at the Cross for an old sinner like me, makes me thankful and love Him more. Praise God for the cleansing power of Christ’s blood for me. I am saved by the great price Christ paid at the Cross for my sins.”

“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

# The Present Obsession With the Anti-Christ

By Paul M. Sadler

As we approach the new millennium, many are anticipating the Lord's soon return, which is sure to generate paranoia about the end times. In fact, this obsession with "things to come" is probably going to be unprecedented from any thing we've witnessed in the past. The predictions of these so-called modern day prophets will range from setting dates for the Rapture to receiving a special revelation that the Church is going through part or all of the Tribulation period.

Of course, the state of confusion that the Church finds itself in is largely a product of its own doing. You would think that after so many *failed* attempts to accurately predict the Rapture those who make such claims would be reluctant to appear in public. Yet the Church persists in its rejection of the Mystery that was committed to Paul, giving it only halfhearted acknowledgement.

**"And to wait for His Son from heaven, whom He raised from the dead, even Jesus, which delivered us from the wrath to come" (I Thes. 1:10).**

According to Paul's gospel the Rapture is *imminent*, that is, it could take place at any moment. There are no signs, times, or seasons that will precede this glorious event. It could be the year 2000 or 2005; then again it may be 2075. We simply don't know how long the *longsuffering* of God will be extended to the Gentiles. God may well extend His grace for

another two thousand years, although this seems unlikely.

The secret coming of Christ for the Church is *unrelated* to prophecy. This explains why biblical chronologists *always* humiliate themselves when they attempt to predict the Rapture based upon the prophetic timetable. If they included the Mystery in their calculations they would receive the following message, "unknown period of interruption." You see, God must first complete His plans and purpose among the Gentiles, which terminates with the *imminent* return of Christ for the Church.

## THE HYSTERIA OVER THE ANTI-CHRIST

**"And then shall that Wicked [one—the Anti-Christ] be revealed, whom the Lord shall consume with the spirit of His mouth, and shall destroy with the brightness of His coming: Even him, whose coming is after the working of Satan with all power and signs and lying wonders" (II Thes. 2:8,9).**

Those who underestimate the importance of rightly dividing the Word of truth normally end up drifting into a Mid, Pre-wrath, or Post-Tribulational Rapture of the Church. It is somewhat understandable how Acts 2 dispensationalists could be swept into these camps simply because they believe Paul's apostleship and message are merely an extension of the kingdom gospel.

But this is inexcusable for someone who understands Paul's unique apostleship and message, although,

sadly, it does happen from time to time. We should probably brace ourselves because these types of departures from the faith will become more and more common as the days grow more evil. We've often said that those who *depart* from the doctrine of the Pretribulational Rapture of the Church never fully understood the *nature* of Paul's gospel to begin with. If the Rapture is near, as some predict, or the Body of Christ is going through the coming Tribulation, as others teach, this explains the present day *mania* over the identity of the Anti-Christ.

One popular prophecy teacher is convinced that the Anti-Christ is Bill Clinton. He points out that the number equivalent of his name is 666. Through elaborate charts, diagrams, and genealogies he somehow draws the conclusion that Mr. Clinton is a direct descendant of the Emperor Nero, and heir to the Rothchild fortune. According to him, Mr. Clinton could be, might be, probably *is* the Anti-Christ, the last great world dictator. He's the seventh head<sup>1</sup> of John's apocalyptic vision (Rev. 13:1 cf. 17:9), which, by the way, this self-ordained prophet surmises the heads to be:

- (1) Nebuchadnezzar
- (2) Cyrus
- (3) Alexander the Great
- (4) Antiochus Epiphanes
- (5) Nero
- (6) Hitler
- (7) Clinton—Anti-Christ

Wow! This sounds like a riddle wrapped in an enigma to me. If there's one thing that the past should have taught us, it would be this: it is extremely dangerous to interpret the Bible according to *current* events. Those who lived

through World War II will recall how well-known Bible teachers confidently declared Adolph Hitler to be the Anti-Christ, only to find that they had to *recant* their position after the war. While it could be said Hitler was anti-Christ, he was not *the* Anti-Christ foretold by the prophets.

During the Nixon administration many believed Henry Kissinger was the man of sin—they, too, found themselves in an awkward situation trying to explain that it was apparently a case of mistaken identity. Now we are being told President Clinton is the Anti-Christ. Mark these words and mark them well, those who teach this will also be running for cover in the very near future.

Incidentally, we know Mr. Clinton could not be the son of perdition for a number of reasons. First and foremost, the last three world leaders referred to by this prophetic teacher, Nero (54-68 A.D.), Hitler (1939-1945), and Mr. Clinton (1992-2000), have all ruled and reigned during God's parenthetical period of Grace. But the Anti-Christ is *inseparably* bound to prophecy; therefore, his reign cannot begin until the close of the age of Grace.

Truth always *exposes* error. This is why in my personal ministry I have never spent a lot of time familiarizing myself with false teaching. I spend the lion's share of my time studying the truth—it makes error stand out like ink on a white shirt.

They say the *Federal Reserve* never train its agents with counterfeit bills for obvious reasons. Instead, they take actual currency



and make each agent memorize the minutest detail of each denomination. This is done over and over again until it makes an indelible impression upon them. Consequently, when counterfeit bills are intermingled with the real thing, they are able to detect the forgery every time. The same is true in regard to spiritual things; darkness cannot withstand the light of God's Word.

### WHAT THE SCRIPTURES SAY ABOUT THE ANTI-CHRIST

The prefix "anti" means *against* and/or *instead of*. Both are true concerning this future dictator. He poses as the Messiah, but opposes Christ by executing all that name His name. The Anti-Christ will have a winsome personality that the world will find irresistible. The prophet Daniel says:

**"And the king shall do according to his will; and he shall exalt himself, and magnify himself above every god, and shall speak marvellous things against the God of gods, and shall prosper till the indignation be accomplished: for that that is determined shall be done. Neither shall he regard the God of his fathers, nor the desire of women, nor regard any god: for he shall magnify himself above all" (Dan. 11:36,37).**

In this narrative, the prophet Daniel gives us a biographical sketch of the Anti-Christ. As we know, the Tribulation is said to open with wars and rumors of wars. It will be a period of unparalleled lawlessness (Matt. 24:6 cf. II Thes. 2:7). Like Hitler, the Anti-Christ will take full advantage of the times. In fact, they will provide the platform for him to

"prosper politically" and become a household name.

During the forty days in which Christ was tempted, you will recall the devil took our Lord up into a high mountain and "...showed unto Him all the kingdoms of the world in a moment of time. And the devil said unto Him, All this power will I give thee, and the glory of them: for that is delivered unto me; and to whomsoever I will I give it. If thou therefore wilt worship me, all shall be thine. And Jesus answered and said unto him, Get thee behind me, Satan: for it is written, Thou shalt worship the Lord thy God, and Him only shalt thou serve" (Luke 4:5-8).

Notice that the world lies in the lap of the evil one. The devil gained power over the nations when Adam fell. Clearly he has control of the kingdoms of this world if he offered them to Christ. Of course, our Lord exposed the devil's desire to overthrow the plans and purpose of God by quoting the Scriptures. But the Anti-Christ, whose coming is after the working of Satan, will happily *receive* control of the nations (Rev. 13:1,2,7). While we know him to be a ruthless dictator who opposes the righteous ways of God, he begins his reign of terror as a man of *peace*. And, sadly, the world will be predisposed to accept peace at any price.

Having control of the kingdoms of this world, the Anti-Christ negotiates a peaceful solution with those nations that are at war with one another. Eventually, he forms an alliance with these nations which serve as his seat of authority (Rev. 13:2 cf. 17:9-13). At the same time, the Anti-Christ strikes a covenant

with the nation Israel, which allows her to re-establish the Old Testament sacrificial system. This brings *peace* to the Middle East.

**“And he [the man of sin] shall confirm the covenant with many for one week [7 years]; and in the midst of the week [middle of the Tribulation] he shall cause the sacrifice and the oblation to cease, and for the overspreading of abominations he shall make it desolate, even until the consummation...” (Dan. 9:27).**

We believe the Anti-Christ will seek to *conceal* his identity for as long as possible at the beginning of the Tribulation. In other words, he would never be so foolish as to say publicly, “I have come to deceive and rob the nations of their autonomy.” This isn’t how deception works. Notice that Daniel states: “He shall confirm the covenant with *many* for one week....” This dynamic impostor will establish this peace agreement with “many” in Israel, but *not all*. While he may *deceive* the religious leaders and their followers as to his true identity, apparently *some* in Israel will suspect that he has evil intentions, and rightfully so.

Thus, the initial agenda of the Anti-Christ will be to bring peace to the world, as uncertain and fleeting as that may be. As this false sense of *security* sweeps across the landscape, the world will wonder after the beast, saying, “Who is like unto the beast?” (Rev. 13:4). But “when they shall say, peace and safety; then sudden destruction cometh upon them, as travail upon a woman with child; and they shall not escape” (I Thes. 5:3). It quite literally is going to be hell on earth with the wrath of God raining down from heaven and the military machine of the Anti-Christ

crushing anyone or any nation that stands in his path.

“But in his estate shall he honour the God of forces: and a god whom his fathers knew not shall he honour with gold, and silver, and with precious stones, and pleasant things” (Dan. 11:38). In addition to his lavish lifestyle, the Anti-Christ will honor the God of forces with his wealth. The word “forces” is the Hebrew term *“ma’owz”* or fortresses. Satan is the god of fortresses or war—he is the author of confusion.

The General who leads the forces of evil into battle in the coming day of the Lord is none other than the Anti-Christ. His military prowess will make the remarkable accomplishments of Alexander the Great look insignificant. He is the rider on the white horse who goes forth to *conquer* (Rev. 6:2). And the main objective of this diabolical leader will be to do battle with the saints and destroy the Nation Israel. Little wonder the souls of the *martyrs* cry out to the Father, “how long, O Lord, holy and true, dost thou not judge and avenge our blood on them that dwell on the earth?” (Rev. 6:10).

Daniel also informs us that “neither shall he regard the God of his fathers” (Dan. 11:37). The phrase “God of his fathers” is uniquely Hebrew. The “fathers” is a reference to the patriarchs, namely Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob. Upon receiving the decree from King Artaxerxes that Israel could return to the land with the gold and silver vessels of the temple, Ezra offered a prayer of thanksgiving:

**“Blessed be the LORD God of our fathers, which hath put such a thing**

**as this in the king's heart, to beautify the house of the LORD which is in Jerusalem" (Ezra 7:27).**

In relation to the Anti-Christ, he will have little regard for the "God of his fathers." He'll have absolutely no desire to know Him nor worship Him, as did his predecessors before him. However, our phrase does clearly indicate that he will be a *Jew*, even though he'll seek to disassociate himself from the Hebrew fathers and what God promised to them. Furthermore, Daniel adds, "nor the desire of women" (Dan. 11:37). This phrase

can be taken to mean either the Anti-Christ won't desire women or women will desire him, but he'll be *oblivious* to their advances. In either case, Daniel's point is this: the Anti-Christ will be so self-absorbed that he'll be more than content to remain *single*.

*To Be Continued!*



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### Endnote

1. The heads in Revelation 17:9 are said to be seven mountains. A mountain is often a reference to a "kingdom" in Holy Scripture—see Jeremiah 51:24,25. In this case, the seven mountains are seven kingdoms.

### QUESTION BOX

*"Why did Paul rebaptize John's disciples at Ephesus?" (Acts 19:1-7).*

According to the biblical record he didn't. Notice the apostle doesn't ask if these disciples had been water baptized. Rather, he inquires if they had received the Holy Spirit. This is the primary theme of the context.

**"He [Paul] said unto them, Have ye received the Holy Ghost since ye believed?"**

To which they responded: "And they said unto him, We have not so much as heard whether there be any Holy Ghost." That is, we have not so much as heard that the Holy Spirit had come. Here we must remember that many of the Jews were still scattered abroad after the captivities. Apparently word had not yet reached them that the promise of the Father had been fulfilled on the day of Pentecost.

**"Then said Paul, John verily baptized with the baptism of repentance, saying unto the people, that they should believe on Him which should come after him, that is, on Christ Jesus. When they heard this, they were baptized in the name of the Lord Jesus."**

The phrase, "When they heard this..." is referring to what John said to his followers, namely, that they should believe on Him. Consequently, these disciples were water baptized by John after they acknowledged that Christ was the Messiah.

"And when Paul had laid his hands upon them, the Holy Ghost came on them; and they spake with tongues, and prophesied. And all the men were about twelve." Once these disciples received the Holy Spirit they would have been enlightened to the fact that God was setting Israel aside in unbelief. In the course of time the filling of the Spirit enabled them to confirm this to the glory of God (Acts 18:5,6 cf. Rom. 11:11-15).  
—Pastor Sadler

# Peter, Paul, and Satan

By Cornelius R. Stam

If we could determine, in *any* dispensation, whose ministry and message was suffering most from Satanic opposition, we would also have determined which ministry and message was of God.

This is not as simple as it sounds, however, for what seems to some to be Satanic opposition and persecution may be but the natural result of human failure. Too often, the devil has been charged by men with instigating calamities which they themselves have brought about.

There are cases, though, where the Scriptures clearly indicate that Satan singled out certain individuals or groups of God's servants for special, concentrated, relentless opposition, and in such cases those so fiercely opposed were, though unpopular religiously, the very ones who were doing *God's* will and proclaiming *His* message.

We take as two examples of this the Apostles Peter and Paul.

## SATAN'S OPPOSITION TO PETER AND HIS MESSAGE

**"And the Lord said, Simon, Simon, behold, Satan hath desired to have you, that he may sift you as wheat:**

**"But I have prayed for thee, that thy faith fail not: and when thou art converted, strengthen thy brethren" (Luke 22:31,32).**

The peculiar position of Peter here should be carefully noted. The "you" of Verse 31 is *plural*; the "thee" of Verse 32 *singular*.<sup>1</sup> Satan had desired, or demanded, to have all the twelve apostles, to sift them

as wheat, but the Lord had prayed especially for *Peter*, that his faith might not fail, and now exhorted him: "*When thou art converted, strengthen thy brethren.*"

There can be no question that human frailty was to be used by Satan in his sifting of the apostles, and particularly of Peter. This is evident both from Verse 24, where we find them "striving" with each other as to which of them should be greatest in the kingdom, and from Verse 34, where the Lord predicts Peter's denial.

But why should Satan so bitterly attack such as these? There was not a "great" man among them. The answer is found in the verses immediately preceding. Satan hated the program which these men represented and in which they were to have so vital a part. *He did not wish Christ to reign.*

Our Lord had just declared to the apostles:

**"Ye are they which have continued with Me in My temptations [testings].**

**"And I appoint unto you a kingdom, as My Father hath appointed unto Me;**

**"That ye may eat and drink at My table in My kingdom, and sit on thrones, judging the twelve tribes of Israel" (Vers. 28-30).**

It was this prospect that roused the Adversary's indignation. It was for this that he would—and would be permitted to—sift them as wheat. And it was because of this that the Lord prayed especially

for Peter<sup>3</sup> and urged him, upon his “conversion,” to strengthen the others.

The apostles,<sup>4</sup> and especially Peter, *did* become the special objects of Satan’s opposition, not only during the closing days of our Lord’s ministry, when they all failed so miserably, but also after Pentecost, when they were “filled with the Holy Spirit.”

Thus Peter’s message at Solomon’s Porch stirred up the religious leaders against him so that they “laid hands upon” him and John, and “put them in hold” until the next day when, after a brief trial, the leaders “threatened” them and “commanded them not to speak at all nor teach in the name of Jesus” (Acts 4:1-22).

And this was but the beginning, for when the apostles defied the prohibition and “believers were the more added to the Lord” (Acts 5:12-16),

**“Then the high priest rose up, and all they that were with him, (which is the sect of the Sadducees,) and were filled with indignation,**

**“And laid their hands on the apostles, and put them in the common prison” (Vers. 17,18).**

As if to emphasize the fact that this was a contest between God and Satan, rather than between men,

**“...the angel of the Lord by night opened the prison doors, and brought them forth, and said,**

**“Go, stand<sup>5</sup> and speak in the temple to the people all the words of this life” (Vers. 19,20).**

Imagine the consternation among the rulers when they learned that though the prison was “shut with all safety, and the keepers standing without before the doors,” the *prisoners* were preaching boldly in the very temple itself! Little wonder “they doubted...whereunto this would grow”! (Vers. 23,24). Little wonder, too, that they heeded Gamaliel’s advice to “let them alone,” except for their base and cowardly act in beating them before dismissing them (Vers. 38-40).

But the rulers *could* not leave them alone for they had sold

themselves to Satan in their opposition to God and His purposes. Soon blood was drawn again as they stoned to death a man who stood before them with a face shining “as it had been the face of an angel.” And they *all* had taken special note of Stephen’s supernatural transformation,

for the record tells us that “all that sat in the council, looking stedfastly on him, saw” this (Acts 6:15).

And the murder of Stephen touched off such “a great persecution” that the members of the church at Jerusalem were “all scattered abroad...except the apostles” (Acts 8:1).

And *this* was not the end, for Saul, a young man at whose feet the murderers of Stephen had left their clothes, now became the flaming leader of the greatest persecution of all. He “made havock

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“...Saul, a young man at whose feet the murderers of Stephen had left their clothes, now became the flaming leader of the greatest persecution of all.”

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of the church”<sup>6</sup> (Acts 8:3). He persecuted it “*beyond measure*” and “*laid it waste*” (Gal. 1:13). He “*punished them oft in every synagogue, and compelled them to blaspheme*” (Acts 26:11). He “*breathed threatenings and slaughter against the disciples of the Lord*” (Acts 9:1). He “*destroyed them which called on this name in Jerusalem*” (Acts 9:21). He “*persecuted this way unto the death, binding and delivering into prisons both men and women*” (Acts 22:4). “*And when they were put to death [he] gave [his] voice against them*” (Acts 26:10).

And even *this* was not all, for soon after,

“...Herod the king stretched forth his hands to vex certain of the church.

“And he killed James the brother of John with the sword.

“And because he saw it pleased the Jews, he proceeded further to take Peter also....

“And when he had apprehended him, he put him in prison, and delivered him to four quaternions of soldiers to keep him; intending after Easter to bring him forth to the people”<sup>7</sup> (Acts 12:1-4).

We know, of course, how God thwarted Herod’s plans; how an angel again delivered Peter from prison—and this time from death.

The point we emphasize is that behind the various groups and individuals who persecuted Peter and his comrades, was *Satan*, and that it was the fact that they represented *God’s* program and message that had aroused his anger.

## **ANOTHER APOSTLE RAISED UP**

We all know the amazing story of the conversion of Saul, though

none of us can comprehend the amazing grace that *saved* him instead of consigning him to the lake of fire.

He does, however, disclose *God’s* purpose in saving him, in a passage which every believer should thoroughly understand:

“**And I thank Christ Jesus our Lord, who hath enabled me, for that he counted me faithful, putting me into the ministry;**

“**Who was before a blasphemer, and a persecutor, and injurious: but I obtained mercy, because I did it ignorantly in unbelief.**

“**And the grace of our Lord was exceeding abundant, with faith and love which is in Christ Jesus.**

“***This is a faithful saying, and worthy of all acceptation, that Christ Jesus came into the world to save sinners, of whom I am chief.***

“**Howbeit for this cause I obtained mercy, that in me first Jesus Christ might show forth all longsuffering, for a pattern to them which should hereafter believe on Him to life everlasting” (I Tim. 1:12-16).**

Saul, the “chief”<sup>8</sup> of sinners had been saved to demonstrate the fact that “Christ Jesus came into the world to save *sinners*.” Not in the *manner* of his conversion, but in the fact that to him the Lord had shown “grace...exceeding abundant,” *he* was to be the “pattern” to those who thereafter should believe in Christ to life everlasting.

But Paul was not only to be a living monument to the grace of God; he was also to be the *herald* of it.

He it was who spoke of

“...the ministry which I have received of the Lord Jesus, to testify *the gospel of the grace of God*” (Acts 20:24).

He it was who wrote to the Gentiles of

**"...the dispensation of the grace of God which is given me to you-ward" (Eph. 3:2).**

And this dispensation and this gospel was originally committed to *him particularly*; not to all the apostles in general. He constantly distinguishes his ministry and message from that of the twelve as he refers to "*my gospel*," "*the gospel which was preached of me*," "*that gospel which I preach*," and adds one argument to another to prove that this gospel was *unique* and not to be confused with the good news which had been proclaimed by those preceding him.

### **PAUL NOW THE PERSECUTED ONE**

One of the strongest proofs that the program under which the twelve had labored was now, in God's purpose, to give way to a new dispensation ushered in by the Apostle Paul, is the fact that Satan now transferred his hate and persecution from the twelve apostles to Paul.

In early Acts it was Peter and the eleven who suffered the persecution; in later Acts it is *Paul* and *not* they.

At Paul's very conversion the Lord had said to Ananias:

**"...I will show him *how great things he must suffer for My name's sake*" (Acts 9:16).**

And almost immediately the persecutions began for, ignominiously, he had to escape from Damascus by hiding in a basket let down through a window outside the wall (II Cor. 11:33).

It would be impossible, even from the record of Scripture, to list all the bitter sufferings the apostle of grace was called upon to endure. In the books of Acts we find him often fleeing from one city to another in danger of his life, yet always proclaiming the good news again. In his epistles he writes about whippings, the beatings, the stoning, the shipwrecks; the perils among robbers, among his countrymen, among false brethren, among the heathen; the perils in the city, in the wilderness, in the sea; the weariness, the pain, the watchings, the hunger, the thirst, the cold and the nakedness (II Cor. 11:24-27).

Everywhere he went his life was in danger, and by proclaiming the best news that ever had fallen on human ears, he "*suffered trouble as an evil doer, even unto bonds*" (II Tim. 2:9).

The devil had now turned in his wrath from the apostles of the circumcision to the apostle of the Gentiles since *he*, Paul, represented the new program which God was now ushering in.

That Satan's special attention had now been diverted from the apostles at Jerusalem is evident from the latter half of the book of Acts.

In Acts 15 we find that the Judaen apostles are now holding their *own* council, right in Jerusalem, in defiance of the Hebrew council, *with no move made to stop them*. Those scattered in the great persecution of Acts 8:1 have returned in such great numbers that they are referred to as a "*multitude*."

This multitude evidently lives in comparative peace at Jerusalem,

while Paul is the target of Satan's darts. Indeed, the church at Jerusalem prospers so, that at Paul's last visit to the city the elders say to him:

**"Thou seest, brother, how many thousands [Lit., "tens of thousands"] of Jews there are which believe..." (Acts 21:20).**

While at Jerusalem the Jews from the province of Asia "stirred up all the people, and laid hands on *him*, crying out" against him, "beating" him and going about "to kill him" (Acts 21:27-32).

And even when rescued by the chief captain, the tumult was so great that he had to be "*carried into the castle...borne of the soldiers for the violence of the people, for the multitude of the people followed after, crying, away with him*" (Acts 21:34-36).

Alone he stood, after permission had been granted, to recount the amazing story of his conversion and commission, but he got no farther than the word—*Gentiles*.

**"And they gave him audience unto this word, and then lifted up their voices, and said, *away with such a fellow from the earth; for it is not fit that he should live.***

**"And...they cried out, and cast off their clothes, and threw dust into the air" (Acts 22:22,23).**

And all this while the *church at Jerusalem* goes free. There is no hint that the persecution extends to them, or that any of them stand with Paul in his hour of extremity.

Finally the apostle is taken to Rome in chains to become "*the prisoner of Jesus Christ for you Gentiles*" (Eph. 3:1) and His "*ambassador in bonds*" (Eph. 6:20). On the way one more incident takes place which vividly illustrates the fact that Satan's wrath is now directed against *Paul*, the apostle of grace.

Shipwrecked on the island of Malta the apostle helps get a fire started when, out of the heat, a viper strikes and fastens itself on his hand.

This is in no way a fulfillment of the promise contained in the commission to the eleven:

*"They shall take up serpents,"* for this serpent bit *him*. To the amazement of the spectators, however, "*he shook off the beast into the fire and felt no harm,*" proceeding unhindered toward the greatest ministry of his life—that which we now enjoy as we read his prison epistles.

The leaders of apostate Judaism, remember, were called a "*generation of vipers*" (Matt. 3:5-8). They were of their father, "*that old serpent,*" the devil. Here, in symbol, we find them leaping out of the fire of their torment to strike, not at Peter, but at Paul. They, like the viper, however, fall back into the fire while Paul and his ministry continue on.

## PAUL OUR APOSTLE

Does not all this indicate emphatically that a new dispensation was ushered in with the raising up of Paul? Otherwise why would



Satan divert his enmity from the leaders at Jerusalem to Paul?

Alas, Satan understands God's program far better than many Fundamentalists, who still go about vainly trying to carry out the commission given to the eleven. Little wonder they suffer such confusion and division from within but so little persecution from without,<sup>9</sup> for Satan has long ago ceased opposing men's efforts to carry out the program of the "great commission." He knows this cannot be accomplished in the present dispensation. What he opposes now—bitterly and relentlessly—is the proclamation of the unadulterated "*gospel of the grace of God,*" and "*the preaching of Jesus Christ according to the revelation of the mystery.*"

### BE THOU PARTAKER


In the light of all this we should take our stand for the message and program made known by the glorified Lord through Paul and cheerfully accept the consequences, considering the apostle's Spirit-inspired exhortations in the matter:

***"For unto you it is given in the behalf of Christ, not only to believe on Him, but also to suffer for His sake" (Phil. 1:29).***

***"For God hath not given us the spirit of fear; but of power, and of love, and of a sound mind. Be not thou therefore ashamed of the testimony of our Lord, nor of me His prisoner; but be thou partaker of the afflictions of the gospel according to the power of God" (II Tim. 1:7,8).***

***"...be strong in the grace that is in Christ Jesus....endure hardness as a good soldier of Jesus Christ" (II Tim. 2:1-3).***

***"For we wrestle not against flesh and blood, but against principalities, against powers, against the rulers of the darkness of this world, against spiritual wickedness [Lit., wicked spirits] in high [Lit., heavenly] places. Wherefore take unto you the whole armor of God, that ye may be able to withstand in the evil day, and having done all, to stand" (Eph. 6:12,13).***

Soon enough the battle will be over. Soon enough we shall hear "the voice of the archangel and the trump of God." Then—*the crown!* How insignificant, in that day, will seem "the sufferings of this present time"! How trivial the persecutions we have borne! 

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### Endnotes

1. Another example of this distinction in the grave style of the English language is found in John 3:7, where the "thee" refers to Nicodemus, but the "ye" to those associated with him, i.e., the other Pharisees and the nation Israel.
2. i.e., "turned again" from the denial of Christ, in which the Lord knew he would become involved.
3. Who, of the *true* apostles, was to fail most dismally, yet was to be their appointed leader.
4. Excepting Judas Iscariot, of course.
5. Lit., "take your stand."
6. i.e., the Pentecostal church.
7. Evidently also for execution.
8. Not the *worst*, but the *foremost*. He was the leader of the rebellion against Christ.
9. The exception here would be the mission field.



*"But without faith it is impossible to please Him: for he that cometh to God must believe that He is, and that He is a rewarder of them that diligently seek Him" (Heb. 11:6).*

# The Modernist Preacher—Entering Hell

By Oscar C. Eliason

“He was an ordained minister, but modern in his views,  
He preached his twisted doctrines to people in the pews.  
He would not hurt their feelings, whate’er the cost would be,  
But for their smiles and friendship and compliments sought he.  
His church was filled with wicked souls that should be saved from sin,  
But never once he showed the way or tried a soul to win.  
He preached about the lovely birds that twitter in the trees,  
The bab’ling of the running brooks, the murm’ring of the seas.

“He quoted fancy poetry that tickled list’ning ears  
When sorrow came to some, he tried to laugh away their tears.  
His smooth and slipp’ry sermons made the people slide to hell.  
The harm he did by preaching goes beyond what we can tell.  
He took our Holy Bible, and preached it full of holes,  
The Virgin Birth, said he, can’t be believed by honest souls,  
The miracles of Jesus and the resurrection tale  
For educated ones like us, today cannot avail.  
We’re living in an age, said he, when wisdom rules and reigns,  
When man’s intelligence is great and superstition wanes.

“He said, we’re all God’s children who live upon this earth,  
No message of salvation, no need of second birth.  
His coat was bought with money that he had wrongly gained,  
For through his twisted sermons, his wealth he had obtained.  
He was just like the Roman soldiers that watched at Jesus’ grave,  
For money in abundance, to them the people gave;  
It all was theirs by telling what was a sinful lie—  
A resurrected Savior, they, too, were to deny.

“The day at last had come for the minister to die,  
When to his congregation, he had to say good-bye.  
His form lay cold and lifeless, his ministry was past,  
His tongue with all its poison was hushed and stilled at last.  
His funeral was grand, he was lauded to the skies—  
They preached him into heaven where there are no good-byes.  
Upon the lonely hill, underneath the shady trees,  
His form was laid to rest in the whisp’ring of the breeze.

“A tombstone was erected with words: ‘He is at rest,  
He’s gone to heaven’s glories to live among the blest.’  
His body now is lifeless, but Ah! his soul lives on,  
He failed to enter in where they thought that he had gone.  
The letters on the tombstone or that sermon some had heard,  
Could not decide his destiny, ‘twas not the final word.  
He still had God to deal with, the One who knows the heart;  
While others entered heaven, he heard the word, ‘Depart.’

"He pauses for a moment upon the brink of hell;  
 He stares into a depth where he evermore will dwell.  
 He hears the cries and groanings of souls he had misled,  
 He recognizes faces among the screaming dead—  
 He sees departed deacons which he had highly praised.  
 Their fingers pointing at him as they their voices raised:  
 'You stood behind the pulpit, and lived in awful sin,  
 We took you for a saint, but a liar you have been.'  
 Accusing cries! he hears them, 'Ah! you have been to blame,  
 You led us into darkness when you were seeking fame.'  
  
 'You preached your deadly doctrine, we thought you knew the way,  
 We fed you and we clothed you, we even raised your pay.  
 You've robbed us of a home where no tear-drops ever flow,  
 Where days are always fair and the heav'nly breezes blow.  
 Where living streams are flowing, and saints and angels sing,  
 Where every one is happy, and Hallelujahs ring.  
 We're in this place of torment, from which no soul returns;  
 We hear the cry of lost ones, we feel the sizzling burns;  
 Give us a drop of water, we're tortured in this flame;  
 You failed to preach salvation to us through Jesus' Name.'  
  
 "The preacher turns in horror, he tries to leave the scene,  
 He knows the awful future for every soul unclean,  
 But there he meets the devil, whom he has served so well,  
 He feels the demon powers as they drag him into hell.  
 Throughout eternal ages, his groans, too, must be heard—  
 He, too, must suffer torment—he failed to heed God's Word.  
 He feels God's wrath upon him, he hears the hot flames roar,  
 His doctrine now is different, he ridicules no more."

## ***LONDON GRACE FELLOWSHIP CONFERENCE***

**London, Ontario, Canada**

- Dates:** August 6-8, 1999
- Location:** *Best Western Lamplighter Inn*  
591 Wellington Road South
- Theme:** *The Distinctive Character of Paul's  
Apostleship and Message*
- Speakers:** Paul M. Sadler, President of *Berean  
Bible Society*, Milwaukee, WI  
Kevin Mepsted, BBI Student, Oshkosh, WI  
Nick Myers, BBI Student, London, Ontario  
Ian Peers, BBI Student, London, Ontario

For directions, times of services or additional information, please  
contact: William & Judy Mepsted (519) 642-3022.

# Redeeming the Time

By Kevin J. Sadler

**“Redeeming the time, because the days are evil.”**

—Eph. 5:16

Redeeming means “to buy up, to acquire.” In other words, Paul is saying for us to buy up, make good use of, seize the opportunities each of us are given to serve the Lord. And there can be a couple explanations to why he says, “because the days are evil.” First, since the days are evil, it gives us the *opportunity* to be redeeming the time in reaching the lost for Christ. And secondly, because we are surrounded by evil and it always has the possibility of affecting and infiltrating the minds of believers, we are to *keep busy* so we don’t fall into sin.

James 4:14 says, “*For what is your life? It is even a vapour, that appeareth for a little time, and then vanisheth away.*” In our evangelizing we try to remind the unbeliever of the fact that they might not have tomorrow to trust Christ as their personal Savior, but as believers in Him we should also never forget that we only have a limited amount of time to serve Him.

We all have responsibilities as members of the Church, the Body of Christ. The question is: Are we being faithful to do them? God has given each of us gifts and He would have us use them. Paul tells Timothy in II Timothy 1:6 to “*stir up the*

*gift of God, which is in thee....*” We should be using the gifts that God has given each of us and be giving our all for Him daily, being motivated by His grace. Under the Law, the saved had to do things to prove their faith, but now under Grace we serve Him to prove our *gratitude*. And there is so much to do and so many to reach!

The Apostle Paul always made good use of his time no matter what circumstance he was in: evangelizing, making known the Mystery, dealing with problems (and then moving on from them), encouraging, comforting, edifying the saints, praying, etc. These are things we also should be doing for the Lord and always with the proper motive (Col. 3:17,23).

We do so much planning for the future in our lives. Our calendars are full of things we will be doing in the next few weeks and months. We plan ahead for our retirements, we plan for things 10, 20, 30 years in advance, but do we plan for our future, 100 billion years into eternity? What we do now affects our eternal state (I Cor. 15:40-42a; II Cor. 4:17,18). May we always redeem, make good use of, the time God gives each of us and in everything we do, may it be done to bring honor and glory to our precious Savior.

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The 1999 Fall Semester of Berean Bible Institute will begin August 23rd. For more information contact: Dr. W. Edward Bedore, PO Box 756, Germantown, WI 53022-0756 or phone: (414) 255-4094, fax: (414) 255-4195.

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For additional information, please contact:  
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***Grace Bible Church***

2828 Isabella Road  
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**Date:** July 25, 1999

**Theme:** *Time Past, Time Present, Time Future*

**Speaker:** Paul M. Sadler, President of  
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For additional information, please contact:  
Mr. Carl Bridgewater (517) 892-6035

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the revelation of the Mystery.***

## NEWS AND ANNOUNCEMENTS

**PASTOR STAM** wanted me to personally thank everyone on his behalf for the avalanche of Birthday cards and greetings. He was truly moved by your thoughtfulness.

**SCHOLARSHIP FUND:** A short time ago the *Berean Bible Institute* established a *Scholarship Fund* to assist our students with their tuition and book expenses. Since many of our students have scaled back work schedules to attend classes every little bit of financial assistance is helpful. If you would like to donate to this fund, please designate your gift: *BBI Scholarship Fund*. On behalf of the Institute and the student body—heartfelt thanks!!

**ADVANCE NOTICE:** Pastor Richard Ware has been invited to be the guest speaker at the *Mid-Atlantic Grace Bible Conference* to be held at White Sulphur Springs, Mann's Choice, Pennsylvania. The dates of these special meetings are September 10-12, 1999. For reservations and directions, please contact Mrs. Suzanne Potter at (304) 263-2411. More next issue!

**NEW BIBLE STUDY:** Brother Brent Biller and his dear wife Sandra extend a warm invitation to attend their home Bible Study in Ridgeley, West Virginia. For additional information, please contact Brent at 108 Pineview Drive, Ridgeley, WV 26753 or phone: (304) 726-4063. The Billers can also be reached via E-mail: <bbiller@mindspring.com>.

**A PIONEER SPIRIT:** Our dear Brother Tom Miles is interested to know if there are other Grace believers who may share his vision of establishing a Grace Study group in Lula, Georgia, which is approximately 30 minutes north of Gainesville, Georgia, and about 1½ hours northeast of Atlanta. For those who would like to contact him, please write Brother Miles at: Piedmont College, P.O. Box 10, 165 Central Avenue, Demorest, Georgia 30535 or phone: (706) 778-8500.

**BEREAN BIBLE INSTITUTE:** Perhaps you have been putting off going to Bible School until everything falls into place. Well, let me say, there will always be obstacles to overcome, the devil will see to it. The Lord is looking for a few good men and women who are willing to present themselves a living sacrifice. Don't delay any longer, because if you do, you will probably never attend. The fall semester at the *Berean Bible Institute* begins August 23, 1999. For a School Catalog, simply drop *BBI* your request. Lord willing, we'll see you in class this fall—Pastor Sadler.

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\*The picture of the lighthouse that appears on the front cover was taken by Brother Joe Watkins of *Things To Come Mission*. Brother Joe snapped this picture while on a recent missionary journey to Port Elizabeth, South Africa.

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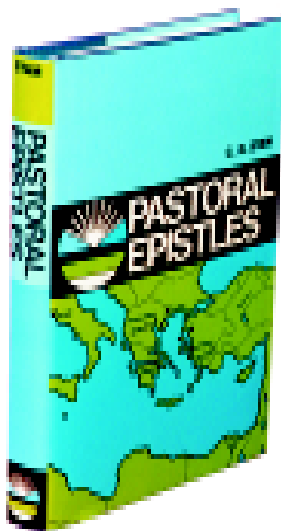
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