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West Suffolk Epistle West Suffolk Baptist Church



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Thoughtfully Reformed - Redemptively Relevant

Monkeying with the Meaning

At this moment in history, even though most of modern society is already fully committed to an evolutionary and naturalistic world view, our society still benefits from the collective memory of a biblical world-view. People in general still believe human life is special. They still hold remnants of biblical morality, such as the notion that love is the greatest virtue (1 Corinthians 13:13); service to one another is better than fighting for personal dominion (Matthew 20:25-27); and humility and submission are superior to arrogance and rebellion (1 Peter 5:5).

But to whatever degree secular society still holds those virtues in esteem, it does so entirely without any philosophical foundation. Having already rejected the God revealed in Scripture and embraced instead pure naturalistic materialism, the modern mind has no grounds whatsoever for holding to any ethical standard; no reason whatsoever for esteeming "virtue" over "vice"; and no justification whatsoever for regarding human life as more valuable than any other form of life. Modern society has already abandoned its moral foundation.

As humanity enters the twenty-first century, an even more frightening prospect looms. Now even the church seems to be losing the will to defend what Scripture teaches about human origins. Many in the church are too intimidated or too embarrassed to affirm the literal truth of the biblical account of creation. They are confused by a chorus of authoritative-sounding voices who insist that it is possible—and even pragmatically necessary—to reconcile Scripture with the latest theories of the naturalists.

Of course, theological liberals have long espoused theistic evolution. They have never been reluctant to deny the literal truth of Scripture on any issue. But the new trend is different, comprising evangelicals who contend that it is possible to harmonize Genesis 1-3 with the theories of modern naturalism without doing violence to any essential doctrine of Christianity. They affirm evangelical statements of faith. They teach in evangelical institutions. They insist they believe the Bible is inerrant and authoritative. But they are willing to reinterpret Genesis to accommodate evolutionary theory. They express shock and surprise that anyone would question their approach to Scripture. And they sometimes employ the same sort of ridicule and intimidation religious liberals and atheistic skeptics have always leveled against believers: *"You don't seriously think the universe is less than a billion years old, do you?"*

The result is that over the past couple of decades, large numbers of evangelicals have shown a surprising willingness to take a completely non-evangelical approach to interpreting the early chapters of Genesis. More and more are embracing the view known as "old-earth creationism," which blends some of the principles of biblical creationism with naturalistic and evolutionary theories, seeking to reconcile two opposing world-views. And in order to accomplish this, old-earth creationists end up explaining away rather than honestly exegeting the biblical creation account.

A handful of scientists who profess Christianity are among those who have led the way in this revisionism—most of them lacking any skill whatsoever in biblical interpretation. But they are setting forth a major reinterpretation of Genesis 1-3 designed specifically to accommodate the current trends of naturalist theory. In their view, the six days of creation in Genesis 1 are long ages, the chronological order of creation is flexible, and most of the details about creation given in Scripture can be written off as poetic or symbolic figures of speech.



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Monkeying with the Meaning

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Many who should know better—pastors and Christian leaders who defend the faith against false teachings all the time—have been tempted to give up the battle for the opening chapters of Genesis.

An evangelical pastor recently approached me after I preached. He was confused and intimidated by several books he had read—all written by ostensibly evangelical authors—yet all arguing that the earth is billions of years old. These authors treat most of the evolutionists' theories as indisputable scientific fact. And in some cases they wield scientific or academic credentials that intimidate readers into thinking their views are the result of superior expertise, rather than naturalistic presuppositions they have brought to the biblical text. This pastor asked if I believed it possible that the first three chapters of Genesis might really be just a series of literary devices—a poetic saga giving the "spiritual" meaning of what actually occurred through billions of years of evolution.

I answered unapologetically: No, I do not. I am convinced that Genesis 1-3 ought to be taken at face value—as the divinely revealed history of creation. Nothing about the Genesis text itself suggests that the biblical creation account is merely symbolic, poetic, allegorical, or mythical. The main thrust of the passage simply cannot be reconciled with the notion that "creation" occurred via natural evolutionary processes over long periods of time. And I don't believe a faithful handling of the biblical text, by any acceptable principles of hermeneutics, can possibly reconcile those chapters with the theory of evolution or any of the other allegedly scientific theories about the origin of the universe.

Furthermore, much like the philosophical and moral chaos that results from naturalism, all sorts of theological mischief ensues when we reject or compromise the literal truth of the biblical account of creation and the fall of Adam. ~ **Dr. John MacArthur**

How Important is Genesis 1 - 3?

I'm convinced the opening chapters of Genesis are not optional. They establish the vital foundation for everything we believe as Christians.

Sadly, it is a foundation that is being systematically undermined by the very institutions that should be most vigorously defending it. More and more Christian educational institutions, apologists, and theologians are abandoning faith in the literal truth of Genesis 1-3.

I recall reading a survey a few years ago which revealed that in one of America's leading evangelical accrediting associations, whose membership boasted scores of evangelical Bible colleges and universities, only five or six college-level schools remain solidly opposed to the old-earth view of creation. The rest are open to a reinterpretation of Genesis 1-3 that accommodates evolutionary theories.

Scores of well-known Bible teachers and apologists see the whole question as moot, and some even aggressively argue that a literal approach to Genesis is detrimental to the credibility of Christianity. They have given up the battle—or worse, joined the attack against biblical creationism.



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How Important is Genesis 1 - 3?

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I'm thankful for those who are still faithfully resisting the trend—organizations like Answers in Genesis, the Creation Research Society, and the Institute for Creation Research. These organizations and others like them involve many expert scientists who challenge the presuppositions of evolutionists on technical and scientific grounds. They clearly demonstrate that scientific proficiency is not incompatible with faith in the literal truth of Scripture—and that the battle for the beginning is ultimately a battle between two mutually exclusive faiths—faith in Scripture versus faith in anti-theistic hypotheses. It is not really a battle between science and the Bible.

As Christians, we believe the Bible is truth revealed to us by God, who is the true Creator of the universe. That belief is the basic foundation of all genuine Christianity. It is utterly incompatible with the speculative presuppositions of the naturalists.

In Scripture the Creator Himself has revealed to us everything essential for life and godliness. And it starts with an account of creation. If the biblical creation account is in any degree unreliable, the rest of Scripture stands on a shaky foundation.

But the foundation is not shaky. The more I understand what God has revealed to us about our origin, the more I see clearly that the foundation stands firm. I agree with those who say it is time for the people of God to take a fresh look at the biblical account of creation. But I disagree with those who think that calls for any degree of capitulation to the transient theories of naturalism. Only an honest look at Scripture, with sound principles of hermeneutics, will yield the right understanding of the creation and fall of our race.

The Bible gives a clear and cogent account of the beginnings of the cosmos and humanity. There is absolutely no reason for an intelligent mind to balk at accepting it as a literal account of the origin of our universe. Although the biblical account clashes at many points with naturalistic and evolutionary hypotheses, it is not in conflict with a single scientific fact. Indeed, all the geological, astronomical, and scientific data can be easily reconciled with the biblical account. The conflict is not between science and Scripture, but between the biblicist's confident faith and the naturalist's willful skepticism.

To many, having been indoctrinated in schools where the line between hypothesis and fact is systematically and deliberately being blurred, that may sound naive or unsophisticated, but it is nonetheless a fact. Again, science has never disproved one word of Scripture, and it never will. On the other hand, evolutionary theory has always been in conflict with Scripture and always will be. But the notion that the universe evolved through a series of natural processes remains an unproven and untestable hypothesis, and therefore it is not "science." There is no proof whatsoever that the universe evolved naturally. Evolution is a mere theory—and a questionable, constantly-changing one at that. Ultimately, if accepted at all, it must be taken by sheer faith.

How much better to base our faith on the sure foundation of God's Word! There is no ground of knowledge equal to or superior to Scripture. Unlike scientific theory, it is eternally unchanging. Unlike the opinions of man, its truth is revealed by the Creator Himself! It is not, as many suppose, at odds with science. True science has always affirmed the teaching of Scripture. Archaeology, for instance, has demonstrated the truthfulness of the biblical record time and time again. Wherever Scripture's record of history may be examined and either proved or disproved by archaeological evidence or reliable independent documentary evidence, the biblical record has always been verified. There is no valid reason whatsoever to doubt or distrust the biblical record of creation, and there is certainly no need to adjust the biblical account to try to make it fit the latest fads in evolutionary theory.



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How Important is Genesis 1 - 3?

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Again, a biblical understanding of the creation and fall of humanity establishes the necessary foundation for the Christian world-view. Everything Scripture teaches about sin and redemption assumes the literal truth of the first three chapters of Genesis. If we wobble to any degree on the truth of this passage, we undermine the very foundations of our faith.

If Genesis 1-3 doesn't tell us the truth, why should we believe anything else in the Bible? Without a right understanding of our origin, we have no way to understand anything about our spiritual existence. We cannot know our purpose, and we cannot be certain of our destiny. After all, if God is not the Creator, then maybe He's not the Redeemer either. If we cannot believe the opening chapters of Scripture, how can we be certain of anything the Bible says?

To those who will inevitably complain that such a view is credulous and unsophisticated, my reply is that it is certainly superior to the irrational notion that an ordered and incomprehensibly complex universe sprung by accident from nothingness and emerged by chance into the marvel that it is.

Scripture offers the only accurate explanations that can be found anywhere about how our race began, where our moral sense originated, why we cannot seem to do what our own consciences tells us is right, and how we can be redeemed from this hopeless situation. Scripture is not merely the best of several possible explanations. It is the Word of God. ~ ***Dr. John MacArthur***

Getting to the Root of the Problem

The Bible has much to say about the heart. In Scripture, the heart refers not so much to an organ that pumps blood throughout the body as it does to the core of the soul, the deepest seat of human affections. It is out of the heart that the issues of life flow. Jesus saw a close connection between the location of our treasures and the drive of our hearts. Find a man's treasure map and you have found the highway of his heart.

In this fallen condition, the heart is seen as the root of our problem. We are said to have "a heart of stone." I remember two songs from my teenage years that lamented this fact of human nature. One was called "Hearts of Stone" and the other, a Dixieland jazz piece, was titled "Hard-Hearted Hannah, the Vamp of Savannah."

Hardened hearts, of course, are not limited to vamps, nor are they found only in Georgia. They are found in the breasts of fallen creatures everywhere who have no affection for God. The stony heart is calcified. It is like an inert rock. It has no passion for God, no affection for Christ, no love for His Word. The hardened heart knows nothing of a longing for the things of God.

When Jesus told Nicodemus that it was necessary for him to be reborn in order to enter the kingdom of God, He was telling him that he had heart trouble. Nicodemus had a congenital heart defect—a condition of sclerosis of the heart with which he was born. ~ ***Dr. R.C. Sproul, Sr.***



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Are People Basically Good?

It is commonplace to hear the statement, “people are basically good.” Though it is admitted that no one is perfect, human wickedness is minimized. Yet if people are basically good, why is sin so universal?

It is often suggested that everybody sins because society has such a negative influence upon us. The problem is seen with our environment, not with our nature. This explanation for the universality of sin raises the question, how did society become corrupt in the first place? If people are born good or innocent, we would expect at least a percentage of them to remain good and sinless. We should be able to find societies that are not corrupt, where the environment has been conditioned by sinlessness rather than sinfulness. Yet the most dedicated-to-righteousness communes we can find still have provisions for dealing with the guilt of sin.

Since the fruit is universally corrupt we look for the root of the problem in the tree. Jesus indicated that a good tree does not produce corrupt fruit. The Bible clearly teaches that our original parents, Adam and Eve, fell in sin. Subsequently, every human being has been born with a sinful and corrupt nature. If the Bible didn’t explicitly teach this, we would have to deduce it rationally from the bare fact of the universality of sin.

Yet the fall is not simply a question of rational deduction. It is a point of divine revelation. It refers to what we call original sin. Original sin does not refer primarily to the first or original sin committed by Adam and Eve. Original sin refers to the result of the first sin—the corruption of the human race. Original sin refers to the fallen condition in which we are born.

That the fall occurred is clear in Scripture. The fall was devastating. How it came to pass is open to dispute even among Reformed thinkers. The Westminster Confession explains the event simply, much in the manner that Scripture explains it:

Our first parents, being seduced by the subtlety and temptation of Satan, sinned, in eating the forbidden fruit. This their sin, God was pleased, according to His wise and holy counsel, to permit, having purposed to order it to His own glory. (WCF 6:1)

Thus, the fall occurred. The results, however, reached far beyond Adam and Eve. They not only touched all mankind, but decimated all mankind. We are sinners in Adam. We cannot ask, “When does the individual become a sinner?” For the truth is that human beings come into existence in a state of sinfulness. They are seen by God as sinful because of their solidarity with Adam.

The Westminster Confession again elegantly expresses the results of the fall, particularly as it relates to human beings:

By this sin they fell from their original righteousness and communion with God, and so became dead in sin, and wholly defiled in all the parts and faculties of soul and body. They being the root of all mankind, the guilt of this sin was imputed, and the same death in sin, and corrupted nature, conveyed to all their posterity descending from them by ordinary generation. From this original corruption, whereby we are utterly indisposed, disabled, and made opposite to all good, and wholly inclined to all evil, do proceed all actual transgressions. (WCF 6:1-4)



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Are People Basically Good?

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That last phrase is crucial. We are sinners not because we sin. Rather, we sin because we are sinners. Thus David laments, “Behold, I was brought forth in iniquity, and in sin did my mother conceive me” (Psalm 51:5). ~ *Ligonier Editorial*

What is Syncretism?

Syncretism is the process by which aspects of one religion are assimilated into, or blended with, another religion. This leads to fundamental changes in both religions.

In the Old Testament, God was deeply concerned with the pressure and temptation toward syncretism. As the people of God moved into the Promised Land they were confronted with pagan religions. The Canaanite gods, Baal and Asherah, became objects of Israelite devotion. Later, God’s people worshiped the national gods of Assyria and Babylon. The law of God clearly warned Israel not only against abandoning Yahweh for other gods, but against worshiping other gods in addition to the true God. The prophets warned of coming judgments as the people modified their faith to accommodate foreign doctrines and practices.

The New Testament period was one of widespread syncretism. As the Greek Empire expanded, her gods mingled with the indigenous gods of conquered nations. The Roman Empire also welcomed all manner of cults and mystery religions. Christianity was not left untouched. The church fathers not only spread the gospel but labored to protect its integrity. *Manichaeism* (a dualistic philosophy that saw the physical as evil) crept into some doctrines. *Docetism* (a teaching that denied Jesus had a physical body) was a problem even as the New Testament was being written. Many forms of *Neoplatonism* made a conscious effort to combine elements of Christian religion with *Platonic* philosophy and oriental dualism. The history of the Christian creeds is the history of God’s people seeking to separate themselves from the snares of foreign religions and philosophies.

The problem is still with the church today. Non-Christian philosophies such as Marxism or existentialism seek the power of Christianity while giving up what is uniquely Christian. Syncretism continues to be a powerful tool to separate God from His people.

Every generation of Christians face the temptation of syncretism. In our desire to be “with it” or contemporary in our practices and beliefs, we yield to the temptation of being conformed to the patterns of this world. We accept pagan practices and ideas and seek to “baptize them.” Even when we confront and engage alien religions and philosophies we have a tendency to be influenced by them. Every foreign element that creeps into Christian faith and practice is an element that weakens the purity of faith. ~ *Ligonier Editorial*

How is the Rainbow a Sign of the Covenant?

Several years ago, my wife and I were driving back home from a trip out of town. At some point, we missed the exit sign on the highway leading to the town in which we lived. We drove for nearly thirty minutes before realizing that we were heading to the wrong city. We had completely missed the sign.



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How is the Rainbow a Sign of the Covenant?

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Failing to see or to understand physical signs can result in unfavorable consequences; the same is true of failing to rightly understand God's covenantal signs. This is evident today in the way many parade their sexual rebellion against God under the banner of a rainbow.

In redemptive history, the Lord established the covenant of grace with Adam, Noah, Abraham, Moses, David, and Christ. With each administration of the covenant of grace, God gave various divine signs. He set apart the rainbow in the sky to serve as the sign of the Noahic covenant. The Noahic covenant was God's pledge that He would sustain the created order (Genesis 9:9–13). Because of His promise not to destroy the earth, mankind could be fruitful, multiply, and fill the earth (Genesis 9:1). In this sense, the Noahic covenant was a unique administration of the covenant of grace in that it contained a principle of common grace.

However, the Noahic covenant was ultimately serving the redemptive purposes of God. God was renewing the covenant promise He made to Adam when He inaugurated the covenant of grace (Genesis 3:15). In the Noahic covenant, God was setting the stage for the unfolding of redemptive history. Christ was in the lineage of Noah (Luke 3:23–38). Noah stood as a type of Christ, the head of a new creation (Genesis 8:13–19; 9:1–7). The ark itself served as a microcosm of redemptive history. The clean animals in the ark belonged to the Old Testament sacrificial system and typified the sacrifice of Jesus as the Lamb of God who takes away the sin of the world (Genesis 8:20; Exodus 12; John 1:29; 1 Peter 1:19). Clean and unclean animals together represented the Jews and gentiles, for whose salvation Christ came into the world (Acts 10:9–48; 11:18).

God set the bow in the sky to serve as the sign of the Noahic covenant—signifying His promise of redemption (Genesis 9:8–17). In his vision of the heavenly throne room, the Apostle John saw a rainbow around the throne of God and the Lamb (Revelation 4:3). Jonathan Edwards explained the significance of this rainbow around the throne in John's vision when he wrote:

The rainbow we know was appointed of God as a token of his gracious covenant with mankind. God is encompassed with a rainbow, which signifies that as he sits and reigns, and manifests himself in his church, he appears as encompassed with mercy. As of old, the throne of God in the holy of holies, where God manifested himself in the church of Israel, was called the mercy-seat, so here there is a rainbow, the sign of God's gracious covenant, round about the throne that he sits on.

The rainbow is a sign of God's redeeming grace and mercy. The Hebrew word translated "rainbow" is properly translated "war bow." By placing His bow in the sky, the Lord was symbolically aiming a weapon of judgment at Himself. As Sinclair Ferguson explains:

The word used in the book of Genesis is not rainbow, it is war bow: the bow of war, the bow of battle. It is a picture of God, after hostility has ended and He has established a new creation, flinging His bow of judgment into the skies as a reassurance to Noah. "Now that there is reconciliation, you may enjoy the peace that you have with Me. You can be sure that there will never again be this kind of judgment on the earth—until, of course, the cosmic final judgment of all at the end of time." . . . If you think about the rainbow as God's military bow transformed into an ornament of great beauty that hostility has ceased, and that there is no arrow in the bow, the only place the arrow could have gone was into His own heart.



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How is the Rainbow a Sign of the Covenant?

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In setting the bow apart to serve as the sign of His covenantal promise, the Lord said to Noah, “*When the bow is in the clouds, I will see it and remember the everlasting covenant*” (Genesis 9:16). Of course, God doesn’t need to be reminded of anything. Rather, in gracious condescension He determined to give us greater certainty of His promise. In this sense, the rainbow is the sign that the Lord will preserve the present creation until the consummation of the covenant of grace when He will fully redeem His people from every tongue, tribe, and nation and bring them into the full enjoyment of a new creation. The sign of the Noahic covenant is therefore a gospel sign of the redeeming mercy of God in Christ (Isaiah 54:9–10). ~ **Reverend Nick Batzig** - *Senior pastor of Church Creek PCA in Charleston, S.C., and an associate editor for Ligonier Ministries*

Sacred History

Archaeology is the study of ancient things. The discipline brings together history and science to engage in research, discovery, and analysis of the physical remnants of ancient civilizations to understand their contexts, cultures, practices, values, and beliefs. This work is extensive, with tens of thousands of archaeological sites under excavation around the world. Incredibly, despite all the work that has been done over the centuries, we have excavated only a tiny fraction of the archaeological sites that could be discovered and researched.

I once visited the ruins of the ancient city of Pompeii in southern Italy. Pompeii was quickly covered by volcanic ash from the eruption of Mount Vesuvius in AD 79, leaving the city extremely well preserved. The ruins were accidentally discovered fifteen hundred years later, and excavations have continued on and off since then. Touring with a woman who holds a Ph.D. in archaeology, I was astounded not only by the sheer size of the city (more than 160 acres) but also by the fact that only two-thirds of the city has been uncovered over the past four centuries or so. Scientists are currently working with newly developed, specialized X-ray machines and artificial intelligence to translate the numerous scrolls found in the library of Pompeii. The ongoing work at Pompeii is just an example of what is left to do around the world. Recently, satellite imaging has discovered more than ten thousand previously unknown sites, one of which archaeologists believe could be thousands of years older than the pyramids of Egypt and possibly the oldest city in the world. What’s more, only a small fraction of papyri (documents written on the leaves of the African papyrus plant) housed at the University of Oxford have been transcribed and translated from an 1897 find in Oxyrhynchus, Egypt. Some of our earliest manuscripts of the New Testament are found in this papyri collection.

As archaeology and technology advance, we will, Lord willing, continue to learn more about the history of the world and discover more physical evidence of the history of God’s people and of His mighty acts throughout history as revealed to us in the inspired and inerrant Scriptures. Although archaeology does not in itself prove that the Bible is trustworthy and true, it can offer material corroboration of the biblical record. Yet we know all the while that it is ultimately only our sovereign God by the power of the Holy Spirit who gives us the gift of faith in Jesus Christ, whose life, death, resurrection, and ascension are all described in the historical record of the Scriptures. ~ **Dr. Burk Parsons** - *Senior pastor of Saint Andrew’s Chapel in Sanford, Fla., chief publishing officer for Ligonier Ministries, editor of Tabletalk magazine, and a Ligonier Ministries teaching fellow*



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E-Mail from A.M. Kuriachan

Beloved Brothers and sisters,

First of all, I want to thank you so much for your continued prayers for me. I had reached you earlier with an update of how the Lord was blessing us in the ministry of the word in two conferences, one in the south eastern part and another in the central part of Nepal.

It was raining when Benny and I came to the Nepalgunj on the 23rd, the western part of Nepal and we were afraid whether we would be able to conduct the pastors training classes, because heavy rain for some three days would fill the compound with water where the classes were to be held and several pastors would not be able to travel either. God answered the prayers of all of us. Rain stopped from August 24 although it drizzled from time to time. All workers except four were able to come for the class. It is a season of heat and it goes to 105-108 F, but those few days rain, in fact, brought down a little bit the heat of the summer; but it was around 95F every day.

In Nepalgunj where Brother Benny has his ministry base where there are some 160 orphan children are being looked after, aging from 4-23 yrs. A good number of them are high school, college and university students and a few are married and are serving the Lord with Benny. I had the privilege of sharing the word with the grown-ups on 23rd night, 26th morning in the worship service and on the 29th night. The only time I had some good rest on this trip was only two days, on 24&25.

On 26th afternoon, after the worship service, (Saturday is the worship day for all churches in Nepal), we went to Bardia where the classes were held, travelling some 4 hours. The classes were held in a church hall very close to a forest. People often see elephants, tigers and leopards in this forest area, and a few were either attacked or killed by tigers in the past, and even three months back one woman was badly attacked by a tiger. One evening after the class I went for a walk on the longest bridge in Nepal near my hotel room, a couple of young men told me that they had just seen one leopard moving in the bushes at the river bank as they were watching it from the bridge. I too wanted to see it, but it quickly disappeared.

The classes were held from 27-29, and it was held from 8:15 a.m. to 5:00 p.m. each day with one hour break in the noon time. God gave me sufficient grace and strength to complete the course. My subject this time was Ecclesiology. Pastors were so greatly benefited. Lots of questions were answered, wrong perceptions were corrected.

I returned to Nepalgunj on 29th night and on 30th, arrangement was for me to come to Lucknow the capital city of Uttar Pradesh the largest state in India; stayed over night and I flew to Cochin (Kochi) my last destination on the 31st and was able to be back home safely after 17 days of ministry travels.

Everything is fine with me by God's grace. Molly will travel on the 7th from London and will be here on the 8th; looking forward very much for her to be back home. She will have to consult with the doctor again for her dental issue which is still quite a problem for her. Please keep her in prayer.

Thank you again for your continued prayers and support. Attaching a few photos on Page 10.

In His Grace, A M



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Thoughtfully Reformed - Redemptively Relevant

If you have a birthday or anniversary in October that is not posted here or is listed in error or you do not want to be published in this newsletter, please contact Walt or e-mail him at gwlcf10415@gmail.com.

Birthdays and Anniversaries Corner October 2023

Birthdays

***Ezekiel F. (1)
Charlene S. (3)
Hazel Kay T. (10)***

Anniversaries

Andy and Emily L. (10)

By Grace Through Faith Ephesians 2:1—10

2 And you were dead in the trespasses and sins **2** in which you once walked, following the course of this world, following the prince of the power of the air, the spirit that is now at work in the sons of disobedience— **3** among whom we all once lived in the passions of our flesh, carrying out the desires of the body and the mind, and were by nature children of wrath, like the rest of mankind. **4** But God, being rich in mercy, because of the great love with which he loved us, **5** even when we were dead in our trespasses, made us alive together with Christ—by grace you have been saved— **6** and raised us up with him and seated us with him in the heavenly places in Christ Jesus, **7** so that in the coming ages he might show the immeasurable riches of his grace in kindness toward us in Christ Jesus. **8** For by grace you have been saved through faith. And this is not your own doing; it is the gift of God, **9** not a result of works, so that no one may boast. **10** For we are his workmanship, created in Christ Jesus for good works, which God prepared beforehand, that we should walk in them. ~ **ESV**



West Suffolk Baptist Church Leadership

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