

Scripture Research, Inc

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(Inside front cover)

BASIC BRIEFS

(DEALING WITH THE QUESTION OF THE SUPERNATURAL AND THE PERSON OF THE LORD JESUS CHRIST)

The one great barrier to a free and full modernistic sway is the Supernatural Element in Scripture. The Supernatural is an offence to Modernism. Many and absurd have been the attempts to excommunicate it from the faith. The scholastic contest against the Scriptural Content concludes in scholastic confusion

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The Anti-supernaturalists start out by attempting to offer a natural explanation for the origin of life. Their efforts lead them into many pit-falls, bring them face to face with many embarrassing positions, and make them victims of many more difficulties than they think to overcome. Evolution is the Modernist's contribution given to refute the Genesis account of Creation. Evolution is made up of abstractions, presumptions, suppositions, and opinions.

The Word of God is the Divine Book of Facts. From Genesis to Revelation not one theory can be found. Man's theories can never shake Divine Facets

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The Bible opens with these words: "In the beginning God created the heavens and the earth." This is a clear, straightforward, positive statement of an absolute fact

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Had the Bible been written by Evolutionists we would be reading something after this fashion: "In the far, far, dim, dark, misty, murky past, perhaps millions and perhaps trillions of years ago, it is supposed that God (?), or some sort of unknown energy or force, sufficiently accumulated to cause what it is reasonable to believe was a change. This change, it is presumed, caused other changes, and these still other changes, et cetera, et cetera, et cetera, until, it is supposed, we now have and are what we now have and are; and there is now what there now is."

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Getting rid of the Supernatural means finally getting rid of God. It is to bring the Divine Book down to the level of human books.

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Every now and then someone raises a great question, viz: "Where did God come from?" As to His origination, He did not come from anywhere or anything. "From everlasting to everlasting, Thou are God" (Psa. 90 52). Everywhere and everything came from God (Cp. Rom., 11:36). As to Revelation, God in the person of Christ came from Heaven. Naturally, we cannot understand either fact; but faith rewards one with ,an understanding surpassing the natural. (Cp. Heb. 11:3, Jno. 8:16.)

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How is one to believe? By accepting the Testimony that God has given to us in His Word concerning His Son Jesus Christ. The Holy Spirit through The Word of God can and will make Christ real to any earnest, open-minded inquirer. When Christ is personally known, one has no difficulties as to the existence and personality of the All-supreme Being (Cp. Jno. 1:1K).

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WORD STUDIES IN PSALM ONE

(Verse 1)

by Sidney A. Hatch

Blessed is the man that walketh not in the counsel of the ungodly, nor standeth in the way of sinners, nor sitteth in the seat of the scornful.

Blessed. The Hebrew word, *esher*₂ or *ashrey*₂ menas "happiness" or "blessedness." The opening phrase is possibly an interjection, "O the happiness of the man." It is significant that the first word of the Psalms is "happiness" or "blessedness," for this book contains the expression of true happiness.

***Esher* may be derived from *ashar*, meaning "to be straight" or "to go straight on." True happiness is connected with straightforwardness. The name *Asher* meant "happy one."**

Man. *Ish* in Hebrew, one of several Hebrew words for "man." *Ish* was often used of a man as a distinguished person, hence Job was "a man in the land" (Job 1:1), and our Lord was a "Man of sorrows" (Isaiah 53:3). Isaiah used *ish* when he wrote, "Show yourselves men" (46:8). Compare Paul's expression, "Quit you like men" (1 Cor. 16:13). The *ish* of Psalm One is distinguished by his separation from sin.

Counsel. The Hebrew word *etzah* means "counsel" or "advice" and, secondarily, "design," "plan," or "scheme." *Ahithophel* was one of the conspirators with Absalom, but David prayed, "Turn the counsel (Scheme) of *Ahithophel* into foolishness" (2 Samuel 15:31). So the Godly man of Psalm One does not walk according to the counsel, scheme, or conspiracy of the wicked.

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Ungodly. The Hebrew language had many words for sin and the sinner. The word used here, *rasha'*, especially referred to those who were guilty before God and, therefore, liable to punishment. This is the word Abraham used when he asked the Lord, "Wilt thou also destroy the righteous with the wicked?" (Genesis 18:23) The "wicked" were the men of Sodom, who were *rasha'*, that is, guilty and deserving of punishment.

Gesenius suggests that the verb form of *rasha'* meant, primarily, "to make a noise," or "tumult." Hence Isaiah wrote, "The wicked are like the troubled sea, when it cannot rest." The young man Elihy used *rasha'* when he asked Job, "When (God) giveth quietness, who then can make trouble?" (Job 34:29)

The "ungodly" of Psalm 1:1 are therefore the troubled ones, wicked and guilty before God. Like the sea, they are noisy, tumultuous, and unable to rest. Blessed is the man who does not walk in their counsel!

Standeth. Here the Hebrew *amad* seems to have the sense of "persevere," or "remain in a situation." The Godly man does not persevere in the way of sinners.

Sinners. The Hebrew word is *chata*, which meant, in its original sense, "to miss the mark." It is used in Judges where we read of 700 left-handed men of Gibeah who could "sling stones at an hair breadth, and not miss" (Judges 20:16). "Sinners," then, are those who miss the mark with God, or wander from the way.

Seat. The Hebrew verb *yashab* meant "sit" or "sit down." From it was formed the noun used here, *moshab*, meaning "a dwelling" (Exodus 10:23), "a seat" (1 Samuel 20:18), or "an assembly" (Psalms 107:32). The Godly man

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does not "sit down" in the "assembly" or "gathering place" of the scornful. He avoids the haunts of evil men.

Scornful. The word in the original is *letz*, meaning "a prattler, scorner," or "mockers." It was formed from the verb *lutz* or *lietz*, meaning "to talk big" or "to deride." Proverbs 9:12 declares, "If thou scornest (talk big), thou alone shalt bear it." Proverbs 20:1 says, "Wine is a mocker (big talker)." Psalm 119:51 says, "The proud have scorned me." God's man does not keep company with the frivolous big talkers who mock and deride the eternal verities.

Summary of verse 1; "O the happiness of that man of distinction who walks not according to the counsel and conspiracy of the restless, guilty, and ungodly ones, nor perseveres in the way of those who miss the mark with God, nor sits in the assembly of frivolous big-talkers."

(Verse 2)

But his delight is in the law of the LORD; and in law
doth he meditate day and night.

Delight. The Hebrew word is *chephetz*, meaning "pleasure," "delight," or "desire." The "law of the LORD," or the Word of God, is the pleasure, delight, and desire of the Godly man.

Sometimes *chephetz* is used in the sense of "something precious." Isaiah 54:12 promises Israel, "I will make... thy borders of pleasant stones" or "precious stones" (literally, "stones of delight"). Hence, to the believer, God's Word is something precious.

Law. The original word is *torah*, a term usually applied to the Pentateuch, the first five books of the Old Testament. However, *torah* is formed from the verb *yarah*,

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meaning "to direct, " "teach, " or "instruct." Hence *torah* is also direction, teaching, or instruction. Isaiah exhorts Israel to "give ear unto the law (*torah* or teaching) of our God" (1:10). Isaiah and Micah prophesy that someday the *torah* will go "out of Zion" into all the world (Isa. 2:3; Mic. 4:2). In that day it will be the "delight" of all the earth.

LORD. Hebrew *JHWH*, usually pronounced "*Jehovah*" or "*Jahweh*," the personal name of the true God who became the Savior of Israel.

Meditate. The Hebrew *hagah* meant "to mutter" or read in an undertone. It was used of the growl of a lion over his prey (Isa. 31:4) and of the cooing of pigeons or doves (Isa. 38:14). It signified the enjoyment of something. The believer enjoys the Word of God "day and night."

Hagah could also be used in a bad sense, meaning "to plot" or "to plan." Psalm 2:1 asks, "Why do ... the people imagine (meditate) a vain thing?"

(Verse 3)

And he shall be like a tree planted by the rivers of water, that bringeth forth his fruit in his season; his leaf also shall not wither; and whatsoever he doeth shall prosper.

He shall be, or, he shall become. This is frequently the idea of the Hebrew verb *hayah*, especially when followed by "like" or "as." Genesis 5:1:3: "Ye shall be (become) as one of us." The man who meditates in God's Word will become like a tree.

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Planted. The Hebrew word *shathul* contains the idea of "transplanted" (*Koehler's Lexicon*). A tree may be taken out of the field (the world) and transplanted into the garden of God, beside a refreshing stream (the Bible). "Those that he planted in the house of the Lord shall flourish in the courts of our God" (Psalm 92:1:3),

Rivers, The original word (*peleg*) means "stream," "channel," or "canal." In an arid land, a tree beside a stream was especially blessed. The figure is that of simile: A Godly man resembling a beautiful tree.

Wither; The leaves of the tree beside the river will not wither. So the life of the man abiding in the Scriptures will not fade. The Hebrew word *nabel* means "to become withered" or "faded." The noun form is often translated "fool." "The fool (the withered man) hath said..., There is no God" (Psalm 14:1; 53:1).

Prosper. Or, prove successful. The verb *tzaleach*

meant "to be in good condition," to be strong, efficient, or of value. Its Aramaic form is used of the three Hebrew children who survived the fiery furnace and were "promoted" by the king, that is, advanced and prospered by him.

(Verse 4)

The ungodly are not so: But are like the chaff which the wind driveth away.

Ungodly. The same word (*rasha'*) as that found in verse one: The wicked, guilty ones. They "are not so, " that is, they are not like a tree planted by the rivers of water.

Chaff. The husk of the grain, separated from it by winnowing, hence anything light and worthless. Hebrew *motz*

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Wind. The wind blows the chaff away, whereas the wind causes the tree by the river to put its roots deeper. The Hebrew word for "wind," *ruach*, also meant "spirit." Sometimes it was used of God's Spirit (2 Sam. 23:2), sometimes of His angels as spirit beings (Ps. 104:4). The idea of *ruach* was invisible force. In Psalm 35:5 the angel of the Lord chases the wicked "as chaff before the wind." But in Psalm 34:7 that same angel "encampeth round about them that fear Him."

In Acts 12 the angel of the Lord delivers Peter from prison but smites Herod so that he dies. Thus the *ruach* or "wind" of God may be sent in mercy or in judgment. It is one thing to a tree; it is something else to the chaff. "(God) maketh winds his messengers" (Ps. 104:4 ASV).

Driveth away. The Hebrew word *nadaph* means to dispel or to drive away by scattering. In Psalm 68:2 God's enemies are scattered "as smoke is driven away." This word is used in Job 32:13 of God "thrusting down," that is, putting to flight an enemy.

(Verse 5)

Therefore the ungodly shall not stand in the judgment,
nor sinners in the congregation of the righteous.

Stand. The basic sense of the Hebrew word (*qum*) is to arise or stand up. Hence Joseph said, "My sheaf arose and stood upright" (Genesis 37:7). However, the thought here seems to be that of remaining, standing fast, or continuing. Isaiah used this word when he wrote, "the word of our God shall stand for ever" (Isa. 40:8). And the Psalmist said, "Who shall ascend into the hill of the Lord? or who shall stand in His holy place?" (Psa. 24:3). Hence the wicked shall not stand or

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or remain, for they are like "the chaff which the wind driveth away."

In Isaiah 26:19 *qum* is used of the resurrection of the dead. In Hosea 6:2 it is used of the resurrection and restoration of Israel: "In the third day He will raise us up."

Congregation. This word meant assembly, company, multitude, or even swarm, depending on the context. However, there is a devotional lesson for the child of God in the fact that the noun form *'edah*, meaning "congregation," was derived from a Hebrew verb which meant to designate or to appoint. In the passive voice it often meant "to meet." God used this word when He told Moses that He would "meet" him at the mercy seat (Exodus 25:22)! God's "congregation," therefore, is composed of "the appointed ones," those who have "met" Him at the mercy seat and have been "appointed" unto life eternal (Compare 1 Thess. 5:9).

Righteous. The Hebrew *tzaddiq* referred to something examined and found in good condition. Only through faith are the "righteous" in good condition, that is, without fault and guiltless. Compare Colossians 1:22.

While studying the cave men of the past, don't forget
the cave men of the future.

If you want a strong, spiritual church program, place
the emphasis on the Book, not on the cook.

Love, joy, peace, are a result, not an effort—and so are long suffering, gentleness and goodness.

You really do not tap the electric current until you provide an outlet.

And you will never tap the great things God has for you in His word until you begin to give out what He has already given you. Give it out* TEACH!!!**

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BAPTISM AND THE SCRIPTURES

(Continued)

by Russell H. Schaefer

When we speak of the New Testament usages of those words relating to baptism, we would not be misunderstood as to our use of the term NEW Testament. We are referring to that division of the Bible called the New Testament, not that this division is a true description. The New Testament, more accurately called THE NEW COVENANT, was not known to John the Baptist, except prophetically; it was not preached by him; and was not instituted in any way until that last Passover Supper of the Lord with His disciples (Matt. 26:17-30). This was after the death of John the Baptist and after the first years of Christ's and the disciples' ministry. Thus, while speaking of baptism in the New Testament, we are not implying that this is in truth New Testament, i.e., belonging to the New Testament or New Covenant. It might well be that John the Baptist could truly be called the last of OLD TESTAMENT prophets since the New Testament or New Covenant was not in effect in any way during his lifetime or ministry. That this title should have been given to the books of the Bible written after Malachi is indeed a misnomer. But custom and general usage has fastened the term, NEW TESTAMENT, over all the books written in this section of the Bible. Some of these books indeed have nothing whatever to do with the New Covenant, the New Covenant People, or the New Covenant in its fulfillment.

The Baptism of Mark 7:1-8 and Luke 11:38

In verse four, BAPTISM is mentioned twice. In the first instance it refers to the person baptizing himself, being in the middle voice. This is likewise true of Luke 11:38. In both instances the reference is to a meaningless self-imposed

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religious ceremony of the Pharisees that was not observed by Christ or His disciples, and that was denounced by Him as being "...doctrines the commandments of men" (Mark 7:5,7,8). It has always been so. Man thinks he can improve upon what God has revealed, and the most subtle thought is one that seemingly offers a standard of holiness beyond that enjoined in the Word of God. We see other examples of this in the denial of marriage, a robed clergy, abstaining from meat, wearing of vestments, observing certain days, and the veneration of men or relics. Here, in this self-baptism, these people were thinking that the very dust of the streets defiled them in the sight of God. They considered themselves too holy to sit with Christ and have Him break bread with them. Christ had no patience or time with the superciliousness of the so-called niceties of religion. Anything that was flavored of priestcraft received short shift from Him. These religious leaders had carried baptism to include the utensils from which they ate and drank. This was beyond the ordinary washing of vessels. Thus, religion could well be concerned with what touched their lips but not concerned with what touched their hearts. In Mark 7:18-23 we are grimly reminded that out of the heart are the issues of life, not the food one eats, not that which is from outward circumstances, not even erewhile religious observances. Even today nearly all Jewish homes have dishes used only for Passover. This passage too, strikes at the modern efforts to improve human nature. Human history is a sad commentary on human nature. The genocide of the 1940's was not conducted by an unlearned people. The crime rate from among the affluent should cause us all to pause and question the modern equation that poverty equates evil character, and affluence, high character.

The Baptisms of Hebrews 9:10

In describing the Levitical economy that was to pass

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pass away, Christ included the dietary laws that regulated the food eaten by Jews. He included all carnal or fleshly ordinances and different washings or BAPTISMS. It was not that these were base, but that they had fulfilled their

teaching value; inasmuch as the One of Whom all this tended, all this predicted, and all this prophesied had come. In the words of Galatians 3:24, the law (with its enactments, types, and shadows) was for the time being the divine-child instructor. It is when we fail to see this elementary-religious-training nature of Israel's old economy that we tend to cling to parts or segments of it, thinking that we thereby are pleasing God. In the words of our text:

... which stood only in meats and drinks, and divers washings (Baptisms), and carnal ordinances, imposed on them until the time of reformation.

These baptism-washings involved the whole or part of the body (washing the hands is literally washing with the fist, i.e., plunging the fist into water up to the elbows). This baptismal-washing does not spell out the mode or manner, and was sufficient if water was passed over the body, or if the body was placed whole or part in water at once or in stages, or if the object was in the water and the water was poured over the subject, or the subject did this for himself (the usual rite).

... and shall wash himself in water, and shall be clean,"
Ex. 29:4; Lev. 14:8; Num. 19:19.

... and Aaron and his sons shall wash their hands and their feet with, water from it, Ex. 30:19; II Kings 3:11.

Josuphus, *Ant. III, 0:2*, mentions the construction and

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function of the brazen laver in the Tabernacle.

Within these gates was the brazen laver for purification, having a base (catch basin) beneath of the same material, whence the priests might wash (not the laver itself, which was a reservoir) their hands and pour down (shower) upon their feet.

Thus were Aaron's sons and Aaron publicly installed as priests - a pouring from above, running water. They could not have been immersed into the laver as then the whole would have been unclean. Cf. Exodus 29:4. This was not done by Aaron himself, but others for him. This was fitting since it was the public installation of Aaron and his sons as the priestly leaders.

THE BAPTISM OF JOHN THE BAPTIST

What was unusual in John's baptism was, that he performed the baptism on others, whereas under the law each one accomplished it for himself, E. W. B.

The statement of Edersheim, Book I, page 273, might be interesting:

What John preached, that he also symbolized by a rite which, though not in itself, yet in its application, was wholly new.

To baptize Gentile proselytes was usual since, to attain the position of proselytes of righteousness, or proselytes of the Covenant, circumcision, sacrifice and baptism were required. To baptize a Hebrew, except in the case of Aaron and his sons, was unknown. To call Israel out of the religious camp; out of the city of priests; out of the Temple; out to the countryside;

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out to the foot of Mt. Sinai where Israel first heard the Law; out to the land beyond the Jordan where Israel first entered the Promised Land; out to the place of the twelve stones where Israel crossed the river, was truly impressive to an Israelite steeped in the traditions of the Old Testament. To them it was a time of national awakening; of a new birth as a nation; a call to be a people prepared for their longed for and awaited Messiah. When John preached, he did as all true ministers of God should, and testified to the Unique Being of Christ (John 1:15), the fullness of Christ's Deity (John 1:34), Christ's Sacrificial Office and Sufficiency (John 1:29), and, the sweetest note of all, he pointed man away from himself to The Christ (John 1:36,37). The place of his ministry? Bethabara, beyond Jordan. Here was the site of Gideon's victory against the Midianites. Here the kingdom was first divided (Judges 7:24), a rent that split the kingdom after Solomon. This was the place of the well known ford across the river Jordan into Perea, Bethabara, meaning HOUSE OF PASSAGE or HOUSE OF SHIPPING. The year A.U. G. 779 was a *Sabbatic* year and the people released from business and agriculture would follow John the Baptist as he traveled through the rural area of Judea with its small villages and hills where David spent so much of his time. They would follow him through Enon (John 3:23) and finally to the ferry-boat site on the Jordon, the most northern point of his mission journey.

The Mode of John the Baptist's Baptism

The prophecy of Ezekiel 36:25 spoke of a future cleansing for Israel.

Then will I sprinkle clean water upon you and ye shall be clean.

The prophecy should be read within its context. It

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refers to Israel in their land, not as now, among the nations. It spells out a new heart that was to be created in them and the old to be taken away. The context does not make clear whether this CLEANSING BY SPRINKLING WITH CLEAN WATER is by a human instrumentality, such as John the Baptist, or by a future cleansing of Israel under the symbolism of water (either figurative or literal). The immediate context of Ezekiel 36:25 emphasizes a cleansing-creative work within these Israelites. This SPRINKLING (scatter, sprinkle, strew) OF CLEAN WATER could refer to God or The Holy Spirit since God is frequently prefigured by animate life or sounds, as well as inanimate objects such as water. God is said, for instance, to fly, to brood, to roar, to thunder, to have wings and feathers, to be fire, light, wind, a rock, a tower, a fortress, a temple, and a cornerstone. He is also spoken of as WATER (Jeremiah 2:13; 17:13; Psalms 36:8, 9). The Holy Spirit pertains to the WATER figure in John 7:37-39. As an Old Testament type it is so used in Isaiah 44:3:

I will pour water upon that is thirsty, and floods upon the dry ground: I will pour my spirit upon thy seed...

The pouring out of the spirit (as water is poured out) is mentioned in Joel 2:28, 29, and in that wonderful text in Zechariah 12:10 that tells of Israel's national salvation when they shall have looked upon The One they had pierced. It is the Spirit aspect that is in view in Titus 3: 5, 6 since the author safeguards our concept in this passage by stating that our salvation is not by any works that we have done, but what He has done. We are saying that this Ezekiel text of washing with clean water would lend significance to John's ministry. He pointed to Another that would baptize with the Holy Spirit. This would round out the context of the prophecy. If a prepared people were to be made ready for their Messiah, and

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this was the mission assigned by God to John. Then the Ezekiel 36:25 cleansing would be applicable at least in a degree to those coming to his baptism. Actual

sprinkling of water may not be intended by the Ezekiel passage, but it is not to be ruled out entirely. It would not be readily ruled out in an Israelitish mind.

The passages that touch upon the mode of John's baptism are few:

... and were baptized of him in Jordan...

Matthew 3:6

I baptize you with water unto repentance...

Matthew 3:11, cf. Mark 1:8; John 1:26

... when He was baptized, went up straightway out of the water... Matthew 3:16, cf. Mark 1:10

**... and were all baptized of him in the river of Jordan ...
Mark 1:5**

**And John also was baptizing in Enon, near to Salim,
because there was much water there. John 3:23**

To sum up the mode of John's baptism, we find the following:

It was with WATER, in water, and much water. The subjects evidently went into the water and came out of the water. The Jordan River figures in his baptism.

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The deductions one may draw from the above will vary according to one's training and tradition. The use of IN, WITH, and OUT in connection with the watery rite, is used both of the BAPTIZER and the BAPTIZED. If this describes a dipping, then both could have been dipped since the text makes no distinction. Also, both John and Christ, for instance, could have gone into the water, stood in the water, and John could have sprinkled Christ with water, dipped Him, or poured water over Him. One of the several early engravings shows John the Baptist standing with Christ in the water, pouring water over Christ's head from a clam shell. They would have had to walk out of the water from such an experience.

The early-church fathers are no help in this matter of MODE because they together prove too much - surrounding the rite as they did with nakedness, thrice-dipping, confession of sins, professions of salvation, casting out of demons,

eating of milk and honey, and other acts more in common with the pagan mysteries than the simple faith enjoined by the Scriptures. It is true that the more one is prone to rituals and legalism, the more that person will want to feel like Peter in John 13:9:

Lord, not my feet only, but also the hands and the head.

The *International Standard Bible Encyclopedia*, pages 385-401, gives a rather broad synopsis on the Baptist, Non-Immersionist, Lutheran, and Anglican views of this rite. We would draw attention of the reader to the fact that non-water baptisms are left to stand alone and distinct from water. I am likely speaking from a position of deep prejudice, but I would suppose that all types and symbolism were to point to the REALITY, and when that REALITY arrives and is

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manifested, there is no need of the types or symbols. It is very true in Scripture that symbolism continued after Christ had come, but if the book of Hebrews proves anything in regards to the types and symbolism of the Old Covenant, it proves that once God had revealed that the OLD was fulfilled in Christ, something new was to take precedence over the old, and then the old was to give way. We can see WATER as possibly illustrating the cleansing we have as a result of Christ's work for us, but I cannot see giving pre-eminence to the watery symbolical rite. It is true that each local church body has the right to dictate the code and conduct of those who seek to become a member of its voting, legislating, or teaching ministry. It is, however, quite another thing to equate this local condition with the reality of one's relationship to God in Christ. This is based upon another and distinct basis:

But to him that worketh not, but believeth on Him that justifieth the ungodly, his faith is counted for righteousness.

Therefore being justified by faith, we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ.

Romans 4:5 and 5:1

Thus, clinging avidly and firmly to God's reality in Christ our Savior, we will let those that make much of the watery rite determine to their satisfaction just what mode of water fits their concepts. To bar one from fellowship, to see something

more important in a drop, a tank, or river of water than in a believer whose life is committed to Christ . . . How soon all of us forget Ephesians 1:6, 7:

To the praise of the glory of His Grace, wherein He (the Father) hath made us accepted in the Beloved. In Whom we have redemption through

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His blood, the forgiveness of sins, according to the riches of His grace.

To shift the emphasis to things, to something, rather than Christ as the only true basis for fellowship with God as sons in the SON and as fellow Christians because of the object of the Father's engracement, has engendered bitterness between Christians and has caused all of us to erect walls between fellow believers. Sometimes even our vehement defense of the ONE BAPTISM of Ephesians 4:5 is used to sever brother from brother rather than being a baptism that should cause all to rejoice because it is a part of that great spiritual unity wrought of God.

The Meaning of John's Baptism

To go beyond the MODE of John's Baptism to its meaning is, I believe, the intent of the Sacred Writer. If we fall short in arriving at the meaning of John's Baptism, at least this is the end element that is commended to the reader for his continued study and research.

The following texts give us a compendium of John's ministry:

...and were baptized of him in Jordan, confessing their sins,

Matthew 3:6.

As it is written in the prophets, Behold, I send My messenger before Thy Face, which shall prepare Thy way before Thee. John did *baptize* in the wilderness, and preach the baptism of repentance for the remission of sins.

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... there cometh One mightier than I after me, the latchet of Whose shoes I am not worthy to stoop down and unloose,

Mark 1:2, 4, 7.

...and saying, Repent ye; for the kingdom of heaven is at hand. And now also the axe is laid unto the root of the trees: therefore every tree which bringeth not forth good fruit is hewn down, and cast into the fire,

Matthew 3:2, 10.

The next day John seeth Jesus coming unto him, and saith, Behold the Lamb of God, which taketh away the sin of the world, (taking the sin of the world, N. M.)

This is HE of WHOM I said, After me cometh a man which is preferred before me: for He was before me.

And I knew Him not: but that He should be manifest to Israel, therefore am I come baptizing with water,

John 1:29-31.

In the person of The Christ, The Messiah of Israel, and The Savior of the world, John could truly preach that the Kingdom of the Heavens (Heavens put for God) was near at hand, and that a prepared people were a repentant people, a people who had changed their mind with all that change implied from the past and toward the One that was coming. The newness of mind was accompanied by confession of sin to God and submission to the symbolical "*baptism* of repentance" to identify them as the repentant ones looking for the One Whom John continually announced. A *BAPTISM OF REPENTANCE* - how well this describes those who submitted

to the Rule of God in this simple but highly suggestive rite. The mode did not matter, but of significance is the overwhelming act of their hearts being flooded with repentance and out of this flood-tide confessing their sins, and submitting to this rite at the hands of this single-minded forerunner of Christ. It was a passing out of the old and into the dedicated life of those, who along with John, would

await the manifesting of The Savior King, Messiah Jesus. They would be the first to welcome Him of Whom all the prophets had spoken. The day was to come when John would announce that The Christ was in their midst. John had proclaimed that the Kingdom of Heaven was at hand, though the intervening events (the valleys between the mountain peaks of prophecy, the events between the first Advent of Christ as He was presented to these repentant ones at the Jordan and His Second Advent with the triumph of the Kingdom) and long centuries were not touched upon by John, know that true repentance must precede God and the Kingdom.

John's first sight of Christ must have been touching. From his inspired lips came forth that wondrous declaration, "Behold the Lamb of God that is taking the sin of the world." It is fitting that He be first seen as Savior. There was to be a Calvary before there was to be a crown. This was a seeming contradiction, a king to reign and a lamb to die. Always first must be the suffering, then the glory. First the cursed tree, then the throne. There is a lesson in this for our faith too. The timing of these two events may have prompted John's later doubts as he lay in prison just as they must have cause the amazement of the prophet when he wrote in Isaiah 52:13, 14:

Behold MY SERVANT shall deal prudently, He shall be exalted and extolled, and be very high. As many were astonished at THEE:

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His visage was so marred more than-any man, and His form more than the sons of men...

Always, John pointed away from himself and to the Coming One. For himself, John sought nothing. Compared to the *baptism* that Christ was to give, John's was but water; compared to his mission of warning and preparation, Christ's mission would issue in the very cutting down of the nation with the ax of God. John was a forerunner of Christ The Savior; he was a voice of Christ; that Mighty one whose sandal straps he felt unworthy to unloose. John pointed his disciples away from himself to Christ. Some of these disciples were to become the first apostles. John's simple message would rekindle and bring to a flame the hope of the Davidic Kingdom and the advent of David's greater King. The hopes of this people were bound up in this land and especially with the message John preached, The Christ he announced, and the place he baptized. They were the pure in heart waiting to see their Savior God.

Would that all of us had the spirit of humble service that marked this greatest of prophets. His life and ministry is summed up and stated so poignantly in John 3:30 (Marshall text):

THAT ONE it behooves to INCREASE Me? but to decrease.

Certainly those seeing and hearing John must have sensed something of this spirit. It must have lent weight to his *BAPTISM OF REPENTANCE*. It was no easier then than now to turn from the citizenship of worldliness to a life of simple faith in a Savior and Lord that had not yet been manifested. John did no miracles and yet may not the changing of people's hearts under the hearing of the Word of God be one

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of the greatest miracles of all? To be identified with a repentant company under the leadership a repentant company under the leadership of a man without formal education, without recognized authority, without seminary training, without all that the world places so much value upon, to be identified with him - a man who sought only to point out the greatness and the glory of Christ, must have meant that a great spiritual change had taken place in the hearers' hearts.

This was the intent and meaning of his *baptism*.

In closing this section of study, may we quote

John 1:6-8:

There was a man sent from God, whose name was John. The same came for a witness, to bear witness of the Light, that all men through; Him might believe. He was not that LIGHT, but was sent to bear witness of that Light.

IF

The Treasure "Hid in a Field" (Matt. 13:44) is the Church,

and also

The Mystery "Hid In God" (Eph. 3:9) is
the Church, there is confusion.

**CONFUSION IS PROFITLESS.
RIGHTLY DIVIDE.**

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THE THREE BEGETTINGS OF CHRIST

by John Boyd

Not Christmas, not December 25th, which is only a heathen festival adopted and adapted by Christendom, is Christ's birthday; but the real birthday is that which The Holy Spirit has marked out. True, His miraculous birth was part of the glorious plan that He might make atonement, but we cannot be united to Him the other side of atonement; neither do Christians (or Christianity) have their birthday there, as we attempt to set forth in the following study:

JESUS was the firstborn son of Mary - (Matt. 1:23-25; Luke 2:7-12; Isaiah 7:13-15; 9:6, 7), is born or brought forth. In 1 John 3:9; 4:7; 5:1, 4, 18, the word rendered "born" is translated "begotten" in the R.V, It is the Greek word *GENNAO* and signifies to beget of The Father; to bring forth of the mother. In Luke 1:31-35, "Thou shalt bring forth" - "that holy thing which shall be born of thee." And she brought forth her firstborn son. (Luke 2:7; Matt. 1:21, 23, 25).

(1) Thou shalt ... bring forth a Son. (Luke 1:31): "Behold the Man."

(2) Thou shalt call His name Jesus, (v. 31): "Behold My Servant."

(3) He shall be great ... the Son of the Highest, (v. 32): "Behold your God."

(4) He shall reign over the House of Jacob forever (v.33): "Behold thy King."

I. He Who imaged Deity was born, or begotten to redeem (Galatians 4:4, 5). And The Word was made flesh... the only Begotten Son of the Father to redeem (John 1:1; 3: 16). He who was manifested in flesh to save (1 Tim. 3:16). The Son to become the firstborn among

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many brethren (Romans 8:29) through redemption. In Heb. 11:28, we note the firstborn ones in Israel at the First Passover. Furthermore, we see the congregation of the firstborn ones which are written in Heaven (Heb. 12:23). Gr. *prototokos*, Firstbegotten (Hebrews 1:6). To redeem, He it was Who knew no sin, was made a sin-offering in our behalf (2 Cor. 5:21). The birth of Christ without His death would save no one. "It is the blood that maketh an atonement." Therefore no spiritual birthdays obtain on the other side of Christ's atoning and redemptive sacrifice. He was begotten as "the Son of Man" to give Himself ransom (Matt. 20:28; 1 Tim. 2:5,6). He it was Who took human form in order to redeem (John 1:14).

II. He Who imaged Deity was born, or begotten to create (Col. 1:15). "He is the image or likeness of the invisible God, The Firstborn of all creation. (See Genesis 1:1; John 1:1, 2). In the beginning (of the ages); for The Word then "was," and the ages were prepared by Him (Hebrews 1:2; 11:3). Creation is not mentioned until verse 3:

The Word had no beginning. See John 1:3; 17:5; 1John 1:1; Ephesians 1:4; Proverbs 8:23-30; cp. John 8:58.

He was begotten to create. (Col. 1:16),

For by Him were all things created ... all things were created by Him, and for Him" (Col. 1:17).

He is before or precedes all things, and in Him all things consist, or hold together.

He is the beginning of the creation of God (Rev. 3:14). He was begotten to create the all things to which He was appointed Heir. (Heb. 1:2; Rev. 4:li). He was begotten to create man in His own (physical) image or likeness. (Gen. 1:26,27) "Let Us make man in Our image after Our likeness."

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One thing - not two: "In the likeness of our image" viz. of Elohim (not Jehovah), the 2nd Person, who had taken creature form in order to create (Col. 1:15; Heb. 1:3; Rev. 3:14). Refers only to outward form, not to attributes. So He afterwards took human form in order to redeem (John 1:14), cp. Rev. 4:11 with 5:9. In any case the "Image and likeness" is physical, not moral. Man fell and is a moral ruin, but some physical likeness to Elohim still remains, (cp. Gen. 9:6; Cor. 11:7; James 3:9) He Who was begotten to create was the "First Begotten" of all

creation." Or. *prototokos* (Col. 1:15) "He it was Who in the beginning formed or founded the earth," etc. (Heb. 1:10). The title, "The Son of God" expresses the relation of The Son to The Father, and as The Son of God, Christ is "the Heir of all things" (Heb. 1:2), and is invested with "All Power," and is "the Resurrection and the Life" (John 11:25), having power to raise the dead (John 5:25). He it was Who took creature form in order to create (Col. 1:15; Rev. 3:15).

III. He Who imaged Deity was born or begotten out of the dead ones (Col. 1:18; Acts 13:30; Gr. *ek nekron*, "Out of the Dead ones").

And we announce glad tidings to you, the promise of which was made to the Fathers; because God has fulfilled this to us their children, having raised up Jesus.

As it is written also in the second Psalm, "Thou art My Son, this day have I begotten Thee" (Acts 13:32, 33) - "Begotten Thee" - brought Thee to the birth, that is at resurrection, when the Son became the Glorified Federal Head of a new creation. (Heb. 1:5; 5:5; Acts 13:33; Rom. 1:4 with 1 Cor. 15:45, etc.)

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Heb. 1:5 is a quotation from Psalm 2, which, with Acts 13:33, tells us that this day was the Day of His Resurrection. Thus Psalm 2:7 is authoritatively applied to Christ's resurrection, and plainly said to speak of His birthday. The Lord's people are related to Him on resurrection ground. The "Corn of Wheat" did not abide alone (John 12:24), but has brought forth much fruit, and our Lord's birthday is the Day of His Resurrection as the "Firstbegotten out from the dead ones" for exaltation in glory for Headship over the Church which is His Body (Eph. 1:20-23; Col. 1:18; cp. Rev. 1:5). He must needs be quickened first from the dead, ere our quickening with Him is assured (Eph. 2:5; Col. 2:12, 13). The resurrection of Christ was His birthday. For, "Thou art My Son, said The Father of Him in connection with that Day (Heb. 1:5); and the spiritual birthday of believers and The Church is the logical result of His begetting in resurrection from the dead.

In Heb. 1:6: And, etc. Read "But when He again bringeth back" (cp. 1 Thess. 4:14) the Firstbegotten into the world (Gr. *dikoumene*) He saith "And let all the angels of God worship Him." Firstbegotten (Gr. *prototokos* Rom. 8:29; Col. 1:15). "He it was Who took glory form in order to become pre-eminent among all (Col. 1:18).

NOTE: The resurrection and consequent exaltation of Christ is the God provided foundation for the life of the believer, the church and Christianity.

CHRISTENDOM has ever placed the emphasis upon the babe of Bethlehem - Jesus the firstborn son of Mary. "And she brought forth her firstborn son." The humanity of Jesus --The Son of Man, rather than The Son of God -- His humanity

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rather than His Deity. This position therefore has been attended by the adoption of a heathen festival called Christmas, as Christ's birthday on December 25th.

But God The Father, even though He sent His Son into the world to be born, live and die, has ever placed the emphasis upon "The Son of God," His inevitable and Ineffable Deity, certified to when He raised Him from the dead and seated Him at His own right hand, declaring, "Thou art My Son, this day have I begotten Thee" (Psalm 2:7; Acts 13:33; Heb. 1:5).

However, in the above study of "The Three Begettings," He has been pleased through a rightly divided Word, to open the eyes of a multitude of believers to the Truth of "His Life from the dead" absolutely necessary to bring life and a birthday to a spiritually dead world (Eph. 1:19, 20; 2:1-5; Col. 2:2, 13). Amen and Amen.

QUESTION: What is the unpardonable sin?

ANSWER: There is no Scripture dealing with the question of unpardonable sin for the present. The sin to which reference is made if dealt with in Matt. 12:31, Mark 3:29, Luke 12:10.

The ministry of The Holy Spirit in relation to Israel is in view. Israel crucified Christ. For this, the Nation was forgiven. Cp. Luke 23:84.

The subsequent offer of the Kingdom to the Nation by The Holy Spirit, and the rejection by the Nation of that offer terminated at the time of the pronouncement recorded in Acts 28.

The designation "Holy Spirit" occurs 42 times in Acts. In rejecting the Spirit's ministry, the Nation "blasphemed" and was set aside.

For the present Administration there is no reference to "unpardonable sin." (H. N. B.)

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NEW TESTAMENT I

JOHN THE BAPTIST - HIS MINISTRY

17. The question arises, is this FIRE spoken of associated with the fire of Matthew 3:12 or with the holy spirit power baptism of verse 11? If it is linked with the former, then the flame of Acts 2:3 is explained. If the latter, then the fire would be an element of judgment upon those represented as chaff in the figure employed. In Scripture, fire is used symbolically many times (Isaiah 4:4; Mal. 3:1-3; 4:1-3, etc.). Fire is also symbolically used of *pneuma hagion*, holy spirit power or action as in Acts 2:3, along with other symbology of water, wind, oil and dove. If the FIRE is associated with the *baptism* of Matthew 3:11, then we would the power from on High being not only POWER for certain ends, but also a holy purifying spirit separating the chaff from the wheat. Thus, either judgment (Matthew 3:12) or a _____ is the second element of this baptism.

1. Purifying spirit 2. Separating spirit 3. Healing spirit.

18. In the book of Acts, the treachery and death of Judas caused the remaining apostles to appoint a successor to Judas (Acts 1:15-20). The qualifications of a successor were that the person or persons selected as candidates be associated with the twelve apostles from the time that the Lord Jesus went in and out among them (Acts 1:21). The ministry of the Lord Jesus was looked upon as having started with the _____

1. Ministry of Zacharias; 2. Ministry of Simeon; 3. Ministry of John

Scripture: Acts 1:22; 10:37

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19. John was said to have _____ with the coming forth of Christ to Israel.

1. Fulfilled his course; 2. Begun his ministry; 3. Closed his ministry

Scripture: Acts 13:25 ... Cp. Acts 13:23-24

20. The POWER FROM ON HIGH *baptism* as found in the book of Acts, is looked upon throughout this book as being the fulfillment of

1. John's promise; 2. The Lord's promise; 3. The apostles' promise.

Scripture: Acts 1:5; 11:16; 18:24-28. Cp. Acts 1:4

21. Would this prophecied "power from on High" equip the apostles to carry out the instructions of Acts 1:8 ? They were to be witnesses of the risen Christ in Jerusalem, Judea, Samaria, and to the uttermost part of the _____. Gr. *Ge* (See Gr. text)

1. Cosmos; 2. World; 3. Land (of Palestine)

22. Just as the apostles of Christ needed super-natural resources to fulfill their ministries, so too John was filled with Holy Spirit (heavenly, divine, and spiritual power (cp. Ch. 24:49). This was unusual inasmuch as it was from

1. The start of his ministry; 2. His ordination; 3. His birth.

Scripture: Luke 1:15

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23. In Luke 1:17 this is described as John going before Christ in _____ of Elijah.

1. Spirit and power; 2. Ministry and message; 3. Power and majesty

24. The result of this special enduement from on High was to be a turning of many Israelites to _____

1. Religion 2. Christianity 3. To the Lord their God.

Scripture: Luke 1:16

25. John's role was essentially one of a _____.

1. Fore-runner of Christ 2. Reformer 3. Revivalist

Scripture: Luke 1:17; 7:27; John 1:6-8

26. The description given of John in Luke 1:15 would lead an Israelite to conclude that John was of the order of the_____.

1. Nazarites 2. Pharisees 3. Sadduces

Scripture: Numbers 6:2-5

27. In contrast to John and his wilderness abode and ministry, The Lord and His disciples attended weddings, ate in the company of publicans (hated Jews who had hired themselves to the Romans to collect taxes) and sinners. (Matthew 9:10; John 2:1-11. This seeming disparity of conduct of Christ and John led the disciples of John to question WHY, Matthew 9:14). We may therefore conclude that Christ, while from the village of Nazareth would be called a Nazarene, He was not an Essene

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(monastic cult) or of the ancient Nazarite cult. John was the last of Israel's prophets. It was only fitting, like _____ of old, (Judges 13: 4-7) who was to deliver Israel in a by-gone day as another Nazarite.

1. David 2. Samuel 3. Samson

Cp. Matt. 11:18, 19; Cp. also 1 Samuel 1:11

28. It is interesting that Samson and John both began to deliver Israel, both were made prisoners, both died by the hands of _____.

1. Treacherous women 2. An assassin

Scripture: Judges 16:18 Matt. 14:1-12

29. While Samson's life and work were marred by sensual- ity until, at the close of life, he despised the mark of his separation from God (Judges 16:17), John on

the other hand remained firm in his testimony until he was imprisoned and then he was beset by _____.

1. Fear 2. Cowardice 3. Questions and doubts

Scripture: Matt. 11:13

30. Christ's last message for John (Luke 7:23) is on a _____ note.

1. Happy 2. Sad 3. Plaintive

31. Christ sent assurances to John that He was truly the looked-for Messiah by pointing to His evidences - the blind see, the lame walk, the lepers are cleansed, the deaf hear, the dead are raised, the Gospel is preached to the poor (Luke 7:22). Christ lastly pronounced a blessing on the one that would not be offended in Him (Luke 7:23). Christ performed miracles

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before the questioning disciples of John (Luke 7:21), but the soon to come Judgment of which John spoke (Luke 3:2-9) seemed remote to this imprisoned prophet of God. In the synagogue at Nazareth, Christ had declared that this was the _____ of the Lord.

1. Judgement 2. Acceptable year 3. Grace dispensation

Scripture: Luke 4:17-19

32. Before handing back the scroll, if Christ had continued to read the passage He was quoting in Luke 4:19 (taken from Isaiah 61:1,2), He would have coincided His message with the message of John. Christ stopped short of _____.

1. Judgement 2. Mercy 3. Grace

Don't criticize the students who commit suicide. Maybe they are only logical. First, see what they are taught.

There is no profit in confusion. Rightly divide.

Why be afraid of an earthquake? Rejoice that you have a God big enough to shake the earth.

Don't build a partition between the Teaching of Jesus and the Teaching of Paul.

Have respect unto God's "now," "after," "then," "afterward," "heretofore," "wherefore," "therefore," "henceforth," etc.

In dealing with His Church. God uses His Word of Truth. Teach the Word! And TEACH!!

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(Inside back cover)

What has all this to do with the question of the Supernatural? Everything. (Cp. Co). 1:15, 16). In these verses we have: (1) Christ's Original Identification as God. (2) Christ's Prior Connection with God. (3) Christ's Absolute Creation for God. (4) Christ's Preeminent Position with God.

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Prior to the beginning of Gen. 1:1 Christ existed in the form of God. He was brought forth (not created) for the

purpose of Creation, Revelation, and Glorification, As the Creator is separate and distinct from creation, so the Supernatural is separate and distinct from the natural. The natural is responsive to the Supernatural.

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Christ, Who is the Author of nature, is greater than nature. The Supernatural is Christ's operation in the realm of the natural for the purpose of Revelation, Redemption, and Restoration. Reconstruction, Alteration, Restriction, or even Elimination may be to His purpose as He deals with mankind in the realm of the natural. God only can safely interfere with the laws of nature.

*** * * * ***

Christ is introduced as the Creator; therefore, He is above creation. He is later introduced as Redeemer; therefore, He is above transgression. He is then introduced as Victor; therefore, He is above corruption.

*** * * * ***

When Christ was here among men in deepest humiliation it was demonstrated that all nature was subject to Him. When He was here in His pre-incarnate ministry all nature responded to His will. Go back to the Flood. This was not in the regular course of nature. Come on down to the Incarnation. He was born of woman. This was not in the regular course of nature. He had no human father. At His word bread and fish multiplied sufficiently to feed thousands. This was not in the regular course of nature. He spake to the water; it responded in purest wine. This was not in the regular course of nature. He arose from the grave, He ascended on high, and He will return to the earth. All these events are strictly outside the regular course of nature.

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Eliminate the Supernatural and you eliminate Christ.

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How about today? Are there now any such intervention demonstrations, or operations contrary to, or in addition to the regular course of nature? Host of God's supernatural interventions within the course of nature were in some way related to his purpose for, and dealing with, the earth people ... Israel. From the time of the setting aside of Israel nationally, as recorded in Acts 28, until the completion and up-calling of The Church, supernatural demonstrations such as: Miracles, Wonders, Power. Signs, Sounds, etc., have no place. . .