

PTP UPDATE

POLISHINGTHEPULPIT.COM/BLOG

PULPIT

POLISHING THE PULPIT

August 14-20, 2020

**PTP 2020 is not canceled;
it is simply moving online, to *PTP365*.**

We plan to add more than 250 men's, women's, teens', and children's sessions to PTP365 and release them during PTP (August 14-20). Churches across the country can host PTP gospel meetings with one or two keynotes a night, families/individuals can watch sessions at home, or homeschoolers can access content during the day.

Communion Preparation

August - Individual Sets

September—Individual Sets

Nursery

(closed for now)

Care of Building

1-15

16-30

Media Center Helpers

Online

Wednesday Evening Devotional

Online

Ministers:

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www.Facebook.com/Fayettevillefcoc

Our Mission Works

Graham & Elizabeth McDonald

- Scotland

Raintree Village Children's

Home

Georgia School of Preaching- South Metro Campus

<http://gsoponline.org/>

gsop-fayetteville-campus

Rick Sharpe, Campus Director

Assembly Schedule: Sunday

9:00 am Bible Classes (postponed)

10:00 am Worship Service-Online

5:00 pm Worship Service-Online

Worship Schedule:

Wednesday Evening Bible Classes are being conducted online only: Please go to www.fcoc.com for further details.

WATCH!

The Fountain of Life

With Larry Acuff

Saturdays at 7 am on channel 57

In SEARCH

of the Lord's Way

with Phil Sanders

WUPA TV 69, Sunday at 7:30am

Elders

Tom Durden (770) 652-7389

Jim Garner (770) 461-3197

Greg Nash (404) 455-1546

Jim Pelfrey (770) 629-2061

Deacons

Dennis Graham Andy Johnson Rick Sharpe

Eric Hagin Stan Mitchell Jack Sorrell

David Hopkins David Poskevich

Hugh Kelly Anthony Ravenell

Records You Made – July 26

Bible Classes n/a

10 am Worship online

5 pm Worship online

Offering \$5,846.00

Wednesday Bible Study online



Volume 26 Number 29

August 2nd, 2020

THE BOOK WITHOUT GOD

Garrett McGilvray

With a title such as that, you probably will be surprised to find that the book to which this article refers is in fact one of the books of the Bible. The Book of Esther has the curious distinction of being the only book in the Bible never to mention God, faith, obedience, or the like. In fact, there is no mention of religion at all, except for the possible exception of Esther's request that all the Jews fast for three days on her behalf. Trusting in the inspiration of all Scripture (2 Tim. 3:16), we then wonder to what purpose the Divine Author saw fit to include such a book in the Holy Canon.

Perhaps if the reader can remember back to his lessons in elementary school, a helpful analogy can be made. A frequent element appearing early in the learning of mathematics is the word problem. For example, Bill wanted to sell his 100 apples for 7¢ each, and it probably required him to take a train heading 280 miles west at 45 mph (for some reason). During the lesson, the teacher would demonstrate the solution. Later during the quiz, the student would find some other problem, such as Sarah who has made 6 chocolate pies for the county fair that she wants to sell for \$4 each, and she must ride her bike 4 miles southwest at 15 mph to get to the fair. Unlike Bill's problem in the lesson, Sarah's problem in the quiz does not come with the answer. Although the details in the second problem are different, the student must apply what he learned in the first to solve the second.

Instead of talking about Bill and Sarah, let us now move on to Joseph and Esther. The story of Joseph (Gen. 37-50) is one of the Bible's greatest lessons on Divine Providence. Anticipating an upcoming famine of enormous proportions, God needed some way to preserve Israel's growing family from starvation before it had a chance to become a nation. Meanwhile Israel's ten oldest sons became exceedingly jealous of their younger brother Joseph, and they decided to sell him into slavery. Through no fault of his own, Joseph then had to endure several great injustices, including betrayal, slavery, a false accusation of rape, and two years in prison. At the time when Joseph became a slave in the house of a prominent Egyptian, we read, **"The Lord was with Joseph,** and he was a successful man....And his master saw that the Lord was with him and that the Lord made all he did to prosper in his hand. **So Joseph found favor in his sight"** (Gen. 39:2-4). Later when Joseph was thrown into prison, we again read, **"But the Lord was with Joseph** and showed him mercy, and **he gave him favor in the sight of the keeper of the prison"** (Gen. 39:21). In time, Joseph came to be second in command over all of Egypt and was therefore in a position to provide grain for his family during the famine. He was later able to tell his brothers, "Do not therefore be grieved or angry with yourselves because you sold me here; for God sent me before you to preserve life" (Gen. 45:5). Another time he told them, "As for you, you meant evil against me; but God meant it for good, in order to bring it about as it is this day, to save many people alive" (Gen. 50:20). Though God is not to be faulted for all the injustices that happened to Joseph, he was able to use those circumstances to bring about much good.

If Joseph is the lesson, Esther is the quiz. Like in the two word problems, the details have changed: instead of a famine, the Jews in the days of the Persians were facing a decree that every Jew throughout the empire should be killed. As the king of Persia began his search for a new queen, the young Jewess Esther was selected to be presented for consideration. First she was put in custody of Hegai, one of the King's officials in charge of the women. There we read that Esther, "pleased him, and **she obtained his favor"** (Esth. 2:9). In fact, **"Esther obtained favor in the sight of all** who saw her" (v. 15). As it turned out, "The king loved Esther more than all the other women, and **she obtained grace and favor in his sight"** (v. 17). Later when Esther the Queen needed to approach her husband with a request, by which she risked death, we read, **"She found favor in his sight,"** (5:2) so that she was then able to plead the case of her people to save them from the edict.

Each time we have read that Esther "found favor" as with Joseph, but this time, the text never says why. Instead, the Bible student must remember the lesson of Joseph to better understand the quiz of Esther. From that lesson, the Bible student then realizes that when Esther "found favor," there goes along unstated, "And the Lord was with Esther." Though never mentioned, the reader who has learned the lesson of Joseph can also find God's work throughout the Book of Esther: that Mordecai (Esther's older cousin) *just happened* to overhear of a plot to assassinate the king; that later during the same night the wicked Haman built a gallows for Mordecai, the king *just happened* to not be able to sleep, so he *just happened* to have the records read to him, and *it just happened* that the record of Mordecai's good deed was selected, so that it *just happened* that when Haman came to the king intending to execute Mordecai, the king was in mind to glorify him; and that it *just happened* that the book ends with Mordecai as second in command of Persia (like Joseph). Having learned the lesson of Joseph, we see that God is the real hero of the Book of Esther.

The quiz of Esther is more like our daily lives than the lesson of Joseph. If, for example, a brother in Christ loses his job, there is no divine narration to say, "But the Lord is with him." Yet when he obtains favor with a new job, we should have learned to look to God as he who bestowed the favor. Mordecai approaches the subject of providence in a way that serves as a model for us. To Esther, he said, "Relief and deliverance will arise for the Jews...yet who knows whether you have come to the kingdom for such a time as this?" (Esth. 4:14). He had faith in God's plan and an awareness of God's providence, yet he was not so arrogant as to suppose he knew the unsearchable plans of God.

A book without God? No! God was there every step of the way. So we learn the lesson: "The Lord your God, he is the one who goes with you. He will not leave you nor forsake you" (Deut. 31:6).

GSOP FALL SHORT COURSE EZRA, NEHEMIAH, ESTHER

We invite you to come and spend the weekend with us for our Fall short courses offered by the **Georgia School of Preaching & Biblical Studies** at the *South Metro campus* in Fayetteville, Georgia!

This will be an exegetical interpretation of Ezra, Nehemiah, and Esther in their historical context, showing God's continual provision for His people as He brings them out of captivity and reestablishes them in their land. Our class times are as follows:

CLASS TIMES

Thursday, Sept 24th – 6:00 – 9:00 PM
Friday, Sept 25th – 6:00 – 9:00 PM
Saturday, Sept 26th – 9:00 AM – 12:00 PM
1:00 – 4:00 PM

*continental breakfast served 8-9am

* lunch on your own off-site

Credit: 1 Credit Hour

Audit: Spiritual Growth

Fellowship Hall

GSOP & Biblical Studies
Fayetteville church of Christ
870 Redwine Road
Fayetteville Ga 30215

Phone: (770) 461-3617 Online-fayetteville.gsopoline.org

*Due to COVID- 19 social distancing will be practiced on campus



RANDY KEA

Randy has been one of our beloved instructors at the South Metro campus since inception. He is well known throughout the brotherhood and to many of us personally. Randy has been married for 46 years to Debbie (a retired school teacher). They have two children (Clint and Christy) and eight grandchildren. He earned a B.S. degree in Bible from Freed Hardeman. He has been preaching for 46 years and is currently preaching at the Humboldt church of Christ in Tennessee. In addition, he speaks at various lectureships and gospel meetings. Randy has been an Instructor for GSOP for nine years.

Please help us to welcome our dear brother back!



WELCOME, VISITORS!

We consider it a privilege to have you worship with us today. Please stay for a few minutes after worship so we can get acquainted with you, and you with us. **Please complete an Attendance Card**, located on the back of the pew in front of you and place it in the offering plate. We have an attended nursery and a training/cry room available.

Today's sermon can be viewed online by going to www.fcoc.com – click on "live broadcast."

Family Matters

Our Sick:

Equillar Buckner - Is in the hospital with a hurt knee.

Kirsten Mullis - Fell and broke her foot last week. The doctor said no weight for six weeks.

Forrest Chapman – Continues to recover at home from a recent surgery.

Doris Buckner – Is home with shingles. Send cards of encouragement.

Kathleen Garner – Is now recovering at home. Send all cards c/o of Jim & Sandy Garner, 183 Highway 279, Fayetteville, GA 30214.

Kathy Gullledge – David's mother's cancer has returned, and she began chemo this week. Her address is 10822 Mabelvale West Road, Mabelvale, AR 72103.

Angela Hollis – Annette Butler's sister is suffering with flu-like issues.

Bridgette Triplicata – David Nash's in-home nurse, lost her 18 year old daughter in an accident last week.

Bob Neff – (Amy Nash's dad) has been moved to Encompass Rehab Center in Newnan for a couple of weeks. He is improving.

Sherry Etheridge – (Dau. of Denny/Marlene) Is home recovering from surgery.

Debby Decker - Was diagnosed with breast cancer.

Members With Health Issues:

Ray Cozart, Jim & Sharon O'Brien, Hugh Kelly, Denise Greene, Linda Howell, Jim & Allene Scoma, Wayne & Betty Jo Nash, Lewis & Linda Armstrong, Lucille Amon, RuPearl

Sharpe, Larry & Margie Fields, Harry & Mattie Williams, Paul & Decieta Lyons, Ray & Tina Russell, David & Sue Riley, Sally Wallace, Mary Lawrence, Joann Crook, Forest & Burma Chapman, Dennis & Marlene Etheridge

Shut-ins:

Alyce Hubbert, Joanne Crook, Joe Clark, David Nash, Bernice Gillespie, Una Fortson, Equillar Butler, Frances Elder, Ruby Fowler and Jane Lankford

Our Missionaries and their families:

Graham & Beth McDonald, Victor & Esperanza González Geronimo, Forest & Burma Chapman & Scott & Rebecca Shanahan.

Others With Health Problems:

Glenda Moore (Una Fortson's friend), Braxton Fortson (Una's nephew), Linda Hall (Charity Nash's mother), Lisa (Cathy Harris' friend), Whitnee Ricigliano (Lyon's friend), Doris Johnson (Wayne & David Nash's sister), Johnnie Ray, Maggie Mills (preacher's wife at Eatonton, GA), Mindy Sims, Alvin Elder (Decieta Lyons' brother), Mia Marques (Chrystine Fields' mother), Eddie Smith, Michael Williams (Steven's brother), Treston Hamilton (former member), Kelly Stoneheart (Etheridge's daughter), Phil Shaw (Catherine Kelly's cousin), Ruby June Cotter (Andrew Dalman's 6 month old cousin), Irving & Cornelia Rose (Larry's parents), Richard Oliver (Brenda Mitchell's stepfather), Lyn Launch & Aden Clarke (Jim & Sharon O'Brien family), Zane Canty (3 yrs. old), Marvin Cook (Jean Johnson's brother), Mary Mackie (Linda Johnson's mother), Nancy Ford (Joann Crook's sister), Lil Cauthen (Poskevich family) and Joe & Judy Hand (Scoma family).