

A man is not saved against his will, but he is made willing by the operation of the Holy Ghost. A mighty grace which he does not wish to resist enters into the man, disarms him, makes a new creature of him, and he is saved.  
(C.H. Spurgeon, Sermons, Vol. 10, p. 309).

### GADSBY'S CATECHISM

by William Gadsby (about 1800)

*(Presented here as originally published – this does not constitute a full endorsement of the Riverside Baptist Church)*

Question CIV. Are God's people to expect nothing but peace and prosperity in this life?

Answer. In this life, God's people will find a warfare, for the world, flesh and Satan will be continually up in arms against them; so that in this world they must have tribulation; but in Christ, and only in Christ they have peace.

Jn. 14.27 & 16.33; Acts 14.22; Rom. 5.3 & 7.18-19,24; Eph. 6.10-18; 2 Tim. 2.3-4,12; 1 Pet. 5.8-11; Rev. 7.14.

Question CV. How then can they hold out to the end if the world, flesh and Satan are against them?

Answer. Jesus Christ, as the Captain of their salvation, fights their battles, and they shall be more than conquerors through Him that hath loved them.

Ex. 14.13-14; 2 Chron. 20.17; Rom. 8.31-39; 1 Tim. 6.12; Heb. 2.10.

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WXTH-LP 101.7 FM – In Richwood

#### Services:

Sunday Morning 11:00 AM

Sunday Evening 6:00 PM

Prayer and Bible Study Wednesday Evening 6:30 PM

WCWV 92.9 FM – 8:00 AM Sunday Morning

# THE RIVERSIDE BAPTIST REPORT

## THE RIVERSIDE BAPTIST CHURCH

“The Pillar and ground of the Truth” -- 1 Timothy 3:15

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### HOW DO YOU SEE IT NOW?

*Who is left among you that saw this house in her first glory? and how do ye see it now? is it not in your eyes in comparison of it as nothing? Haggai 2:3*

The scene that is called to our attention by the prophet had come in answer to a prophecy. It had been written by Jeremiah, discovered and believed by Daniel and now experienced by those under the leadership of Zerubbabel and Joshua. Yet, it was discovered that the people involved were less than zealous regarding either the promise or the task that lay before them. So, it was that Haggai chided them for indifference and their attention to personal things rather than the things of the Lord. When the work of rebuilding the Temple began in earnest, the question here was provoked. Whether by design or the indifference of the people, the rebuilt Temple was lacking in the eyes of many, including the prophet.

We read, in more detail, from the Book of Ezra of how this new Temple was received. There was a sense of accomplishment when the foundation was laid and so there was celebration by many, but not all. The younger ones were quite happy with their work and shouted for joy; others wept. These were the older ones who had seen the original Temple. It was apparent to them that this one could not compare and they wept because of that which was lacking. It is the glory of the former house (Temple) that is addressed and well it should be. The commentator, A. R. Faussett, observed that the Jews note five points of inferiority: The absence from the second Temple of (1) The sacred fire; (2) the Shekinah; (3) the ark and the cherubim; (4) the Urim and the Thummin; (5)

the spirit of prophecy. Faussett went on to observe that “The connection of it with Messiah more than counterbalanced all these; for He is the antitype to all five (Haggai 2:9).”

This in part provides the basis for the observation of the prophet that “Is it not in your eyes in comparison of it as nothing?” No doubt, those who remembered the original Temple were thinking of the intricate work, the costly materials and size of the first Temple. They remembered that it dominated the view of any near it. It was in all appearances and operation indicative of the One whose presence was symbolized there. So, it has been in reference to all things that once manifested the glory of the Lord in such emphatic ways. They knew of the manifestation of great power and wisdom in the original creation. They were aware of the wrath of God against wickedness and perversity in the destruction of Sodom and Gomorrah. They often reminded themselves of the mighty way the Lord attended their departure from Egypt. They knew of other enemies that had been vanquished as a way of displaying the Lord’s care for His people. Even now they were working against constant threats and conspiracies. But, where was the manifestations of divine power such as had been in the past?

One of the most exciting books in all the Bible to read is the Acts of the Apostles. Perhaps, this is because we connect with the people, the events and the message as being the beginning of this era of the Gospel going

into all the world. These times were no less glorious than was the time of the building of the first Temple. This was the time of manifestation of the power of God unto salvation in application and bringing to fruition all that Christ has done. Our hearts thrill as we read of the evident working of the Holy Spirit in the hearts and lives of men who preached the Gospel and the salvation being brought mightily to men who received the forgiveness of sins through Christ our Lord. The Word of God was boldly preached in the face of great opposition and prevailed. Miraculous outpourings of the Spirit were the order of the day and the enemy had no answer. We were not there, but through the inspiration and illumination of the Spirit we are made to witness it in the Word of God.

But then, we are constrained to look at things as they are today. What we see begs the question: "How do you see it now." We are reminded of the reformation and the great awakening and other times of increased spiritual activity and again we become excited. But that was then and we still must ask as to how today compares with then. The early churches went from house to house and were attended with great power as they gladly embraced the Word of God, were steadfast in adherence to good doctrine and fellowship, and daily were about the business of worship and service. Again, we

ask, how do we see the state of Christianity today? Today we have magnificent edifices in which to meet, programs geared to attract numbers, and messages aimed at conciliation. But, in terms of the glory of the Lord, the preeminence of Christ in the hearts, and power, we again ask, "How do you see it now" and answer "It is nothing in comparison."

The prophet provides hope and encouragement as we read the next verse: *Yet now be strong, O Zerubbabel, saith the LORD; and be strong, O Joshua, son of Josedech, the high priest; and be strong, all ye people of the land, saith the LORD, and work: for I am with you, saith the LORD of hosts: Haggai 2:4.* Both the governor and the High Priest are directed to "Be Strong!" The people are likewise encouraged. Haggai had asked earlier: *Is it time for you, O ye, to dwell in your cieled houses, and this house lie waste? Haggai 1:4.* Today's typical Christians try to balance their "tiled houses" with the service of the Lord. They are concerned about the things of the faith but not excessively so. Their times of pure dedication to the things of the Lord are somewhat less than daily. The answer to the question is to treasure the Lord's presence and "be strong" in Him. O that we might aspire to the standard of the early Christians! *bhs*

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### Jesus Christ Says "Come to Me" To the Most Sinful

"Come now, and let us reason together,' says Jehovah, 'though your sins are like scarlet, they shall be as white as snow; though they are red like crimson, they shall be as wool.'" (Isaiah 1:18)

What are sins that are "like scarlet" and "red like crimson"? They are the worst of sins? We do not imply that some sins are inconsequential, for all deserve the punishment of death. But as surely as murder is considered a worse sin than lying, so are sins "like scarlet" and "red like crimson" worse than others.

The color of these sins denotes bloodguilt, the state of being guilty of murder, for red is the color of blood. And Jesus here speaks to people whose "hands are full of blood" (v.15), stained with its guilt. Jesus therefore here speaks to murderers! You may not

have committed murder with your physical hands, but in God's sight "Whoever hates his brother is a murderer" (1 John 3:15; Matthew 5:21f). Therefore, we all have committed murder in God's sight, and our "hands are full of blood", and our sins are "like scarlet" and "red like crimson".

The color of these sins also denotes their permanence, for cloth dyed scarlet was "double-dyed" by dipping it twice in the dye in order to make it colorfast. You are a double-dyed sinner, because you are a sinner first by nature and afterward by deeds. And you are a colorfast sinner, for you cannot absolve yourself of your guilt by all the tears you shed, and all the waters of baptism, and all the religious deeds you perform, and all of everything else you do.

But Jesus Christ here calls even these worst of sinners to "Come to Me."

And He assures all who come to Him that "they shall be as white as snow" and "they shall be as wool". To "be as white as snow" is to be innocent through justification and holy through sanctification. To "be as wool" is to be as fleece from which all dirt and filth and stains have been removed, so that the wool is restored to its original whiteness.

This is what happens to all who come to Christ. When they believe and trust in Him, all their sins are washed away from them by the cleansing blood of Jesus Christ. He answers their prayer "wash me, and I shall be whiter than snow" (Psalm 51:7). And they become identified as "These are the ones who ... washed their robes and made them white in the blood of the Lamb" (Revelation 7:14).

But if you refuse Jesus Christ's call today "Come to Me" you will at last hear Him say to you "Depart from Me, you cursed, into the everlasting fire prepared for the devil and his angels" (Matthew 25:41, 46). Daniel Parks (Saint Croix, US Virgin Islands)

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(The following is an excerpt from the best-known message of Jonathan Edwards (1703 – 1758) who was a central figure in the "Great Awakening" in America. It was entitled *Sinners in the Hands of an Angry God*. It is included in that it emphasizes that mercy is the absolute need of all. This is the need of that which is set forth in the article above by Bro. Daniel Parks)

"Sinner! The God who holds you over the pit of Hell, much as one holds a spider — abhors you, and is dreadfully provoked! His wrath towards you burns like fire! He looks upon you as worthy of nothing else, but to be cast into the fire! The bow of God's wrath is bent, and His arrow is made ready upon the string. Justice points the arrow at your heart and strings the bow. It is nothing but the mere pleasure of God (and that of an angry God without any promise or obligation at all) that keeps the arrow one moment from being made drunk with your blood! Your wickedness makes you as it were heavy as lead, and to tend downwards with great weight and pressure towards Hell; and if God should let you go — you would immediately sink and swiftly descend and plunge into the bottomless gulf. Your healthy constitution, and your own care and prudence, and best contrivances, and all your righteousness, would have no more influence to uphold you and keep you out of Hell, than a spider's web would have to stop a falling rock!"

(The Lord blessed this message and many others by Edwards to the salvation of many.)