

EXTRA: EXPOSING ERROR—IS IT WORTHWHILE? BY HARRY IRONSIDE (P.8)

IS PREACHING HELLFIRE *Biblical?*

"And I saw the dead, small and great, stand before God . . . and the sea gave up the dead which were in it; and death and hell delivered up the dead which were in them: and they were judged every man according to their works. And death and hell were cast into the lake of fire. This is the second death. And whosoever was not found written in the book of life was cast into the lake of fire."

— REVELATION 20:12-15

The
Berean
Call

APRIL 2008

JUSTICE, FORGIVENESS, AND TRANSFORMATION

by DAVE HUNT

NEW! FOR ZION'S SAKE CHRISTIAN ZIONISM AND THE ROLE OF J.N. DARBY

With so much confusion and misinformation surrounding dispensationalism, Christian Zionism, and the role of J.N. Darby, Wilkinson's work is a breath of theological and historical fresh air . . . This work should quickly become a standard on Christian Zionism and Darby's influence on this important movement. — **MARK HITCHCOCK**

Few dedicated Christian scholars have been attacked more unfairly than John Nelson Darby . . . This well researched and readable book carefully sets the record straight and makes a valuable contribution to prophetic studies. — **TIM LAHAYE**

Wilkinson's impeccable documentation . . . thoroughly refutes the myth that Darby got his doctrine of the Pre-tribulation Rapture from a Scottish girl and two Jesuit priests. I highly recommend this excellent treatment of a controversial subject that has confused many. — **DAVE HUNT**

Dr. Wilkinson has restored Darby's reputation as a pious visionary who was used by God at a crucial time in history . . . For any student of ecclesiastical and political history, as well as systematic and historical theology, this book is essential reading. — **RANDALL PRICE**



Wilkinson—Christian Zionism has been described by Hamas as “the greatest danger to world truth, justice, and peace,” and by the church as “a powerful force” that “fuels the Arab-Israeli conflict” and “encourages the destruction of millions of people” with its “Armageddon theology.” It has also been denounced as “pernicious,” “biblically untenable,” “anathema to the Christian faith,” and “one of the most dangerous and heretical movements in the world.” How sustainable are these charges, and is there a case to answer? By locating Christian Zionism firmly within the evangelical tradition, Paul Wilkinson takes issue with those who have portrayed it as a “totally unbiblical menace” and as the “road map to Armageddon.” Charting in detail its origins and historical development, he argues that Christian Zionism lays the biblical foundation for Israel’s restoration and the return of Christ. No one has contributed more to this cause than its leading architect and patron, John Nelson Darby, an “uncompromising champion for Christ’s glory and God’s truth.” This groundbreaking book challenges decades of misrepresentation and scholarship, exploding the myth that John Nelson Darby stole the doctrine of the pre-tribulation rapture from his contemporaries. By revealing the man and his message, Paul Wilkinson vindicates Darby and spotlights the imminent return of the Lord Jesus Christ as the centerpiece of his theology. Foreword by Thomas Ice. Paternoster, 308 pp.

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McMahon—Tom observed a connection between *The Passion of the Christ* and trends taking place among professing Bible believers such as the increasing use of entertainment in presenting the gospel, the ecumenical relationship between Catholics and Evangelicals, the use of imagery verging on idolatry, and the major drift away from the objective Word of God in favor of the subjective, “feelings-oriented” treatment of the Scriptures. The Berean Call, 160 pp.

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An understanding of the gospel includes not just what we are saved to but what we are saved from—and why. Without the preaching and teaching of the doctrine of hell, the “good news” of Jesus Christ as “the way, the truth, and the life” is rendered merely as “a way of life.” Tragically, an alarming percentage of those who profess to know Christ are increasingly antagonistic to the Scriptures and either spiritualize or ignore God’s own word on the matter, which so clearly warns and documents in plain language the eternal destiny of all who reject the Truth.

THE BEREAN CALL

"[The Bereans] . . . searched the scriptures daily, [to see] whether those things were so."—Acts 17:11

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Justice, Forgiveness, and Transformation

Dave Hunt

The Bible declares, "In the beginning God created the heaven and the earth." After the creation of all else, God said, "Let us make man in our image....So God made man in his image." He then created Eve, a wife for Adam, and gave them the easiest command possible: of the innumerable trees of delicious fruit He had planted in the Garden paradise, there was only one of which they were not to eat: "the tree of knowledge of good and evil" (Gn 2:9). It could have borne any variety of fruit. There was no spiritual power in the fruit of this tree any more than in any other fruit just like it.

The command not to eat of that particular tree was a test of His creatures' obedience. Disobedience even in such a simple thing would be rebellion for which they would be cut off from God, the giver of life, resulting in physical and spiritual death and expulsion from His presence forever.

Critics find it incredibly cruel that eating forbidden fruit should result in today's world of painful and deadly diseases, poisonous insects and reptiles, the suffering of innocent babies and children, wars, murders, rape, theft, and other horrors that continue, in pain and sorrow, to spell out human history. Yet Adam and Eve's seemingly insignificant act was done in defiance of their Creator. The rest, as they say, is history—the history of persistent rebellion against the God who created mankind to be the recipients of His love and blessing.

Here we are today, 6 billion-plus little egos, reaping the awful consequences of our own selfishness. We cannot blame God for today's world but only ourselves. This is not the world God made but the one we have made in our defiance of Him.

It is said that President Bush is a born-again Christian who prays on his face before God every morning. Yet Bush calls Islam a "religion of peace," even though it is the most vicious religion in history, responsible for the slaughter of untold millions—a slaughter that continues today worldwide. How can Bush be a true Christian and tell such a lie, not once but repeatedly? He calls Muhammad (the founder of this murderous "faith" and himself a murderer of many) a prophet of the true God—and the Qur'an the Word of God! Bush can

hardly be ignorant of the fact that sixteen times the Qur'an denies that Jesus is the Son of God. It also denies that He died on the Cross for the sins of the world, denies the resurrection, and every other Christian doctrine. Yet Bush praises Islam?

Where is the practical evidence in everyday leadership that Bush is following Christ with his whole heart and not just playing both sides for political purposes? The rebellion that began with Satan in heaven and spread to Eden is rampant in America and worldwide. Neither God nor Christ is honored in the United Nations. What country's leaders actually seek and follow the guidance of the Creator of all? America is right where Israel was when God lamented, "Judgment is turned away backward, and justice standeth afar off: for truth is fallen in the street, and equity cannot enter" (Is 59:14).

As Creator of His universe, God must rule. Satan led a cosmic rebellion in heaven, taking many angels with him. Tragically, man followed this insurrection that God will not tolerate. No ruler can allow anarchy—this is why treason warrants the death penalty. How infinitely worse is a revolt against the Lord of the Universe!

God has written His moral laws in every human conscience (Rom 2:14,15). We each know when we continue the rebellion. Sin is high treason against the Lord of the Universe. Thus God told Adam and Eve that in the day they rebelled against Him they would "surely die." All of their descendants have likewise failed the "obedience test."

The Bible warns, "The wages of sin is death" (Rom 6:23). If treason against an earthly government warrants the death penalty, how much more would high treason against the Lord of the Universe warrant eternal separation from the Life-giver! Jesus himself decreed for rebels eternal banishment from His presence into "outer darkness [where] there shall be weeping and gnashing of teeth" (Mt 8:12; 22:13; 25:30).

Does God sentence us to a severe but temporary punishment, then welcome us into heaven as having been "purged" of our sin in physical flames? On the contrary, the Bible says that Christ "by himself purged our sins" (Heb 1:3). If we could be purged of sin in any other way, then why did Christ die on the Cross? This erroneous idea of being purged of sin by torment in fire is common to both Roman Catholicism and Islam. The latter's concept of hell sounds as though Muhammad borrowed it from Catholicism's purgatory.

In Catholicism, the "purging" occurs in a place called purgatory, invented by Pope Gregory the Great in A.D. 593. Roman Catholicism declares that if one has not suffered sufficient "sorrows, miseries and trials of this life" then "expiation must be made in the next life through fire and torments or purifying punishments..." ("Apostolic Constitution on the Revision of Indulgences," Vatican II).

The idea that physical fire consuming one's body could have a morally purifying effect (affirmed by both Catholicism and Islam) is not only heresy but unreasonable. Evangelicals, too, accept the idea of torment in physical fire as a fitting eternal punishment for moral and spiritual rebellion against God. That concept has numerous problems.

Bodily immersion in fire (as Islam, Catholicism, and many evangelicals propose) would cause such unbearable pain that it would be impossible to have a moral or rational thought. There couldn't even be a sincere regret for sins committed—only an overwhelming rage against the "God" who would torture in this manner and the desperate promise of anything in order to get relief. Of course, promises made under such duress would be worthless!

If those in the Lake of Fire have physical bodies (which the rich man in hell did not), their bodies would be consumed instantly. Thus, the "God" torturing them would have to instantaneously and continuously reconstitute their bodies to maintain the physical torment. This is the hell of Islam: "...cast into the Fire: As often as their skins are roasted through, We shall change them for fresh skins, that they may taste the penalty: for Allah is Exalted in Power, Wise" (Surah 4:56). The body is much more than skin, so this makes no sense. Yet Catholics and even some evangelicals have a similar view.

The question is often asked, "What about the bodies of evildoers mentioned in John 5:28-29? And what about 'I saw the dead, small and great, stand before God....the sea gave up the dead which were in it; and death and hell delivered up the dead which were in them' (Rv 20:12-13)? Doesn't that sound as though their bodies have been resurrected?" No, it couldn't be. Nothing is said in these passages about "the dead" having bodies. How could those standing before God in judgment be described as "dead" if they had been raised body, soul, and spirit? Only through Christ's resurrection is death conquered. The bodies of the redeemed alone partake in that victory.

The fact that the dead are “judged... according to their works” (Rv 20:12) surely means nothing unless they are punished “according to their works.” How could that happen through the torture of being thrown into the Lake of Fire? Will Hitler be in a hotter section? But how could physical bodies suffer greater or lesser heat in the split second of consumption? And how could degrees of physical torture distinguish between sins of so many different kinds and the motivation behind each? Physical flames could not do that.

The rich man in hell did say he was tormented in a flame; and death and hell will one day be cast into “everlasting fire, prepared for the devil and his angels....The lake of fire...where the beast, and the false prophet...shall be tormented...for ever and ever” (Mt 25:41; Rv 20:10,14). But the “devil and his angels” have no physical bodies, so how could physical flames, to which they would be impervious, have been prepared for them? The rich man’s body was in the grave, not in the flames of hell, even though he spoke of his tongue.

Certainly, the fire that shall “try every man’s work of what sort it is” (1 Cor 3:13) is not physical. It must be the “fire” of God’s justice, holiness, purity, and truth that exposes motives and would surely torment the conscience of the damned forever. This alone could constitute the flames in the Lake of Fire. No longer is any excuse plausible even to the most perverted. With no tree to hide behind, no fig leaf to cover, and standing naked before God, the flame of His justice burns the conscience with supernatural conviction. That eternal torment will be beyond anything we could imagine.

The Qur’an has far more to say about hell than does the Bible. Qur’anic descriptions are vivid and terrifying. Hell is for those who reject the teachings of the Qur’an (Surah 5:86). And like Rome’s purgatory, every Muslim must spend at least some time in hell (S 19:71,72). Some “will abide therein forever” (S 2:217), while others will be delivered after they have sufficiently suffered in the flames: “Whoso is removed from the Fire and is made to enter paradise, he indeed is triumphant” (S 3:185, etc.).

Of the rich man, Jesus said, “In hell he lift up his eyes, being in torments” and begged for a drop of water to be placed on his tongue (Lk 16:23,24). That strange request betrayed confusion between the physical and spiritual/moral, since his body and its tongue were rotting in the grave. Having sought pleasure, joy, and fulfillment in the physical alone to the exclusion of the moral and spiritual, the rich man was apparently locked into that delusion for eternity.

Why wouldn’t torment in the Lake of Fire bring the most hardened sinner

to repentance and thus to salvation? As already noted, if physical, the pain would be too severe to allow any rational thought, much less a genuine free-will response to the gospel, even if offered. Biblically, it is too late. After death comes “judgment” (Heb 9:27), not a second chance.

Every parent knows that a child caught in disobedience will tearfully repent and promise the moon to escape punishment. The same is true of criminals. I helped a former chairman of the Federal Parole Board write his biography. He learned that prisoners begging for parole could bring one to tears with their apparently sincere promises to “go straight” and never return to prison. Yet very few fulfill such promises. Prisons have revolving doors, with a high percentage of “graduates” returning to continue the lesson they never learned.

The United States, with by far the highest per capita church attendance in the world, also has the highest percentage of its population behind bars at any time. This reflects both the fact that many criminals live more luxuriously in prison than they did in the outside world—and that prison sentences for criminals are not biblical. Instead, God requires restitution to the victim, and that has a morally restorative effect for the offender. Of course, most people never commit a crime that sends them to prison, but they could be engaging secretly in adultery, fornication, lust, homosexuality, envy, pride, jealousy, etc., and “repent” only when caught.

A number of high-profile religious leaders, both Catholic and evangelical, have within the past few years been exposed for committing horrible sins and have supposedly publicly repented, some with tears. The shame is hard to recover from and the suspicion can never be removed that no matter how sincere the repentance may seem to be, it didn’t come because the one exposed was truly repentant but was merely embarrassed at being caught. If the sin had remained hidden, would the person have come forward to repent, or would he have continued to enjoy the sin in secret? God alone knows the answer to that vital question (Jer 17:9).

There is no way for any sinner, no matter how repentant, to cleanse his heart! God knows that we cannot change from what we are to the new creation He wants us to be. For God to justly forgive, the penalty must be paid. Since it is infinite and pronounced by God upon all mankind, no one but God himself could pay it. But that would not be just, because He is not one of us. So God became a man through the virgin birth to take our place under His wrath, paying the penalty for everyone’s sins so that all could be justly forgiven.

The penalty of eternal death having been pronounced by God, even He cannot change it. Why? Whatever God says is a reflection of His holy character. For God to go back on His word even once would undermine His perfection. If He could change His mind once, why not twice, or three times—or any number of times? If He only once broke His Word, we could never again rely upon what He says. The possibility would always remain that He might change His mind again—and again.

But this is impossible: “I am the Lord, I change not....For ever, O Lord, thy word is settled in heaven” (Mal 3:6; Ps 119:89).

In contrast, Allah says, “Such of our revelations as we abrogate or cause to be forgotten, we bring (in place) one better or the like” (Surah 2:106).

The redemptive work that Christ accomplished on the Cross is the foundation of our faith and for that very reason it is the object of continual attacks aimed at discrediting it. Islam, in the Qur’an, denies that Christ is God come as a man (though it affirms the virgin birth) and denies that He died on the Cross, much less that He did or even could pay the penalty for others (Surah 4:157-8). The very concept of Christ, the sinless One, dying in the place of sinners is attacked not only by Islam but by atheists who claim it violates the principles of justice.

In Romans 3:21-26, Paul argues the justice of Christ’s death as the substitute for all mankind. His conclusion sounds as though he has fully proved it: “...that he [God] might be just, and the justifier of him which believeth in Jesus” (v. 26). Paul gives no explanation why this, which seems so contrary to all human reason, could be true.

To understand, consider Barabbas and Paul. The former was the only one who ever lived who could say that Christ literally died for him. What a testimony he could have given! But Christ’s death in his place effected no transformation in his heart but merely set that criminal free to live for himself. In contrast, Paul testified, “I am crucified with Christ: nevertheless I live; yet not I, but Christ liveth in me: and the life which I now live in the flesh I live by the faith of the Son of God, who loved me, and gave himself for me” (Gal 2:20).

Those who truly believe on Christ as Lord and Savior are accepting His death as though it were theirs. The life that one once aspired to live for self has been crucified with Christ, and His life has been accepted in exchange. Faith in Christ effects a miraculous transformation in the believer’s heart that can only be described as being “born again...of the Spirit” (Jn 3:3-8). Those who do not know Christ in this way can receive Him by faith right now and begin this new life that will last for eternity! TBC

Quotable

The clock of life is wound but once,
And no man has the power
To tell just when the hands will stop
At late or early hour.

To lose one's wealth is sad indeed,
To lose one's health is more.
To lose one's soul is such a loss
That no man can restore.

Robert H. Smith (1832)

When we come to God, we must bring nothing but Christ with us. Any ingredients, or any previous qualifications of our own, poison and corrupt faith. He that builds upon duties, graces, etc., knows not the merits of Christ....If you [are to live by faith], you must every day renounce as dung and dross (Phil 3:7,8) your privileges, your obedience, your baptism...sanctification...duties...tears....Nothing but Christ must be held up. Every day your workings and self-sufficiency must be destroyed.

Thomas Wilcox (1621-1687)

Q&A

QUESTION: I was saved as a result of your presentation of the gospel in *The Seduction of Christianity*. I love you and appreciate you beyond words. But in response to a question in May 2007, you said, "You are limiting God. Did a missionary get the gospel to Enoch, Job, Noah, Abraham...? Through the witness of creation and His laws written in their consciences, God has always been able to bring those with open hearts to Himself...."

My mind went to Romans 10:13-15. Doesn't that passage contradict your assertion? Hasn't God limited Himself to using the preaching of the Gospel as the means to salvation?

RESPONSE: I ask again, who preached the gospel to the heroes of the faith listed in Hebrews 11? Do you think that every Old Testament saint understood the gospel to the same extent that it has been revealed to us today through the fullness of the Scriptures? Even the prophets didn't have the full gospel. They understood through animal sacrifices that an innocent substitute had to die for the guilty—but did everyone realize all that was entailed? Peter tells us:

Of which salvation the prophets have enquired and searched diligently, who prophesied of the grace that should come unto you: searching what, or what manner

of time the Spirit of Christ which was in them did signify, when it testified beforehand the sufferings of Christ, and the glory that should follow. (1 Pt 1:10,11)

Go back and read the full chapter of Romans 10 again. It doesn't say that a preacher is essential. Paul's question is rhetorical: "How shall they hear without a preacher?" Note that after saying, "Faith cometh by hearing, and hearing by the word of God," (Rom 10:17) he adds, "Have they not heard? Yes, verily, their sound went into all the earth, and their words unto the ends of the world [nothing about a preacher]."

That declaration echoes what Psalm 19:1-4 says about the witness of all of God's creation: "There is no speech nor language, where their voice is not heard." Paul hammers the same theme: "For the invisible things of him from the creation of the world are clearly seen, being understood by the things that are made, even his eternal power and Godhead; so that they are without excuse..." (Rom 1:20).

In other words, people everywhere in all times of history know from the universe about them that God exists as Creator. Romans 2:14-15 makes it clear that every person anywhere in the world and at any time in history also knows in their God-given conscience that they have broken His moral laws and that even if they could live without sin in the future that could never wipe away the guilt of having violated conscience in the past. The Holy Spirit witnesses in every heart that God is love and that He must have a just solution. Seekers cry out to know Him, and cast themselves upon His mercy.

Although He was speaking primarily to Israel through His prophet Jeremiah, the Lord made it clear that He will reveal Himself to anyone who seeks Him with his or her whole heart: "And ye shall seek me [the one true God], and find me, when ye shall search for me with all your heart" (Jer 29:13).

A common objection one hears from atheists and even from those who say they believe in God but want an excuse for rejecting Christ is, "What about those who have never heard about Christ? Are you saying they are condemned to hell for their ignorance?" No. They are condemned on the basis of what they know, not because of what they don't know.

Those who reject the witness in their hearts of creation and conscience are not going to receive Christ when they hear the gospel, no matter how clearly preached—and for God to impose it upon them, knowing they won't believe, would only add to their condemnation. Remember what Abraham said to the rich man in hell, who

was sure that if Lazarus came back from the dead and witnessed to his brothers they would believe: "If they hear not Moses and the prophets, neither will they be persuaded, though one rose from the dead" (Lk 16:31).

Never mind "What about the heathen who have never heard?" What about the person asking the question, who probably has heard the gospel multiple times yet continues to reject Christ? The United States especially is filled with millions of such people.

God will get the truth to every person who sincerely seeks Him. This is His promise, and we can count on that. So those who claim to have sought the Lord without finding Him have never truly sought for Him with their whole heart. Either they are lying or God is.

So what about the need for a preacher? God promises to reveal Himself to every honest heart, and He can do it in miraculous ways. He sent an angel to prepare Cornelius and to call Peter to his house. And in that process the Lord showed the following to Peter: "I perceive that God is no respecter of persons: but in every nation he that feareth him, and worketh righteousness [according to the light he has], is accepted with him" (Acts 10:34,35). I'll let you interpret that for yourself.

QUESTION (A composite of many, many questions—too many to deal with singly—concerning the Rapture and the "last trump."): The sounding of the "last trump" very clearly calls the dead from their graves at the resurrection (1 Corinthians 15:52). Since the Rapture and the resurrection of "those who sleep in Jesus" (1 Thessalonians 4:13-18) occur simultaneously, the "last trump" must signal the moment of the Rapture and would seemingly be heard by all the redeemed at that moment. Wouldn't the seventh trumpet (Revelation 11:15) be the "last trump," and wouldn't that tell us the time of the Rapture—i.e., the mid-point of the Great Tribulation?

RESPONSE: I can't say that the seventh trumpet, sounded by the seventh angel (Rv 11:15), occurs at mid-trib, much less that this marks the resurrection and Rapture of the saints. First Thessalonians 4:16 refers to the "trump of God" but does not identify it as the trumpet sounded by the seventh angel. A number of remarkable events are described as occurring when this seventh trumpet is sounded (Rv 11:15-19), but the resurrection and Rapture are not mentioned, which seems odd if they do occur at this time—nor do they seem to fit this timing.

The first three chapters of Revelation are about events happening to the church

on earth. Then suddenly a “door is opened in heaven” (Rv 4:1) and John is commanded, “Come up hither....” That is the last we hear of the church on earth. From that time forward, the scene shifts to heaven except for the Second Coming, with which the Great Tribulation and Revelation both begin: “Behold he cometh with clouds; and every eye shall see him, and they also which pierced him...” (Rv 1:7).

There are numerous reasons for a pre-trib Rapture. Check the *TBC* reprints (available on our website, or contact our office) for more information on this subject.

QUESTION: In a recent newsletter, Dave Hunt refers to being “born of water” and being “born of the Spirit” as both being the spiritual birth of a person. Could you please explain that position further?

RESPONSE: There can be no question concerning “born of the Spirit.” It is the expression “born of water” that raises questions. Certainly it cannot mean baptismal water, inasmuch as Paul clearly shows there is no link between baptism and the gospel of salvation: “Christ sent me not to baptize, but to preach the gospel” (1 Cor 1:17). Of course, infant baptism and baptismal regeneration of any kind are grave heresies. Salvation requires faith, and baptism is only for those who have believed the gospel (Acts 2:41; 8:37; 10:47,48, etc.)—impossible for a baby.

The Word of God, of course, of which the gospel is a vital part, is credited with effecting the new birth: “Being born again... by the word of God... the word which by the gospel is preached” (1 Pt 1:23,25). God’s Word is depicted in many ways. It is the seed sown in Matthew 13, Mark 4, and Luke 8: “The seed is the word of God” (Lk 8:11). It is also the living water of eternal life: “If any man thirst, let him come unto me, and drink” (Jn 7:37); “Whosoever drinketh of the water that I shall give him shall never thirst...” (Jn 4:14); “Whosoever will, let him take the water of life freely” (Rv 22:17). It is also shown to be like water that cleanses from sin in the process of the new birth: “Ye are clean through the word which I have spoken unto you” (Jn 15:3); “washing of water by the word...” (Eph 5:26).

No water other than the water of life in the Word of the gospel can be meant by the phrase, “born of water.” Moreover, this water of life of the Word of God is essential to the new birth.

QUESTION: Are you aware of Pastor Hagee’s new book, *In Defense of Israel*? He says that Jesus did not present Himself to the Jewish people as the Messiah at His first coming, an unbiblical statement. I have also heard that he believes the

Jewish people will be saved another way than for Gentiles. Please comment.

RESPONSE: I have not read this book so can only comment on what you have said about it, which, by the way, agrees with the criticisms I have read on the internet by those who have read the book and are concerned with its many errors. Nor is this the first time this issue has surfaced.

Even the secular press has reported his heresy. *The Houston Chronicle* (4/30/88, sec. 6, pg 1) quoted Hagee, “I’m not trying to convert the Jewish people to the Christian faith...trying to convert Jews is a waste of time....I believe that every Jewish person who lives in the light of the Torah, which is the word of God, has a relationship with God and will come to redemption....Everyone else needs to believe in Jesus...but not Jews. Jews already have a covenant with God that has never been replaced by Christianity....” This secular newspaper added this comment, “John Hagee, fundamentalist pastor from San Antonio and friend of Israel, is truly a strange fish....The man has a mission. He’s out to attack anti-Semitism. He also believes that Jews can come to God without going through Jesus Christ.”

To whom did Peter preach the gospel on the day of Pentecost, if not to Jews? The early Christians and apostles thought the gospel was *only* for Jews, and preached “the word...unto the Jews only” (Acts 11:19). God had to give Peter a vision to get him to preach to Gentiles (Acts 10:9-16). All through Acts, in every town he entered, Paul first went into the synagogue, where he preached to the Jews, and only when they rejected the gospel did he turn to the Gentiles (Acts 9:20; 13:5,14-46; 14:1; 17:2, etc.). Why did he always offer salvation to the Jews first? Because, as we are clearly told, “the gospel of Christ...is the power of God unto salvation...to the Jew first...” (Rom 1:16). It’s Paul or Hagee.

Hagee must know that Paul kept the Torah perfectly, yet he counted that effort as self-righteousness, no better than dung (Phil 3:4-9). Hagee probably makes statements like this to keep on the good side of the Israeli government, to whom he is somewhat of a hero for the many large tours he leads to Israel and the financial support he gives. Can his Christian supporters be blind to the truth—or doesn’t it matter to them that Hagee is withholding the gospel of salvation from Jews, robbing them of heaven?!

I was present at a meeting in December 2006 when Hagee publicly denied not only that he presently believes in a special way of salvation for Jews but that he had ever taught a “dual covenant.” Yet this teaching is in his published writings and has never been renounced.

News Alert.....

The Los Angeles Times 1/20/08:

Episcopalians [held] an Indian Rite Mass with Hindus and apologize[d] for past religious discrimination. Hindu nun Pravrajika Saradeshaprana, dressed in a saffron robe, blew into a conch shell three times, calling to worship Hindu and Episcopal religious leaders who joined Saturday to celebrate an Indian Rite Mass at St. John’s Cathedral near downtown.

The rare joint service included chants from the Temple Bhajan Band of the International Society for Krishna Consciousness and a moving rendition of “Bless the Lord, O My Soul” sung by the St. John’s choir.

“This was a once-in-a-lifetime experience in worship service,” said Bob Bland, a member of St. Patrick’s Episcopal Church.... “There was something so holy—so much symbolism and so many opportunities for meditation.”

During the service, the Rt. Rev. J. Jon Bruno, bishop of the Episcopal Diocese of Los Angeles, issued a statement of apology to the Hindu religious community for centuries-old acts of religious discrimination by Christians, including attempts to convert them.

“I believe that the world cannot afford for us to repeat the errors of our past, in which we sought to dominate rather than to serve,” Bruno said in a statement.... “In this spirit, and in order to take another step in building trust between our two great religious traditions, I offer a sincere apology to the Hindu religious community.”

The bishop also said he was committed to renouncing “proselytizing” of Hindus. Swami Sarvadevananda, of Vedanta Society of Southern California, was among about a dozen Hindu leaders honored during the service. He called Bruno’s stance “a great and courageous step” that binds the two communities.

“By declaring that there will be no more proselytizing, the bishop has opened a new door of understanding,” Sarvadevananda said. “The modern religious man must expand his understanding and love of religions and their practices.”

[TBC: *The bishop obviously rejects Jesus’ declaration: “I am the way, the truth, and the life: no man cometh unto the Father but by Me.” His “great and courageous step” opens the door for a “moving rendition” of “Bless the Lord Krishna, O My Soul.” Christ’s sacrifice on the Cross for the sins of the world has been judged a meaningless gesture.*]

Speaking Schedule

Apr 10-12 (Dave)	Red River Prophecy Conf Fargo ND (701) 232-5869
May 4 (Dave)	Bayside Community Church Tampa FL www.baysidecommunitychurch.net
Jun 8 (Dave)	Coastline Christian Fellowship Astoria OR (503) 325-1051
Jun 21-28 (Dave)	Word of Life Schroon Lake NY (518) 532-7114
Aug 1-3 (Dave)	Hope for Today Conf Chino Hills CA (800) 752-4253
Sep 5-7 (Dave/TA)	Great Lakes Prophecy Conf Appleton WI (920) 735-1242
Sep 17-19 (Dave)	Winnipeg Prophecy Conf Winnipeg MB (204) 853-7786
Oct 11-12 (Dave)	Calvary Chapel Auburn Auburn CA (530) 885-6332

Letters

Dear TBC,

Thank you for your valuable work in keeping us informed of the truth and aware of the insidious apostasy of these “last days.”... What staggers my comprehension are the continual attacks leveled against you folks in response to your sound Bible teaching. In your Q&A column, there always seems to be someone who is boiling inside with a tenacious attachment to some sort of false doctrine and they teeter on the brink of outright rage. What amazes me is that they appear to be eloquent and well educated...and yet are so blinded by falsehood that they not only fail to see the truth but openly resist it with a ferocity. Thank you for your patient replies to these lost, and your often humble and humbling apologies for having been too brief in your article in question, or for unintentionally having caused misunderstanding. You stand strong on God’s Word and it shows, but so do the humility and compassion—a sure sign of saved, God-fearing servants. JG (N.H.)

TBC:

We...feel that we need to unsubscribe due to the fact that we no longer have time to sit down and read the articles. Each time we read an article, we feel a very negative overtone. We agree with most of what you share, but feel that we can spend our time better being encouraged by God’s Word rather than negative articles....If we feel a desire to research a subject from your point of view, we can always come to your website. M&RR (email)

Dear Brothers,

Here are a few observations about some of the subjects that you deal with: 1) Compromise—in order for compromise to take place, both sides have to make concessions. In the battle with the world, the world never budes on anything! It is only the “Christian” that surrenders his values, one step at a time. The word “compromise” is not even in the Bible. “Conformity” is, and that is exactly what we are doing—conforming to the world, and the Bible clearly forbids it. And when we do conform...we do not impress anyone! The world only changes their view of us from hot hatred to lukewarm contempt. 2) Psychology—In watching others in my family and among my acquaintances, I have found that being under a psychologist’s treatment is like walking down a very steep and treacherous mountain trail—backwards. Of all those that I personally know that were treated by a psychologist, none were ever helped and some have been destroyed. 3) The only logical explanation for the pandemic of depression and suicide and the latest threat of school and other mass shootings that was unknown a few years ago is the vapid, hopeless worldview of secularism: “[If] we are the mindless product of evolution with no purpose and no future, there is no reason for our existence.” This is preached to our children from day care through graduate school. If you really believe this, why not kill as many as you can and then end your own life since it really doesn’t matter? AB (WY)

Dear Friends at Berean Call,

I just wanted to...tell you how much I appreciate your ministry and the clarity you have when it comes to the “true truth” of the gospel. In this day of moral relativism and the confusion that is rampant all over the landscape, your ministry is a beacon of light. I appreciate your biblical soundness and it is no coincidence that you drink heavily from classic Christians out of the past like Spurgeon, Andrew Murray, Tozer, and others who were totally sold out to Jesus. DC (prisoner, MO)

Dear Brethren,

I have been receiving [your newsletters] for quite awhile now [and] have found them to be biblically sound. I understand that you get a lot of negative feedback for what you write, but...some folks just do not want to admit that they are not standing on biblically solid ground. When I had just completed four years in the Navy and was drinking with my friends many years ago, I thought to myself, “If I die tonight, because I was baptized in a certain church as a baby, I am going to heaven? Somehow that doesn’t sound

right. I better find out why I believe what I believe.” As a Christian of almost 35 years and a student of God’s Word, I can now honestly answer that question and I know what I believe because it is written in God’s Word. Everything else to me is not important, no matter how religious it sounds. JH (WA)

Dear Dave, T.A., and Crew,

My mom and I were able to attend the Bible vs. the Quran debate that was held in Whitby. Very well spoken. However, there is one thing that Muslims can never say with conviction [regarding] Allah. At Creation, God created man to have a personal relationship with Him and to have that intimacy.... That is the fact that stands out above all that the Muslim spoke on. You have to know Christ and God the Father to know how He works and to have His Spirit living within you....There is so much in the church today that Christians...accept as truth without first investigating it. (email, Canada)

TBC Notes

Can you explain why God became a man and died on the Cross for us?

Last year I had a Muslim in his twenties ask me that question. It was an experience I’ll never forget. There was no hint of a challenge in his voice; this was not intellectual curiosity but rather an honest desire to understand why I believed that aspect of the gospel I had just presented in a hall packed with university students. Although he revered Jesus, I knew he believed that Jesus could not be God incarnate nor did He die on the cross because those beliefs are rejected in the Qur’an. Nevertheless, he was looking for an explanation.

It’s not every day that I have the occasion to explain such an important belief to someone who genuinely desires to know the reason for the hope I have in Jesus (1 Peter 3:15), so I rejoiced within at the opportunity the Lord provided.

What’s your explanation? Does it explain why Jesus had to be God and a man in order to pay for the sins of mankind? If you are unsure, read again Dave’s explanation in this month’s article.

EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

T.A. McMAHON

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EXPOSING ERROR

Harry Ironside

IS IT WORTHWHILE?

Objection is often raised even by some sound in the faith regarding the exposure of error as being entirely negative and of no real edification. Of late, the hue and cry has been against any and all negative teaching. But the brethren who assume this attitude forget that a large part of the New Testament, both of the teaching of our blessed Lord Himself and the writings of the apostles, is made up of this very character of ministry—namely, showing the Satanic origin and, therefore, the unsettling results of the propagation of erroneous systems which Peter, in his second epistle, so definitely refers to as “damnable heresies.”

Our Lord prophesied, “Many false prophets shall rise, and shall deceive many.” Within our own day, how many false prophets have risen; and oh, how many are the deceived! Paul predicted, “I know this, that after my departing shall grievous wolves enter in among you, not sparing the flock. Also of your own selves shall men arise, speaking perverse things, to draw away disciples after them. Therefore watch.” My own observation is that these “grievous wolves,” alone and in packs, are not sparing even the most favoured flocks. Undershepherds in these “perilous times” will do well to note the apostle’s warning: “Take heed therefore unto yourselves, and to all the flock, over the which the Holy Ghost hath made you overseers.” It is as important in these days as in Paul’s—in fact, it is increasingly important—to expose the many types of false teaching that, on every hand, abound more and more.

We are called upon to “contend earnestly for the faith once for all delivered to the saints,” while we hold the truth in love. The faith means the whole body of revealed truth, and to contend for all of God’s truth necessitates some negative teaching. The choice is not left with us. Jude said he preferred a different, a pleasanter theme—“Beloved, when I gave all diligence to write unto you of the common salvation, it was needful for me to write unto you, and exhort you that ye should earnestly contend for the faith which was once delivered unto the saints. For there are certain men crept in unawares, who were before of old ordained to this condemnation, ungodly men, turning the grace of our God into lasciviousness, and denying the only Lord God, and our Lord Jesus Christ” (Jude 3, 4). Paul likewise admonishes us to “have no fellowship with the unfruitful works of darkness, but rather reprove them” (Eph. 5:11).

This does not imply harsh treatment of those entrapped by error—quite the opposite. If it be objected that exposure to error necessitates unkind reflection upon others who do not see as we do, our answer is: “It has always been the duty of every loyal servant of Christ to warn against any teaching that would make Him less precious or cast reflection upon His finished redemptive work and the all-sufficiency of His present service as our great High Priest and Advocate.”

Every system of teaching can be judged by what it sets forth as to these fundamental truths of the faith. “What think ye of Christ?” is still the true test of every creed. The Christ of the Bible is certainly not the Christ of any false “-ism.” Each of the cults has its hideous caricature of our lovely Lord.

Let us who have been redeemed at the cost of His precious blood be “good soldiers of Jesus Christ.” As the battle against the forces of evil waxes ever more hot, we have need for God-given valour.

There is constant temptation to compromise. “Let us go forth therefore unto Him without the camp, bearing His reproach.” It is always right to stand firmly for what God has revealed concerning His blessed Son’s person and work. The “father of lies” deals in half-truths and specializes in most subtle fallacies concerning the Lord Jesus, our sole and sufficient Savior.

Error is like leaven, of which we read, “A little leaven leaveneth the whole lump.” Truth mixed with error is equivalent to all error, except that it is more innocent looking and, therefore, more dangerous. God hates such a mixture! Any error, or any truth-and-error mixture, calls for definite exposure and repudiation. To condone such is to be unfaithful to God and His Word and treacherous to imperiled souls for whom Christ died.

Exposing error is most unpopular work. But from every true standpoint it is worthwhile work. To our Savior, it means that He receives from us, His blood-bought ones, the loyalty that is His due. To ourselves, if we consider “the reproach of Christ greater riches than the treasures of Egypt,” it ensures future reward, a thousand-fold. And to souls “caught in the snare of the fowler”—how many of them God only knows—it may mean light and life, abundant and everlasting.

DR. HARRY IRONSIDE (1876-1951), a godly fundamentalist author, writer, and teacher for many years, served as pastor of Chicago’s Moody Memorial Church from 1930-1948

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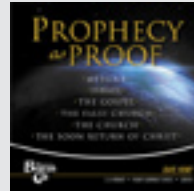
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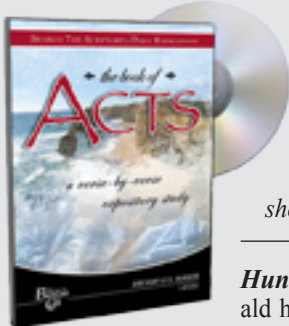
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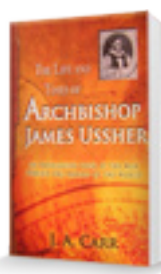
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