

The Gospel Herald

“As the truth is in Jesus” (Ephesians 4:21)

For The LORD’S PILGRIMS, STRANGERS & SOJOURNERS

by
Donald E. Martin, Sr.

The Lord God Prepared

“Now the Lord God had PREPARED a great fish to swallow up Jonah” (Jonah 1:17)

It was in the mid 1890s when some ministers calling themselves Old Baptists made their way southward into central Florida bringing with them the NEW message of “Conditional Time Salvation.” Included in this NEW message among the Old Baptist in Central Florida was the teaching that God, without doubt had determined an elect people called and chosen to be in eternal immortal glory, yet the blessings of “salvation” in time (this present world in the mortal realm) was based on the obedient DUTY of the believer.

These ministers and many others fallen prey to their “duty works” message endorsed this teaching as it became more popular among the Churches. Another slant of heresy that accompanied this false teaching, was the position that God had predestined his people and that their election is sure, but that limited God’s predestination...God (as was taught) was not the God that had predestined events and or calamities to occur in time? This NEW teaching was no problem for many, as the natural mind reckoned it as being logical. Therefore, logic endorsed the “new limited predestination” teaching as influential pulpiteers among the Churches preached it with zeal and fervency.

In my Baptist historical studies among the early Old Baptists, prior to 1800 there was no such teaching among Old Baptist (I stand to be corrected if someone knows differently). This new “conditional time salvation” was a good tool used to keep the professing believers from living ungodly lives and causing discord and discipline to be exercised. This new message would promise those that lived holy and strived to be obedient would be showered with God’s blessings and eat of the good of this life with divine favor.

NOTE: The elect chosen heir of grace shall live a life pursuing righteousness and seek to please his/her merciful Father out of the spirit of love, not DUTY.

If God being ALMIGHTY (which he is, as there are 57 references to his Almighty name), then, the God of the scriptures has not only predestined a people for his names sake but has determined that in TIME they will walk to the honor and praise of his glorious name. Has the Almighty chosen a people for HIS NAMES SAKE and then left them to be a bad testimony? How ridiculous to think that God has called a people to be less than a positive witness of his loving kindness and merciful grace.

Jonah DID NOT want to go to Nineveh; he despised the people and rebelled against the Lord. If God has not predestined all things that come to pass regarding events, calamities, wars, death of mortal man, and every activity of the totality of all creation Then NOTHING can be determined to occur in advance, as the creature's FREE actions would alter the path of divine providence. No Prophet could speak of future events as did Isaiah 730 BC of the virgin birth of our Lord Jesus Christ if it were not for the Almighty's ABSOLUTE predestined purposes decreed to come to pass.

The Lord God PREPARED (made ready before) a large fish to swallow up Jonah. It was a PARTICULAR FISH, not just some fish, but a PREPARED FISH, specifically designed to be the swallower of the Prophet of God. No other fish could have swallowed Jonah, except the one Lord God almighty had PREPARED and determined to have this Prophet of the Most High enter into it belly and experience the darkness and fearful doom for three days and three nights.

“And the Lord spake unto the fish (my, my, our sovereign God speaks even to fish) and it vomited out Jonah on the dry land” (Jonah 2:10). Brethren, it rubs my fur the wrong way, when a man that claims to be an Old Baptist minister would say that God has ON:LY predestined his people to immortal glory and has not predestined events and circumstances throughout time. The man that would make such a comment has not clue of the ALMIGHTY God of the Holy Bible. My God SPEAKS TO FISH and it vomits one of God's elect on dry land. God predestined that event, as Jonah HAD TO PREACH where God sent him. What choice did Jonah have? What duty could he perform to cause the Almighty to vomit him out of that fish's belly? I declare the God Saves sinners, decreed to save them, determined to save them, predestined to save them, and causes them to walk worthy of their calling in Christ Jesus as witnesses of Christ loving kindness and everlasting mercy. Even to the point that disobedience shall be dealt with by divine chastisement that the end result be that the fruit of holiness be manifested.

Yes, beloved brethren our God determines our failures and rebellion to use the rod of reproof to line us up on the narrow way, time and time again, all because we are SONS.

Jonah repining over God's mercy towards the Ninevites, went to the edge of the city to sit and observe what would happen. “the Lord God PREPARED a gourd and made it to come up over Jonah” My, my, Mr. Conditionalist, Time Salvationist, how could this be, that the God of the Bible could PREPARE (before made ready) a gourd to grow at a certain place at a certain time to shadow the Prophet. But Oh, beloved brethren, that's

not all, the Almighty “PREPARED A WORM when the morning rose the next day, and it smote the gourd that it withered.” These events would have to be by chance and or coincidence if they are not PREDESTINATED by the Almighty God that created all things for his praise and glory.

Then last, our great God PREPARED (before made ready) a vehement east wind!!!

*God had told Jonah that those people of Nineveh that could not discern their right and their left hand, nevertheless, God wanted his message declared, and IT WAS SO.
(Inserted note: Isn't it ironic the Ninevites are those from Iran & Iraq?)*

*What mortal man can confront the Almighty and question his decreed purposes?
For ALL that he has determined from the foundation of the earth and before the planets had their names, shall come to pass to satisfy his divine purpose for the praise of his glory.*

Our God has PREPARED a people, a remnant according to his election, and NOTHING shall alter their path as they travel through this time world. For they are set on a divine course that the Almighty hath PREPARED and shall arrived to their destination RIGHT ON TIME !!!!! Eternal glory is their HOPE.....

*D.E. Martin, Sr.
March 12, 2006*