



The Grace Proclamator and Promulgator

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

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WHAT GOD'S WORD SAYS ABOUT WAR

By Laurence A. Justice

EDITOR'S NOTE: Bro. Laurence Justice preached this timely message at the 37th Annual Bible Conference at Beverly Manor Baptist Church, Washington, Illinois. I had planned to devote most of this issue to a report on the work in Thailand but I felt it urgent to publish the sermon before the war is over in Iraq.

On Wednesday evening March 19th our country went to war against the nation of Iraq. War is a horrible thing! War brings about large-scale destruction of life and property. It butchers men in wholesale fashion. Property is wantonly wasted. In war the flower of our civilization, the best of our men are destroyed and multitudes of widows and orphans are created.

It was reported at the 21st International Congress of the Red Cross in Istanbul, Turkey that over 90 million people were killed in wars during the 20th century. 20 million soldiers and civilians died in WW I, 50 to 60 million in WW II and 6 million died in the Korean War not to even

mention the Viet Nam War.

There is great pain and heartache when our fathers, brothers, sons, daughters, sweethearts and husbands leave home to go to war! Some of them won't come home! Some will come home crippled and/or emotionally wounded.

In thinking about the horrors of war the important question for Christians is, "What does God's word have to say about it?" God's verbally inspired word is our only rule of faith and practice in this world.

It is impossible in one brief sermon to deal with everything God's word has to say about this matter of war so I will have to just mention some general principles that are taught in God's word and leave it to each of you to make further study of God's word for yourselves. In this message we shall consider very briefly seven things God's word has to say about war.

THAILAND MISSIONS REPORT

"Your Life Will Never Be the Same Again."

By Wayne Camp

Bro. Bill Lee said, "Your life will never be the same again." Little did I know the true significance of this statement when he said it. We were somewhere over the Pacific Ocean between Los Angeles, California, and Bangkok, Thailand. It was my first trip to Thailand.

But, let me backtrack a bit. In the Spring of the year 2000 after all the hullabaloo and nonsense of Y2K was over, I invited Bro. Bill Lee to come to Pilgrims Hope Baptist Church

and present slides and give a report on the mission work being done by Bro. Anond Phoothaptim among the Hill Tribes of Thailand, especially among the Lahu and Lisu tribes. Both Pilgrims Hope Baptist Church and I were very impressed to get involved in the mission work.

In fact, the church voted that night to give \$3000 to buy Bibles to be distributed in the prisons and among the churches.

(See THAILAND Cont. P. 8, Rt. Column)

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GOD'S WORD DOES NOT TEACH THAT WAR IS ALWAYS WRONG

A lot of people say that war is all wrong and is always wrong, for defense as well as a matter of aggression but God's word will just not bear this out. Ecclesiastes 3:8 says there is a time for war. **"A time to love, and a time to hate; a time of war, and a time of peace."**

In the scriptures we read that God has actually commanded war on certain occasions in the past. God not only permitted war, he

commanded it at times. I think it was Loraine Boettner in his book, ***The Christian Attitude Toward War***, who counted 35 times in the Old Testament where God commanded the use of armed force in carrying out his purpose. For example in Deuteronomy 7:2 God ordered Israel to destroy the Canaanites when Israel entered the land after the Exodus. ***"And when the LORD thy God shall deliver them before thee; thou shalt smite them, and utterly destroy them; thou shalt make no covenant with them, nor show mercy unto them."*** Other examples of God's commanding war include Numbers 21:14-15, Numbers 31, Joshua 5:13-6:27, Judges 4:1-23, Judges 6 & 7 and II Samuel 5:19-20.

Joshua 10:14 says that in the valley of Ajalon, God fought for his people. ***"And there was no day like that before it or after it, that the LORD hearkened unto the voice of a man: for the LORD fought for Israel."***

The scriptures reveal God as a God of war as well as a God of peace. Exodus 15:3 says ***"The LORD is a man of war: the LORD is his name."*** God commanded his people to go to war and God would certainly not command something that is inherently wrong. To say therefore that all war is unrighteous is to say that God is unrighteous!

Many of God's choice saints were warriors, military men. If all war is wrong what about David, Abraham, Joshua, Gideon, Jephthah, Barak, Samson and other great warriors whom God used, commended and blessed? God gave these men great military skill and courage and in Psalms 144:1 David recognized this skill for war was a gift from God. ***"Blessed be the LORD my strength, which teacheth my hands to war, and my fingers to fight."*** These warriors were God's chosen saints and it was as Hebrews 11:34 says, ***"Through faith (that) they waxed valiant in fight, (and) turned to flight the armies of the aliens."***

Some wars have certainly resulted in much good in this world. Most of the religious and political freedom we now enjoy was made possible because of the willingness of our forefathers to fight for these things! What if Charles Martel had not defeated the Moslems in the Battle of Tours in 732 AD? Europe would be

Muslim and America would most probably not even exist. What if the American farmers had not joined the Continental Army and fought in the American Revolution?

War is sometimes necessary and even a duty in order to preserve the blessing of true peace. War is sometimes necessary for the defense of just and vital rights. War is sometimes the only thing left that will protect justice and protect the people of a nation. Rulers justly use force to protect their people and other people from harm. War is justified when a ruler uses force to remove a genuine threat to the safety and security of his people.

We have an increasing number of professed pacifists in our nation today and many of them claim they base their non-resistance to evil in God's word. These pacifists sometimes quote such verses as Matthew 5:39 as the basis of their pacifism. Here the Lord Jesus says, ***“But I say unto you, That ye resist not evil: but whosoever shall smite thee on thy right cheek, turn to him the other also.”***

But “turn the other cheek” does not apply to war. “Turn the other cheek” applies to individuals who have been abused for their testimony for Christ. It certainly does not apply to self defense nor does it mean that a man is to turn his wife's cheek nor his children's cheeks nor the cheek of the weak whom he is called on to protect! God's word never teaches passive non-resistance to aggressive attack or potential aggressive attack.

It has been demonstrated again and again throughout history that passive non-resistance only provokes aggression by evil men. We all want peace but most of us realize that there are some things that are worse than war. War is a ghastly thing but God's word does not teach that war in itself is wrong.

GOD'S WORD TEACHES THAT WAR IS A FACT OF LIFE IN THIS WORLD

God's word never promises that there shall be no war on this earth during this present age. God's word recognizes that in an evil world war must come to pass.

In Matthew 24:6 the Lord Jesus says, ***“And ye shall hear of wars and rumors of wars: see that ye be not troubled: for all these***

things must come to pass, but the end is not yet.” Daniel prophesied in Daniel 9:26 that ***“unto the end, war and desolations are determined.”*** In God's word we read of the wars of Assyria and Babylon and the Medes and Persians and Greeks and Romans.

The history of this world is the history of war. War has played a large role in the history of our own country. There was the Revolutionary War in the late 1700's and the War of 1812 and the Mexican War in the 1840's and the War Between the States in 1861-1865 and the Spanish American War and World War I and World War II and the Korean War and the Viet Nam War and the Gulf War and the Afghanistan War and now the War in Iraq. In my own lifetime the young nation of Israel has fought three major wars since its birth in 1948. This is just as God says in his word that it shall be all during this age.

GOD'S WORD TEACHES THAT GOD IS SOVEREIGN OVER WAR

War causes people to have to ask, Does God have anything to do with war? Can God have anything to do with such awful waste and devastation?

The biggest cause of problems for those who see war as all wrong and always wrong is their wrong views of God. Most Americans have for so long been fed the error that God is all love and only love that they have great difficulty in seeing that God has anything to do with war.

Some say the existence of war just proves there is no God or if there is a God he is not a God of love. Some say that God has nothing to do with war, that it is beneath God's dignity to be in any way connected with war. Some say that when war comes things have gotten out of God's hands and he has left the world to go its own way because men have not heeded his directions and warnings. Thus God's only relation to war is that he just permits it.

But it does no honor to God to say he has nothing to do with war nor that he has stepped aside when it happens. War *is* related to God and is not a problem to be considered entirely on the human plane. War is not merely a human question or problem.

God's word teaches that God is sovereign over war as well as over everything else. God has not relinquished control of history! All history is under God's control and guidance. God has ordained all things that come to pass in their smallest details. In Isaiah 14:24 God says, **"...Surely as I have thought, so shall it come to pass; and as I have purposed, so shall it stand..."**

In war as in everything else God is fulfilling his sovereign purpose. Amos 3:6 says, **"...shall there be evil in a city, and the LORD hath not done it?"** In Isaiah 45:7 God says, **"...I form the light, and create darkness: I make peace, and create evil: I the LORD do all these things."**

It is therefore not true that God has nothing to do with war. It is not true that God only allows or permits war. God's word teaches that God is actively using the nations and their wars to carry out his sovereign, predetermined purposes!

It is a great comfort to realize that in this time of war and tumult every event, great or small, is included in God's sovereign providence. We Christians must take refuge in this sovereign God who is controlling and guiding all things in this world. It is here that we find comfort. In Psalms 46:10 David is speaking of God in relation to war when he quotes God as saying, **"Be still, and know that I am God: I will be exalted among the heathen, I will be exalted in the earth."**

GOD'S WORD TEACHES THAT WAR IS A CONSEQUENCE OF SIN

We are living in a world into which sin has entered with devastating effect! War itself is not sin. War is a consequence of sin. War is an expression of sin. The fundamental cause of war is sinful human nature. The cause of war is the lust of the flesh, the lust of the eyes and the pride of life. The primary cause of quarrels between individuals and of wars between nations is unregenerate, sinful human nature. Man can never live together in harmony as long as their hearts are filled with sin. War is characterized by barbarity and brutality that come from corrupt human nature.

James 4:1-2 says, "From **whence come wars and fightings** among you? come they not

hence, **even of your lusts** that war in your members? **Ye lust**, and have not: **ye kill**, and desire to have, and cannot obtain: **ye fight and war...**" War is a consequence of the sinful lusts of human nature; jealousy and envy and greed and hatred and pride and bitterness and lust for power and malice, all of which come from the sinful human heart. The lust of Saddam Hussein for wealth and power and empire and his barbarity in seeking these things and the greed and lust for wealth by France, Germany and Russia is what has brought about this war. If we lived in an ideal world there would be no war because there would be no sin but **we do not live in ideal world!**

In peacetime we usually think lightly of sin and highly of human nature. War reveals once again what is really in man's nature. War reveals once more the hideousness of sin and of man's sinful nature. It reveals once again the truth of Jeremiah 17:9 what says that **"The heart is deceitful above all things, and desperately wicked: who can know it?"** War shows men in a clearer way than ever before what sin really is and what it does. Pacifism denies the sinfulness of man thinking instead that man is basically good and if we can just organize and follow the League of Nations or the United Nations or if we can just somehow agree to get along then we can eliminate war.

But some may ask at this point, "Why do innocent people have to suffer in war?" The partial answer of God's word to this is that no person is actually innocent. **"All have sinned and come short of the glory of God,"** says Romans 3:23. We are all sinful and have to reap the consequences, not only of our own person sins but of those of our nation as well.

GOD'S WORD TEACHES THAT WAR IS A JUDGMENT OF GOD ON NATIONS FOR THEIR SINS

We may not take sin very seriously but God does! Romans 1:18 says **"For the wrath of God is revealed from heaven against all ungodliness and unrighteousness of men..."** War was and is used of God to restrain and punish national sins. God does not postpone all punishment of sin until the next world. He sends some punishment on our sins in this world and

this is especially true of national sins. When iniquity abounds in this world, God comes forth out of his place to deal with it in judgment. God punished Israel by sending war with Assyria and the basic cause of this war was the great sins of Israel that are listed and warned against in Deuteronomy 28:47-58.

War is the rod of God's anger and the staff of his indignation against sin. In Isaiah 10:5-6 God is talking about Assyria's invasion and war with Israel. ***"O Assyrian, the rod of mine anger, and the staff in their hand is mine indignation. I will send him against an hypocritical nation, and against the people of my wrath will I give him a charge, to take the spoil, and to take the prey, and to tread them down like the mire of the streets."*** Samaria, the capital city of Israel was besieged and fell in 722 BC after a three-year siege. 27,290 people were carried away captive, the suffering was unspeakable and Israel as a nation ceased to exist.

In Isaiah 1:20 God threatened the nation of Judah with war as judgment on them for their sins when he said, ***"...If ye refuse and rebel, ye shall be devoured with the sword: for the mouth of the LORD hath spoken it."*** Saddam Hussein's regime has committed unspeakable atrocities and if left alone would have moved to even greater ones.

Do you think God will continue to spare our nation from war, that he will continue to give us peace at home so that we can continue living in a way that insults his holy name? What have we done with the peace that God in his goodness has given us? We have forsaken God and settled into lives that are basically materialistic and sinful, lives that are basically hedonistic! We have given ourselves to lives of pleasure seeking. We have forsaken the house of God on his holy Sabbath day for our own work and pleasure and travel. In our disobedience and ungodliness and sinfulness we have utterly abused the blessings of peace. The important question we Americans need to ask ourselves is not, "Why does God allow war?" but, "Why does God not allow the destruction of our nation in judgment on our sins?"

GOD'S WORD TEACHES THAT GOD SENDS WAR TO CALL MEN AND NATIONS TO REPENTANCE

Isaiah 26:9 says, ***"With my soul have I desired thee in the night; yea, with my spirit within me will I seek thee early: for when thy judgments are in the earth, the inhabitants of the world will learn righteousness."***

This calling of nations to repentance through war was illustrated again and again in the history of Israel in the book of Judges. God would bless them, they would sin and forsake God, God would send war, they would cry out to him for deliverance, and God would send another time of blessing. Psalms 107:6 speaks of the experiences of Israel when war came when it says, ***"Then they cried unto the LORD in their trouble, and he delivered them out of their distresses."***

Contrary to what many of these pacifists today believe, there are things that are more important than peace. Repentance from sin is one of them. But since 9/11 there have been few or no signs of real repentance in our nation. We are not really concerned with God's holiness or with sin as such. ***IF*** we were we would repent of our sin and begin to walk with God.

Sexual immorality runs rampant, abortion continues, divorce is commonplace. Sodomy is recognized and tolerated. Sabbath desecration increases and our schools have expelled God and prayer and Bible reading. It has only been God's mercy that our land has been spared the ravages of war that other nations have known.

Because this particular consequence of sin is especially painful for us we are quick to ask God to prevent it or stop it but when we ask God to prevent war we are asking him to prevent one of the inevitable consequences of sin and he won't do this unless we repent of our sins.

GOD'S WORD TEACHES THAT WARS WILL ONLY CEASE WHEN CHRIST RETURNS TO THIS EARTH

Man, apart from God, has always had an unreasonable optimism about his own ability to prevent and even abolish war. Just before 1914 and WW I the world had grown greatly optimistic

about human nature and the possibility that war could be abolished. Postmillennialism's optimistic theory that the gospel would conquer the world and peace would come was largely responsible for this optimism. When the war broke out Dr. Walter Rauschenbush, famous liberal and one of the greatest such optimists was asked what he thought about the future now, to which he responded, "The armies of Europe are marching over my soul!"

Some of you saw the Larry King Live show recently on which a Roman Catholic priest quoted Micah 4:3 as a reason Christians should oppose all war including the present one. Micah 4:3 says, "**...They shall beat their swords into plowshares, and their spears into pruninghooks: nation shall not lift up a sword against nation, neither shall they learn war any more.**" That priest was ignorant of the fact that this is not a command for Christians but a prophecy of the future Kingdom of Christ on this earth. Micah speaks here of the coming millennial kingdom of Christ when this will indeed be a warless world. But in the mean time God has told us the kind of world we live in today, a world of wars and rumors of war.

According to God's word wars will continue until Jesus Christ returns to this earth and even then he will come as a man of war seated on a white horse and leading the armies of heaven! Revelation 19:11, 14-15 says, "**And I saw heaven opened, and behold a white horse; and he that sat upon him was called Faithful and True, and in righteousness he doth judge and make war...And the armies which were in heaven followed him upon white horses, clothed in fine linen, white and clean. And out of his mouth goeth a sharp sword, that with it he should smite the nations: and he shall rule them with a rod of iron: and he treadeth the winepress of the fierceness and wrath of Almighty God.**"

CONCLUSION

Our responsibility as Christians is to preach the gospel of Jesus Christ, pray for God to change the hearts of sinful men and support our government in the preservation of peace and security. We must seek peace in every legitimate way and ultimately we must watch for and pray for the return and peaceable kingdom of Jesus Christ on this earth!

Bouquets and Brickbats

WWW: RE: James Dobson and the Big Bang article. For the most part, I agree with you. But what about the other teachings of his that have destroyed families? As a child raised under his regime, for now, I wish to remain anonymous.

WWW: Promise Keepers and Dobson: First, let me say that the article was tremendous.

I support your thoughts and pray for you staying strong in the faith. The article does a wonderful job utilizing Scripture in dealing with the obvious problems with high level Christian leadership and power-wielders like Dobson. I got saved 20 years ago and find that among many Christian friends and church fellows (CMA), I stand alone in speaking against the blasphemies of those who prefer to have their ears itched.

Having written Dobson and appealed to him about his ungodly position supporting abortion; getting a snotty response back from one of his designates on it, I have to wonder where men like him stand with respect to the Christian faith?

WWW: [Editor's note: another loving Promise Keeper writes]. Mr. Camp I am sick and tired of athiests and God haters such as yourself who disguise themselves as christians,so you can figure out how to try and thwart the cause of Christ. Pretending to be a christian in order to deceive others away from a strong believers union is very clever indeed but not clever enough.I am on to you.

I will be sending out professional letters to the founders and leaders of this group,encouraging them to file lawsuits against you and I will encourage others to unite and do the same. In the mean time,I advise you to remove this garbage from the internet unless you want it used as evidence in court.

WWW: What the verse is talking about is seven fires or furnaces the Word of God came through. [The writer is referring to this verse of Scripture which he grossly twists. **Psalm 12:6 The words of the LORD are pure words: as silver tried in a furnace of earth, purified seven times.**] It is easy for you to find a straw man and knock him down but you can't argue with history. Try looking for the seven furnaces and I will give you one for free Egypt! God says in the bible how he called out his people from the "iron furnace". Ok I'll give you two because you are spiritually discerned Babylon "fiery furnace".

So try looking for seven major persecutions of

the Word of God in history and you will come to 1611.

You bible haters miss it all the time.

John 3:16 "knowest not these things" shame on you! Try studying church history too for you are still a babe!

WWW: I appreciate what you had to say about promise keepers and agree with you wholeheartedly. However, I hear nobody lamenting the fact that we (Christians) have done the same thing with Christmas and Easter. Show me Scripture to support these, as well as Sunday worship. I do long for more people to expose lies that have entered the church, but if we stop short of our favorite lies, why are we any different than the Dobson's or Bly's or Hick's? Shalom,

WWW: I enjoyed finding your article on the internet, although we are of different persuasions. I note that you quoted Hoyt Chastain, whom I debated a number of years ago in Mississippi. I also engaged in a debate with Albert Garner at Ocala, FL. I have read the biography of Dr. Ben M. Bogard and several years ago visited his grave, his old home, and the old Antioch Missionary Baptist Church as well as the 4th and State Church of Christ in Little Rock where Dr. Bogard and Dr. N. B. Hardeman held a famous debate. I just thought you might enjoy knowing a little of this history.

WWW: Read your paper on PK. Very interesting, only been to one meeting so I don't have a complete understanding about PK, but your paper sure showed new light. Thanks.

You also mentioned about you investigating about the Jesus Movement. I attend a non-denominational church called Calvary Chapel which I thought came from a "Jesus Movement" ministry. Do you have any paper on the "Jesus Movement" or "Calvary Chapel" movement?

WWW: Enjoy your paper very much. I am retiring and moving, here is my change of address.

INDIANA: I ran across this quote today and I thought you might find it interesting and include it for you:

"In this connection I may be permitted to say that while Dr. Graves was a successionist there is no evidence, I think, that he put undue emphasis on the fact of succession or on any sort of

'mother-church' notion; he did emphasize church *authority* and with apostolic zeal contended for the recognition of the same." — [J.J. Burnett, *Sketches of Tenn. Pioneer Bapt. Preachers*, p. 194].

TENNESSEE: I found your website while looking at the Landmark Baptist Website in Alaska. We have some new friends that live in Walls, Mississippi. They have come to see Grace. They are very conservative, meek, understanding, humble people who are ready to learn. The woman and her daughter wear a covering all the time. The family has an Armenian background but seem to really be grounded in the doctrines of grace now. They attend a Primitive Baptist church at present. They like the Church and they do say they do believe in talking to others about the Lord. I'm not sure yet just how hardshell this Church is or if it EVEN is. In our area, Primitive Baptist are all hardshell but I know that may not be the same everywhere. Anyway, they go to this Church because they believe in the doctrines of Grace and hold some of their conservative views. I thought I could direct them to your Church IF you are within driving distance. Again, they may wish to stay at this Church but I sense they might go somewhere else to be around folks who believe completely as they do. The headcovering and modest dress for men and woman (dresses) would be a real issue with them (as it is for me and my family). Could you comment on these two issues and let me know how close to Walls, MS that you are. (Have you even heard of it?) Email me at preacher@clarksville.com at your earliest convenience.

WWW: To Whom it May Concern:

I am looking for some information in regards to the celebration of Christmas. The Awake Magazine of December 8, 2002 has printed the following statement. "The early Baptist and Congregationalist churches also found no scriptural grounds for celebrating Christ's birth. One source notes that it was not until December 25, 1772, that the Baptist Church of Newport (Rhode Island) observed Christmas for the first time." This is very important to me as now being a Baptist and a believer in Christ, is this statement a fair statement by the Watchtower Tract Society? I have relatives and friends that are using this information to benefit their beliefs as Jehovah's Witnesses. Do you possibly know whether this information is true or where I might gain access of this information for my personal

understanding. As you can see from the above the source of their information is not given. I am a former Jehovah Witness and there is no way the Watchtower Tract Society would give me the source of their information. I am considered an apostate amongst the Jehovah's Witnesses. Appreciate any of your thoughts, for I have been a Jehovah Witness for 26 years before accepting Christ as my Lord and Savior. Hope this makes sense and you might have some answers on this question.

WWW: I disagree with your interpretation, even though it may be plausible, I don't think scripture functions the way your approach assumes. We must assume that the audience each book is addressed to, knows what the writer is referring to. If Abel was regarded as a testimony to justification by faith in Jesus day, then your interpretation is valid. If not, then there is a different explanation.

OHIO: I am so amazed at what you have written, and I thank God for those of you who can bring to light such darkness dressed in the white woolly clothes. Thanks for your work. God Bless.

NORTH CAROLINA: My name is Dave Rogers, and I am looking for a good sovereign grace baptist church in the Raleigh area of North Carolina. Do you know of any churches in the area? If so please let me know the name, and phone #. Please email it to me @ rogers_dave@hotmail.com.

WWW: My name is Sherry. I was inspired to write you a short note on this posting, which I just read tonight. I, myself just recently saved only a few months, along with my husband, have joined a Pentecostal church. The preacher of this church does not believe in celebrating christmas either, for the same reasoning as yourself. Now me, always having been taught we were celebrating Christ's B-day, this has been a very rough Christmas (sorry Xmas) for me this year.

To make this short and to the point, I thank you for this article that you typed almost 4 years ago. I now understand why my preacher does not believe in this holiday. Your explaining has opened my eyes to a different understanding.

My husband, whom God has placed and Blessed me with, is very open minded and was able to digest this 'eye opening experience' with great ease. Me, on the other hand, I am requiring more time to adjust.

Today is 12/27/02 at 12:29 in the morning. This is the last Xmas that I will ever celebrate, at the Lords

will. It is as you suggest in the article, it can be a depressing thought, but if you remember the truth behind the reasoning, then it makes it a lot easier.

With your understanding, I have printed out the article and I want to show this to everyone I know, especially to my mother, God Bless her. You have profoundly expressed and explained the one question I have been thinking about since I have been saved and started this church, "What is the matter of celebrating Xmas?"

I thank God for my husband, The wisdom he gave me understand and see the truth, and for you Mr. Camp. Surely God must have had me somewhere included in his plan when He inspired you to write this.

WWW: What denomination are you? I appreciate your website and will tell OTHERS about it!

Pennsylvania: I was briefly looking at your site and inferred you are Calvinist. I didn't overindulge the thought until I again noticed your church's name and this question began to perplex me; Why "Pilgrim's HOPE Baptist Church"? If I am not elected, I have no hope and if God, by His sovereignty, has elected me, what hope do I need? If I may respectfully submit, it reminds me of the old argument regarding the destiny of infants upon their death. I believe Calvin taught they went to Hell if they were not elected. This teaching was later modified by "more understanding" teachers to accommodate those who struggled with infants going to Hell to state only elect infants die. While initially sounding much less scathing, this doctrine pleads the question, "What does it matter if you die *unselected* as an infant or at 70 years?" - you are doomed to Hell with no HOPE. Please accept the sincerity of my question and I look forward to your response and thank you for your time.

THAILAND NEWS, Cont. From P. 1

During his presentation, Bro. Lee asked the church to send me to help in the annual mission trip that would be made in October. The church agreed and in October, I left with the Lees from Memphis International Airport to go to Thailand. It was on that trip that Bro. Lee warned me that my life would never be the same again after making the trip. Little did I know how true that statement was.

For a little over two weeks we traveled among the churches and preached. We also had a Bible Conference attended by as many of

the members of the churches as could attend. It was on that very first trip that I saw three things that became a burden on my heart.

First, I saw the need of Bro. Anond having a 4-wheel drive vehicle for use in the work. I came back to Memphis with a desire to raise the money to purchase such a vehicle. With the help of several churches and individuals, the money was quickly raised and in March of 2001 I returned to Thailand and spent almost four weeks. The first week was spent in purchasing a pickup and traveling among the churches in rented vehicles while the pickup was being prepared for delivery. When it was delivered we continued traveling among the churches.



We also held a camp meeting/Bible Conference where I preached and taught about 3 to four hours each day. The second thing that I saw on my first trip was again very evident during this nearly four-week visit. This was the deep desire of these dear Lahu and Lisu saints to learn the truth. They would sit on the ground for long sessions as we taught them the word of God. Near the end of that visit (AD 2001), one eighty-year-old Lisu lady said to Bro. Anond, "We need Bro. Camp to come and teach us long time." This dear lady sat through every session of the camp meeting listening to the teaching of God's Word without ever leaving for any reason. Sadly, this dear lady who was saved and baptized in the year 2000 has lost so much of her hearing that she can hear very little of the preaching she loves now.

During the camp meeting in March, 2001, I made no "evangelistic appeal" and gave no invitations at the close of the services. I have



long thought that the preaching of the gospel is all the invitation that one needs to issue. And, it should be more of a command than an invitation. All men are **commanded** to repent. **Acts 17:30 And the times of this ignorance God winked at; but now commandeth**

all men every where to repent. And, all men are commanded to believe. **1 John 3:23 And this is his commandment, That we should believe on the name of his Son Jesus Christ. John 6:29 Jesus answered and said unto them, This is the work of God, that ye believe on him whom he hath sent.**

As I said, I gave no evangelistic appeal and gave no invitations after the message was finished. But, during the camp meeting that lasted for most of four days, 17 made professions of faith and asked for baptism. The pastors of these churches come with approval to receive folks for baptism. The various converts went to the pastors from their respective villages and presented themselves for baptism and were received and at the end of the camp meeting I was asked to administer baptism for all the churches. When Pilgrims Hope sent me they sent me with approval and authority to do anything necessary to forward



the work. And, these pastors and representatives of each church also come with such approval. Moreover, Bro. Anond is sent out to do this kind of work by the Pa Sak Baptist Church. With all of that, I felt comfortable administering baptism on behalf of the churches and did so.



My third trip to Thailand was made in March, 2002. This time my wife accompanied Bro. Bill Lee and Sis. Janice Lee and me on this trip. It was a life-changing experience for her also. On the day before we left we were scheduled to go to Pa Bon Gnam and visit a church there. Ruth fell and broke her shoulder about noon and we took her to the hospital and then to the hotel. I was of a mind to stay with her but she insisted that I go on with Bro. Lee and visit this church. Sis. Lee offered to stay with her and pack our things and their things in preparation for the trip home the next day.

Even though we were over two hours late arriving at the village, a large crowd was waiting to meet with us for a service. While in route to the village, Bro. Anond informed us that he had learned that the pastor of this work, John Sheh yi, had only Pentecostal Baptism and that we needed to talk to him about being scripturally baptized. We did so with the assistance of Bro. Matthew Shehsi-o, pastor of another Lisu church in the village of Pa Koe.

After a time of discussion and teaching, Bro. John realized his need to be rebaptized and agreed to that. We then walked about half a mile to the dam and lake where we had a service and I preached on baptism and stressed the fact that down through history our churches

had insisted upon the rebaptism of any whose baptism they had reason to doubt. By the time this service was finished it was black dark. At the request of the missionary, Bro. Anond, and of the church at Pa Bon Gnam, and with only the light of a two-cell flashlight, Bro. Bill Lee commenced to baptize the pastor and three others who were scheduled to be baptized.

Then an amazing thing happened. People started going into the water and requesting baptism. Bro. Lee stopped and gave some instructions and had Bro. Anond to stress the importance of being saved before baptism. Being assured by those coming for baptism that they were truly saved, Bro. Lee resumed baptizing. By the time he was finished, there had been 20 adults, two who were on the borderline of adulthood if not adults, and two teenagers who had been baptized. This was a total of 24 baptized.



Baptizing in the dark



We then returned to the little church building and had a service and set the church in order. This continues to be one of the fastest growing churches in the work. They have now outgrown the little church building

where we met for the service and by the light of a flashlight had the service just mentioned.



Through the generosity of the Lord's churches and individuals who are supporting the Thailand work, I am happy to report that we have been able to build a new and larger building on the sight pictured here.



I do not have any pictures of the building at this time. It has been completed since I returned to the United States. While still in Thailand, I negotiated the purchase of the land where the weeds and grass are growing. An elderly lady who is not a Christian owned it and wanted to sell it to the church. I offered her 3,000 bahts for it but she refused. I thought it was a fair offer but she informed us it was too much. I lowered the offer to 1500 bahts, if I remember correctly and she refused that. She then said she would only accept 200 bahts for the land, a mere \$4.75. I then went to pay her and she said that we

should wait until the papers could be drawn up and properly witnessed. Best land buy I have ever made, I can assure you.

My third concern since my first trip to Thailand has been the need of a Bible School in which the pastors and others in the churches could be more thoroughly taught the Word of God. There was also a need of teaching the pastors some principles for Bible study and interpretation, as well as teaching them to organize their studies into an outline from which they could preach.

From the beginning, I had no intention of being the one to go and start this school. At my age, I was convinced a younger man was needed for the work. But, God began to lay it on my heart to go. In October, 2001, Bro. Jack Duplechain accompanied Bro. Lee and others to Thailand. When Bro. Jackie got off the plane in Memphis after visiting the field, he came straight to me and said, "They need a Bible School over there and you are the man to go and start it."

I smiled but still had no intention of going. I had given over 13 years of my life in pastoring a church and teaching in what was then called The Illinois Missionary Baptist Institute and Seminary. I had also done substitute teaching in the Missionary Baptist Institute and Seminary while doing post-graduate work. And, I did some small amount of teaching in a school in Michigan. To be quite frank about it, I thought, "I have served my time in teaching young preachers. I have paid for my teaching by teaching others."

But, it was not to be. God began to lay it more and more on my heart to go. Then when my wife went over with us in March, 2002, she came home with the burden also. When I would discuss my burden with her, she always encouraged me to go and start the school. I presented the burden to Pilgrims Hope Baptist Church and they unanimously voted for me to go and teach for four months each year and remain as their pastor. I have completed one term at this writing and am making preparations to return about the first of November to begin a second term. Through his churches and individual Christians, my needs, and the needs of the school, were more than supplied for the first term and I feel confident that supply will

continue. God has never given one of his servants a task to perform without providing the necessities for performing it.

During our first term, we had a total of 38 students attend the classes. Some came very briefly but for one reason or another did not return. I believe 22 attended enough that we granted them certificates. Two finished the first term with perfect attendance records. Ja heh Ja hkaweh and Ja shaw Ja ui who are pictured in the next column.

Others had good attendance records but these were the only two who did not miss a single day of this first term. They were two of our best students as well.



Ja heh Ja hkaweh



Ja shaw Ja ui



During the last week of school this picture was taken of the twenty students present that day. If I remember correctly twenty-two were the most present on any one day.

I will write more later about the school and churches. I will also print more pictures. Several have asked about Thanamsak Shehmai, the student that was seriously injured in the motorcycle wreck. Here he is receiving his certificate for completing the first term at the Sovereign Grace Independent Baptist School of Theology.



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