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From The Director

JOB, WHO WAS TRIED AS GOLD (II)



HOW WAS JOB DESTROYED?

The righteous angels came at what seems to be an appointed time for them to report on their assigned duties, and Satan appeared before God's throne with them. [Satan has access to the ear of God, since "every dog has his day in court" (Zech. 3:1-2; I Kings 22:19-22; Rev. 12:10). With our accuser active continually, we must have a "lawyer for the defense" (I John 2:1-2). Only the redeemed have the "great high priest" at the right hand of God (Heb. 4:14-16)]. With chest extended, Satan claimed to control all on earth, whereas God had control of heaven. God deflated his ego, however, when He asked, "Hast thou considered my servant Job?"

Of course he had, since Satan as a roaring lion compasses the earth seeking God's offspring whom he can destroy. [Being a fallen angel, not deity, Satan is not omnipresent, though he can "fly swiftly" (I Pet. 5:8. Dan. 9:21). Today, Satan works only through mediums, not directly as God permitted him once to exercise his devious will. Were Satan still to be able to work in the area of the miraculous, he would have the advantage of God, since God has limited His activities to the non-miraculous since the first century.]

Satan affirms that were it not for God's bribing Job to get Job to honor and obey Him, Job would curse God to His face. [This was a ruthless charge both that God was not worthy of worship and that man would not worship God unless things went well all the time and unless he got paid well. What about you, dear reader; do you worship God only when things go well and only when you prosper financially?]

Being thus attacked and challenged by Satan, God allows Satan to take away all that Job has, but he was not permitted to touch Job (1:6-12). [Inasmuch as Satan is a created being, he is subject to God's limitations (as is a dog on a leash); he could do only what God permitted (cf. I Cor. 10:13).]. "So [with this liberty to deprive Job of all his possessions] Satan went forth from the presence of Jehovah" [into darkness, to do his dirty work]. The astute reader will observe that the battle is between God and Satan; and, who is caught between them? The righteous Job is!

In one fell blow, Satan's cruel, ruthless, vicious hatred against God, his archenemy, and man, who is God's beloved, precious offspring, is seen as he takes away everything Job has (Job 1:13-19). He does so in such a way that the only servant of Job who is spared each time Job is afflicted (so that he can carry the message to Job) is not even able to get the terrible news out of his mouth before the

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Co-Editor's Column SILENCE OF THE SCRIPTURES

Garland Elkins

DIGRESSION AT THE POINT OF SILENCE OF THE SCRIPTURES!

Every generation must fight anew the insidious errors of Satan. Error is error wherever taught, on the "outside," or on the "inside" of the church. The major difference is that error on the "outside" cannot begin to do the damage that it can on the "inside." Paul warned that the Great Apostasy would be an "inside" job. To the elders of the Ephesian church, he sorrowfully said, "I know that after my departing grievous wolves shall enter in among you, not sparing the flock; and from among your own selves shall men arise, speaking perverse things to draw away the disciples after them" (Acts 20:29-30).

It is still true that all the water in the world cannot sink a ship as long as it is on the outside, but it is when water gets on the inside that the ship is in danger of sinking. It is definitely true that the water is now on the inside! When Paul thought upon such a condition he both wept and warned the brethren. He said, "For many walk, of whom I told you often, and now tell you even weeping, that they are the enemies of the cross of Christ: whose end is perdition, whose God is the belly, and whose glory is in their shame, who mind earthly things" (Phi. 3:18-19).

It Is Christian To Oppose Error

It is indeed unfortunate that there is an ever growing attitude of indifference toward defending the truth and exposing false teachers. A sense of false tolerance has caused some to conclude that it is not Christ-like to engage in controversy. All who hold such a view should remember that our Lord was the greatest controversialist ever to live. To the Ephesian elders, Paul enjoined watchfulness against all error and informs us how it caused his heart to break: "Wherefore watch ye, remembering that by the space of three years I ceased not to admonish every one night and day with tears" (Acts 20:31).

"Silence" Arguments Are Rebellion Against Divine Authority

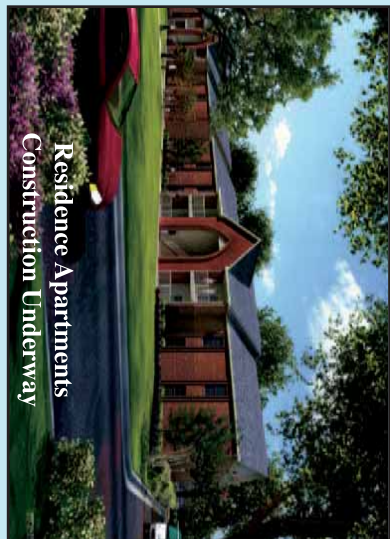
Samuel gave the Lord's command to Saul to destroy Amalek; "Now go and smite Amalek, and utterly destroy all that they have, and spare them not; but slay both man and woman, infant and suckling, ox and sheep, camel and ass" (I Sam. 15:3). When Saul spared Agag along with certain animals, he was in rebellion to God, and Samuel said to him, "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. 15:23). Christianity is the religion which is set out by God's authority.

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Memphis School of Preaching



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Attend The Annual

MSOP LECTURES

Which Begin the Last Sunday of March and Continue Through the Following Thursday.

March 26-30, 2006 ••• Theme: "The Gospel Of Christ"

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GENERAL INFORMATION

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END-OF-YEAR SUPPORT

Ever since the Memphis School of Preaching had its beginning forty years ago (1966), those contributions made at the close of the calendar year have been vital to its work. As you know, the MSOP receives no (it does not wish for, nor would it accept any) federal or state grants, student loans, building loans, or other governmental support. And, it charges no tuition, or fees.

The School is a part of the Bible teaching program of the Forest Hill Church of Christ, and is supported by the Forest Hill congregation, and by other faithful brothers and sisters, individually and congregationally, who are convinced of the continuing need to train men to preach the Gospel of Christ.

The many hundreds of graduates preaching throughout the world tell us their two years of training at the Memphis School of Preaching was the hardest work they ever did--and loved! Equal to more than four years of college in two years (164 semester hours), the course demands that students learn discipline and diligence.

Forty years of faithful service to the Lord, and to the Cause of Christ, have shown the School is worthy of your support.

These end-of-year gifts are very helpful because of the needs of students who have not raised all of their support for living expenses, January enrollment of new students, anticipated lectureship expenses in March, and catching up with unanticipated expenses.

These donations are fully tax deductible, of course, and they are a Godsend. Please help if you can.

Curtis A. Cates, Director

2006 MEMPHIS SCHOOL OF PREACHING LECTURES--THE GOSPEL OF CHRIST

Several notable events will take place during the annual MSOP Lectures, March 26-30, 2006 (Sunday-Thursday).

First, 2006 marks the fortieth year of the School's work in training men to preach the gospel. Over these forty years (1966-2006), hundreds of men have received the necessary instruction and preparation to preach the Word. MSOP graduates have gone to the four corners of the earth, and have demonstrated their faithfulness to God, and devotion to the Cause of Christ by their good labors. In connection with this momentous forty-year milestone, the dinner on Monday night will feature speakers representing the four decades of classes, along with other speakers, and a historical look at MSOP.

Second, we hope to have the building of the student residence halls well underway by lectureship time. Four buildings, with eight units in each building, and with three bedrooms in each unit, for a total of thirty-two units, and ninety-six bedrooms, will be built on the five acres behind the N. B. Hardeman Library building. We know you will want to come see the progress made by lectureship time.

Third, the Alumni and Friends dinner on Tuesday night is always a highlight of the lectures, and of the year. We hope all alumni, and friends, who possibly can, will come to the lectures, and will also plan to be with us at this annual dinner. The dinner is an informative and encouraging time, as well as a time to renew acquaintances of those whom we may see only once a year.

In the lectureship, we look forward to the capable presentation of their topics by sixty speakers (fifty-two men and eight women), addressing various aspects of the tremendous theme, "The Gospel of Christ," to worshipping with the great lectureship crowds, and to the fellowship of hundreds of brothers and sisters from across the nation, and from foreign countries.

The lectureship books and cds will be available, and displays of good works, and of good materials will be present.

We hope you will be present too!

Bobby Liddell

(CATES: Continued from Page 1)

next servant appears with more heart-rending news, the last of which was the death of all Job's children. How different this was from the attempts of a person who has to break some terrible news to another person regarding, perhaps, the death of a child in an automobile accident [as preachers are quite often called upon to do]! We search our souls and our vocabularies, trying with every fiber of our beings to break the terribly sad news as "easily" as possible--and, there is no "easy" way.

Dear reader, who would want to serve a master like Satan--and spend eternity with such a wicked, bitter enemy? I hope he does not control your life. Having lost round one (1:20-22), since Job did not curse God, Satan challenged God that Job really had not even been tried, as yet. Of course, Satan was refusing to acknowledge that God had won the earlier trial of Job.

Now, he argued that if Job's body was afflicted with grievous pain, he would curse God; Job would trade even the skin of his own children to save his own skin. God again gave Satan liberty to afflict Job, but not to take his life. "So Satan went forth from the presence of Jehovah, and smote Job with sore boils from the sole of his foot unto his crown" (2:1-8). Even then, the trials of Job had hardly begun! "For the thing which I fear cometh upon me, And that which I am afraid of cometh unto me. I am not at ease, neither am I quiet, neither have I rest. But trouble cometh" (3:25-26).

HOW WAS JOB TRIED IN THE FIRE?

First, Job was deprived of his physical possessions. No doubt he had worked hard for that over which God allowed him to be a steward. At one moment he was a man of great riches, the next moment a pauper. If this author were to lose all his physical possessions, the loss would not be great; but, Job lost a vast fortune.

Second, Job was deprived of his high social standing in the community and in the East. He was held in the highest esteem and respect by young and old, princes and nobles, rich and poor, widow and orphan (29:7-25). Everyone looked to Job as "chief" and "guide." *Now*, there was no need for his royal looking robe--how unbecoming to a person who had lost it all, who had moved from a place of admiration and respect to a trash pile, clothed in sackcloth and covered with ashes (1:20)! His companions were dogs, beggars, and outcasts of society, in that garbage dump at the edge of the village.

Third, Job was spurned and scorned by his family and former acquaintances. Those whose fathers Job would not allow to sleep with his sheepdogs now ridiculed him, spat upon him, and struck him (30:1-14). His own brothers and sisters abandoned him, as well as did his former household servants (19:13-19). Especially sad is it that even the little children who had once loved and honored him now abhorred him! [Note: Job is a type of Christ; indeed, Satan's attack on Job is actually an attack on the principle of the innocent suffering, though innocent. If Job can be proven by Satan to be guilty, and thus deserving of the suffering he is undergoing, then Satan feels that he can perhaps add fuel to his contention (in the words of Eliphaz, Bildad, and Zophar) that only the wicked suffer, and thus undermine the suffering of the innocent Christ on the cross for guilty sinners. The point is, Job was betrayed by his closest acquaintance, as was Jesus (Psm. 41:9).]

Fourth, Job suffered the loss of his own children. Children of God themselves, they were no doubt known for their godly lives. Job had brought them up in the nurture of the Lord, and he had been very careful to watch over their spiritual welfare. Continually, Job would offer sacrifices of atonement for them, inasmuch as "It may be that my sons have sinned and renounced God in their hearts" (1:5). They are listed first among Job's "substance," or possessions, for they were the most prized and precious. Blessed is the father who realizes, with the mother, that his children are his most valuable and greatest responsibility (Eph. 6:1-4). How would it be, dear reader, to lose one child, the "apple of your eye"? To lose ten would be indescribably unbearable, except with the help of the dear Lord! Oh, how Job needed the help of the Lord!

(Continued Next Month)

Curtis A. Cates

(ELKINS: Continued from Page 1)

A brother has written an article in which he seeks to confuse and lead brethren astray. In this article, he contends that "silence of scriptures neither authorizes nor prohibits but is neutral." So what? Does he think that because silence says nothing he has authority for instrumental music? If so, he could not be further from the truth. We have biblical authorization in the New Testament for singing in worship to God, but there is absolutely no authority for mechanical instruments in the worship of the church. When God specifies a certain action, He forbids all other actions.

1. In the Old Testament God authorized prescribed acts of worship. Since hand washing was not authorized, Jesus condemned such action and pronounced the act as vain worship (Mat. 15:9).

2. Nadab and Abihu, the sons of Aaron, offered "strange fire" which the Lord "commanded them not" (Lev. 10:1). The fate of these two men is well known. "And there went out fire from the Lord, and devoured them, and they died before the Lord" (v. 2). Regardless of all the dust our brother tries to stir up at this point it is crystal clear that when God specified a certain fire all other fire was forbidden. He would tolerate no new element in His worship. Since God authorized a certain fire, to use "strange fire" was sin (I John 3:4), and Nadab and Abihu paid with their lives.

3. God had specified not only by whom, but how the ark was to be moved, and He considered all other ways forbidden. "And when they came to Nachon's threshing floor, Uzzah put forth his hand to the ark of God, and took hold of it; for the oxen shook it. And the anger of the Lord was kindled against Uzzah; and God smote him there for his error; and there he died by the ark of God (II Sam. 6:6-7). David later admitted that God sent punishment upon them because they had erred; "for that we sought him not after the due order" (I Chr. 15:13). David realized that when God authorizes an action, all other action is forbidden.

Our brother admits that when God authorizes an action that forbids all other action. He writes, "The command to immerse renders sprinkling and pouring unauthorized." Exactly! And the command to sing renders instrumental music unauthorized. Not only has he admitted this principle, but after quibbling on such passages as Hebrews 7:14, he said, "His specifying that priests should be from Aaron rendered the tribe of Judah unauthorized as priests." Again, I emphasize that when God authorizes an action, all other action is forbidden. (Continued Next Month)

Garland Elkins

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WENDELL WINKLER, A PREACHER'S PREACHER AND CHRISTIAN GENTLEMAN, PASSES

Curtis A. Cates

A great and good man, faithful gospel preacher, and dearly beloved brother Wendell Winkler went to his reward on October 23rd, at age seventy-four. He had distinguished himself as a superb homiletician, a thorough Bible scholar and writer, and a powerful evangelist.

Having attended Montgomery Bible College [later, Alabama Christian College] some ten years before the writer, he and I shared the same outstanding mentor, brother Rex A. Turner. Brother Turner often expressed the joy of seeing his student greatly succeed in his work as preacher. I saw in him the same gentlemanly spirit, humility, and encouragement which I beheld in brother Turner.

It was a great privilege to appear on **Polishing the Pulpit**, in Huntsville, Alabama, September 11-15, with brother Winkler and to hear his masterful, challenging discourses on "The Seven Sayings of Jesus." As always when he would talk to me the last few years, he showed genuine concern in inquiring about my health. He was ever thinking of the welfare of others, even when he himself was undergoing severe illness. And, brother Wendell encouraged the Memphis School of Preaching and the Forest Hill church.

The memorial service took place at the Northport Church of Christ, Tuscaloosa, on October 25th. The service was conducted by brother and sister Winkler's three sons: Dan Winkler, who preaches at Huntingdon, Tennessee; Mike Winkler, who preaches at Madison, Alabama; and Tim Winkler, who is a surgeon in Tuscaloosa. Barry Kennedy, preacher with Allen Webster in Jacksonville, Alabama, led the singing. Brother Joe Williams, Northport, handled the service at the graveside in Tuscaloosa Memory Gardens. Brother Winkler's influence upon the lives of myriads of us was positive and profound. We thank God that he lived, and we pray for sister Betty, for brethren Dan, Mike, and Tim, and for their families. We cherish the memory of brother Wendell Winkler.

MSOP CONDUCTS FOUR CAMPAIGNS

Billy Bland

October 30-November 3, 2005, MSOP divided the student body into four groups, and conducted four very successful Campaigns for Christ. One group traveled to **Tupelo, Mississippi** to work with the **East Main Church of Christ**, where the local evangelists are **Darrell Beard** and **Gary Williams** (MSOP 1997). Their efforts resulted in 1,831 doors knocked, with 87 Bible correspondence courses, and 31 home Bible studies established. Two were restored. Brother **Bobby Liddell** (MSOP Associate Director), did the preaching.

Another group traveled to **Lewisville, Arkansas**, where brother **Tye Barnette** (MSOP 2004) preaches. 601 doors were knocked which resulted in 46 Bible correspondence courses and 39 home Bible studies. Brother **John Barker** (MSOP 2005), did the preaching in this campaign.

A third campaign was conducted in **Sedalia, Missouri**, where brother **Johnnie Scaggs** preaches. Brother **Jerry Martin** (MSOP instructor and elder and preacher for the Cordova congregation), did the preaching. They knocked 1,138 doors and established 30 Bible correspondence courses and 18 home Bible studies. 2 people were baptized during the week of the campaign.

The fourth campaign was with the **Thomson Church of Christ in Thomson, Georgia**. Brother **Matthew Shelton** (MSOP 2004), is the local preacher in this growing area of Georgia. 1,150 doors were knocked and 142 Bible correspondence courses and 106 home Bible studies were established. Brother **David Jones** (MSOP instructor and elder and preacher of the Nesbit congregation), preached the Word of God during this week. There were 1 baptism and 1 restoration during the campaign.

Obviously, campaigns require much work, by local brethren, prior to, during, and after the campaign. We thank God, both for the opportunity of planting the seed (Luke 8:11), and for His giving the increase. The next campaigns are scheduled for the Spring of 2006.

Should the church where you worship be interested in hosting a Campaign for Christ, contact Billy Bland at the Memphis School of Preaching, 3950 Forest Hill Irene Road, Memphis, TN 38125.