



The Grace Proclamator and Promulgator

“To testify the gospel of the grace of God.” Acts 20:24

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CHRIST ACCOMPLISHING THE IMPOSSIBLE: PUTTING AWAY SIN BY THE SACRIFICE OF HIMSELF

By Wayne Camp

TEXT: *"And this is but a light thing in the sight of the LORD: he will deliver the Moabites also into your hand" (II Kgs. 3:18). ". . . now once in the end of the world hath he appeared to put away sin by the sacrifice of himself" (Heb. 9:26).*

INTRO: Perhaps you are wondering how the two texts that I have chosen could possibly go together in a sermon. I will shortly show you. But first, let us look at the context of our first text.

While Ahab was living, the king of the Moabites was under his rule and paid a yearly tribute. However, Ahab dies and a son named Jehoram comes to power. Mesha, king of the Moabites, rebels and refuses to pay the tribute. Jehoram prepares to go to battle with him. He solicits the assistance of Jehoshaphat, the king of Judah. He also seeks the assistance of the king of Edom.

As the three kings, with their armies, travel through a wilderness area on their way to subdue Moab, there is a shortage of water. Their scouts report that there is no water to be found within a seven days journey. They begin to fear that the Lord has brought them there to give them over into the hands of the Moabites. They come before Elisha and he tells them to dig ditches in the wilderness valley and the Lord will fill them with water. There will be no wind and no rain, but there will be water in their ditches so that they will not go thirsty.

Elisha says that the giving of this water in the midst of a drought *"is but a light thing with*

the Lord," meaning that it is very easy for the Lord to do such a thing. It infers, and the following verses reveal, that the Lord will do much more for them than simply supply them water. He will give them a complete victory over the king of Moab. They will conquer the land, cut down all the good trees, fowl every piece of good land with rocks, and stop up the wells of the Moabites. What I want you to notice especially, is the ease with which the Lord can perform such miracles. It is *"a light thing"* with him to do such things.

Our second text speaks of the most difficult thing that the Lord has ever done—the putting away of sin. How this could be done without the marring of his justice and holiness was a matter that must employ infinite wisdom. Christ appeared to put away sin, but that could only be accomplished by the sacrifice of himself.

My subject is, *Christ Accomplishing the Impossible: Putting Away Sin by the Sacrifice of Himself.* When it came to the putting away of sin, Scripture never speaks of it as an easy task. Putting away sin was no light thing with the Lord. I have no doubt that it was the most difficult task ever assigned to any person. It was so difficult that only the Almighty God of heaven could do it. Emmanuel must do this mighty work, and that with extreme difficulty.

**OUR FIRST TEXT SUGGESTS THAT MANY OF
THE LORD'S WORKS ARE PERFORMED WITH
RELATIVE EASE**

God could fill those ditches in that valley with

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no more effort than to speak the word. He did not have to lift a finger. His word could go forth and it was done. The drought was no problem. The lack of wind and rain was no problem. There was simply nothing that stood in the way of God giving them an abundance of water with perfect ease.

I think of the creation of this universe with all its vastness. The heavens themselves are of such wonder that they reveal the marvelous glory of God. Yet, God spoke and the heavens and earth came into existence, perfectly formed

and fit for angelic habitation. **"In the beginning God created the heavens and the earth" (Gen. 1:1).** He did so with relative ease.

When this creation had been thrown into a state of chaos by the fall of Lucifer, he reconstructed it simply by commanding that it be so. By the simple fiat of his command, he made it a beautiful place fit for human habitation (Gen. 1:2-26).

When darkness covered the face of the waters God said **"Let there be light, and light became."** It was as simple and easy as that.

When he was ready he commanded the waters to roll back and reveal the earth. He commanded and the ground brought forth vegetation. At the going forth of his command, that which he commanded came to pass.

I think we can truthfully say with Elisha, **"This is but a light thing"** for the Lord to do. He is so powerful that he can do what he pleases and no one is capable of withstanding what he does. Let the kings of the earth take counsel against the Lord and against his Christ. Let them boast, **"Let us break their bands in sunder, and cast off their cords from us."** But he that sitteth in the heavens will laugh at mans foolish imaginations. None can stay our Mighty Maker's hands; He says, **"Yea, before the day was I am he; and there is none that can deliver out of my hand: I will work, and who shall let it? (Isa. 43:13).** The word "let" means to hinder. "I will work," declares our mighty and sovereign Lord, "and who shall hinder it?" The obvious answer is, **"NO ONE."**

There is no one in the universe who is capable of hindering, much less preventing, that which our Lord desired to do. He is in the heavens and has done whatsoever he has pleased. **Psalm 115:3 But our God is in the heavens: he hath done whatsoever he hath pleased.** He does as he wills in heaven, in earth, in the seas, and in all deep places. **Psalm 135:6 Whatsoever the LORD pleased, that did he in heaven, and in earth, in the seas, and all deep places.** With relative ease, he goes about creating, watering, controlling the movement of the earth and all moving bodies in the heavens.

At his word, he puts down kingdoms and

kings. He sets up kings. And no one can even hinder him, much less stop him. He controls the waters and waves of the oceans simply by issuing the decree. **"When he gave to the sea his decree, that the waters should not pass his commandment: when he appointed the foundations of the earth" (Prov. 8:29). "Or who shut up the sea with doors, when it brake forth, as if it had issued out of the womb? When I made the cloud the garment thereof, and thick darkness a swaddlingband for it, And brake up for it my decreed place, and set bars and doors, And said, Hitherto shalt thou come, but no further: and here shall thy proud waves be stayed?" (Job 38:8-11). "He gathereth the waters of the sea together as an heap: he layeth up the depth in storehouses" (Psa. 33:7).**

Having been a rice farmer at one time, and having experienced two floods while pastoring in Louisiana, I know how difficult the control of water can be. What I have experienced is nothing to what God has accomplished simply by commanding that it be done. Oceans circle around the globe and remain within boundaries prescribed by the Almighty. He has said to them, **"Hitherto shalt thou come, but no further."** And, they obey his will. When they are hanging on the side of the orb of the earth, or even when they are on the underside, they do not pour out for they are kept in their boundaries by the fiat of the Sovereign who orders all things after the counsel of his own will. Only when he uses them for his own wise reason are they permitted to extend beyond their normal boundaries. But, this also is but a **light thing** unto the Lord.

He controls the storms and all the elements with simple commands. Once when his disciples thought they would perish in a storm, they cried out their fear. Jesus rebuked them for their fear and lack of faith. **"Then he arose, and rebuked the winds and the sea; and there was a great calm" (Matt. 8:26).** Mark wrote, **"And he arose, and rebuked the wind, and said unto the sea, Peace, be still. And the wind ceased, and there was a great calm" (Matt. 4:39).**

Of this relative ease with which God does much of what he does, Solomon also wrote,

"Who hath ascended up into heaven, or descended? who hath gathered the wind in his fists? who hath bound the waters in a garment? who hath established all the ends of the earth? what is his name, and what is his son's name, if thou canst. tell?" (Prov. 30:4).

This rhetorical question has an obvious answer. God has done these mighty acts, and he has done them with apparent ease.

When Israel thirsted God told Moses to simply smite a rock and that vast multitude of people and all their livestock could drink their fill and water was left over. On another occasion, he told him to speak to the rock and the same thing would be accomplished.

When Elijah was hungry, God commanded the ravens to deliver him food. God's "Raven Express" was right on time and target with such food as Elijah needed. Was it difficult to perform this task? No! It was doubtless done with apparent ease.

I think of the time when God would bring his judgment on wicked Ahab. Ahab went to war. Every effort was made to disguise him. The commander of the enemy army had told his men to look for and try to kill only Ahab. The battle continued for some time and Ahab was not found. Simply, at a chance, an aimless, nameless bowman let go an arrow. It hit the mark and Ahab met his divinely prescribed death. Amazing to us, that God could use such a means to accomplish his will. Yet, he did it with relative ease. It was but a **light thing** in his sight.

God can take the weakest, most foolish things and easily confound the mighty. Paul marveled at this marvelous ability of our Lord. **"But God hath chosen the foolish things of the world to confound the wise; and God hath chosen the weak things of the world to confound the things which are mighty" (I Cor. 1:27-28).** In a similar vein Paul had just written, **"The foolishness of God is wiser than men; and the weakness of God is stronger than men" (I Cor. 1:25).**

God is of such marvelous power that even his foolishness is seen to be infinite wisdom to those who will observe. He is of such mighty power

that even his very weakest power is mightier than the strongest of men. Is it any wonder that his filling the ditches in the valley is declared to be **"a light thing in his sight"**?

THE TASK OF PUTTING AWAY SIN WAS NOT AN EASY TASK

Sin had affected the entire human race, the elect as well as others. Through the sin of one single man, the entire human race was plunged into sin. **"Wherefore, as by one man sin entered into the world, and death by sin; and so death passed upon all men, for that all have sinned . . . For as by one man's disobedience many were made sinners, so by the obedience of one shall many be made righteous" (Rom. 5:12, 19)**. Because of the sin of Adam, the whole of mankind is dead.

I recently came across a tract which denied that Adam's descendants are affected by his sin. It declared that children are born into this world without sin. They become sinners, but not because of Adam, and not because of a sinful nature. Of course, the Bible is right and the writer of the tract is a liar.

Hear Paul again on the matter. **". . . if through the offence of one many be dead . . ."** Paul, in this passage is laying out the effects of Adam's sin upon his seed and the effects of Christ's death for his seed. In our head, Adam, we fell. Through the offence of one many are dead. And again he says, **"Therefore as by the offence of one judgment came upon all men to condemnation; even so by the righteousness of one the free gift came upon all men unto justification of life" (Rom. 5:15, 18)**. It is obvious from verse 18 that it was the offense of Adam that brought judgment upon the entire race. How could that be if sin did not come upon the entire race because of the sin of Adam?

As a result of this sin of Adam sin has rendered the race **"dead in trespasses and sins" (Eph. 2:1)**. This is not something that has happened to us since we were born. We **"were by nature the children of wrath, even as others" (Eph. 2:3)**.

As most of you know, that which is by nature is not an acquired circumstance; rather, it is what is natural to us as creatures descended from fallen Adam and born of the flesh. The reason that putting away sin was such a difficult task is that it is contrary to everything that we are by nature.

This sin nature which we inherited from Adam has brought the entire race under condemnation. On occasion I have been asked, "What have I done to be condemned before God?" My answer is, "Adam, your father, stood as the federal head of his race. In

him we stood or fell. When he sinned, we sinned. When he came under condemnation, so did we."

Romans 5:18 Therefore as by the offence of one judgment came upon all men to condemnation; even so by the righteousness of one the free gift came upon all men unto justification of life.

Sin is so powerful that it has enslaved the entire human race. Paul reminded the Romans Christians that once **"ye were the servants of sin."** (Rom. 6:17). This was a state that was common to them all. The word from which **servants** is translated means a **bond-slave**. It does not mean someone who lives in his own home and gets up each morning and goes to another's house to work for them for pay, such as a maid might do. It means one who is in slavery. The apostle declares that all these Roman Christians were at one time slaves of sin. They were in the bondage of sin.

Sin is so powerful that it rendered man incapable of doing that which is acceptable for everlasting life. To be saved one must come to Christ. Jesus said, **"Ye will not come to me that ye might have life" (Jn. 5:40)**. There is simply no eternal life, no salvation without coming to Jesus Christ. Someone says, "If that is what God requires, then all men must have the ability to come to Christ." The **exact opposite is the case!** Jesus said, **"No man can come to me, except the Father which hath sent me draw him" (Jn. 6:44)**. To reiterate, he said, **"Therefore said I unto you, that no man can come unto me, except it were given unto him of my Father" Jn. 6:65)**.

This tragic inability of man to do that which is acceptable with God is further declared by Paul in his epistle to the church at Rome. **"The carnal mind is enmity against God: for it is not subject to the law of God, neither indeed can be. So then they that are in the flesh cannot please God" (Rom. 8:7-8)**.

Every man born of the flesh was, in the fall, totally corrupted so that no good remains. **"For I know that in me (that is, in my flesh,) dwelleth no good thing: for to will is present with me; but how to perform that which is good I find not" (Rom. 7:18)**. If there were some good in us with which God could start, the putting away of sin might not be so difficult. Even as a born-again Christian, the apostle still could not find the **way "to perform that which is good."** Regeneration does not affect the flesh, or one's sinful nature. A new nature is received, but this does nothing to moderate or mitigate the sinful bent of the old nature. In fact, if anything, it arouses it to fight a more determined war against good. **"When I want to do good, evil is present with me."**

Some men, in an effort to relieve the intensity of this difficulty, advocate there is a spark of good in all of us which merely needs fanning and encouraging and it will produce more good. If there were a spark of spiritual good in all men, there would be no need to speak of the difficulty of putting away sin. But, in what we are naturally, in what we are as a result of our fleshly birth, in what we are without the new birth, there is no good thing. All bad! No good! Therefore, God must start with that which is no good and put away sin.

A difficult endeavor indeed! So difficult, in fact, it would require the death of his only begotten Son. It would require that he turn his back on his beloved and pleasing Son. It would require his laying our sins on him if he would lay his righteousness on us.

Oh, the depth of our sinfulness by nature, as well as by practice. Sin is like leprosy, as far as man is concerned there is no cure. In the state of Louisiana I lived, for a while, not too far from a leper colony. Yes, there are still lepers in this world. Leprosy is incurable for man. It is, and was, one of the most, obnoxious, repugnant, and invidious of the diseases. If it had been curable, this would have moderated its repugnance somewhat. But, when one had this invidious disease, there was no cure, aside from a miracle of God. The difficulty of handling and removing this disease is symbolic of the difficulty of removing sin. It was no light thing with the Lord. It required infinite wisdom and a sacrifice of infinite worth to put away sin. The sinless Son of God must leave the glory of heaven, come to a sin cursed earth, live in poverty, and die the cruel death of the cross to put away the leprous thing called sin.

Sin is so abominable in the sight of our thrice holy God, that its debt must be paid in full, to the very last farthing, if men are to be saved. If God is to save sinners and put away sin every debt of sin must be paid in behalf of his elect people. God would not, he could not sacrifice his perfect holiness. Nor could he compromise his justice to put away sin. Sin must be put away in a manner that would maintain the absolute integrity of our blessed and holy God. From Scripture it appears that there was but one way for this momentous task to be accomplished in keeping with the perfect holiness and absolute justice of God. Christ must put away sin by the sacrifice of himself.

Paul tells us of the scheme of redemption that permitted God to be both merciful and just. **"For all have sinned, and come short of the glory of God; Being justified freely by his grace through the redemption that is in Christ Jesus: Whom God**

hath set forth to be a propitiation through faith in his blood, to declare his righteousness for the remission of sins that are past, through the forbearance of God; To declare, I say, at this time his righteousness: that he might be just, and the justifier of him which believeth in Jesus" (Rom. 3:23-26). Sin reigned in the hearts and lives of God's elect as much as in the heart of Satan himself, and sin clings to its throne tenaciously. To dethrone sin was not easy, but to our all-wise, omnipotent God nothing is too hard. It was a light thing to fill those ditches in that valley with water. It was a light thing to feed five thousand men, besides the women and children, and do it with only a little boys lunch. It was a light thing to furnish a wedding in Cana with an abundance of the very finest of wines. It was a light thing to make the blind to see, the deaf to hear, the dumb to speak and the lame to walk. But, to bring down the throne of sin in the hearts of the elect was a difficult task. Only the triune God of heaven was up to that task, and that was not to be accomplished without the death of God the Son.

THE DIFFICULTY OF THE TASK OF PUTTING AWAY SIN IS REVEALED IN THE MANNER IN WHICH CHRIST ACCOMPLISHED THE WORK
"By the sacrifice of himself."

Let us now consider the sacrifice of himself by which Christ put away sin.

This sacrifice of himself, in one sense, began in eternity when he agreed to come into the world and die for the sins of his people. Before the mountains were brought forth, before the earth had been formed by the mighty hand of God, Christ was a lamb slain. He is truly **"the Lamb slain from the foundation of the world."** (Rev. 13:8). He is the spotless lamb **"Who verily was foreordained before the foundation of the world" (1 Pet. 1:18-20).**

Every throb of pain, every piercing of his scalp with thorns, every stripe upon his back, every wound from the nails, every wracking pain from the cross being dropped into its socket pulling all his bones out of joint., every torturous moment of excruciating thirst were in his mind from all eternity. No wonder he is called **"a man of sorrows, and acquainted with grief"** and **"the lamb slain from the foundation of the world."**

This sacrifice of himself must have included his condescension to be born of a peasant woman from the despised city of Nazareth and his being despised and rejected of men. As a part of his suffering, Isaiah tells us that he is **"despised and**

rejected of men" (Isa. 53:3). Paul speaks of his sacrifice as including his condescension to be in the form of a servant. Notice how Paul connects this condescension with his death on the cross. He **"made himself of no reputation, and took upon him the form of a servant, and was made in the likeness of men: And being found in fashion as a man, he humbled himself, and became obedient unto death, even the death of the cross" (Phil. 2:7-8).** Upon what grounds of interpretation are we required, rather, permitted to separate the condescension from the cross when the condescension is essential to the death of the cross? Only in the **"fashion as a man"** could he become the substitute for men. Only in the "fashion as a man" could he die the death of the cross. He must be found "in the likeness of sinful flesh" if he would suffer for sinful flesh.

When one thinks about it, there were no non-essentials in the humiliation and suffering of our Lord Jesus Christ. Every aspect of his suffering, every contradiction of sinners that he encountered, every taunt, every humiliating condescension, every aspect of his suffering is, in one sense, a part of his **"sacrifice of himself."**

This sacrifice of himself included a life of poverty while he lived on this earth. From the manger to the grave he had nothing material that he could call his **own.** He spoke of this poverty. **"And Jesus saith unto him, The foxes have holes, and the birds of the air have nests; but the Son of man hath not where to lay his head" (Matt. 8:20).** But, someone objects, "His suffering of poverty was not a part of his sacrifice of himself." If it were not a part of his sacrifice of himself, it would be of no special benefit to those for whom he suffered. Yet, our brother, Paul, declared that he became poor that we might be rich. **"For ye know the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, that, though he was rich, yet for your sakes he became poor, that ye through his poverty might be rich" (II Cor. 8:9).** Since Paul spoke of this poverty as a means of our being made spiritually rich, would this not indicate that it is a part of the substitutionary sufferings of Jesus Christ? He endured poverty that we might enjoy spiritual riches. He endured death that we might have eternal life. Our spiritual poverty was a result of sin. In putting away sin, he must put away our spiritual poverty. To do that, he became poor that we might be rich.

I doubt that you or I can ever know, in this life, the full extent of the **"sacrifice of himself"** that Christ made to put away sin with its devastating effects upon his elect. In fact, I am not sure we can ever know the extent of his sufferings, even when we are

in glory. Perhaps this will be part of what is revealed to us as God reveals the exceeding riches of his grace in the ages to come.

This sacrifice of himself must include his mental and soul suffering in Gethsemane. He was yet several hours from the cross. But, I assure you, he was already suffering very intensely. As he bore our sorrows and carried our griefs, he would say, **"My soul is exceeding sorrowful, even unto death" (Matt. 26:38).** Before he was ever arrested by the soldiers, before they had ever laid a finger on him, before Judas had planted the betraying kiss upon him, before they had plucked out his beard or crowned him with thorns, our blessed sacrificing Saviour was in the agony of his sacrifice. **"And being in an agony he prayed more earnestly: and his sweat was as it were great drops of blood falling down to the ground" (Lu. 22:44).** Some say that he literally sweat blood, and I am inclined to agree. Perhaps he did. Others believe that the sweat was in great drops, as blood, welling up out of his pores and falling upon the ground. Which ever is the case, the fact is that he was already enduring the agony of the sacrifice of himself, when he was still several hours from the cross.

This sacrifice of himself must include his being brought as a sheep to the slaughter. If he is to die as the Lamb of God, he must be brought as a lamb to the slaughter. Every detail of this perfect, complete, once-for-all sacrifice must be fulfilled, even the manner of his being conducted to the judgment hall. **"Then the band and the captain and officers of the Jews took Jesus, and bound him, And led him away . . ." (Jn. 18:12-13).** **"He is brought as a lamb to the slaughter, and as a sheep before her shearers is dumb, so he openeth not his mouth" (Isa. 53:7).**

I repeat, every detail of this sacrifice of himself is essential and important. It goes beyond the three hours of darkness while he was on the cross, though I doubt not that that three hours was the most horrible period of his suffering. It goes far beyond the few hours on the cross. This sacrifice of himself included his treatment before Annas and Caiaphas. There one of the Roman soldiers slapped him, charging that he was speaking disrespectfully to the high priest. They blindfolded him and smote him again, calling on him to name the smiter if he were truly a prophet. They blasphemed him in many ways. (See Jn. 18:13-24; Lu. 22:63-65).

This sacrifice of himself included His trials before Pilate and Herod. After he left the house of the high priest he was brought, early in the morning, to

Pilate's judgment hall. From there he was sent before Herod; Pilate sought to pass the buck to that old fox. But Herod sent him back to Pilate who delivered him to be crucified.

This sacrifice of himself included his giving his back to the smiters and his cheeks to them that plucked off his beard. **Isaiah 50:6 I gave my back to the smiters, and my cheeks to them that plucked off the hair.** This sacrifice of himself included giving his face up to shame and spitting. This he did willingly. Notice his own words as recorded by the prophet, Isaiah. **"I hid not my face from shame and spitting" (Isa. 50:6-7).**

Can you imagine such humiliation and suffering? That the Son of God, with power to cast them all immediately into eternal torment, would allow these vile men to smite his face, pluck the beard from his cheeks, and repeatedly spit in his face, is marvelous. The awful shame of it! He suffered, that you and I may never be ashamed.

This sacrifice of himself included His being stripped and having a scarlet robe placed on him in derision of his claim to being the king of the Jews. **"And they stripped him, and put on him a scarlet robe" (Matt. 27:27).** The meek and lowly Son of man subjected to such derision and ridicule. Yet, this is another aspect of his suffering as he gave himself a sacrifice to put away sin.

This sacrifice of himself included his being crowned with thorns. Now, bear in mind, our Saviour is not yet to Golgotha. He has not yet been nailed to the cross, where we usually think of him giving himself a sacrifice. But, I suggest to you that he is already shedding blood. Any of you who have ever been pierced by a thorn will know that they cause one to bleed, sometimes profusely. Being an Arkansan farm boy by birth and rearing, I spent most of my summers barefooted when I was a boy. I know what a thorn can do to the feet, even feet toughened by walking in the hot dirt and on gravel roads. I find it hard to even imagine what thorns must have done to the forehead of our blessed Lord. Though he was not yet to the cross, he was already giving his blood for our redemption. Surely, no one would even suggest that this blood was any less precious than the blood shed on the cross. **"And when they had platted a crown of thorns, they put it upon his head, and a reed in his right hand: and they bowed the knee before him, and mocked him, saying, Hail, King of the Jews!" (Matt. 27:29).**

This sacrifice of himself included their mocking, scourging, and hitting him with their fists. Much of the bruising of Christ occurred before he reached Golgotha. We have already seen some of it, but it

would continue right up until they left to crucify him. **"And they spit upon him, and took the reed, and smote him on the head" (Matt. 27:30).** Other places reveal that they also hit him with their fists. Were these bruising blows a part of his sacrifice of himself to put away sin? Isaiah indicated they were. He said, **"He was bruised for our iniquities" (Isa. 53:5).** The bruises, the stripes, and many of the wounds mentioned by Isaiah were laid upon Jesus before he had reached the cross. In fact, Isaiah mentions them before he speaks of his being led to the slaughter.

I fear that we are so accustomed to thinking of the cross, and Christ's suffering there, that we may be guilty of discounting this prior suffering as not being included in the sacrifice of himself.

This sacrifice of himself included his bearing his cross until he fell under the weight of it. It included his being stripped naked and nailed to that cross bearing our sins in his own body. **Matthew 27:31-35 And after that they had mocked him, they took the robe off from him, and put his own raiment on him, and led him away to crucify him. 32 And as they came out, they found a man of Cyrene, Simon by name: him they compelled to bear his cross. 33 And when they were come unto a place called Golgotha, that is to say, a place of a skull, 34 They gave him vinegar to drink mingled with gall: and when he had tasted thereof, he would not drink. 35 And they crucified him, and parted his garments, casting lots: that it might be fulfilled which was spoken by the prophet, They parted my garments among them, and upon my vesture did they cast lots. 1 Peter 2:24 Who his own self bare our sins in his own body on the tree, that we, being dead to sins, should live unto righteousness: by whose stripes ye were healed.**

It included his cross being dropped into the socket and all of his bones coming out of joint. **Psalm 22:14 I am poured out like water, and all my bones are out of joint: my heart is like wax; it is melted in the midst of my bowels.**

This sacrifice of himself included all the mockings he endured while on the cross. **Psalm 22:6-8 But I am a worm, and no man; a reproach of men, and despised of the people. 7 All they that see me laugh me to scorn: they shoot out the lip, they shake the head, saying, 8 He trusted on the LORD that he would deliver him: let him deliver him, seeing he delighted in him. Psalm 22:12-13 Many bulls have compassed me: strong bulls of Bashan have beset me round. 13 They gaped**

upon me with their mouths, as a ravening and a roaring lion.

This sacrifice of himself also included his heart melting like wax and running into the midst of his bowels. **Psalm 22:14 I am poured out like water, and all my bones are out of joint: my heart is like wax; it is melted in the midst of my bowels.**

This sacrifice of himself included his tongue drying up like a potsherd and cleaving to his jaws. **Psalm 22:15 My strength is dried up like a potsherd; and my tongue cleaveth to my jaws; and thou hast brought me into the dust of death.**

This sacrifice of himself included the piercing of his hands and his feet when they nailed him to the cross. **Psalm 22:16 For dogs have compassed me: the assembly of the wicked have inclosed me: they pierced my hands and my feet.** What agony that must have been! It included the shedding of his infinitely precious blood. **1 Peter 1:18-20 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; 19 But with the precious blood of Christ, as of a lamb without blemish and without spot: 20 Who verily was foreordained before the foundation of the world, but was manifest in these last times for you.**

This sacrifice of himself included, and reached its very crowning zenith, when God forsook him as his very soul was made an offering for sin. **Isaiah 53:10 Yet it pleased the LORD to bruise him; he hath put him to grief: when thou shalt make his soul an offering for sin, he shall see his seed, he shall prolong his days, and the pleasure of the LORD shall prosper in his hand. Matthew 27:45-46 Now from the sixth hour there was darkness over all the land unto the ninth hour. 46 And about the ninth hour Jesus cried with a loud voice, saying, Eli, Eli, lama sabachthani? that is to say, My God, my God, why hast thou forsaken me.** This was the most indescribable aspect of his suffering. God veiled the world in darkness while his Son drank the last bitter dregs of his cup of suffering.

But, this sacrifice of himself did not end until he cried, **"It is finished,"** and bowed his thorn-crowned head and gave up the ghost.

But, even after that, they came by and pierced his side. Blood and water gushed forth. Was this blood not also **"the blood of his cross"**? Only then, and not until then, was the suffering finished, and the sacrifice complete.

CONCLUSION

Certainly, the cross is the focal point of his

suffering. And, the hours of darkness when his very soul was made a offering for sin was the zenith, the apex, the crowning aspect of his suffering. But, all of his suffering was not at the cross, nor in the hours of darkness. This sacrifice of himself began in his purpose to come to the earth in the form of man. It began experientially when he condescended to be born of a lowly virgin from Nazareth. It did not end until he commended his spirit unto the Father and they drove the spear into his side, emptying his body of its last blood.

Yes, he was wounded for our transgressions, he was bruised for our iniquities, the chastisement of our peace was upon him, and with his stripes we are healed. He suffered in his body; he suffered in his mind; he suffered in his soul. That is how he sacrificed himself to put away sin, his most difficult task. **This is how Christ accomplished the impossible. He put away sin by the sacrifice of himself.**

NORTH SPRINGFIELD BAPTIST CHURCH OF NORTH SPRINGFIELD, VERMONT, IN WHICH J. R. GRAVES WAS BAPTIZED

By Wayne Camp

I suppose if there is any one man that could be called **"Mr. Landmarker,"** it would be J. R. Graves, author of **Old Landmarkism, What Is It?** Of course, J. M. Pendleton would be close up there with him as would A. C. Dayton. According to William Cathcart, at the age of 15 years, Graves was baptized into the fellowship of the North Springfield Baptist Church of North Springfield, Vermont. This church was started out of the First Baptist Church of Chester, Vermont. But, the First Baptist Church was not formally and officially organized by the First Baptist Church of Bellingham, Massachusetts. Their only link to the Church in Bellingham, Massachusetts, is the fact that, after he visited Chester and determined to work there, he returned to Bellingham and the FBC of Bellingham ordained Aaron Leland a "Travelling Minister" on June 20, 1787. [While this would satisfy some, others would unchurch the

First Baptist Church of Chester and thus unchurch the North Springfield church and thereby repudiate the baptism of J. R. Graves. As Bro. Larry Killion has said and I agree, "I think we would have to be meticulously rigid and very nit picky to unchurch Bro Leland . . ." RWC].

In July, 1787, Elder Aaron Leland and his wife, Joanna, left Bellingham, MA, and travelled to Chester, VT, where Joanna took sick and died shortly after their arrival. Leland had been invited to come to Chester, VT, "to preach with us" by a petition of fifteen citizens, none of whom were Baptists.

On August 9, 1789, two years after arriving in Chester, the Chester Baptist Church was formed in covenant by the 10 people Leland had gathered during his two years there. On October 3, 1789, the church in Bellingham, Massachusetts, dismissed Bro. Leland from its membership sending a letter of recommendation to the church in Chester, VT. On January 14, 1790, the Chester church received the letter and formally voted to "receive Elder Aaron Leland as a Minister of this church according to the above recommendation." The entire text of this letter is in the records of the church. Bro. Leland pastored this church for 43 three years. It was his first and only pastorate.

The current pastor of the First Baptist Church of Chester, Vermont, Eld. Tom Charlton, writes, "The Bellingham, MA, church did not directly form the Chester, VT, church. However, on invitation from citizens of Chester [none of whom were Baptists, RWC], Aaron Leland did travel here and in his life had a lasting influence on the community."

The Old Landmarker himself, the great Baptist, J. R. Graves, was baptized in the North Springfield Baptist Church which formed out of the First Baptist Church of Chester, VT, which was not directly, or formally, formed out of another Baptist Church. There is no indication that Graves ever renounced his baptism and sought re-baptism. If it had been the contention of this Old Landmarker that every church must be formally started by another Baptist Church or

it is not scriptural and could not, therefore administer scriptural baptism, surely he would have repudiated his baptism.

[Editor's Note: The information for this historical sketch has been gathered from three sources. (1) I have a copy of a lengthy letter in hand from the current pastor of First Baptist Church of Chester, VT, containing information which was based on the church minutes and other historical sources, which was sent to another brother who sent it to me and others. (2) An article on J. R. Graves, Pages 466-468 of *The Baptist Encyclopedia*, by William Cathcart. (3) An article on Eld. Aaron Leland from *The Baptist Encyclopedia*, Page 682. Though I found nothing additional, I also read quickly through *J. R. Graves: Life, Times, and Teachings* to check and see if it mentioned a rebaptism of Graves]

HAVE YOU HEARD?

Have you heard that salvation is absolutely free. It cannot be bought or earned by good works. It is the gift of God. ***Romans 8:32 He that spared not his own Son, but delivered him up for us all, how shall he not with him also freely give us all things?*** Please note the expression, "***freely give us all things.***" The word ***freely*** means that what is given to us in Jesus Christ is given without any regard for any thing we have done. We do not deserve it. Salvation is given to the true believer in Jesus Christ out of pure grace, pure unmerited favor. There is absolutely no meritorious conditions attached.

Notice also these things in Christ are ***given*** to the true believer in Christ. We do not purchase them. We do not earn them as wages. We have absolutely no claim on God for them. ***Romans 6:23 For the wages of sin is death; but the gift of God is eternal life through Jesus Christ our Lord.*** Sin earns the wages of death, spiritual death, eternal separation from God in the awful lake of tormenting flames. But, eternal life is a pure gift given to the true believer in Jesus Christ. It is a gift from God. It is a gift motivated by everlasting, immutable love. ***Jeremiah 31:3 The LORD hath appeared of old unto me, saying, Yea, I have loved thee with an everlasting love: therefore with lovingkindness have I drawn thee.*** Have your received God's gift of eternal life?

Bouquets and Brickbats

OKLAHOMA: I want to say Thank You so much for the wonderful information on your website. I have not celebrated Christmas for many years, but was never able to adequately explain why. With the information you have provided I feel I can now express my reasons with a sure knowledge. Thank you again.

WWW: Hello.....just wanted to commend you on your article on Christmas! We don't do Christmas here either! We have been married for 21 years and have NEVER done Christmas.....and never will.....keep up the good work! I read your article on the Perilous Times webpage!

MEXICO: Two comments: (1) Although some Baptists say that baptism is the DOOR to the local church, their own practice shows that it is instead a prerequisite condition for church membership. They do not baptize every new member who joins their church, but often accept members previously baptized by other churches! (2) To insist that baptism is the door to the church, without rebaptizing members who transfer, unwittingly implies that there is a "universal, visible Baptist church". Thanks for your well thought out articles.

WWW: Having looked at your web site I am disgusted at your scissored & paste type of Biblical 'scholarship'. If you paid more attention to the finished work of Calvary & less to throwing mud at fellow believers; I believe you would find that you would find many more needy souls coming to find a personal relationship with Jesus Christ as their Lord & Saviour!! Unfortunately, non Christians read your web site diatribes & go away laughing. Dr. James Dobson may be mistaken in some of his friends, possibly mistaken in some of his doctrinal views, but I suspect when we gather around the throne of God in Heaven you & your friends will discover that the man you are trying to malign WILL receive Our Master's: "Well done thou good and faithful servant!"

None of us can be perfect in this life. Even the greatest saint is ONLY a sinner saved by God's mercy & grace. Without the shed blood of Calvary we are ALL nothing! As an elder in a Penticostal (sic. Pentecostal) Assembly I also take strong exception to your views on the Arminian view of Salvation. Personally, I find Calvinism arrogant & full of spiritual pride. God DOES know the end from the beginning, however, we ALL do have free choice. To think otherwise is to condemn millions to a Christless eternity!. In view of the troubled world in which we are living, I would suggest you find a better use for your web site than to preach a twisted gospel of negativism. Perhaps you might EVEN consider telling sinners that Christ shed his precious blood to save their souls from hell?

MARYLAND: After having visited your site, you are in my prayers. I do not believe I have witnessed more self righteous garbage than your rambling diatribe. You truly miss the whole point of being a Christian.

TEXAS: I was tickled when I came across your web Site. I was looking for some books on Baptist History to complement the ones I already have. Since I knew of some that the Baptist Examiner had, I called up a search on that name and your site had a 58% or so probability that it mentioned such. I happened to get snagged with brickbats and bouquets and became intrigued with your discussion with "Joe" I think. I was not sure which side of this question you were on but got a surprise when you talked of a position that mirrored mine. Actually I was cajoled early to be such a chain linker but then I could not get past the two to three gathered together bit. It was obvious that they were baptized believers and not necessarily any one being needful to have been an ordained preacher to establish a church. This process was amended by the scripture in acts concerning the scattering of the persecuted church of Jerusalem into the world. It seemed to have everybody preaching the word and multiplying....again with no other hint but that these were baptized believers....true - baptized

at Jerusalem the one church, but not necessarily ordained preacher led.

Now, the question I have now (Oh! Let me mention one other thing concerning that throughout history we were not all called "Baptist", though we could recognize them as such by some of our doctrines. So being Baptist in name is not an issue) is that if some of our baptized brethren leave out from us and combine with some believers who were not Baptists and they covenant to form the "nondenominational church of Jesus" or some such name, could they be truly considered Baptist enough for us to receive them doctrinally as Baptists if they send out members who seek to church themselves with some of our Baptist churches (them not finding like denomination to join up to, and these not having been baptized in a "Baptist" church.). Can we associate with them as sister Churches- being a like question? I seem to recall that many of our Baptist brethren have actually started some of the charismatic denominations, and even some of the nondenominational assemblies, having been embarrassed by the Baptist name.

Outside of this, the only thing I might have contributed to scripture knowledge in my small life is the finding of the two endings, one of the sign gifts of the spirit and the other of the gifts of knowledge and prophecy in the Bible. Or in other words, why we can bald facedly tell a charismatic that he might be lying when he says he has a manifestation of any of the sign and testimony gifts today (outside of Love - being the only manifestation the world could ever observe to give us credibility that we are indeed the disciples of Christ today). This also ties down the date of Christ's Birth and his resurrection and the date of John the Baptist's death as a sort of by product of the research. All this found in the Bible without any special revelation of God to me. However, It ironically introduces a chance help of Ben Bogard that began my research from one of his out of context statements in a debate with some Church of Christ minister. If this is intriguing I might send you what amounts to a seventy page plea for help to check out my research so I

don't wander into some sort of heresy. I figure you could possibly keep me doctrinally sound as much as a brother can if Christ be with him.

Thanks for the articles

WWW: Hi Mr Camp There is a very interesting article that came out in a Roman Catholic newspaper that discusses PKs in detail from a Roman Catholic point of view. In this article it quotes Coach McCartney as stating that he always wanted the RC to be involved with the PKs - - since the beginning. The article points out that somewhere between 10 and 20 percent of the audience at the rallies are RC. The article states that the top echelon of the PK went to the Franciscan University on numerous occasions to conduct PK type business. In fact, the article states that the RC leadership there did not like the PK Statement of Faith so PK allowed the RC theologians there to modify the Statement so that the RCs could be included in future PK activities. The article stated that one of their more prominent RCs had been selected as a member of the Board of Directors for the PK. This same gentleman, Mike Timmis, got up in front of the crowd at the Stand at The Gap rally in DC in October several years ago and prayed. In his prayer for all he stated that Roman Catholics, the Orthodox Church and Protestants of all persuasions were brothers and sisters in Christ. The article also indicated that a Jim Berluchi, a Roman Catholic Evangelist, gave presentations at selected PK rallies. The article also stated that Coach McCartney stated he was a born again Catholic. In a separate article, there was an interview with Stephen Chavis of PK and he indicated that Coach Mc had made this same statement while on Larry King Live.

(EDITOR'S NOTE: I have reported before that Coach Bill McCartney, though he had become a member of the Vineyard movement, had never renounced his Roman Catholicism. The article to which this letter refers, shows that McCartney is still aligned with the RC church.)

MISSOURI: You don't know me but I have been on your mailing list for the **GP&P** for some time and just thought I would write a few lines to say

how much I enjoy getting the paper. I save all copies as I feel some day we may not be able to receive such papers as they will be classified as hate mail by our government. Just wanted to say thanks for what you are doing.

FLORIDA: Just a note to let you know, the Sovereign Grace Baptist Church of Brandon, FL, is always in prayer for you and the church there. May God continue to bless your work with the paper. Enclosed is a check for continuance of getting the gospel out to a dying world.

I know you are under fire from a lot of people,

but our Lord said it would happen. As your Brother in Christ I pray you will be truly blessed for your effort.

NORTH CAROLINA: If all you've got to write about is baptism & "Baptist church," please count me OUT! REMOVE FROM MAILING LIST!

PLANNING TO MOVE? If at all possible, please notify us three weeks in advance of your change of address so that we may keep your paper coming. It costs us 70 cents to get your new address from the Postal Service and that may take long enough that two papers are returned at a cost of \$1.40 before we get the correction. This will mean you miss one or two papers. Your help in saving us this expense will be appreciated.

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Cecil Fayard: The Preacher and Modern Theology & The Preacher and Lust
Joe Maldonado: How to Be a Good Pastor in God's Eyes & How to Be Instant Out of Season **Michael McCosky:** The Preacher Enduring Hardness & The Preacher's Equipment
Royce Smith: A Bishop Must Be Blameless & The Preacher and Persecution
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