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# Shield of Faith

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## Return Unto Me

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“Even from the days of your fathers ye are gone away from mine ordinances, and have not kept them. Return unto me, and I will return unto you, saith the LORD of hosts. But ye said, Wherein shall we return?” (Malachi 3:7).

Through the prophet Malachi, God gave a command that was often repeated in Scripture, “Return unto me.” God’s complaint concerning Israel was, “Even from the days of your fathers ye are gone away from mine ordinances, and have not kept them.” The people of Jerusalem, called of God, “the city which I have chosen me to put my name there,” had so often turned from God that Jeremiah called it a “perpetual backsliding” (Jeremiah 8:5), saying, “they hold fast deceit, they refuse to return.” The Hebrew word translated *perpetual* signifies *strength*. The same used Psalm 13:1, and translated *for ever*, implying a strong, stiff, stout refusal.

Israel was following the same path their fathers walked when they brought on themselves the Babylonian captivity. Nothing but God’s unchanging long-suffering had prevented their being long ago “consumed” (Malachi 3:6).

When the Lord spoke through Malachi and called Israel to return, they said, “Wherein shall we return?” (Malachi 3:7). They considered it an affront to be told of their faults, and called upon to repent. They were so ignorant of themselves and of God’s ordinances that saw nothing in themselves to be repented of, or reformed. They were pure in their own eyes, and thought they need no repentance. There were not, they reasoned, idolaters as those who were carried into bondage. They were so firmly resolved to go on in sin that they will find a thousand foolish and frivolous excuses turn away the calls that were given them to repent.

Israel believed themselves to be devout worshippers of God. They be-

lieved they were following God’s commands as they brought their offerings to the temple. “A son honoureth his father, and a servant his master: if then I be a father, where is mine honour? and if I be a master, where is my fear? saith the LORD of hosts unto you, O priests, that despise my name. And ye say, Wherein have we despised thy name? Ye offer polluted bread upon mine altar; and ye say, Wherein have we polluted thee? In that ye say, The table of the LORD is contemptible. And if ye offer the blind for sacrifice, is it not evil? and if ye offer the lame and sick, is it not evil? offer it now unto thy governor; will he be pleased with thee, or accept thy person? saith the LORD of hosts” (Malachi 1:6-8). Not only did the people bring their blemished sacrifices, but the priests also accepted them and offered them before the Lord. There was not one sincere or honest priest among them. They were so selfish and worldly that not one of them would even kindle a fire on the hearth of the altar unless he were paid for it. “Who is there even among you that would shut the doors for nought? neither do ye kindle fire on mine altar for nought. I have no pleasure in you, saith the LORD of hosts, neither will I accept an offering at your hand” (Malachi 1:10).

“For from the rising of the sun even unto the going down of the same my name shall be great among the Gentiles; and in every place incense shall be offered unto my name, and a pure offering: for my name shall be great among the heathen, saith the LORD of hosts. But ye have profaned it, in that ye say, The table of the LORD is polluted; and the fruit thereof, even his meat, is contemptible. Ye said also, Behold, what a weariness is it! and ye have snuffed at it, saith the LORD of hosts; and ye brought that which was torn, and the lame, and the sick; thus ye brought an offering: should I accept this of your

hand? saith the LORD” (Malachi 1:11-13). They did not literally say the Lord’s table was contemptible, but their acts virtually said so. They felt it needless toil and drudgery to observe every point of the law about ordering themselves and the sacrifices. they brought that which was torn and without value, disregarding ordinance, and without diligence in examining the sacrifice to see that it was perfect and according to law.

The priests accepted and offered the torn, and blind, which were expressly forbidden to be made sacrifices, for fear of offending the people, and so losing all gains from them.

“Should I accept this of your hand? saith the LORD” (Malachi 1:11-13). God had challenged Israel to “...offer it now unto thy governor; will he be pleased with thee, or accept thy person? saith the LORD of hosts” (Malachi 1:8). Their earthly ruler would surely have been insulted, if offered that which they had brought to God. The living God should have living sacrifices, and God who is perfect should have perfect sacrifices. But the people bringing such, the priests accepting such, in effect told the world they thought such sacrifices good enough for that God they were offered to. These the Jews revered the governors they had, and would not dare do that to them they so boldly did with God daily. To give to God what we should be ashamed to present to man is a grievous insult to his majesty.

Can we see ourselves portrayed in ancient Israel? Do we, like Israel, think we have no need to repent? God’s word asks, “Will a man rob God? Yet ye have robbed me. But ye say, Wherein have we robbed thee? In tithes and offerings. Ye are cursed with a curse: for ye have robbed me, even this whole nation” (Malachi 3:8-9). Have we, in like manner, robbed God?

When we, by the written word or by

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## Return Unto Me

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the preached word, are called upon to repent, we all agree that our nation needs repentance. Most of us know those who have fallen away from the church, and certainly *they* need to repent. God's call to repentance must, however, come to each individual, and not to those *others*. "Do I need repentance?" is the question each of us needs to ask ourselves. If we even bother to examine that question, do we not, as Israel, say, "Wherein shall we return?"

We do not worship today in the same manner as Israel, but their form of worship illustrates principles of worship that are valid today. Israel worshipped by bringing sacrifices to the house of God. God's word spelled out in minute detail what was acceptable for sacrifice and how it must be handled.

Our worship today is in like manner by bringing a sacrifice — a living sacrifice. "I beseech you therefore, brethren, by the mercies of God, that ye present your bodies a living sacrifice, holy, acceptable unto God, which is your reasonable service" (Romans 12:1). That living sacrifice must meet God's standards in order to be acceptable. A sacrifice that is torn between self-will and God's will, lame from trying to walk according to the course of the world during the week and after God on Sunday, and sick from filling up on worldly pleasures, is unacceptable to God.

For many, there is no sacrifice. They present their bodies only as it is convenient and does not interfere with the thing in which they really find joy. Still others come with an attitude of "...What a weariness is it!" They grudgingly offer God a little of their time, but non of their heart. "Should I accept this of your hand? saith the LORD."

God's word by Isaiah the prophet says, "I have blotted out, as a thick cloud, thy transgressions, and, as a cloud, thy sins: return unto me; for I have redeemed thee" (Isaiah 44:22). The debt of sin from the account-book in which it was entered has been taken away as a thick cloud is scattered away by the wind.

He has redeemed His own, therefore they are His and obliged to return and adhere to God. The price God paid for our redemption was high. "Forasmuch as ye know that ye were not redeemed with corruptible things, as silver and

gold, from your vain conversation received by tradition from your fathers; But with the precious blood of Christ, as of a lamb without blemish and without spot" (1 Peter 1:18-19). Should He not have what He has paid for?

We do not repent in order that He may redeem us, but because He hath redeemed us. Can he who believes he has been forgiven do any less than love God with all his heart? "There was a certain creditor which had two debtors: the one owed five hundred pence, and the other fifty. And when they had nothing to pay, he frankly forgave them both. Tell me therefore, which of them will love him most? Simon answered and said, I suppose that he, to whom he forgave most. And he said unto him, Thou hast rightly judged" (Luke 7:41-43).

As God called Israel to repent by the prophet Hosea, He said "I will go and return to my place, till they acknowledge their offence, and seek my face: in their affliction they will seek me early" (Hosea 5:15). God spoke after the manner of men, saying that He with withhold His gracious favors until they acknowledge their offenses and until they confessed and humbled themselves for their sins.

God has never abandoned His people, but has on many occasions withheld His blessings and His manifest presence because of their sins. God has today "returned to His place" and hidden Himself because of our sins. Many may dispute that statement. Surely there are times in which we experience the presence of the Lord and enjoy His blessings. Those times are, sadly, few and far between. They are tokens that assure us that He has not cast us off.

There is still time to return to the Lord.

Many believers lament the conditions of our nation today and perhaps pray that God will heal our land. Do not, however, mistake the problem. The condition of our nation is only a reflection of the condition of *the church*. We have strayed from God and have let His blessings slip away from us. It is not the nation that needs to repent, but the church.

Hosea would later say, "O Israel, return unto the LORD thy God; for thou hast fallen by thine iniquity. Take with you words, and turn to the LORD: say unto him, Take away all iniquity, and

receive us graciously: so will we render the calves of our lips. Asshur shall not save us; we will not ride upon horses: neither will we say any more to the work of our hands, Ye are our gods: for in thee the fatherless findeth mercy. I will heal their backsliding, I will love them freely: for mine anger is turned away from him" (Hosea 14:1-4).

Both Malachi and Hosea attest to the fact that when the people of God return to Him, He will return to His people. "I will heal their backsliding, I will love them freely: for mine anger is turned away from him."

Hosea instructs Israel to "Take with you words, and turn to the LORD." Instead of sacrifices, Israel (and we) were to bring words, the words of confession of sins and repentance from them. God will not accept empty professions. He does not ask costly sacrifices, but words of heartfelt repentance. With their words they were to join deeds. Their hearts were to be in their words, and evidenced by their deeds.

"So will we render the calves of our lips." Instead of fatted calves, God will be pleased with the calves of our lips; "the sacrifice of praise;" that is, "the fruit of our lips." "By him therefore let us offer the sacrifice of praise to God continually, that is, the fruit of our lips giving thanks to his name" (Hebrews 13:15).

"Asshur shall not save us; we will not ride upon horses: neither will we say any more to the work of our hands, Ye are our gods: for in thee the fatherless findeth mercy" (Hosea 14:3). Look not for help in powerful men, governments or the works of our own hands. Only in God will we find help, and only when we return to Him according to His word. "They that dwell under his shadow shall return; they shall revive as the corn, and grow as the vine: the scent thereof shall be as the wine of Lebanon. Ephraim shall say, What have I to do any more with idols? I have heard him, and observed him: I am like a green fir tree. From me is thy fruit found. Who is wise, and he shall understand these things? prudent, and he shall know them? for the ways of the LORD are right, and the just shall walk in them: but the transgressors shall fall therein. (Hosea 14:7-9)

## Bible Quiz

Throughout history men have lived who wanted to leave a monument which they built. Match each builder with his project.

1. Bezaleel (Ex. 31:2-5)
2. Solomon and Hiram (1 Kings 6:18)
3. Uzziah (2 Chron. 26:9)
4. Jotham (2 Chron. 27:4)
5. Balak (Num. 23:13-14)
6. Judah (1 Kings 14:23)
7. David (1 Chron. 17:6)
8. Nehemiah (Neh. 4:6)
9. Rehoboam (2 Chron. 11:5)
10. Noah (Gen. 6:14)
11. A rich man (Luke 12:18)

- a. Altars
- b. Ark
- c. Barns
- d. Cities for defense
- e. Castles
- f. House
- g. Images
- h. Towers
- i. Temple
- j. Articles for the tabernacle
- k. Wall of Jerusalem

Answers on page 4.

## Central States Primitive Baptist Bible Conference

The Sixtieth Annual Session of the Central States Primitive Baptist Bible Conference will convene at Vincennes University, Vincennes, Indiana, July 17, 18, 19, 2007, the Lord willing. The scheduled speakers are:

July 17,  
4:20 pm Elder Greg Phillips, Chattanooga, TN  
8:00 pm Elder Steve Taylor, Hartsburg, MO

July 18,  
9:50 am Elder Dennis Holt, Ozark, AL  
11:05 am Elder Edward McIntyre, Fitzgerald, GA  
3:55 pm Elder McKinley Wright, Jacksonville, FL  
8:00 pm Elder Mike Newman, Jacksonville, FL

July 19,  
10:05 am Elder Doyle Kilgore, Rainsville, AL

For directions or more information, contact Elder Greg Phillips, (423) 875-3652 or email eldphil@bellsouth.net

## THE PRACTICAL EVIDENCES OF FAITH

1. It embraces the Lord Jesus Christ as the Way, the Truth and the Life.
2. It receives and acknowledges Gospel truths, and 'the doctrine which is according to Godliness.'
3. It is 'not ashamed of the Gospel of Christ.'
4. It Works by love.
5. Shows itself by its works.
6. It establishes the law by recognizing its perfection in the obedience and sacrifice of Christ,
7. It overcomes the world.
8. It resists the devil.
9. It relies on 'the evidence of things not seen.'
10. It looks to Christ as its 'Author and Finisher.'
11. It subserves the power of God in the safe keeping of his people. 'The time would fail me to tell' of all its practical signs ; and yet one more I will relate.
12. The best test of faith as its reliance on the declarations, assurances and promises of God, irrespectively of visible means, reliable indications, or strong probabilities. The faith which does not trust in. the Lord, in the absence of these, is not of the right kind. Heb. xi.  
I will now treat of my subject in a more general way. Self denying, cross-bearing, following Christ, walking in him, are favorable signs. Watching, fasting and praying are holy indications of spiritual life. God's I own elect' evince their renewed state by crying unto him I day and night.' Luke xviii, 7. The 'Doers of the word' show their 'faith by their works.' Contending earnestly 'for the faith once delivered to the saints,' is a mark of distinction--a remarkable one, indeed, in the present day.

Elder John M. Watson

From *The Old Baptist Test; or, Bible Signs of the Lord's People*

## Christ Bare The Sins of Many

NOW WE PLAINLY SEE, that the sentence of death due to our offences, was executed on Christ according to God's determined purpose, and we are consequently justified thereby, in a way of justice. Christ bare the sins of many, and when he died for us, and suffered for our sins as a public head, acting and dying as the representative of many, his death is regarded as the death of all for whom he died, and this is what we read, 11 Cor.5:14,15, "For the love of Christ constraineth us; because we thus judge that if one died for all, then were all dead; and that he died for all, that they which live should not henceforth live unto themselves, but unto him which died for them, and rose again."

- from Wilson Thompson, "Of Free Justification, by the Blood and Righteousness of Christ," *The Triumphs of Truth: or, The Scripture a Sure Guide to "Zion's Pilgrims* (1825).

## *Rotting On The Inside*

A news reporter asked a pedestrian, "Do you know what the two greatest problems in America are?"

"I don't know and I don't care!" the man responded.

"Then you've got both of them!" was the abrupt reply.

Although our nation is rotting on the inside and hostile forces are determined to take away our freedom, our greatest problem might just be that there are too many people who neither know nor care.

Not until all is lost will many awake to the painful reality that America as we once knew it is gone.

As humanism moves society farther away from Christian values, it will become increasingly intolerant of competing viewpoints. In a smear campaign aimed at what Norman Lear calls "the new right," Christians have been painted in the same hues as the Nazis and the Ku Klux Klan. Because Christians believe in the freedoms that America has enjoyed for 200 years, they are considered the lunatic fringe. Make no mistake about the intention of these secularists: It is to discredit the voice of Christians so that America will tolerate only one view. The battle lines are between two religions: Humanism vs. Judeo-Christian beliefs. Clearly two world-views are on a collision course.

History documents the final results of an intolerant humanistic state. According to some estimates, Chairman Mao of China is credited with the death of 30 million Chinese; Stalin 30-60 million Russians and Hitler 15 million people, of which 6 million were Jews.

These people died because the state believed that matter was the final reality, hence there is no God, no immorality, no final judgment. God was dethroned and the state was put in its place.

Today the doctrine of evolution is in disarray. Although the man on the street may not know it yet, the theory of evolution is being dismantled through modern discoveries.

Darwinism has fallen on hard times. Even the head of the French Academy of Science candidly admits, "Evolution is a fairy tale for adults." But that is not what the public at large hears. Clarence Darrow once argued in the 1925 Scopes Trial that it is "bigotry for public schools to teach only one theory of origins." Now that evolution is entrenched in public education, the American Civil Liberties Union, de-

spite its own cries on behalf of pluralism, insists that only one theory of origins he taught. Bigotry has returned to the public classroom.

To settle for evolution or "the big bang" theory without God begs a thousand scientific questions. Where did the original energy and matter come from? What caused the explosion? How could impersonal forces acting randomly construct a universe whose planets rotate with such precision that we set our clocks by them? It is preposterous to believe that "nothing times nobody equals everything!"

On a television program, author Aldous Huxley once responded to the question of why evolution was so readily accepted. He admitted "the reason we accepted Darwinism even without proof is because we didn't want God to interfere with our sexual mores."

There you have it. The real reason modern man does not want to believe in God is he wants no interference from the Creator.

While many scientists secretly admit that evidence for the evolutionary fairy tale is crumbling, they refuse to run toward God. If one does not wish to find God, he will not, regardless of the evidence.

Yet if man is only a biological accident, the product of chance chemical reactions of impersonal forces, it is virtually impossible to make any distinction between right and wrong.

On November 17, 1980, the Supreme Court struck down a Kentucky law that required the posting of the Ten Commandments in public school classrooms. The Court said that the Ten Commandments were "plainly religious"...and may induce children to read, meditate upon, perhaps to venerate and to obey the commandments."

Morality and religion can never be separated. In fact, the very basis of morality is the existence of God. When the Supreme Court asked that the Ten Commandments be removed from Kentucky classrooms, they had no moral code to replace them. Logically, all that would be left is a blank wall. When religion is removed, morality goes too.

Ironically, humanists at times do talk about morality. But when they do, they piggyback on the Judeo-Christian ethic.

When they believe in human dignity, freedom and peace, they are assuming a theistic view of the world, for those of humanistic thinking were also created in God's image and were given a moral consciousness, even though they may fail to recognize its origin.

We have not yet seen the full result of humanism in the United States, because we are still coasting on the values derived from our rich Judeo-Christian heritage. But what of the generations to follow? As that heritage fades, everyone will be permitted to do whatever seems right in his own eyes in a world of twisted values, where morality is ridiculed and evil becomes a virtue. God clearly pronounces judgment on those who "call evil good, and good evil; that put darkness for light, and light for darkness" (see Isa. 5:20).

At the war crimes trial in Nuremberg, Germany, Hitler's henchmen argued that they had broken no laws. Germany's own legal system, they contended, permitted the elimination of those who impeded the advance of the Third Reich. Adolph Eichmann protested before his execution, "I had to obey the laws of war and my flag."

In our own country, a group protesting an abortion clinic were charged with slander because they had called abortionists "murderers." The abortionists argued, as had the accused at Nuremberg: You can't call someone who isn't breaking a law a murderer.

Both the experience of Nuremberg and today's silent holocaust in our abortion clinics bear eloquent witness to the fact that when a state believes it is accountable to no one except itself, it assumes a hidden premise: that whatever is legal is moral.

Robert H. Jackson, chief counsel for the United States in the Nuremberg Trials, was forced to appeal to permanent values, to moral standards transcending the lifestyles of a particular society. In effect, he argued that there is "a law beyond the law" that stood in judgment on the arbitrary changing opinions of men.

Today the shape of America is being altered by use of the same strategy. The Supreme Court, influenced by the humanistic trends, has helped to brainwash our people to believe that whatever is legal is moral. They would argue that there is no law above human laws.

This is not the case of our founding fa-

*(Continued on page 6)*

### Answers to Bible Quiz

1-j, 2-i, 3-h, 4-e, 5-a, 6-g, 7-f,  
8-k, 9-d, 10-b, 11-c

Devotions:

*Daily Devotion*

By Elder Bill Taylor

Workday Grace - June 4, 2007

## The Lord is In This Place

"And Jacob awaked out of his sleep, and he said, Surely the LORD is in this place; and I knew it not. And he was afraid, and said, How dreadful is this place! this is none other but the house of God, and this is the gate of heaven." Genesis 28:16-17

There are some people who say they never dream. For those who dream regularly this seems strange, because they seem to spend their sleeping hours wrestling with situations and scenes that are at once curious and disturbing. Jacob was a dreamer - not a day dreamer, but one who, at least this once, saw images too wonderful and too disturbing for his understanding. He had seen the wonderful image of a mediator between heaven and earth, typified by a ladder upon which the angels of God ascended and descended. He had heard the voice of Almighty God reaffirm with him the covenant of the seed of Abraham. The Lord had confirmed that he would give Jacob and his seed all He had promised Abraham and his seed. The Lord had promised His Presence would lead, guide, and direct Jacob wherever he went: "And, behold, I am with thee, and will keep thee in all places whither thou goest, and will bring thee again into this land; for I will not leave thee, until I have done that which I have spoken to thee of" (Genesis 28:15). The promise of eventually being brought back into the Land of Promise must have seemed remarkable to Jacob, especially since he knew that Esau would never abandon his threat of killing Jacob for stealing Isaac's blessing for his firstborn son. Still, as he awoke, Jacob had a sense that his dream was not just the result of his mind trying to work through the circumstances of his life - Jacob's dream was real, and it represented a door of opportunity opening for him that would change his life forever.

Jacob's first recognition of the reality of the dream he had was to confess that, "Surely the LORD is in this place." How did he sense God's Presence? Natural senses can fool us; so it was not through one of the five senses - sight, smell, hearing, touching, tasting - that Jacob knew God was present with him. The way Jacob sensed God's Presence then is the same way we sense His Presence with us today: He leads us to a certain place - spiritually - and reveals the Covenant of Christ in us (the hope of glory). That is why Jacob was sure. He could not likely have explained why he was so sure, but his words convey that he indeed was positive about at least two categories of things: the reality of God's Presence, and the holiness of the place in which He reveals Himself. There is a phrase used by some people - less frequently today than in days past - to speak about a place that is dear to them. This phrase is used to describe a place of great spiritual blessing and comfort when people say, "This is a Bethel spot to me." Why call it a Bethel spot? The reason has to do with Jacob's understanding that

*(Continued on page 8)**Hymns and Hymn Writers**IN THE CROSS OF CHRIST  
I GLORY*

It is hard to believe that the author of this hymn was called "the most unpopular governor Hong Kong ever had!" Sir John Bowring (1792-1872) by his high-handed and insolent policies in that Crown Colony actually brought on the second Opium War between Great Britain and China, 1856-1858. The explanation may lie in the change wrought in an idealistic youth who wrote his splendid hymns before he was thirty-five, and then, corrupted by power, became the hardhearted politician, "full of conceit, without any very clear idea of political principles on a large scale."

During his youth, he felt the call to preach and had a strong desire to enter the ministry of the Unitarian Church, but was dissuaded from by his father who had "higher" ambitions for his son. He wrote in 1820, "It will be the height of my ambition to do something which may connect my work with the literature of the age." This was realized when, at thirty-three, in 1825, inspired by the words of St. Paul in Galatians 6:14, "But God forbid that I should glory, save in the cross of our Lord Jesus Christ," he wrote a hymn which began "In the cross of Christ I glory, Towering o'er the wrecks of time All the light of sacred story, Gathers round its head sublime."

His words may never have achieved their deserved popularity had it not been for a rainy Sunday morning in 1849. Ithamar Conkey was organist and choir director at Central Baptist Church, Norwich, Connecticut, that year, and his minister, Rev. Dr. Hiscox, was preaching a series of sermons on "The Words on the Cross." The thirty-four-year-old musician was grieved when he went to the choir room to rehearse the anthem that particular Sunday just before the Morning Worship Service. To his dismay only one soprano showed up. As if that were not bad enough, not a single alto, tenor or bass put in an appearance. He was so disgusted and discouraged that after he played the prelude that morning he cut off the organ motor, closed the console, locked it, and went home, leaving the minister to carry on as best he could under the circumstances.

That afternoon Conkey tried to raise his spirits by playing the piano. As he sat at the keyboard, he thought of his minister and the series of sermons he was delivering on Jesus' Seven Last Words. The stanzas of "In the Cross of Christ I Glory," which the pastor had quoted, came into his mind, and right then and there he composed the hymn tune to which they are now universally sung. He confessed later that "the inspiration that came to me at that moment was a vivid contrast to my feelings at the morning service."

Mrs. B. H. Rathbun, his leading soprano, was, with her husband, a faithful member of the choir. As a compliment to her, since she was the only singer who showed up that rainy Sunday morning, he named his new tune "Rathbun."

So, from the pen of a disillusioned politician and a disappointed organist and choir-master, came the stirring strains of "In the Cross of Christ I Glory," which breathe the air of confidence and conviction, and spread the message of joy and hope to all the world.

## *Rotting On The Inside* (continued from page 4)

thers. Whether individually Christian or not, there was a general consensus of theism, the belief that God existed and the new republic was based upon this foundation. This understanding profoundly influenced their view of law and government. As the Christian world view has faded, America has turned not to the laws of God, but to what Francis Schaeffer called "sociological law." Law is only what the majority wants, or what the judges say it is. Thus in 1973 the Supreme Court invalidated the abortion laws of fifty states and legalized abortion on demand. Where did the Court get the notion that a woman has a right to an abortion? Such right is not found in the Constitution. The Court made it up. Like Napoleon, it crowned itself emperor answerable to no one-not even the American people.

Such distortion of "rights" has also opened the doors to pornography, under the guise of a free press, and to the offense of the public at large. As Christians we must explode the myth that whatever is legal is moral. What men make legal is not necessarily moral.

Secular humanists would like us to believe that they are broadminded, pluralistic and neutral in moral matters. They are opposed to censorship, sectarianism and intolerance. The media has done a successful job of getting the American people to believe that it is the so-called right wing religious fanatics who are seeking to "impose their morality on society."

But all laws are an imposition of someone's morality. That is why the statement, "You cannot legislate morality" as it stands is absurd.

Secular humanism is imposing its own morality on the American public. It does so through the media, the schools and the courts. There is a clear intent to keep Christian thinking out of the mainstream of the media and the nation's political life. When Francis Schaeffer's film, *Whatever Happened to the Human Race?* was shown on a television station in Washington, pro-abortionists exerted all the influence they could to prevent it from being aired. (Liberal establishments are strangely silent about the pluralism and open-mindedness they verbally espouse when the cause contradicts their own.) Even after the showing, the *Washington Post* ran an article entitled, "No Matter How Moving, Show Still Propaganda." Thus the media ridiculed the

program with loaded terminology. One editor admitted that the only religious news story that the press likes to do is a scandal.

When a book entitled, "How to Have Sex With Children," was confiscated by the Chicago police, several demonstrators marched in protest, insisting that pornographers should have unlimited privileges. But neither prayer nor a creationist view is allowed in the classroom.

As columnist George Will put it so ably, "And it is, by now, a scandal beyond irony that thanks to the energetic litigation of 'civil liberties' fanatics, pornographers enjoy expansive first amendment protection while first graders in a nativity play are said to violate first amendment values." No law is neutral. Every law imposes some form of morality on society. Abortionists impose their morality on the unborn. Homosexuals want their views flaunted in the public school classrooms. Atheists want religious influence excluded from public life.

Some politicians, in an attempt to remain "neutral" on such issues as abortion and sidestep the flak, say they are personally opposed to abortion but would never "impose their values on society."

If so, how does this sound? "I personally would never gas a Jew, but I have no right to impose my moral judgment on the Nazis ...I don't think the courts have the right to reach into someone's private gas chamber and legislate morality." The question is not whether the public will allow religion to "impose its morality" on America. Morality will be imposed. The real question is: Whose morality will be legislated?

On the surface it may seem that every Christian should be in favor of such legislation as the ERA. If we take seriously the biblical teaching that women are created in the image of God, they certainly are entitled to equal rights. Yet behind the proposed amendment lies a deception. If ERA had been ratified, it would have brought a sweeping restructure of society, with devastating attack on the family and morality in general. The amendment would likely destroy America as we know it. The radical feminists who so vociferously back the movement want, first of all, to end the institution of marriage. Sheila Cronan speaks for many of them when she writes, "Since marriage constitutes slavery for women, it is clear that the Women's Movement must concentrate on attacking this institution.

Freedom for women cannot be won without the abolition of marriage."

These same feminists want freedom from the burden of children. There can be no equality, they insist, as long as the woman is a homemaker. Moreover, the children, they say, should be reared by another, namely the state. The Houston Conference for Women, sponsored by N.O.W., called for federally-funded day care centers around the clock, seven days a week. Society as a whole; they insist, should bear the burden.

Lenin pursued this philosophy in Russia. So has Cuba. And Communist China. It is a Marxist solution.

The National Organization for Women opposes the right of churches to make any differentiation between men and women. The refusal to ordain homosexuals could soon be interpreted as "contrary to public policy," and homosexual teachers could flaunt their lifestyle in the public classroom.

Meanwhile, in an incredibly ridiculous project, even the World Council of Churches has released a Biblical Lectionary that omits all gender based terms, including all references to God as "He." Both the Scriptures, and the overwhelming majority of the public at large, still make clear distinctions between male and female. To disregard these differences is to invite the disintegration of America. This very day, as you read this article, some 4,300 preborn babies will legally be put to death - under the protection of the Supreme Court's 1973 decision in *Roe vs. Wade*.

In earlier days abortion was the last act of a desperate woman. Today it is said that 97% of all abortions occur simply for convenience. It has become the nation's means of birth control.

Wrote Peter Singer in *Pediatrics*. "We can no longer base our ethics on the idea that human beings are a special form of creation made in the image of God and singled out from all other animals." Babies' bodies have been sold by the bag. They are used in some cosmetics and for experimentation. In one general hospital, the sale of preborn babies brought in \$68,000 in a ten-year period.

From *The Rebirth of America*  
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*To be continued*

## JOHN XI. 39

May 22, 1906

ELDER C. H. CAYCE: Dear Sir and I Friend— When you have the time I would like for you to write a short editorial on John xi. 39, that is if you think there are any Spiritual applications beyond the historical fact that Lazarus was dead. Christ went to the grave and said, "Take ye away the stone." I have heard two Arminian friends preach from this text, but to my mind they got it somewhat mixed. They would apply the stone to the stony heart, and would say to their penitents at the altar to take away the stony heart. But it seemed to me that the stone was placed over the grave of Lazarus to make it more secure; if so, then the above is no part of a spiritual application. I guess I had better quit before I say too much. Come and see us sometime.  
Yours truly, JOSEPH B. ANDERSON.  
Ponder, Mo.

### OUR ANSWER

We suppose Brother Anderson merely wishes our opinion of the expression, "Take ye away the stone." He says he has heard two Arminian friends preach on that text, and that, to his mind, they got it somewhat mixed. We would be somewhat surprised if they did not get things mixed. Their whole theory is a "tangled hank," from first to last.

It seems to have been the custom in those days that a stone be placed over a grave or sepulchre. A stone was placed over the sepulchre where the Saviour was buried, and the women who event to His grave early in the morning of the first day of the week said, "Who will roll away the stone?" The stone over the grave of Lazarus has no reference whatever to a stony heart. It simply shows that Lazarus was dead, and that he was buried according to the usual custom. In the resurrection of Lazarus was a wonderful display of the power of God. He could have raised Lazarus just as easily without the stone being rolled away as after it was taken away. The stone being over the grave did not hinder His ability to raise Lazarus. But if He had raised him without the stone being first taken away, then those unbelieving Jews would have said it was all a "sham" and that Lazarus was not dead. Then the question might be asked, why

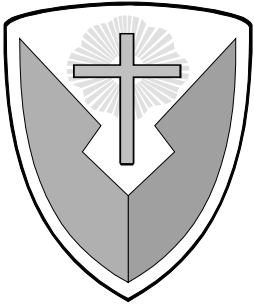
did the Saviour not roll the stone away Himself? We answer, it was not necessary that He roll it away. They could do that themselves. They could not give life to Lazarus, but they could roll away the stone. The Saviour did what they could not do. So He tells them to roll away the stone, and when it is taken away, they can see Lazarus lying there now dead, and "behold he stinketh." Now, the Saviour cried with a loud voice, "Lazarus, come forth," and he obeys, the Saviour imparting life with the command. They have seen Lazarus was dead, and they have seen that life was imparted to him, and he came forth. There is absolutely no room to dispute the fact that the dead was raised. Hence this is a wonderful display of the power of Christ, showing that He has power to raise the dead. Even so now He has the power to raise the sinner out of a state of death in sin to a state of life in Christ.

The sinner is not commanded to take the stony heart away, or to take the stony heart out of his flesh. In Ezekiel xi. 19, 20, the Lord says, "And I will give them one heart, and I will put a new spirit within you; and I will take the stony heart out of their flesh, and will give them an heart of flesh; that they may walk in my statutes, and keep mine ordinances and do them: and they shall be my people, and I will be their God." Here we have the positive promise of the Lord, the God that cannot lie, that He will take away the stony heart and that He will give a heart of flesh. He does not tell us to do what He has promised to do for us, and He does not promise to do for us what He commands us to do. Having the stony heart taken away, and a heart of flesh given, is equivalent to being born again, and sinners are no where commanded in God's word to be born again. This taking away of the stony heart and giving of a heart of flesh is something the Lord will do "that they may walk in my statutes, and keep mine ordinances, and do them." Then the stony heart must be taken away in order that acceptable obedience be rendered to the Lord. If the stony heart must be removed in order that acceptable obedience be rendered to the Lord, then the stony heart must be removed before the sinner obeys. So, if the Lord commands the sinner to remove the stony heart, and the sinner cannot render acceptable obedience until the stony heart is re-

moved, and the Lord cannot or will not save the sinner until the stony heart is removed, it looks to us as though there is no hope for the poor sinner. They do get it somewhat mixed, sure enough. But the Lord takes away the stony heart and gives them a heart of flesh and puts a new spirit within them. The Lord thereby qualifies them for His service.

But someone might ask, "Does not the Lord somewhere command somebody to purify their hearts?" Certainly He does, but He is not talking to alien sinners. James iv. 8 says, "Draw nigh to God, and He will draw nigh to you. Cleanse your hands, ye sinners; and purify your hearts, ye double minded." James is not talking to unregenerate sinners; he is talking to the brethren, to children of God, those to whom the Lord has given a heart of flesh. In the 11th verse he says, "Speak not evil one of another, brethren." He uses the term "brethren" all along in different places, so it has no application whatever to the unregenerate. Some brother, then, might ask, "How are they to purify their hearts?" Peter tells us how. 1st Peter i. 22, 23: "Seeing ye have purified your SOULS in obeying the truth through the Spirit unto unfeigned love of the brethren, see that ye love one another with a pure heart fervently; being born again, not of corruptible seed, but of incorruptible, by the word of God, which liveth and abideth forever." They purified their souls in obeying the truth through the Spirit. To obey the truth through the Spirit, one must first be in possession of the Spirit, or must have the Spirit before they obey. Then they do not purify their souls unto eternal life, but unto the unfeigned love of the brethren. They are in possession of the Spirit before the obedience is rendered; and the Lord promised to put a new Spirit within them, and when the Lord puts that Spirit within them they are "born again, not of corruptible seed, but of incorruptible, by the word of God, which liveth and abideth forever." All the Lord's dear children, to whom the Lord has given a heart of flesh, should endeavor to "purify their souls in obeying the truth through the Spirit unto unfeigned love of the brethren." We think Brother Anderson should do this.

We pray the Lord to bless these thoughts to your good, and to the good of all our readers. Dear brethren and sisters, pray for us. C. H. C.



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And let us consider one another to provoke unto love and to good works, Hebrews 10:24

*Daily Devotion*

*HIS SUFFERINGS*

*(Continued from page 5)*

The Lord was in that place, that certain place, where he dreamed his marvelous dream of a mediator between heaven and earth. Of this place Jacob said, "How dreadful is this place! this is none other but the house of God, and this is the gate of heaven." The place became known as Beth-El (Bethel), which means, "The House of God." The Lord revealed to Jacob that His place was there, and He would bring Jacob back to that very place. It became so precious to Jacob that he immediately said, "...this is the gate of heaven." What a wonderful reassurance God gave Jacob! How often He gives us the same reassurance - that He is with us and that He will bring us back to the place of sweet communion with his Presence! This promise became Jacob's great hope, and it ought also to be ours - not that we will be returned to some physical location, but that we will be lead by God into the fullness of joy to be found in His Presence.

Today is a good day to desire to be drawn once again to Bethel - the place of His Presence with us.

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And Jacob called the name of the place where God spake with him, Bethel. (Genesis 35:15)

HIS SUFFERINGS AND BLOOD were most freely given for all loving believers on Christ, all that feel helpless, lost and ruined by sin. Though men are lost and ruined by sin, yet by the obedience of Jesus Christ "many shall be made righteous." To all in the house—to all men everywhere, I want to tell that Christ Jesus came into the world to save sinners, of whom I am chief. When brought into tender sympathy with Jesus in his extreme suffering and bitter death, and made to think of my own helpless state and desperately wicked ways when dead in sins, when reminded that Jesus still loved me and died for my sins though a rebel against him—then my soul is so filled with love for Jesus and for my fellow-beings, that though I suffer the loss of all things, in obedience to God, I must speak even to the vilest sinners concerning my loving and merciful Saviour. He is the only Saviour. Human merit and human efforts can never save nor help to save, from the justly deserved fire of an awful hell. But while with men salvation is impossible, "with God all things are possible." I feel if such a vile sinner as myself has received mercy, no one need despair. "The Son quickeneth whom he will" even though a bloody Manasseh or a wicked Mary Magdaline.

The crimes are great but can't surpass,  
 The power and glory of His grace.

- from Moses D. Denman, "Sore Conflicts" (late 1800s),  
*Religious Writings of Moses D. Denman (1907).*