

THE REFLECTOR

September 1975

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September 1975

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EDITED BY:
Edward O. Bragwell
P. O. Box 146
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SUNDAYS:
Bible Classes 9:45 a. m.
Worship 10:45 a. m.
Worship 6:30 p. m.

WEDNESDAYS:
Bible Classes 7:30 p. m.

VOLUME 15 - NUMBER 9

What saith the answer of God?

CHARLES G. MAPLES SR.

QUESTION: "Is there a passage of Scripture that tells us that Jesus was ever referred to by the name of Jehovah? What is the meaning of Exodus 6:3...and Psalms 83:18?" - J. H. , Huntsville, Alabama

ANSWER: There is no passage of Inspired Scripture, that I know of, where the name "Jehovah" is applied to Jesus, the Son of God. This is the name peculiar to God the Father. However, there are many Scriptures which prove the ETERNAL EXISTENCE of God the Son, such as John 1:1, 14; Phil. 2:6; Col. 1:16-19; Heb. 1:8 and Rev. 1:1, 8. Mr. Robert Young says the word means "The Existing One" (Young's Analytical Concordance to the Bible), and thus we see that technically it could have been used to refer to Jesus Christ.

With reference to Exodus 6:3, if you check the American Standard Version of the Scriptures, you'll find God referred to in this manner in such passages as Gen. 15:2, 7. In the later God says, "I am Jehovah," and in the former Abraham addresses God as Jehovah. There are several possible answers to this APPARENT conflict; three of which are briefly stated in this manner by Adam Clark in his commentary on this passage: (1) "The word should be read INTERROGATIVELY, for the NEGATIVE PARTICIPLE - 'I appeared unto Abraham, Isaac and Jacob by the name of God Almighty, and by my name Jehovah was I not also made known to them?' (2) "The name Jehovah was not revealed before the time mentioned here, for though it occurs so frequently in the book of Genesis, as that book was written LONG AFTER the name had come into common use, as a principle characteristic of God, Moses employs it in his history of this circumstance; so that whenever it appears PREVIOUSLY to this, it is by the figure called PROLEPSIS and anticipation." (3) "I believe the simple meaning is this, that though from the beginning the name JEHOVAH was not known as one of the names of the Supreme Being, yet what it really IMPLIED they did not know". (Clark's Commentary - Vol. 1, page 319).

With reference to Psalms 83:18, I believe it says what we have noted above; namely that "Jehovah" was a name peculiar to God the Father.

ADDRESS QUESTIONS TO:

Charles G. Maples
1744 Steiner Ave., S.W.
Birmingham, Ala. 35211

Selected Short Subjects

From "HEALTH BULLETIN"
published by Dr. Henry Scott:

WATCH THAT WHIPLASH!

A chiropractor in San Francisco says long hair is causing thousands of young persons across the nation to suffer from acute forms of whiplash.

"Young people are tossing and jerking their heads to fling their hair in place," Dr. Thomas Turley said. "The constant motion is causing severe damage to their spines and thus causing an upsurge in headaches."

These persons, he said, were suffering from the snapped neck syndrome and from pinched nerves.

By ROBERT TURNER
from Par Street Anchor:

IT ALL DEPENDS

The song leader was young and inexperienced. He used poor judgement in the selection of songs, and made mistakes in pitch, time and rhythm. We could be embarrassed because we put on no better "program" for the visitors; OR, we could be proud of our young people for trying, and of the church for encouraging the development of each member.

An elderly brother led in prayer. He used poor grammar, and his manner of speech was crude. We could criticize the elders for calling on such an unlearned man; OR, we could appreciate the sincerity and directness in the heart of this old soldier of the cross, and add our hearty "amen!" to his plea to God.

The preacher spoke plainly and forcibly. He delved into the scriptures concerning the church and its work, and made a sincere effort to explain what God had said. But effort on our part was necessary in order to follow his reasoning, and he "lost" us. We could resent his discussion of points unfamiliar to us, and be embarrassed because he distinguished so clearly the Lord's church and denominationalism; OR, we could be thankful for the services of this man of God. We could listen attentively, make a few notes, and continue our learning in private.

At the invitation a woman came forward, crying bitterly, to confess her sins. She asked the prayers and help of brethren that she might do better. We could feel a bit uneasy, and say, "What's she doing down here again;" OR, we could rejoice with the angels in heaven, and determine to visit and encourage this weak sister.

The Lord's Supper could be a time-consuming project, with opportunities to gather coats and books in anticipation of dismissal; OR, it could be a true fellowship with the Lord. We could use these quiet mo-

ments waving at a baby; OR, looking deeply within ourselves, thanking God for cleansing us from sin, and asking His blessing.

And, we could go home complaining about how "they" do things "down there;" OR, we could go forth renewed in spirit and determined to make this our best week yet for the Lord.

From TRUTH
East Gadsden, Ala:

WHEN CURIOSITY KILLS

A man rocked a boat to see if it would tip: IT DID!

A laborer stepped on a nail to see if it would go through his shoe. IT DID!

A man looked into a gun to see if it was loaded. IT WAS!

A woman looked into a patent medicine booklet to see if she was sick. SHE WAS!

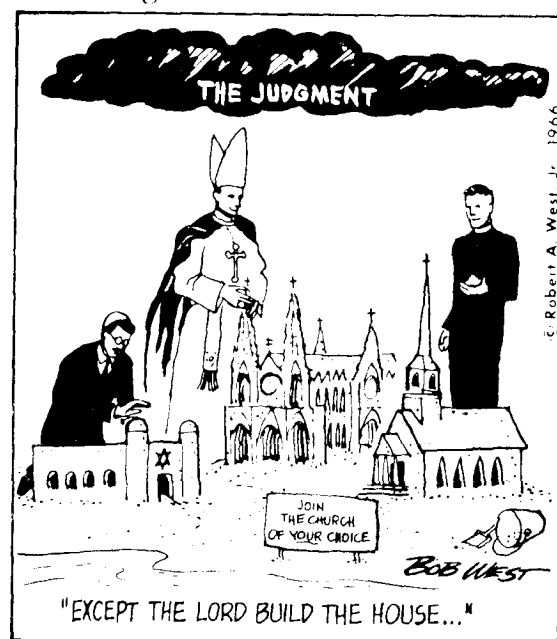
A worker smelled escaping gas and lit a piece of oily waste to find the leak. HE FOUND IT!

A young girl kept late hours to see if it would really injure her character. IT DID!

A young man tried drinking to see if it would make him act like a fool. IT DID!

A man said, "I'll ignore Jesus Christ and see if I go to hell." HE DID! (Luke 16:19-21).

Our Religious World



By LEO B. PLYLER
from "Light"

INIQUITY MULTIPLIED - LOVE WAXES COLD

How many times this is seen! "And because iniquity shall be multiplied, the love of many shall wax cold." (Matt. 24:12).

It may be because of jealousy or merely an unguarded tongue that talk begun and eventually resulted in a family rupture which was never healed. It has been true of God's family (the church) and in time iniquity takes its toll. The effect is that some are hurt, "offended", discouraged and find it undesirable to continue to serve and worship God faithfully. Because iniquity multiplied the love of someone grew cold.

By iniquity many are tripped and plunge head-long from joy in service on the peaks of righteousness, to grief and over the cliff to the valley of sin and destruction. Have you not seen this happen? Though once godly, ready to help in the work of God, by the wound of a wild and wicked word he was hurt and is now seen by his absence from the assembly and now has even overthrown respect for moral purity. A tragic thing indeed. Iniquity was multiplied and love grew cold. Such an one is lost to the cause and lost to the evil one -- Satan. Such an one possesses a soul that is precious. A lost soul however -- He must repent, but he may never. (Rev. 3:19).

Now, we have illustrated what iniquity does but have we succeeded in impressing the need of being careful that we not be guilty of multiplying iniquity. Hold your tongue until you have given thought to what you say. Consider if it will multiply iniquity. Will I turn some soul away from his God?

We need to see the tragic results of iniquity and avoid sowing the seed of such. Let us be ready to heal the hurt of misguided and unguarded words whether it be from our own lips or of some other.

"A soft answer turneth away wrath, but grievous

words stireth up anger." (Prov. 15:1). "A word fitly spoken is like apples of gold in network of silver." (Prov. 25:11).

It may be the words of a preacher, a Bible class teacher in the class or words of a brother in a religious article, but remember Matt. 24:12.

By LEO ROGOL
from "Think"

HAVE YOU EVER HEARD...

An eager fisherman ask, "But do I have to go fishing more than once a week?"

An avid golfer ask, "But do I have to golf more than once a week?"

A hungry man ask, "But do I have to eat more than once a week?"

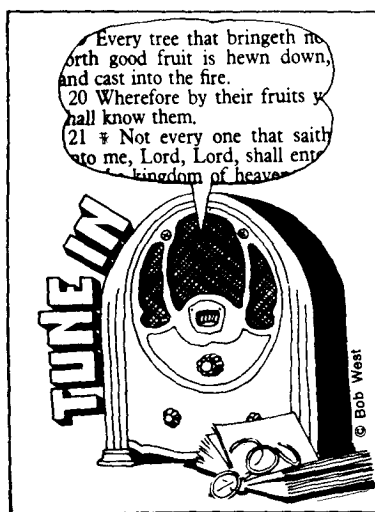
A man in love with a girl ask, "But do I have to see you more than once a week?"

A zealous, dedicated Christian ask, "BUT DO I HAVE TO GO TO WORSHIP MORE THAN ONCE A WEEK?"

A fisherman, golfer, hungry person, or one in love will do his best to find a way to do what he likes to do so very much. WHAT ABOUT YOU, CHRISTIAN, ABOUT WORSHIP?

If the fisherman tried to get out of going fishing, or the golfer tried to get out of going golfing; if the hungry man tried to get out of eating, or the young man tried to get out of seeing his lady friend then we would say not one of these had much desire in his particular pursuit. What about you, Christian, going to worship?

Something is wrong when a fisherman, etc. tries his best to find a way to do what he wants as often as he can, and then turns around and asks, "But do I have to go to worship more than once a week?"



BIBLE TALK

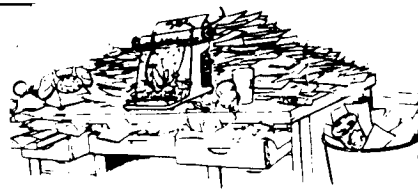
Mon. - Fri.

6:06 a.m.

WATV

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Editor's Desk



EDWARD O. BRAGWELL, SR.

The Salvation of Israel

"And so shall all Israel be saved. . ." -- Rom. 11:26

Many read passages like this with one eye on the Bible and the other on events in the Middle East. They are sincerely looking for any sign they can interpret as fulfillment of these passages. I might suggest another direction for the eye turned toward the Middle East--turn it toward the contexts of the passages.

Romans 11 is discussing the salvation of two kinds of people--Jews and Gentiles. It is pointing out how individuals of each class are to be saved. The emphasis in verse 26 should be placed on the "SO" rather than the "ALL". "SO" suggests the manner in which all Israelites may be saved.

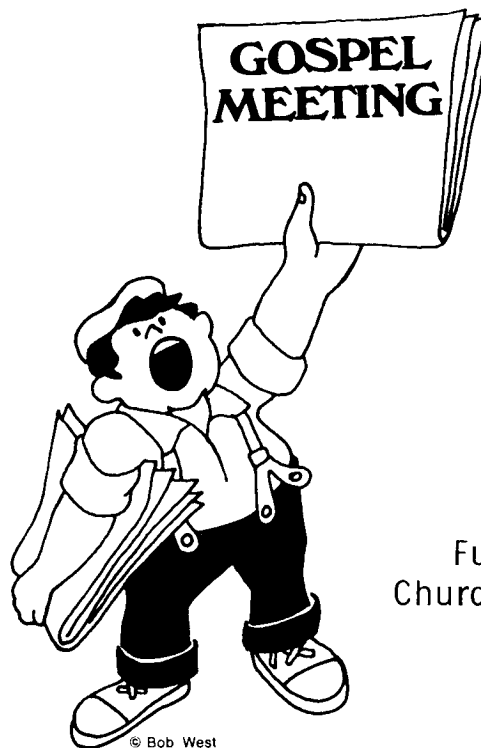
The chapter begins with the question: "Hath God cast away his people?" Obviously, He had not. Paul himself was evidence that an Israelite could be saved. (vs. 1, 2). Paul declared that though he was "the apostle to the Gentiles" his efforts were also directed to the salvation of Israel (vs. 13, 14). With verse 15, he begins a discussion showing Gentile Christians how fitting it is that Jews be saved and how unbecoming it would be for Gentiles to resent the salvation of Jews. The Jews had rejected the gospel of Christ causing the preaching of the gospel to be aimed more toward the Gentiles, thus resulting in their salvation (vs. 11, 12). He compares the Jews' fall to the breaking off an olive branch and the resultant salvation of Gentiles as the grafting in of a "wild olive branch". The "wild olive branch" (Gentiles) should not boast against the "natural branch" (Jews)--but rather rejoice in their salvation (vs. 18, 19).

Why were the Jews broken off? Because of unbelief. (vs. 20, 21). Why were the Gentiles grafted in? Because of faith (v. 20). God would no more spare a Gentile who turned to unbelief than he did the Jew (v. 21). God is no respecter of persons (Acts 10:34). In Christ there is neither Jew nor Gentile (Gal. 3:28). If a Jew turns from unbelief he can be grafted in again (v. 23-24). "So", that is through faith, "all Israel shall be saved". All Israel shall be saved just as all Syria, all Egypt, all England or all America shall be saved--through faith in Jesus Christ.

Paul now urges the Gentiles to show mercy to Israel (v. 31). In what way can they show mercy to Jews? By giving them the gospel (new covenant) to turn them from unbelief to belief that their sins might be taken away (vs. 26-28). Other passages show that this faith is an obedient one that leads folks to be baptized into Christ (Gal. 3:26, 27).

Romans 11 has nothing to do with a prophecy that before Christ comes that Israel AS A NATION shall be saved. It has nothing to do with present day Israel as a nation nor present events in the Middle East. It is simply explaining to Gentile Christians how Israel -- one by one -- can be saved under the terms of the gospel and the appropriateness of that salvation. It is urging Gentile Christians to carry the gospel to Jews so that they too might receive the blessings of the gospel enjoyed by Gentiles, which blessings came in part as a result of Jewish unbelief.

So, my friend, if you have a Jewish friend--teach him the gospel of Christ. That is the only way that he can be saved. He will not be saved simply because he is a Jew. God has no chosen nation today, except His spiritual nation, the church. If our Jewish neighbors are saved, it will have to be because they turn from unbelief, turn to the will of Christ and then God will take away their sins (v. 27)--thus, grafting them again into the olive tree.



Nov. 17 - 23

Sewell Hall

Fultondale
Church of Christ

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ORAL ROBERTS AND MIRACULOUS HEALING

Wallace H. Little

I received a card signed by a representative of Oral Roberts of Tulsa, Oklahoma. It was an invitation to what was termed a "PARTNER'S MEETING." I wanted to be there and to my regret, was unable, because of a schedule conflict.

Since Mr. Roberts has more than a moderate degree of fame as a "faith healer," I believe it would be good, first, to review Bible miracles, placing emphasis on New Testament healing. Read with me the text in 1 Cor. 12:08-12, from the New American Standard. Here Paul the apostle, by inspiration, wrote: "For to one is given the word of wisdom through the Spirit, and to another the word of knowledge according to the same Spirit; to another faith by the same Spirit, and to another gifts of healing by the one Spirit, and to another the effecting of miracles, and to another prophecy, and to another the distinguishing of spirits, and to another various kinds of tongues, and to another the interpretation of tongues. But one and the same Spirit works all these things, distributing to each one individually just as He wills."

Notice Paul speaks of nine separate gifts. They are: (1) — word of wisdom; (2) — word of knowledge; (3) — faith; (4) — gift of healing; (5) — miracles; (6) — prophecy; (7) — distinguishing of spirits; (8) — kinds of tongues; and (9) — interpreting of tongues. Of these, it is interesting to note the two where the attention of man today is directed. Some claim to speak in tongues. These do not seek financial reward. However, my own observation and reading tells me whenever the "gift of healing" is invoked, money is involved, or nearly always so. Of all claiming this gift today, Mr. Roberts is probably the best known and certainly one of the richest from his "healing ministry." For this reason, I want to review certain features of healing which took place in Biblical times, and compare these with Mr. Roberts'.

Here are some of the characteristics of New Testament by Christ and those by His approval representing Him. The healings were:

a. done by **speaking words** (widow's son at Nain raised from the dead; Lk 7:11-15).

b. **instantaneous** (raising Lazarus from the dead; Jn 11:43,44).

c. for the **purpose of causing belief** in Him (same reference as b; Mk 16:20).

d. **recognized and accepted as miracles** (even though resented) by Christ's enemies (concerning Lazarus' raising, see Jn 12:09-11).

e. **complete** (Jn 9:09-12).

f. **publically done** (the leper in Mt 8:01-03).

g. such as to **require no special faith on the part of the one healed** (the centurion's servant in Mt 8:05-13).

It is also worthwhile recognizing, on no occasion did Jesus or the apostles ever ask for or accept money for

healing. As a matter of fact, Jesus in Mt 10:08 ordered the apostles to do their healing **free!** Additionally, healing was always secondary to the purpose of demonstrating Christ's and the apostle's right to speak for God on spiritual matters. The miracles were not used exclusively or primarily for the purpose of healing. To believe otherwise is to charge the Lord and His apostles with gross indifference to human suffering. Had it ever been God's intent to heal for its own sake, He by speaking the Word only could have ended all human suffering for all time in an instant. This is the best kind of testimony healing and all other miracles had another purpose more important than the mere improving of the physical situation under which humans live.

Now let's take a close look at Mr. Roberts' record in his "healing ministry." The following is copied verbatim from Vol. VIII, No. 7, Whole Number 41, **NEWS AND NOTES**, a periodical published by Bolton Davidheiser, PhD, Bx 22, La Mirada, California, 90638. Dr. Davidheiser's source is available in tract form at 10c per copy from **RELIGION ANALYSIS SERVICE**, 902 Mennepin Avenue, Minneapolis, Minnesota, 55403. It is titled, "Oral Roberts And The Navajos." It reads:

"Gordon H. Fraser, Director of the S.W. Board of Missions, Flagstaff, Arizona, has written an eye-witness report of the Oral Roberts Navajo Crusade, August 17 to 19, 1959.

"Mr. Roberts appeared on the platform only briefly on three occasions during the crusade and his longest message was no more than twenty minutes, half of which time was required for translation into the Navajo language. 'It was quite obvious the emphasis throughout the crusade was not directed toward the salvation of the Indians, but was on the matter of bodily healing.' The Navajos took the advertizing at face value and brought their sick and disabled in great numbers from many miles around. 'There are no hypochondriacs among the Indians ... thus every case was genuine.'

"Mr. Roberts read to the Indians Luke 4:16-19 (in which the Lord Jesus tells of His anointing) and told the Indians that 'I too, have this anointing.'

"When the cameras were ready, Mr. Roberts began to go down the healing line, the cameras following him. So did Mr. Fraser, who reports, 'He offered no audible prayers and no results were seen. No results were even stimulated. Those who had hobbled around the track on sticks went away on their sticks; the blind were led away still blind. There was a look of dismay on most faces ... It was quite apparent that all of them came expecting results and were in possession of whatever attitude of faith would be expected of them. Hence the disillusionment that was present when nothing happened.'

"Mr. Roberts went down the line, rapidly laying hands on people until picked up by a car and whisked away to his private place, leaving at least 250 Indians still standing in line with their prayer cards in hand. All that remained of Roberts' party were some flunkies, loading equipment on a truck.

"Some of the Indians became panicky, demanding in tones unusual for Navajos, 'When is Mr. Roberts going to come? He promised to pray for me.' Last of all old folks sitting on folding chairs were set on the ground and the chairs loaded on the truck.

"Results for the Indians: Healings, none. Apparent healings, none. Conversions, probably none. Christian Indians utterly confused. Many Indians embittered against all Christian missionaries.

"Results for Oral Roberts: Cash offerings probably amounting to several thousand dollars. Several thousand books sold at a handsome profit to people of whom 98% cannot read English. A wealth of publicity photos to be shown on the screen and in publications of his organizations . . ."

There is more, but space does not permit it to be reprinted here. You may send 10c to the address noted above for the complete record.

Let's examine another instance of Mr. Roberts as related to his "healing ministry." "According to a writer in **TIME**, April 3, 1972, when Oral Roberts founded his university, he 'set his heart on a national basketball championship.' Recently when the star of the opposing team tore some tendons, Roberts prayed over him and asked the Lord to restore him to the game. Later, in the hospital, the player said, 'I believe what I've heard about Oral Roberts. If I had been more conscious of what was happening, maybe it would have worked.' " How conscious was the dead widow's son at Nain (Lk 7:11-15) when Christ raised him from the dead?

All healing is Divine. Since we are all God's creatures and since we function in nature according to the laws which He created, all healing of our physical bodies is in accordance with His laws, thus Divine. The difference between this, however, and the healing of Christ and His apostles was that His was MIRACULOUS also! It must be plainly evident Mr. Oral Roberts has no more ability to heal miraculously than "the man in the moon."

Mr. Roberts is a rich man. He became that by bilking money out of people such as the Navajos in the illustration. His method was typical of "con men." He has yet to produce his first valid example of miraculous Divine healing. I have an active dislike of anyone cheating people by false claims of being able to heal. But even if I had no personal feeling on this, I would still object to Roberts and his chicanery (Webster says this is: misrepresentation; conniving; subterfuge, deception) to make himself richer on the sickness and injuries of others by playing on their ignorance. There must be a specially hot corner of hell for the type of monster such as Roberts who preys on

human misery for personal financial gain.

I am sure Roberts, his organization and others who practice this sickening "trade" (Roberts is just one of a number who do this) will object to what I have written. So be it. Let's run a test according to the Biblical principles I listed earlier, and measure Roberts and all others in their performance of their 'miracles.' I will select one doctor; Robert another. These two doctors will choose a third acceptable to both. Then Roberts and I, those with him and those with me will choose subjects acceptable to the such an audience as we generate whose diseases and disabilities satisfy the Bible requirement. We will pick some diseased and some injured and some dead. As a matter of fact, he can start with me. Some years ago, I lost several fingers, and would very much like to have them restored. We will have these examined by the three doctors to certify they are indeed dead, diseased and injured. Then we will have Mr. Roberts demonstrate to me . . . and to you that he can really perform miraculous healing. After he has finished, we will have the three medical doctors reexamine the subjects and testify publicly as to what was accomplished, again as measured by the standards of healing in the New Testament.

Since Mr. Roberts seems to like publicity and picture-taking, we will notify the national news media of the demonstration. This publicity ought to be enough to satisfy him.

If he heals any, restores any to life, eliminates any injury, I will make a public apology on the same news media at the same time, asking his forgiveness. Does any really believe Mr. Roberts would submit to such a test?

Oral Roberts and all his kind are fakes of the worst kind! They will take your money for "fat-cat" living under the pretense of healing when they can no more heal than they can recreate the world, bring again the universal flood of Noah or offer salvation in the name of a man (Acts 4:12). And truly, God, as He punishes all unrighteousness, will not permit this man, and his kind to escape! Do not be taken in by this fake!

One final comment: This article, with a slight variation, was originally intended for publication in our local teaching paper, which goes to approximately 6000 homes in our community. That is roughly three-quarters of those here. We had word Roberts intended to have a "crusade" in this area. Had he done so, he would have been met by this material, and hopefully, mass rejection of his "crusade" by people here.

— P. O. Box 1306
Marshall, Texas 75670

Life is filled with ups and downs—like getting up in the morning and getting down to work.



Gripe! Gripe! Gripe!

Brent Lewis

That's all some people ever do. Of course, not a Christian. Or does he?

Well, I've seen people who say they are Christians who complain all the time. But I have yet to understand it.

The Christian should be the happiest person on earth! He has every reason to be. "If God be for us, who can be against us?" (Rom. 8:31). "I will fear no evil, for thou art with me" (Ps. 23:4). "I can do all things through him that strengtheneth me" (Phil. 4:3). These are the greatest reasons we might suggest as to why the Christian should be happy and optimistic: (1) God for us. (2) God with us. (3) All things through Christ.

Why, then, all the griping? Some evidently have forgotten (if they've ever known) what they possess as Christians.

Honestly, with some people you don't dare ask them how they feel--for fear they'll tell you. I knew a lady like this once in a congregation. Every Sunday (for a while) I would make the monumental error of asking how she was, and then would be treated to a thirty-minute dissertation on the subject--everything from rheumatism to a bad case of the hangnail.

Finally I learned to stop asking. It was either that or I was going to have to ask her to make up a list on paper every week so I could read it later--and I didn't have the heart to ask her, what with her rheumatiz an' all.

Scripture-Setting -Continued

Paul to a place where there was sufficient water for him and his house to be BAPTIZED.

It perhaps ought to be said also that even if the Bible had said that the baptism occurred in the prison, it STILL would have had to be by a burial and resurrection for that is the Holy Spirit's own explanation of HOW it occurs (Rom. 6:4; Col. 2:12).

One should not be so wedded to a human tradition in religion (and sprinkling IS a tradition originated by Catholicism) that he would actually read INTO a passage of Scriptures something that is not there. Let us allow the Bible to explain itself in such a case as the one above. Every believer who is penitent should be IMMersed "in the name of Jesus Christ for the name of Jesus Christ for the remission of sins" (Acts 2:38).

2047 High School Road
Hueytown, Alabama 35020

What is wrong with Sister Sourdough and Brother B. Wail? Well, they are chronic grippers! Donate them a dozen doughnuts apiece and they'll not say "thanks"--but they'll spend the next six months telling anyone who'll listen about "how big those holes were!"

Now, all of this might be tolerable if this matter was only between me and you (preferable you) and Sister Sourdough. But that's not all there is to it. If I understand the Scriptures, it is also a matter between Sister Sourdough and the Lord! And you know what? God doesn't like grippers any better than you and I do.

Listen to this: "Neither murmur ye, as some of them murmured, and perished by the destroyer" (I Cor. 10:10). The "them" in this passage were the Israelites. Well, what did they murmur about? Everything under the sun. The manna and then the quail; against Moses and Aaron; against the spies' report brought back from Canaan; every difficulty and foe on their journey. The God of heaven was their father -- but they "really had it rough," to hear them tell it. No wonder the Lord said, "Forty years long was I grieved with this generation" (Ps. 95:10).

What forbearance the Lord had! To tell you the truth, it's all I can do to stand a griper for ten minutes. Imagine the Lord putting up with it for forty years! (However, some people I know have a pretty good jump on this--give them time and they'll probably break that 40-year record.)

Seriously, now, how can anyone claiming to be a Christian say, "We know that to them that love God all things work together for good..." (Rom. 8:28) (which every Christian must say)--and at the same time whine and fret in 57 varieties?

Actually, the difference in the one who gripes and the one who doesn't is the attitude. The poet says:

Some murmur, when their sky is clear
And wholly bright to view,
If one small speck of dark appear
In their great heaven of blue;
And some with thankful love are filled
If but one streak of light,
One ray of God's good mercy, gild
The darkness of the night.

In palaces are hearts that ask,
In discontent and pride,
Why life is such a dreary task,
And all good things denied.
And hearts in poorest huts admire
How love has in their aid

Scriptures Within Their Setting

BARNEY KEITH

Was It "Sprinkling" Or "Immersion"?

One of the primary proofs (?) used by some to justify the action of sprinkling rather than immersion for baptism is the case of the Philippian jailor in Acts 16:23-34. Bible readers know that following Paul's initial work in the city he and Silas had been arrested and put in prison.

"And when they had laid many stripes upon them, they cast them into prison, charging the jailor to keep them safely; who, having received such a charge, thrust them into the inner prison, and made their feet fast in the stocks" (16:23, 24). Later verse 33 declares that he "was baptized, he and all his straightway." It has been argued from this information that it is ridiculous to think the jailor could have been immersed. How could he have been immersed in a prison cell? Did Roman prisons have baptisteries? Was there a creek or a river--some large body of water--in which a man could be immersed? So, the deduction drawn by such people is that the jailor HAD to be "baptized by sprinkling, not immersion!"

Once again someone has failed to consider the SETTING and the CONTEXT of these verses. Certain groundless, unwarranted assumptions have been made by those who practice sprinkling instead of baptism. In a moment we shall consider these assumptions. First, however, let us observe exactly what the SCRIPTURES tell us about the "mode" of baptism.

THE "HOW" IS DESCRIBED

In Romans 6:3, 4 an inspired man wrote, "Know ye not that so many of us as were baptized into Jesus Christ were baptized into his death? Therefore, we were buried with him by baptism into death: that like as Christ was raised up from the dead by the glory of the Father, even so we also should walk in newness of life." It should be noted: (1) Paul is definitely talking about BAPTISM - verse 3. (2) He clearly states what action is involved when one is baptized--one is BURIED and then RAISED UP! There is no way that sprinkling a few drops of water on a person can be viewed as a burial and resurrection. As Jesus was BURIED, so the penitent believer is BURIED IN BAPTISM. As Jesus was RAISED UP from the dead, so this person is RAISED UP from the water of baptism. The word "immersion" fits such a description; the word "sprinkling" does not.

In Colosians 2:12 Paul writes again, "Buried with

him in baptism, wherein you are also risen with him through the faith of the operation of God who raised him from the dead." Note again the same language referring to the action of baptism -- "BURIED" and "RISEN". One can easily see that immersion fits the demands of the text, but it requires considerable mental gymnastics to see sprinkling in such language.

Added to these passages is the testimony of the Greek lexicons in defining the word from which "baptism" comes. Any reputable lexicon will show that the idea is that of a "dipping" or "immersion." Hence, IF the jailor and his household were sprinkled, their baptism was different from that of Paul, the Roman brethren and the Colossian Christians. Paul--and they --had to be "buried" in baptism and "raised up."

BAPTIZED IN THE PRISON CELL?

The unwarranted assumption has sometimes been made that the jailor's baptism occurred in the prison. Actually people are just reading into the text something that was never there at all. Where does the passage state--or even imply--that the baptism of the jailor occurred in the prison? Not a syllable of evidence points to such a location for the baptism. In fact, the language used shows conclusively that it was NOT in the prison cell.

A careful reading of Acts 16:23-34 will show that there was considerable moving about on the part of the people in this account. Verse 29 states that the jailor (after the earthquake) "sprang in." But the next verse says he "brought them out" before he even asked what to do to be saved! The word translated "out" is the word that means outside or out of doors. Certainly it is clear then that the jailor (along with Paul and Silas) did NOT remain in the jail. They went "outside" somewhere!

Then verse 32 says that "they spoke unto him the word of the Lord, and to all that were in his house." Evidently they had moved to the place where the jailor's house was located and where the preaching was done to all of them. Furthermore, after Paul preached to all that were "in his house," verse 33 shows that "he took them... and was baptized, he and all his straightway." Can anyone fail to see that he took Paul and Silas somewhere where he would be able to wash the stripes of the prisoners AND to be baptized (immersed--since that is the meaning of the word). No, it did not happen in the prison cell. The jailor brought them OUTSIDE. Paul had occasion to preach to those "IN HIS HOUSE." After being taught the jailor TOOK

(Love that not ever seems to tire)
Such rich provisions made.

Brethren, if you feel like you are going to overtaken with great lamentations, how about making for the nearest closet? Of course, the Lord will still hear you, but at least I won't have to--and He's got a great deal more patience in this matter than I do.

Oh, yes... I almost forgot... about the time I really thought Sister Sourdough must have reformed.

As I remember, this one Sunday (this was before

I learned better) I said, "Hello, Sister Sourdough, how are you?" And this time she said, "Oh, so much better, thank you, so much better..." Well, needless to say I almost dropped my lowers (and I don't even have false teeth). But, alas, during my period of stunned silence, she finished... "Worse than I was yesterday, of course-- but so much better than I expect to be tommorrow!"

(That was when I surrendered.)

Hueytown Church of Christ

2053 HIGH SCHOOL ROAD
HUEYTOWN, ALABAMA 35020
TELEPHONE 491-3225

Dear brethren:

A series of studies in CALVINISM VERSUS THE BIBLE will be conducted here at our building each Tuesday night at 7:30. If any of the members of the other congregations in the area are interested, we will be happy to have them come and share these lessons with us. The classes will be conducted by Barney Keith. The various fundamentals of Calvinistic teaching are found either whole or in part, in nearly every Protestant denomination as well as in Catholicism. In recent years there are indications that certain aspects of the theories have been embraced even by some of those in the body of Christ. This is truly a living issue. We believe that there can be a profitable study of these matters. It is suggested that those who attend bring notebooks and pencils along with their Bibles. We plan to continue Nov. 16, possibly resuming the class after the holidays.

HUEYTOWN CHURCH OF CHRIST

THE EVANGELIST



"Your best bet is not to make one."

Hutto to Illinois

Hiram Hutto, author of our WORDS column, has moved to Illinois. But we are not about to let his escape without a promise. He has promised to continue writing on WORDS as soon as he gets settled in the work there. OK, Hiram, unpack the boxes and get busy!

Calvinistic Imputation -

Theological Buck Passing

EDWARD O. BRAGWELL, SR.

Man likes to shift responsibility away from himself. If he stumbles over his own big feet, he looks around to see who tripped him up. If he is assigned responsibility, he often looks around for someone to whom he can pass it. The buck passing game started with our first parents. Adam sinned against God and said, "The WOMAN whom THOU gavest to be with me SHE gave to me and I did eat" (Gen. 3:12). Eve, likewise, refused to accept responsibility for her action. She said, "The SERPENT beguiled me, and I did eat" (Gen. 3:13). Their efforts failed. They were punished for their sins and the entire human race suffers death (physical) as a result of it (I Cor. 15:22). Many of Adam's and Eve's descendents are blaming their sin upon that first pair. This is theological buck passing.

Religionists, influenced by Calvinistic concepts of imputation, are great buck passers. First, there is supposed to be the imputation of Adam's guilt upon the whole human race. This relieves the race of responsibility of their having become sinners in the first place. They are sinners by virtue of the fact that they were born descendents of Adam. Secondly, the supposed remedy for imputed sin is a second imputation -- the imputation of Jesus' perfect life to the sinner. You see, the sinner in Christ may go on sinning (because being in the flesh he cannot help it), but he doesn't need to worry about it because Christ lived a sinless life in his stead. Hence, a man is relieved of the responsibility of a godly life and even the responsibility of correcting his wrongs, because he will not be judged for his own actions but by the perfect life that Jesus lived. A rather convenient buck passer, wouldn't you say?

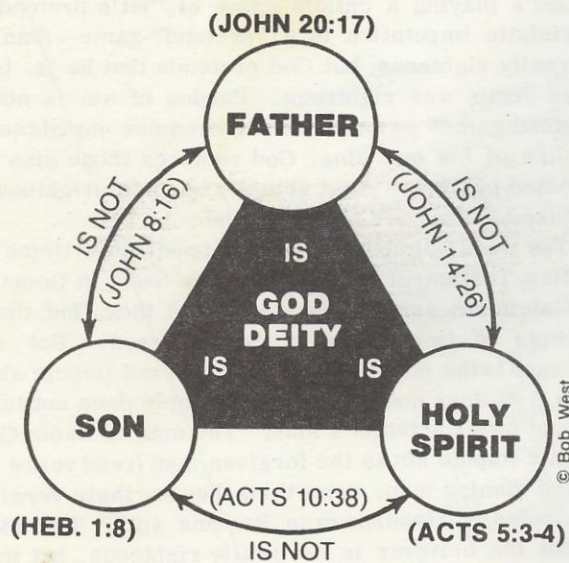
You and I must accept the responsibility for our sins. "The soul that sinneth, it shall die. The son shall not bear the iniquity of the father, neither shall the father bear the iniquity of the son: the righteousness of the righteous shall be upon him, and the wickedness of the wicked shall be upon him," so reads Ezekiel 18:20. The guilt of sin is a personal matter. I cannot blame all my guilt upon Adam for having sinned. While I may suffer the consequences of another's error, I do not suffer the guilt. Paul wrote, "For we must all appear before the judgment seat of Christ, that every one may receive the things done in HIS (not Adam's nor Christ's --EOB) body, according to that which HE (not Adam nor Christ--EOB) hath done, whether it be good or bad."

You and I must accept responsibility for living godly. Jesus did live a perfect life, making Him a perfect sacrifice for my sins, without any spot or blemish, leaving me a perfect example for my life --but His perfect life is not imputed to me. Our lives are made righteous through pardon and not imputation --there is a vast difference. Jesus died for my sins (Matt. 26:28; Rom. 5:8-9). His atoning death provides for my pardon -- if I will face up to my responsibility for sins by repenting and obeying God's law of pardon (cf. Acts 2:38; I John 1:7-9). Then, it is not a matter of God's playing a child's game of "let's pretend." Calvinistic imputation is a "pretend" game--man is not really righteous, but God pretends that he is, because Jesus was righteous. Pardon of sin is not a "pretend game" -- man actually becomes unrighteous because of his own sins. God removes those sins by the blood of Christ. Man actually becomes righteous, because his sins are no more (Heb. 10:1-4).

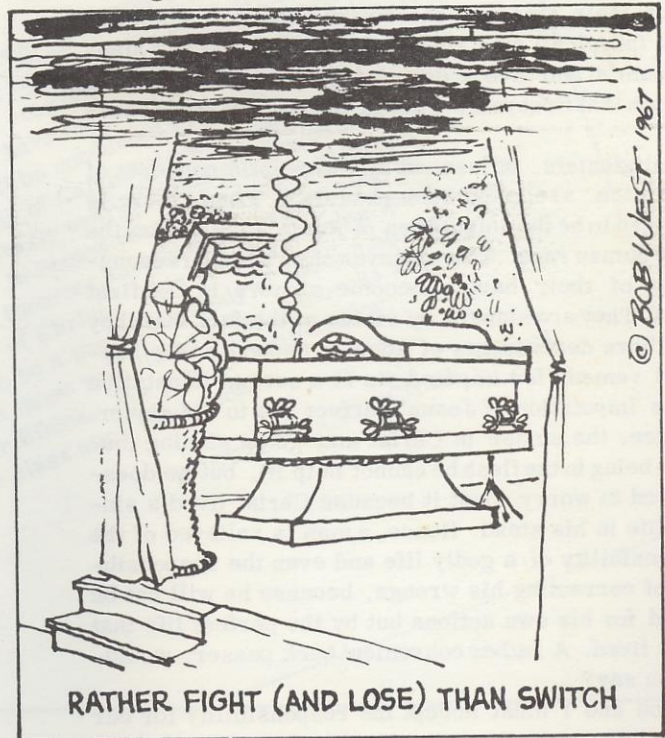
The word, "impute," is mentioned nine times in the New Testament. Six of these are found in Romans 4. Calvinists sometimes claim that they find their concepts of imputation in these verses. Not so! "Blessed is the man to whom God will not impute sin" (Rom. 4:8) does not say that God simply does not take account of a Christian's sins. The man to whom God will not impute sin is the forgiven man (read verse 7), not the sinning man. Some think they see their version of imputed righteousness in Romans 4:22. The idea is that the believer is not really righteous, but that God accounts (pretends) him so, because his faith is imputed to him for righteousness. They would have the expression, "for righteousness", mean INSTEAD of righteousness. The expression is "eis dikaiosunen" in the Greek. Hence, it is "eis" (unto or in the direction of) righteousness. Just like repentance and baptism is "eis" (unto) the remission of sins (Acts 2:38). Our faith in the blood of Christ and our obedience to the faith makes us truly righteous--not just a pretended righteousness.

We must face up to our responsibility before God. We must accept the responsibility for our own sinfulness and repent of it. We must accept the responsibility for righteous living. If we fall short, we must accept the responsibility for it--ask God's forgiveness and try again. We cannot use the Calvinistic concepts of imputed sin and righteousness to escape our responsibility under God's gracious law.

BEST from WEST



Our Religious World



THEOPHILUS

