



The Grace Proclamator and Promulgator

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

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FALSE TEACHERS DO SOMETIMES TEACH TRUTH

By Wayne Camp

“God is not a man, that he should lie; neither the son of man, that he should repent: hath he said, and shall he not do it? or hath he spoken, and shall he not make it good? Behold, I have received commandment to bless: and he hath blessed; and I cannot reverse it” (Numbers 23:20).

Do false teachers sometimes teach truth? The answer to this question is clear from the words of Balaam in the above verses. What he said in the preceding verses was absolutely true even though he was a false teacher, a hireling prophet. As we will see, false teachers often teach a good deal of truth just as a polluted fountain may have much good water coming out of it and only a small amount of poison. But, who wants to drink at such a fountain?

BALAAM, A FALSE PROPHET

Before we examine the truth which Balaam taught we should first establish the fact that he was, in fact, a false prophet and teacher.

Balaam is mentioned three times in the New Testament and in each instance he is classified as a false teacher. Peter mentions him in his second epistle in the second chapter. That chapter begins: ***“But there were false prophets also among the people, even as there shall be false teachers among you” (II Pet. 2:1).*** The false teachers bring in ***“damnable heresies”*** and they have ***“pernicious ways”*** (V-1, 2). God, in the time of judgment, will not spare them, nor will their (See FALSE TEACHERS Cont. P. 10, L. Col.)

BAPTISM BY SPRINKLING Misleading Misnomer or True Translation?

By Wayne Camp

“And John also was baptizing in Aenon near to Salim, because there was much water there” (Jn. 3:23).

Is baptism properly administered by sprinkling? Did the early churches practice sprinkling? Is it lawful to change the mode or method of baptism from that set forth in the Scriptures? In the Westminster Confession (Presbyterian) the following is found: “Dipping of the person into the water is not necessary; but baptism is **RIGHTLY**

ADMINISTERED BY POURING OR SPRINKLING water upon the person” (Chapter 28, Section 3). In his comments Dr. A. A. Hodge affirmed that “the best mode is to sprinkle.” Hodge considered this the best mode because it was more “decent” than immersion.

There are many who would have us believe that the mode of baptism is completely unimportant. They say that the water applied in the name of the Trinity is

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EDITOR'S ADDRESS, PHONE NUMBERS AND E-MAIL ADDRESSES

The editor, Eld. Wayne Camp, may be reached at the address given above, or at his home address. His home address is: 2065 Tompkins Lane, Millington, TN 38053-5107.

Church Phone at Home: (901) 876-5015

Church Phone: (901) 357-0215.

E-mail address: RWcamp@cris.com

Visit our Home Page on the Internet

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Evening Service 5:00 P. M. Sunday

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the essential thing; the mode or method of application is "necessarily perfectly indifferent" (Hodge, p. 463). In Biblical interpretation there is an ancient axiom which men would still do well to observe. It is. "Expressio unus est. exclusio altenius." This means: "The specification of one thing is the prohibition of every other."

If Christ, in his commands and his example specified sprinkling then none ought ever to be immersed. If John the Baptist practiced sprinkling then none ought

to be immersed. If, on the other hand, Jesus by example and command specified immersion then **none** ought to be sprinkled. If John the Baptist sought out a place where there was "much water" because he was immersing then none ought to be sprinkled. Since sprinkling requires practically no water John certainly would not have needed "much water" to sprinkle.

When God commanded Noah to build an ark of Gopher wood, he would have been disobedient if he had substituted white pine because it was more convenient to come by. His command to use Gopher wood prohibited the use of every other species of lumber regardless of looks, convenience, or cost.

When God commanded Moses to overlay the boards of the tabernacle with gold, that eliminated every other kind of metal. If, because it was more available, less expensive, and looked nearly as good, Moses had substituted copper or brass, would he have been faithful and obedient in the matter?

When God gave the specifics on carrying the ark of the covenant he was very detailed. Four men were to bear it on their shoulders with two poles that were passed through four rings on the four corners.

On one occasion the ark was being moved and the movers decided that the mode was not important, just the moving. The new cart on which they moved it did not have a good suspension system and when the oxen made a sidestep while passing Ornan's threshing floor the ark of the covenant nearly toppled over. In fervent, sincere concern for the welfare of the ark Uzzah reached to steady the ark. God immediately smote him dead because no one was to lay a finger on the ark of the covenant. Had these men not changed the mode for moving the ark Uzzah would not have died on that occasion.

DID JESUS SPECIFY IMMERSION?

When Jesus commanded that we go forth witnessing, baptizing, and teaching he used the Greek word BAPTIZO. What does this word mean? The scripture is composed of words and we must know the meaning of **(See IMMERSION Cont. P. 6, Left Column)**

NEWS FROM THREE OF THE CHURCHES IN THAILAND

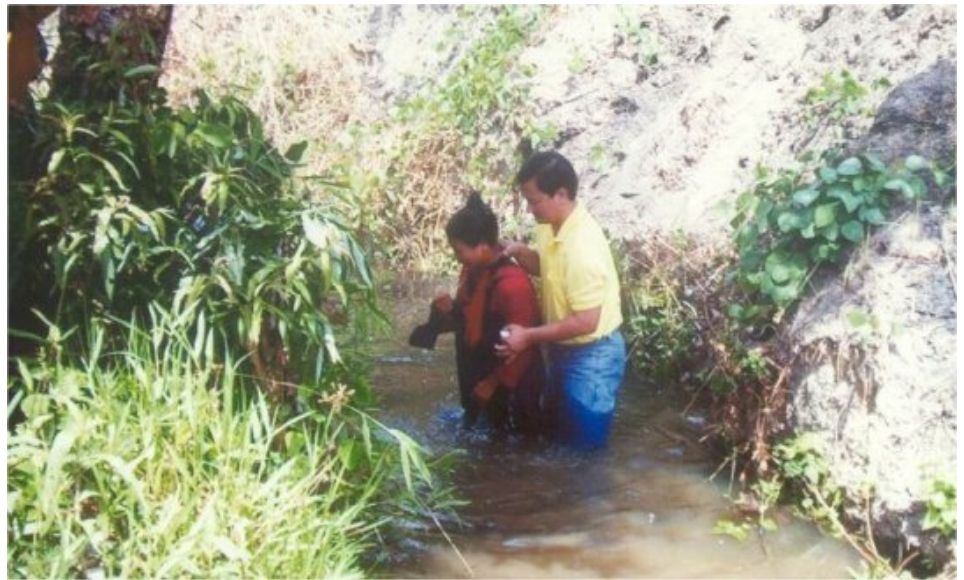


PA KOE

The church in the village of Pa Koe is growing at a good pace. In fact, it is one of the fastest growing congregations with whom we work. Bro. Matthew, second from left, is the pastor of this congregation. You can see Bro. Anond, the Lord's hard-working missionary is on the right behind a man wearing a hat.

BAPTIZING AT PA KOE

Baptizing in or near the jungle villages can sometimes be somewhat difficult. Notice the shallow water. During the dry season, it may be difficult to find water this deep. It is often necessary to lay a tarpaulin in the bottom of a stream, weight the up-stream end down with rocks and then have a couple of men to hold the downstream end up to back up enough water for immersing.



THE HOUSE IS FULL

Every seat is taken and children are on the floor at the front. When I looked at this picture I recognized the young lady on the right front row.

I don't think that I have ever been to a service at Pa Koe that she was not right there or somewhere on the front row. She speaks Thai, Lahu, and Lisu, and possibly Dai. She is very intelligent and always ready to help Bro. Anond do medicine when Sis. Lee is not present.



HOE SAI HKAOW

The church in the village of Hoe Sai Hkaow is one of the younger churches. It was set in order while I was in Thailand last year. Shortly before I left to come home we purchased this land with funds supplied by Beverly Manor Baptist Church. The people secured a permit and cut their trees for columns but some members of another church in the village complained to the forestry department and they came and picked up the columns they had made. In June of this year they had not been restored.

PART OF THE CONGREGATION

When we go to a church during the work week, some of the members will not be able to take off from work to attend the service. The church at Hoe Sai Hkaow has more people than are shown in this picture. But this many were able to be present for the services when Bro. Lee was there in June of this year. The children were apparently in school so only little ones were present when this photo was made.



TEMPORARY SHELTER FOR SERVICES

If I understand correctly, the Lahu style building at Hoe Sai Hkaow has been completed since this photo was made in June. From funds supplied by the supporting churches and individuals Bro. Lee was able to leave enough money for them to proceed with their building even though the forestry department had not returned their columns. Sometimes a bribe would work but we never pay bribes, though it is an accepted practice over there.



NA HUI CHURCH

The Na Hui church was formed last year by two young congregations merging into one. The pastors of these two congregations lived on land belonging to the men for whom they worked. These men would not let them come to school as long as they lived on their land. We purchased the land on which they stand. Some of the men and Bor. Anond have met with the Chinese man (behind children to pay for the property.

NA HUI CONGREGATION

Here the Na Hui congregation is gathered in front of their new building after a service. Bro. Bill Lee was there in June and you can see him in the picture. I see two or three brethren from other churches in the picture also.

This building is located just a few kilometers from the Hill Tribes Children Center.



NA HUI SERVICE

Some of the members of the congregation are gathered in the building for a service. Some have come to the service on motorcycles. Apparently it had been raining and someone has hung his blue rain coat over the wall near the entrance.

These buildings provide about as cool a place as one can find during the hot times of the year.

It is a joy to see these congregations build their own buildings and to see how happy they are when meeting in them.

(IMMERSION Continued from Page 2)
 words if we are to know the meaning of Scripture. Every word has a primary, basic meaning or comes from a root with a primary, basic meaning. In the study of Scripture we need to seek the true, primary, basic meaning of a word and attach that meaning unless there are weighty and contextual reasons for applying a secondary meaning. We should never base a doctrine or practice on some isolated situation where we may be able to **“make a word”** mean something. The primary meaning is how a word will most often be used.

The Greek word BAPTIZO appears in the New Testament 79 times. Of that 79 it is transliterated “baptise” 74 times, “Baptist” 1 time, “be baptized” 2 times and “wash” 2 times. These 2 times that it is translated “wash” it refers to washing the hands which included dipping the hands into the water (Mark 7:4; Luke 11:38).

Another form of the word is BAPTO appears 3 times and is translated “dip” each time (Lu. 16:24; Jn. 13:26; Rev. 19:13). It appears 3 times with the prefix “EM” attached and means to “dip into.” It is translated “dippeth” and “dipped.”

Thus it is seen that the primary meaning is applicable in the use of this word. We must, therefore, ascertain the meaning.

BAPTIZO IN THE LEXICONS

Thayer is admitted to be one of the best authorities on the meaning of Greek words used in the New Testament. Of BAPTIZO he gives as the primary meaning “to dip repeatedly, to immerse, to submerge.” The second meaning refers to those times when the word is translated “wash.” There he says it means “to cleanse by dipping or submerging.” Thayer was a professor in the Divinity School of Harvard University and was evidently well qualified to give the meaning.

Parkhurst, a Presbyterian like Thayer, gives the primary meaning: “To dip, immerse, or plunge in water.” On those verses where it is translated wash he says it means “to wash the hand by immersion or dipping in water.”

Thus two recognized Greek scholars, non-Baptists, affirm that the word used in the New Testament for baptism has as its primary and predominate meaning “immersion.” In its’ secondary meaning of “wash” it still has its primary meaning for it means to “wash by dipping or immersing.” We could add sixty other Lexicons which will corroborate what these two have said.

SCHOLARS

That Jesus specified immersion when he commanded baptism is clear from the statement of scholars on the meaning of the word BAPTIZO. Dr. Charles Anthon (Episcopalian), President of Columbia College, New York, wrote: “Baptizo—The primary meaning of the word is to dip, to immerse; and its secondary meaning, if it ever had any, refers to the same leading idea. ***Sprinkling and pouring are entirely out of the question.***” [Emp. mine, RWC]

Bechman, a Greek Catholic wrote in 1701 A.D.: “In the Primitive Church baptism was a total immersion or burial, as it were.”

In his work “Ceremonies in Baptism,” Joseph de Vicecomes, a French Roman Catholic said: “I will never cease to profess and teach that only immersion in water...is lawful baptism in the church.” In “Church History,” Vol. 2, p. 294, A.D. 1840 Mrs. Doellfinger, a German Old Catholic wrote: “Baptism by immersion continued to be the prevailing practice of the church as late as the fourteenth century.”

The Douay Version of the Bible with Haydock’s notes has the endorsement of the Pope of Rome. In the notes on Matt. 3:6 we read: “Baptized—The word baptism signifies a washing, particularly when it is done by immersion, or by dipping, or plunging a thing under water, which was ***formerly the ordinary way of administering baptism*** . . . That Christ was, baptized by immersion is clear from the text; for he who ascended out of the water must first have descended into it. And this method was in general use in the church for thirteen hundred years, as

appears from the acts of councils and ancient rituals.”

The Lutheran Theologian, Keckerman wrote: “We cannot deny that the first institution of baptism consisted in **immersion, not sprinkling**” (*Systematic Theology*, Vol. III, Chapter 8, p. 369; 1615 AD).

The founder and father of Presbyterianism, John Calvin, wrote: “The very word baptize, however, signifies to immerse; and it is certain that **immersion was the practice of the ancient church**” (*Calvin’s Institutes, Vol. III*, p. 343; 1816). [Emp. mine, RWC].

The Church of England scholar, John Davenant, wrote in 1627: “In the ancient church they **did not pour**, but they **immersed in water** those who were baptised.” [Emp. mine, RWC]

To these declarations of scholars many, many more could be added. They show that scholars admit that the original method of baptism was immersion. Immersion was specified by Christ and practiced by his followers.

LOCATIONS OF BAPTISMS

Another evidence that Jesus commanded immersion is found in the location where baptisms occurred. Baptisms could have been performed almost anywhere if sprinkling were baptism and if Christ had specified sprinkling.

AENON, NEAR TO SALIM

“John also was baptizing in Aenon near to Salim, BECAUSE there was much water there” (Jn. 3:23). I have emphasized the word “because” in this verse to show that the Divinely declared reason that John was baptizing in Aenon was because of the “much water” that was there. It doesn’t take “much water” to sprinkle a lot of folks. On the other hand, a good deal of water is necessary for the baptism of one person when immersion is practiced. John was immersing in Aenon, not sprinkling!

IN JORDAN

“And were baptised of him in

Jordan” (Matt. 3:16).

Notice these were baptized **“IN JORDAN.”** They were not sprinkled in Jordan or by Jordan, they were immersed in Jordan. When our Saviour was baptised, he **“went up straightway out of the water”** which clearly indicates that he had been immersed (Matt. 3:16). There would have been no need whatever to put him in the water for a mere sprinkling on the head.

THE ETHIOPIAN EUNUCH

“And as they went on their way, they came unto a certain water; and the eunuch said: See, here is water; what doth hinder me to be-baptized? And Philip said, If thou believest with all thie heart, thou mayest. And he answered and said, I believe that Jesus Christ is the Son of God. And he commanded the chariot to stand still: and they went down both into the water, both Philip and the eunuch; and he baptized him. And when they were come up out of the water . . .” (Acts 8:36-39). Here we have both the baptizer and the one baptized going out into the water for a baptism. Only immersion would require that either enter the water. Both could have remained on shore if Philip had merely sprinkled.

THE SYMBOLISM OF BAPTISM: A BURIAL

“Know ye not, that so many of us as were baptized into Jesus Christ were baptized into his death? Therefore we are BURIED with him by baptism into death: that like as Christ was raised up from the dead by the glory of the Father, even so we also should walk in newness of life” (Rom. 6:34).

Here we see that baptism is a burial in water as well as a raising up in the likeness of Christ’s resurrection. In baptism we symbolically declare that we believe that we were identified with Christ in his death, his burial, and in his resurrection. In baptism we say symbolically: “When he died, I died;

when he was buried, I was buried; when he arose, I arose.”

In verse five Paul further indicates immersion by referring to baptism as a “planting in the likeness of his death” with assurance that we will be raised in the likeness of his resurrection.

Dear reader, there is only one way that baptism can picture the burial and resurrection of Christ, a burial in water and a raising up out of that water. Immersion is the only mode to manifest this.

The word (BAPTIZO), the places, and the picture all require a complete immersion in water. How could anyone accept anything less for baptism?

IS IT REALLY IMPORTANT?

Occasionally someone will ask: “Is it really important which mode one uses?”

I ask, “Is it important to obey our Lord’s command? Is it important to preserve the proper symbolism?”

OBEDIENCE MAKES IT IMPORTANT

When God sent Saul against the Amalekites he told him to slay the women, the men, the children and the suckling babies. He told him to slay all their animals.

Saul decided to change God’s orders just a little bit and he brought back as captive their king, Agag. He also brought back some of their best sheep and cattle allegedly for sacrificing. He partially obeyed, but not completely. In certain areas he clearly disobeyed which amounted to a flat rejection of God’s command.

God sent Samuel forth with the message that God had rejected him from being king over Israel. Samuel said: **“Behold, to obey is better than sacrifice, and to hearken than the fat of rams. For rebellion is as the sin of witchcraft and stubbornness is as iniquity and idolatry. Because thou hast rejected the word of the Lord, he hath also rejected thee from being king” (I Sam. 15:22-23).** Ask Saul if it is important to obey the Lord fully and

completely.

Since our Lord clearly commanded immersion, to teach and administer sprinkling is disobedience to a clear command. Such stubborn disobedience is as bad as the sin of witchcraft, iniquity, and idolatry. Ask Saul if obedience is important.

When God had Moses make the Ark of the Covenant he gave him very careful instructions for its transportation from one location to another. When David and his men changed that Divine direction for convenience sake trouble came. As they hauled the ark on their new cart. **“the oxen shook it”** and **“Uzzah put forth his hand to”** steady the ark and keep it from toppling over. **“God smote him there for his ERROR; and there he died by the ark of God” (II Sam. 6:7).**

Ask Uzzah if obedience to Divine direction is important?

Our Saviour said: **“Ye are my friends, if ye do whatsoever I command you” (Jn. 15:14).** Since Jesus commanded and specified immersion his **friends** immerse. Again the Lord said: **“If you love me, keep my commandments” (Jn. 14:15).** Do you love Christ? If you really love him and his word you will insist on immersion for baptism, and nothing less will manifest love, for only immersion of a born again believer will meet the requirement of complete obedience in baptism!

Jesus has some rather harsh words concerning those who do not obey him. John wrote: **“And hereby we do know that we know him, if we keep his commandments. He that saith, I know him and KEEPETH NOT his commandments, IS A LIAR, and the truth is not in him” (I Jn. 2:3-4).** **“For this is the love of God, that we keep his commandments: and his commandments are not grievous” (I Jn. 5:3).**

If you are a friend of Christ, if you love: Christ you will obey Christ. He commands immersion for baptism and the person who knows that and practices or condones sprinkling makes a liar of himself, says the beloved Apostle John.

If obedience to Christ's commands is important, then immersion is important. **Don't put question marks where God has put periods!**

THE GOSPEL MAKES IT IMPORTANT

The gospel, according to Paul, is the good news of how Christ died, was buried, and rose again. The gospel involves the counsel of God to do this and the events and circumstances leading to its actual fulfillment. This gospel, which ***"Is the power of God unto salvation to everyone that believeth"*** (Rom. 1:16), and which is the gospel by which the Corinthians were saved when they believed it (I Cor. 15:15), is pictured in baptism, in immersion. It is not pictured in sprinkling or pouring. This is why Paul spoke of being ***"planted together in likeness of his death"*** and being ***"buried with him in baptism."***

There is not the remotest picture of the gospel in the mere sprinkling of water on the forehead. In both baptism and the Lord's Supper we ***"shew forth the Lord's death till he come"*** (I Cor. 11:26). In the case of baptism, this is only true if it is ***really baptism*** which is an immersion of the entire body into water and a raising up of that person out of the water just as Jesus was placed in a tomb and came up out of that tomb.

Thus, the fundamental, basic message of the gospel is set forth pictorially in scriptural, Christ commanded immersion. When men distort the ordinance they tamper with the gospel that is pictured therein. Baptism, true and scriptural baptism helps to preserve the true gospel.

Sprinkling for baptism had its origin out of the heresy of baptismal regeneration. Since, they argued, baptism is essential to salvation it ought to be administered to the sick and to infants. Since, they argued further, immersion was very difficult for the infirm and infants, sprinkling should be substituted for immersion. At first only the infirm were sprinkled. Sprinkling did not become common practice until thirteen centuries of church history had passed by.

WHY CHRISTIANS SHOULD INSIST ON IMMERSION

If you are a Christian you ought to insist on immersion for a number of reasons.

1. Our blessed Saviour traveled from Nazareth to the lower Jordan valley to be immersed by John the Baptist in the Jordan river. If immersion at the hands of that Baptist was important to our Saviour, it should be important to us.

2. Immersion was commanded by Jesus Christ and we ought to obey Christ. In fact, if we love him we will obey him (Jn. 14:15; 15:14). Sprinkling will not suffice for obedience any more than white pine could have replaced gopher wood in the ark.

3. The truth about baptism from the Scriptures is that it was by immersion and only for believers. If we love the truth we will practice truth in administering this ordinance.

4. Baptism by immersion is the only way one can be ***"buried"*** with Christ in baptism or ***"raised"*** in the likeness of his resurrection (Rom. 6:1-6).

WHY CHRISTIANS SHOULD CONDEMN SPRINKLING

1. It is contrary to the law of Christ and is a terrible sin.

2. It perverts the gospel in picture since it does not show the death, burial, and resurrection.

3. It originated with the Roman Catholic Church, the whore of Babylon, ***"THE MOTHER OF HARLOTS AND ABOMINATIONS OF THE EARTH"*** (Rev. 17:1-9). Sprinkling is just one of her many abominations.

4. Christians, like David, should ***"hate every false way"*** (Psa. 119:104, 128), and sprinkling is a false way of baptism.

5. ***"A faithful witness will not lie: but a false witness will utter lies"*** (Prov. 14:5). Those who teach that sprinkling is acceptable for baptism are false witnesses speaking lies.

6. If we condone sprinkling or support and encourage those who do teach sprinkling we become partakers in their evil deeds. ***"If there***

come any unto you, and bring not this doctrine, receive him not into your house, neither bid him God speed: For he that biddeth him God speed IS PARTAKER OF HIS EVIL DEEDS” (II Jn. 10-11).

7. Those who pervert an ordinance of Christ which pictures the gospel will not hesitate to pervert the gospel of Christ. As a matter of fact most have already done that very thing.

8. Since neither Christ nor his inspired apostles commanded sprinkling, it falls under the Biblical classification of **“commandments of men, that turn from the truth” (Titus 1:14)** and cause one’s worship to be **“in vain” (Matt. 15:9)**. These ill-conceived commands of men, such as sprinkling, are also designated **“doctrines of demons”** and are inspired by **“seducing spirits” (I Tim. 4:1)**.

CONCLUSION

It does make a difference. It makes a great difference. We are commanded to immerse **“and if any man obey not our word by this epistle, note that man, and have no company with him” (II Thes. 3:14)**.

God, through the pen of the prophet Isaiah, puts the matter more forcefully. **Isaiah 8:20 To the law and to the testimony: if they speak not according to this word, it is because there is no light in them.** Certainly, those who teach baptismal regeneration and who sprinkle instead of immerse, who **rhantize** instead of **baptize**, do not obey the word of God and true Christians should have no company with them. **“Be ye separate, saith the Lord” (II Cor. 6:17)**.

(False Teachers Cont. From P. 1) damnation slumber (V-3-11). They are **“as natural brute beasts, made to be taken and destroyed” (II Pet. 2:12)**. In verse 15 Peter declares that these false teachers have followed **“the way of Balaam the son of Bosor, who loved the wages of**

unrighteousness.” Then, in verse 17 Peter declares **“These (Balaam and those who follow his ways) are wells without water, clouds that are carried with a tempest; to whom the mist of darkness is reserved for ever.”**

Jude speaks of Balaam as one of those persons **“who were before of old ordained to this condemnation” (Jude 4)**. Of those who were false teachers at the time of Jude’s writing he said: **“Woe unto them! for they have gone in the way of Cain, and ran greedily after the error of Balaam for reward, and perished in the gainsaying of Core (Korah)” (Jude 11)**. Jude says further of Balaam and those like him: **“These are spots in your feasts of charity . . . clouds they are without water, carried about of winds; trees whose fruit withered, without fruit, TWICE DEAD, plucked up by the roots; raging waves of the sea, foaming out their own shame; wandering stars’, to whom is reserved the blackness of darkness for ever” (V-12-13)**. In Revelation 2:14 Christ strongly rebuked the church at Pergamos for harboring those **“that hold the doctrine of Balaam, who taught Balac to cast a stumbling block before the children of Israel, to eat things sacrificed unto idols, and to commit fornication.”** Again he is classified as a false teacher with pernicious, deceptive ways.

It should be clear that Balaam was a false teacher. It is also clear that his ways were pernicious (very injurious and destructive; deadly) ways. Truth, with a mixture of error, is more deadly and dangerous than error without truth. A person who teaches that salvation is wholly of works and declares that grace has nothing to do with it is not nearly as dangerous as the one who teaches that salvation is by grace but some ordinances (such as baptism) are still essential, or the person who teaches that our salvation is based on the covenant of grace but the benefits of that gracious covenant are “conveyed, imparted, and conferred” by circumcision originally and now by baptism.

THE TRUTH TAUGHT BY BALAAM

Did this false prophet Balaam teach some

truth? He certainly did but who wants to go to church where he is the teacher and preacher and have to try to glean a few grains of truth from his field of error?

BALAAM TAUGHT THAT GOD'S WILL IS IRRESISTIBLE

When rebuked by Balak for not cursing Israel he said: ***"How shall I curse, whom God has not cursed? or how shall I defy, whom the Lord has not defied (Numbers 23:8)?"*** Again he asked: ***"Hath he said, and shall he not do it? or hath he spoken, and shall he not make it good (Num. 23:19)?"*** He then declared: ***"Behold, I have received commandment to bless: and he hath blessed; and I cannot reverse it" (v-20).***

That God's will is irresistible is a glorious truth affirmed by Spirit-inspired men, Paul wrote: ***"Therefore hath he mercy on whom he will have mercy, and whom he will he hardeneth. Thou wilt say then unto me, why doth he yet find fault? For who hath RESISTED HIS WILL? Nay but O man, who art thou that repliest against God?" (Rom. 9:18-20).***

God himself declared. that his will is invincible and irresistible when he said: ***"My counsel shall stand, and I will do all my pleasure ... yea, I have spoken it, I will also bring it to pass; I have purposed it, I will also do it?" (Isa. 46:9-11).***

After seven years in the seminary of insanity, Nebuchadnezzar was convinced that God's will is irresistible. He declared: ***"He doeth according to his will in the army of heaven and the inhabitants of the earth: and none can stay his hand, or say unto him what doest thou?" (Dan. 4:35).***

When Balaam taught his inability to change the will and purpose of God he taught truth. That, however, did not change the attitude of God toward him for he had ordained Balaam ***"before of old to condemnation"*** (Jude 4). The fact that Balaam taught the truth about the invincible will of God did not change Peter's attitude toward this man for he still classed him as a heretic, a false prophet, and one who had a reservation in hell that was preserved for him. Even though Balaam taught some truth about the nature of God,

the Son of God still condemned him and rebuked a church for harboring in her fellowship those who followed his pernicious ways. A little, or a lot of truth cannot deliver a false teacher from God's anathema!

BALAAM TAUGHT THE IMMUTABILITY OF GOD

Balaam declared another important and glorious truth about God. He taught that God is immutable, that God does not change, and that he never needs to change. Hear his true declaration: ***"God is not a man, that he should lie; neither the son of man, that he should repent"*** (Num. 23:19). What a fine declaration of truth from the lips of a false prophet who must burn in hell! Yes, Mr. Bosor's son, Balaam, declared a great truth.

This same truth has fallen from the lips of our great Jehovah when he declared unequivocally: ***"My covenant will I not break, nor altar the thing that is gone out of my lips" (Psa. 89:34).*** The words of Balaam and the words of God are in agreement; they are both true, therefore.

David confirmed this same truth of God's immutability. He said: ***"My covenant will I not break, nor alter the thing that is gone out of my lips"*** (Psa. 89:34). Job said: ***"But he is of one mind, and who can turn him? and what his soul desireth, even that he doeth. For he performeth the thing that is appointed for me: and many such things are with him"*** (Job 23:13-14).

In Jeremiah 4:28 God declares: ***"For this shall the earth mourn, and the heavens shall be black: Because I have spoken, I have purposed it, and will not repent, neither will I turn back from it." Again God has said: "I the Lord have spoken it: it shall come to pass, and I will do it; I will not repent; according to thy ways, and according to thy doings shall they judge thee, saith the Lord God"*** (Ezek. 24:14).

The fact that Balaam spoke such glorious truth did not deliver him from the scathing

denunciations of Peter, Jude, or, Jesus. He was a false teacher and prophet with a perverted pernicious doctrine and he burns in hell today.

BALAAM TAUGHT THE DOCTRINE OF JUSTIFICATION

Justification refers to the legal standing of a person before God. It means that God deals with the justified as though they had never sinned. Paul wrote: ***“Who shall lay anything to the charge of God’s elect? It is God that justifieth”*** (Rom. 8:33).

Did Balaam teach this truth, also. Listen

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to these words from his lips? ***“He (God) hath not beheld iniquity in Jacob, neither hath he seen perverseness in Israel”*** (Numbers 23:21). Israel had sinned many times. There is no question about that. In love, God had chastened them. ***“The Lord shall judge his people”*** but ***“who shall lay any thing to the charge of God’s elect”*** (Heb. 10:30; Rom. 8:33). God was dealing with Israel in their covenant relationship and saw them as sinless in that relationship and refused every request of Balaam to curse them.

CONCLUSION

There are a number of other truths which Balaam preached and prophesied even though he was a false teacher. This truth, however, did not deliver him from the penalty of his false teaching.

Peter condemned him and those like him in no uncertain terms. He declared that hell was his home.

Jude condemned him as one who was ***“before of old ordained to condemnation”*** for whom there was a reservation in the blackness of darkness forever.

Jesus strongly rebuked the church at Pergamos for harboring those who held the doctrine of Balaam and warned that He, the Lord, would come and fight against them with the sword of his mouth.

None of these—Jude Paul, and Jesus—had one thing good to say about Balaam or other false teachers. Paul prayed for those who perverted the gospel by advocating that circumcision was an essential of salvation to receive God’s curse (Gal. 1:6-9). God’s New Testament preachers never encouraged false teachers; they condemned them and called their doctrines the doctrines of demons. The tables of heretics and false teachers are not acceptable feeding places for God’s sheep. Beware of these ravaging wolves in sheep’s clothing!

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