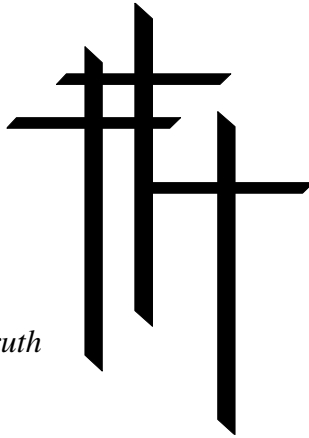


Timely Messenger

*Rightly Dividing the Word of Truth
Speaking the Truth in Love*



Volume 66 No. 4

April 2006

A BODY PREPARED BY GOD

by Gregg Bing

The human body is simply amazing. As medical science has advanced over the years, this fact has become more and more evident. We are often in awe of the tremendous strides men have made in their discoveries about human disease, the development of new medications, and the technological improvements in medical and surgical treatments, including such wonderful improvements in open heart surgery, MRI and CT scans, laser surgery, and the list goes on and on. Re-

cently, the announcement was made that medical scientists have even been able to grow organs in the lab to be used for transplants.

As wonderful as all this seems to us, man's knowledge still pales in comparison to that of the God who created us in the first place. We must remember that God prepared and formed man's body in the very beginning.

"And the LORD God formed man of the dust of the ground, and breathed into his nos-

trils the breath of life; and man became a living being." (Gen. 2:7)

The human body, as God formed and prepared it, was perfect in its design. Though man's body has been cursed by the entrance of sin into the world, the human body remains a testimony to the existence of an all powerful and all knowing God. All the systems of the body (skeletal, muscular, nervous, respiratory, circulatory, etc.) work together to provide for and sustain human life. The Psalmist David expressed great wonder at the body God had given him with these words:

"For You formed my inward parts; You covered me in my mother's womb. I will praise You, for I am fearfully and wonderfully made; marvelous are Your works, and that my soul knows very well." (Psalm 139:13-14)

There is another special body that was prepared by God; we read about it in the book of Hebrews, chap-

ter 10. The first four verses declare that the animal sacrifices offered under the Mosaic law could never make those who brought them perfect. These sacrifices had to be offered continually year by year to cover sins, for they could not truly purify and cleanse man's conscience from sin. It was simply "not possible that the blood of bulls and goats could take away sins." Sins had to be dealt with in another way.

"Therefore, when He came into the world, He said: 'Sacrifice and offering You did not desire, but a body You have prepared for Me. In burnt offerings and sacrifices for sin You had no pleasure. Then I said, Behold, I have come—In the volume of the book it is written of Me—To do Your will, O God.' Previously saying, 'Sacrifice and offering, burnt offerings, and offerings for sin You did not desire, nor had p l e a s u r e i n them' (which are offered according to the law), then He said, 'Behold, I

have come to do Your will, O God.' He takes away the first that He may establish the second. By that will we have been sanctified through the offering of the body of Jesus Christ once for all." (Heb. 10:5-10)

God had no pleasure in animal sacrifices and offerings for they could not satisfy His holy and righteous requirements, therefore He sent His only Son into the world to offer Himself as a "once for all" sacrifice for our sins. In order to accomplish this, God the Son had to have a body of flesh and blood—a body that had to be especially prepared by God. Matthew records how this took place.

"Now the birth of Jesus Christ was as follows: After His mother Mary was betrothed to Joseph, before they came together, she was found with child of the Holy Spirit. Then Joseph her husband, being a just man, and not wanting to make her a public example, was minded to put

her away secretly. But while he thought about these things, behold, an angel of the Lord appeared to him in a dream, saying, 'Joseph, son of David, do not be afraid to take to you Mary your wife, for that which is conceived in her is of the Holy Spirit. And she will bring forth a Son, and you shall call His name JESUS, for He will save His people from their sins.' So all this was done that it might be fulfilled which was spoken by the Lord through the prophet, saying: 'Behold, the virgin shall be with child, and bear a Son, and they shall call His name Immanuel,' which is translated, 'God with us.'" (Matt. 1:18-23)

The child born to Mary was conceived of the Holy Spirit. God prepared a body for His Son and placed it in her womb. His name was to be JESUS, which means "Jehovah saves," for He would "save His people from their sins." The Lord Jesus was born of a virgin. Joseph was not

His father, otherwise the sinful blood of Adam would have flowed through His veins, just as it does through ours. If He was to offer Himself as a sacrifice for sinful men, His blood must be without spot and without blemish. Thus, His name was also called Immanuel, for this Holy Child was very “God with us.”

Mary also was told that she was to bring a Child into the world. Being a virgin, she questioned how this could be.

“Then Mary said to the angel, ‘How can this be, since I do not know a man?’ And the angel answered and said to her, ‘The Holy Spirit will come upon you, and the power of the Highest will overshadow you; therefore, also, that Holy One who is to be born will be called the Son of God.’ (Luke 1:34-35)

The Holy Spirit came upon her and the power of the Highest overshadowed her, forming the body of this Holy One in her womb. Thus He was called

the “Son of God.”

In this special body, prepared by God, the Lord Jesus Christ Himself

“... bore our sins in His own body on the tree, that we, having died to sins, might live for righteousness—by whose stripes you were healed.” (1 Pet. 2:24)

When we come to the writings of the Apostle Paul, we find still another body prepared by God—the church, the body of Christ. Paul mentions this body in his early epistles written during the Acts period.

“For as the body is one and has many members, but all the members of that one body, being many, are one body, so also is Christ. For by one Spirit we were all baptized into one body—whether Jews or Greeks, whether slaves or free—and have all been made to drink into one Spirit.” (1 Cor. 12:12-13).

(Continued on page 4)

TIMELY MESSENGER

Published monthly by:

GRACE BIBLE CHURCH

1450 Oak Hill Road
Fort Worth, TX 76112-3017
(817) 451-0937

Website:

www.gracebiblechurch-fw.com

Email: gbcfw@sbcglobal.net

Gregg Bing — Editor

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Sunday Services:

10:00 AM Sunday School
11:00 AM Morning Worship
6:00 PM Evening Worship

Mid-Week Services:

Tues. 10:00 AM Ladies Class
Wed. 7:00 PM Bible Study

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Thanks for your help!

(Continued from page 3)

Later, when Paul fully revealed the truth of the mystery, we find how this joint body of Jew and Gentile was prepared and created by God through the cross of Christ.

“For He Himself is our peace, who has made both one, and has broken down the middle wall of separation, having abolished in His flesh the enmity, that is, the law of commandments contained in ordinances, so as to create in Himself one new man from the two, thus making peace, and that He might reconcile them both to God in one body through the cross, thereby putting to death the enmity.”

Under the law, God dealt exclusively with the nation of Israel. The Gentile nations were “far off” from Israel “having no hope and without God in the world” (Eph. 2:12). God had a wonderful purpose for Israel in the earth, for God chose them to be

“a people for Himself, a special treasure above all the peoples on the face of the earth” (Deut. 7:6). God’s purpose for Israel has not been fully accomplished, and, in fact, it is currently postponed, but God will one day fulfill all His promises to this nation.

When Israel rejected God, killing God’s prophets under the law, crucifying God’s Son, and then resisting and refusing the testimony of the Holy Spirit during the Acts period, God set this nation aside and called out a new body of believers—the church the body of Christ. The church is a new man, a new body created in Christ from both Jew and Gentile. God broke down the middle wall of separation between them, which was contained in the ordinances of the law, and reconciled them both (Jew and Gentile) to God in one body through the cross.

While Israel was God’s earthly people, the church, the body of Christ, is God’s heavenly people. The sphere of its blessings is “in the heavenly places in Christ Jesus” (Eph. 1:3). Its

position is seated together “in the heavenly places in Christ Jesus” (Eph. 2:6). Even God’s eternal purpose for this body is focused in heavenly places.

“To the intent that now the manifold wisdom of God might be made known by the church to the principalities and powers in the heavenly places, according to the eternal purpose which He accomplished in Christ Jesus our Lord.” (Eph. 3:10-11)

The church, the body of Christ, has been sanctified and cleansed by God through the death of Christ that He might “present it to Himself a glorious church” (Eph. 5:27). We must remember that this church is not an man-made organization, but a living organism, created by God and composed of individual believers. Before the church can be presented to God “a glorious church,” the individual members must be glorious as well. This cannot take place as long as we dwell in bodies of flesh, bodies cursed by

sin and still possessing a sin nature. This leads us to consider another special body, the one God has prepared for believers.

“For we know that if our earthly house, this tent, is destroyed, we have a building from God, a house not made with hands, eternal in the heavens. For in this we groan, earnestly desiring to be clothed with our habitation which is from heaven, if indeed, having been clothed, we shall not be found naked. For we who are in this tent groan, being burdened, not because we want to be unclothed, but further clothed, that mortality may be swallowed up by life. Now He who has prepared us for this very thing is God, who also has given us the Spirit as a guarantee. So we are always confident, knowing that while we are at home in the body we are absent from the Lord. For we walk by faith, not by sight. We are confident, yes, well pleased rather to be ab-

sent from the body and to be present with the Lord.” (2 Cor. 5:1-9)

Our earthly bodies are referred to as a tent, a temporary dwelling place, but when these bodies are destroyed, we know, from God’s Word, that there is a new body God has prepared for us. Paul refers to it as a building or a house, for it is a permanent dwelling place, eternal in the heavens. We can be confident of this because God has given the Holy Spirit to dwell within us (1 Cor. 6:19-20). The presence of the Spirit is God’s guarantee to us that He will one day come for His church and fulfill His promise to give us new bodies.

“For our citizenship is in heaven, from which we also eagerly wait for the Savior, the Lord Jesus Christ, who will transform our lowly body that it may be conformed to His glorious body, according to the working by which He is able even to subdue all things to Himself.” (Phil. 3:20-21)

When Christ comes in the air to catch His church up into glory, He will transform our lowly bodies (literally “bodies of humiliation”) and will conform them to His glorious body (literally “the body of His glory”). What a tremendous display of the power of this One who is “able even to subdue all things to Himself.” Paul told the Colossians believers: “When Christ who is our life appears, then you also will appear with Him in glory” (Col. 3:4). Some believe the expression “in glory” refers to a place, that is heaven, but it really describes the condition of our new glorified bodies.

What a wonderful and glorious hope is ours, as we wait for God to clothe us with these new bodies from heaven. It should encourage us to respond as Paul exhorted the Corinthians.

“Therefore, my beloved brethren, be steadfast, immovable, always abounding in the work of the Lord, knowing that your labor is not in vain in the Lord.” (1 Cor. 15:58)



We will be featuring one of our publications each month. This month's article is from the tract series: What Saith the Scripture.

What Saith the Scripture Concerning SALVATION

by Charles Wages

“For by grace are ye saved through faith: and that not of yourselves; it is the gift of God. Not of works, lest any man should boast.” (Eph. 2:8-9)

Grace is simply God's willingness to do something for us that we cannot do for ourselves. It is often said that God helps them that help themselves, however, the important thing is that God helps them that cannot help

themselves! This is where God's grace really is evident.

If there should be one area in which man proves his helplessness, it is in trying to save himself from sin. “The wages of sin is death” (Rom. 6:23). Also, t h a t “ a l l h a v e sinned” (Rom. 3:23). Therefore all men are subject to death because of sin. What can sinful man do about it? The answer is—nothing! What can God do about it? He can cleanse us from all sin!

The Scripture says, “The wages of sin is death, but the gift of God is eternal life through Jesus Christ our Lord” (Rom. 6:23). “Christ died for our sins according to the scriptures and that he was buried and that he rose the third day according to the scriptures” (1 Cor. 15:3-4).

God's grace is so bountiful that it overabounds all our sin. Romans 5:20 tells us, “Moreover the law entered, that the offence might abound, but where sin abounded, grace did much more abound.”

Yes, God saves us by His grace, keeps us by His

grace, teaches us by His grace, and by His grace we shall appear with Him in the glory (Titus 2:11-14).

Dear Friend, and reader of this, please keep in mind that, doing the best you can, changing your ways, joining a church, becoming religious, or whatever, will never save your soul. However, if you will simply trust His grace to save you from your helpless, hopeless condition, He will.

“Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ and thou shalt be saved.” (Acts 16:31)

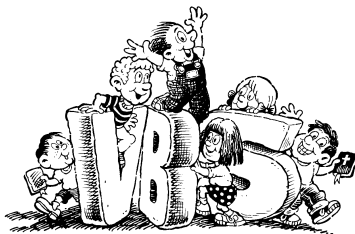
“For God so loved the world, that He gave His only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in Him should not perish, but have everlasting life.” (John 3:16)

“Now to him that worketh is the reward not reckoned of grace, but of debt. But to him that worketh not, but believeth on him that justifieth the ungodly, his faith is counted for righteousness.” (Rom. 4:4-5)

Someday the silver cord
will break
And I no more as now
shall sing:
But oh, the joy when I
shall wake,
Within the palace of
the King!
And I shall see Him face
to face
And tell the story, saved
by grace.

**For ye know
the grace of
our Lord
Jesus Christ,
that, though He
was rich, yet
for your sakes
He became
poor, that ye
through His
poverty might
be rich.**

2 Cor. 8:9



Vacation Bible School

*Grace Bible Church
Fort Worth, TX*

June 5-9, 2006

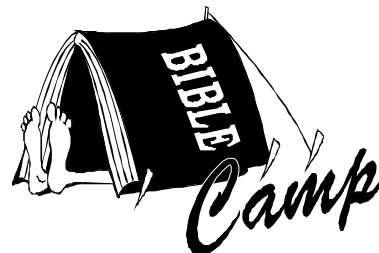
Grace Bible Church will hold their Vacation Bible School on June 5-9 this year from 9:30 to Noon each day. We will have pizza and ice cream for lunch on Friday. There will be classes for ages 3 to 14.

Vacation Bible School

*Eleventh Avenue Church
Mineral Wells, TX*

June 5-9, 2006

Eleventh Avenue Church will hold their Vacation Bible School on June 5-9 this year from 6 to 8 PM each night. There will be an ice cream supper on Saturday, June 10, with games and skits.



Family Bible Camp

July 3-7, 2006

The dates for this year's Family Bible Camp have been set for July 3-7. While the dates are about the same as last year, the location this year will be different. We will be going back to a campground we used many years ago, Camp Arrowhead near Glenrose, Texas.

Camp Arrowhead is a beautiful campground right on the Brazos River. It has added many new facilities since we were there and made some nice improvements. They have a nice motel for our adults to stay in and plenty of dorm space for our children and young people. We are excited about this change, as we will have the entire campground to ourselves.

A registration form will be included in next month's issue.

BIBLE STUDY BOOKS

The following Bible study materials are available free of charge for your personal use or for use in teaching a Bible class.

by Charles Wages

- Written for Our Learning
- Stepping Stones to Truth
- Past Pentecost to Paul
- Points to Ponder
- The Ages
- Saved by Grace
- Ministry of the Church
- The Perfect Will of God
- Once in a Lifetime
- Fellowship in Christ
- Hidden in God
- Thoughts on Vision
- Spiritual Fitness
- What Saith the Scripture
(Set of 6 Diff. Tracts)

by Mrs. Charles Wages

- Seasons
- Spiritual Thoughts for Young Minds
- A Man Named Paul
- Studies for Women

by R.B. Shiflet

- Informal Study: Philippians
- Informal Study: Ephesians
- Personal Meditations on Paul's Post-Acts Ministry
- Giving Under Grace
- Ultradispensationalism
- The Lord's Supper

by Ike T. Sidebottom

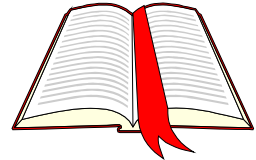
- The Book of Acts
- Through the Bible Dispensationally
- Prophetic Gleanings from Daniel and Revelation
- Saved, Settled and Sure
- Fellowship of the Mystery

by Gregg Bing

- Keys to the Word : Understanding the Bible
- That I May Know Him
- Making Good Choices
- For God So Loved the World
- It is Finished!
- Conformed to the Image of His Son
- The End of the World
- Assurance : Can We Know that We are Saved?

by John D. LaVier

- Yokefellows : Paul and His Companions
- Sure Words of Prophecy
- The Lord has Spoken
- Why is Heaven Silent?



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