



Covenant Baptist Church

Reformed and Refreshing

September 29th, 2019

Welcome to Covenant Baptist Church. We are a Reformed church committed to three things:

- **The Exaltation of God**

We desire that the people at Covenant truly understand who God is and His rightful place in their lives as their Lord and sovereign Savior.

- **The Edification of the Saints**

We consider it extremely important to correctly teach the Bible, verse by verse, so we can properly have the Holy Spirit apply it to our lives.

- **The Evangelization of the Sinner**

We understand that God has given us the responsibility to be stewards of the Gospel and that means sharing it exactly like God gave it to us with those who need Jesus.

<https://covenantbaptistsc.org>

Covenant Baptist Church Schedule

Bible Education Hour (Systematic Theology)
~ 9:30 A.M.

Sunday Worship ~ 10:30 A.M.

Wednesday Prayer Service ~ 7:00 P.M.

*(We are not interested in traditional worship
or contemporary worship. We are only
interested in true worship.)*

~

Order of Worship

(September 29th, 2019)

I Stand Amazed In the Presence, pg. 105

Prayer and Scripture Reading: 13:1-25

Blessed Assurance, pg. 403

How Great Thou Art, pg. 5

Message: The Promise of the Holy Spirit, Part Two
—John 14:15-17

Closing Hymn: I Worship You, Almighty God (screen)

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Upcoming cleaning volunteers:

October 5: Shaffer
October 12: Crapps/McSween
October 19: Lucas/Bean
October 26: Bristol

Deacon on-call list:

September 29: Colonel Rogers
October 6: Burt Lanier
October 13: James Campbell
October 20: Matt Watson

Announcements—September 29th, 2019

Congratulations to Ethan & Grace Hammond, who joined their hands in marriage yesterday, September 28.

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Greek class will meet tonight at 6 PM.

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Thank you for all the sweet and loving cards, notes, and prayers. They were much appreciated. The Lord is gracious to us. Love in Jesus, Angela Swann

—
There will be a church work day Saturday, Oct. 12 at 8 AM. Please let Chris Waddell know if you are available to help, or for more details on what is needed.

—
Alton will be giving the Kenya trip mission presentation at Pine Grove Baptist Church on October 6 at 6 PM. If you missed the presentation when shown at Covenant you are more than welcome to visit with us there. You'll also have the opportunity to meet the folks who have joined with us to do mission work in India and Kenya. The address is 235 Pine Grove Road, Leesville. The pastor there is Bro. Bud Moss. If you have any questions, please see Alton or call him at: 803-604-2187.

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If you have a desire to give cash to a designated project, you need to be sure to place it in an envelope and write on the envelope which project you wish it to be given to (building, India missions, Kenya missions, Kenya orphans, etc.). There has been a lot of cash placed in the offering box with no type of indication as to where it was to be directed. Envelopes don't have to be signed, just designated, otherwise the church treasurers can only place the cash in the general fund.

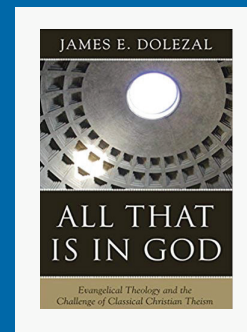
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The church bookstore is now open, and purchases can be made between and after services by seeing Annsley or Cristan Smoak. To simplify the process for the store operators and church bookkeeping, all transactions are cash only.

—
We will be having a conference here at CBC, but the date has been changed to the month of February 2020. More info and exact dates will be provided as we get closer to the event.

Book of the Month:

All That Is In God

James E. Dolezal



Increasing numbers of conservative evangelicals are denying basic tenets of classical Christian teaching about God, with departures occurring even among those of the Calvinistic persuasion. James Dolezal's *All That Is in God* provides an exposition of the historic Christian position while engaging with these contemporary deviations. His convincing critique of the newer position he styles "theistic mutualism" is philosophically robust, systematically nuanced, and biblically based. It demonstrates the need to maintain the traditional viewpoint, particularly on divine simplicity, and spotlights the unfortunate implications for other important Christian doctrines, such as divine eternity and the Trinity, if it were to be abandoned. Arguing carefully and cogently that all that is in God is God Himself, the work is sure to stimulate debate on the issue in years to come.

By What Standard?

Watch the trailer at: <https://founders.org/cinedoc/>

“In 1979 the Southern Baptist Convention (SBC) formally entered into the “Battle for the Bible” that was raging within North American evangelicalism. Over the next 15 years, the SBC was returned to its historic commitments on the inerrancy and infallibility of Scripture. Many of those who resisted this conservative resurgence were driven by religiously progressive convictions...

“Now, 25 years after the clear success of the conservative resurgence, it seems like evangelicals, including Southern Baptists, are in danger of loosening their commitments to those basic, Christian commitments. Dangerous ideologies like Critical Theory and Intersectionality are gaining inroads into the thinking of some leaders, churches and organizations....

“Founders Ministries is producing this cinedoc to sound an alarm and issue a call for pastors and churches to stand firm against this onslaught by reaffirming the authority and sufficiency of God’s written Word. If we care about true justice—what God has revealed to be just—then we must stand against what is being promoted under social justice. If we care about the true gospel—the gospel revealed in the faith once-for-all-delivered to the saints—we must reject the agendas being promoted by godless ideologies.”

(From: <https://founders.org/cinedoc/>)

Covenant Baptist Church Events

Greek Class:

Our Greek class, “It’s Greek to You and Me”, will continue tonight the fellowship hall at 6 P.M.



2nd Sunday Fellowship Dinner:

October 13th is our next second Sunday fellowship meal. Please plan to bring a dish and join us after the service! Also remember that we usually have visitors who stay for the meal, and you are encouraged to bring more than a small side dish so that there is plenty to go around.

Does Christ Want Us to Give Everything?—by Jeremiah Johnson

Sometimes you know what the sermon is going to be before the pastor even says a word. Certain Bible stories and Scripture passages naturally lead to familiar principles and well-worn applications. It's not always easy to fight off that arrogant "Been There, Done That" feeling—especially for those of us who grew up in the church.

This passage from Luke's gospel might prompt a similar response at first glance. Luke records a familiar vignette from the days leading up to Christ's arrest and execution.

And [Jesus] looked up and saw the rich putting their gifts into the treasury. And He saw a poor widow putting in two small copper coins. And He said, "Truly I say to you, this poor widow put in more than all of them; for they all out of their surplus put into the offering; but she out of her poverty put in all that she had to live on." (Luke 21:1-4)

You might expect a sermon on that passage to be a short treatise on self-denial, selflessness, humility, sacrificial giving, or vows of poverty—or some other point that is routinely wrung out of those verses. But as John MacArthur explains in his commentary on Luke's gospel, those meanings and applications are utterly foreign to what is commonly known as the story of "The Widow's Mites."

All those ideas, however, are imposed on the narrative; Jesus drew no principle regarding giving from her behavior. The text does not record that He condemned the rich for their giving, or commended the widow for hers. There is no judgment made regarding the true nature of her act, nor is anything said about her attitude, or the spirit in which her gift was given. Since Jesus made no point about giving, neither should the interpreter.

That might come as a shock to you—it certainly did to me when I first heard John's sermon on this passage (titled "Abusing the Poor"). But in spite of seemingly universal agreement that this brief passage applies to the act and attitude of our giving, that's simply not the point of the story.

It is not, as many suggest, a sweet little sidebar about God's pleasure in our self-sacrifice. If it was, that meaning would be explicit in Christ's words.



Does Christ Want Us to Give Everything?—by Jeremiah Johnson (continued)

It is simply bad hermeneutics to infer, suppose, or jump to conclusions about the point of this passage that extend beyond Christ's recorded words.

Moreover, if you're determined to make these verses a lesson about giving—that is, if you interpret Christ's statement as an affirmation of the widow's gift—the only legitimate point you can draw from the text is that God wants you to give absolutely everything you have, and resign yourself to a life of destitution. And we know that's not biblical, because God's Word is clear elsewhere about the importance of being a good steward with your money.

In fact, the only instance when Christ ever told anyone to give away everything they had was during His conversation with the rich young ruler (Matthew 19:21). And we know that the Lord's words were not a prescription for an alternate means of salvation or a pattern for giving, but a test of the young man's true affections.

So if this anecdote from Luke's gospel has nothing to do with giving, what is the point? Why did Luke and the Holy Spirit include it in this gospel account?

The first step to making sense of Luke 21:1-4 is to understand that these verses do not represent a change of topic or train of thought—that they belong in the immediate context of everything Christ said before and after the widow deposited her offering.

We need to remind ourselves from time to time that, while the words of Scripture were directly inspired by the Holy Spirit, the chapter and verse numbers are not. In this case, the chapter break inserts a speed bump into Luke's gospel that the apostle never intended. The verses immediately prior (Luke 20:45-47) contain Christ's scathing critique and condemnation on the Jewish religious elite.

And while all the people were listening, He said to the disciples, "Beware of the scribes, who like to walk around in long robes, and love respectful greetings in the market places, and chief seats in the synagogues and places of honor at banquets, who devour widows' houses, and for appearance's sake offer long prayers. These will receive greater condemnation."

And who were the scribes? Here's how John MacArthur explains their place in first-century Israel:

Not all Pharisees were scribes, but the scribes were primarily Pharisees, who were interpreters and teachers of the law of Moses and the traditional rabbinic writings. Their teaching provided the theological framework for the Pharisees' legalistic system of works-righteousness. The scribes were the dominant force in Judaism, not

Does Christ Want Us to Give Everything?—by Jeremiah Johnson (continued)

only theologically, but socially. Their views affected every aspect of life, and they also handled all legal matters, including property, estates, and contracts. They were revered, and given the respectful title of Rabbi (Matthew 23:7).

The influence the scribes wielded was corrupted on several fronts, and their hypocrisy infected the entire nation. Christ’s criticism emphasized several examples of their overweening pride. But their corruption wasn’t limited to haughtiness and self-promotion. As John MacArthur explains,

[Jesus also exposed] a more sinister aspect of their hypocrisy—their rapacious greed that led them to prey on the most defenseless members of society. That the scribes would stoop so low as to “devour widows’ houses” graphically illustrates the intense desire for wealth that characterizes false teachers (cf. Micah 3:5, 11; 2 Peter 2:1-3, 14). . . . The Old Testament teaches that widows are to be protected and cared for (Exodus 22:22; Deuteronomy 10:18; 14:29; 24:17-21; 27:19; Psalm 68:5; 146:9; Proverbs 15:25; Isaiah 1:17; Jeremiah 22:3; Zechariah 7:10), but the scribes consumed their meager resources. They took advantage of their hospitality, cheated them out of their estates, mismanaged their property, and took their houses as pledges for debts that they could never repay.

The moment Jesus finished denouncing the scribes for “devouring widows’ houses” (Luke 20:47), His audience saw the reality of His words borne out in vivid, tragic detail. The widow’s offering was a devastating illustration of the wicked religious system Christ had just condemned. Through her final offering, this widow succumbed to an institutionalized scheme of works-righteousness that had bled her dry. In fact, it likely killed her, as Scripture tells us she gave up “all that she had to live on” (Luke 21:4) in her last-ditch effort to obtain a blessing.

In that sense, her gift was not an example for us to follow but a warning about how false religion preys on people.

As the story of this widow reveals, deceptive, self-righteous religion preys on the weak, the desperate, and the defenseless. Far from being pleased with her giving, Jesus was angry that the so-called worship she had bought into had taken her last cent. The Lord would go on to pronounce judgment on that very apostate Judaism in the next section. [See Luke 21:5-6; and for a more in-depth study of Christ’s condemnation, see John MacArthur’s sermon “Abusive Religion.”]

Money has always been at the heart of satanic religion (cf. Luke 16:14; 19:46; 1 Peter 5:2), consequently abuse of the poor by false religious systems has continued from our Lord’s day to our own.

The corruption of first-century Judaism ought to sound familiar to us. Countless men and women today likewise give what little money they have—and often more than they can afford—to prosperity preachers, faith healers, and other religious hucksters in search of physical and financial blessings. Chris-

Does Christ Want Us to Give Everything?—by Jeremiah Johnson (continued)

tian television is dominated by ministries that make outrageous promises of health and wealth if viewers will only first “sow a seed” of financial faith into their coffers. But the only ones who ever get rich are the vile false teachers themselves, while more and more people fall for their lies.

Just as Christ warned His disciples about the danger the scribes presented, we need to be bold and faithful about calling out the wolves who prey on people in God’s name. We need to be clear about what God’s Word says in all matters, and what it doesn’t—leaving these charlatans no room to operate their blasphemous Ponzi schemes.

That’s the lesson we need to take away from the story of this widow—that God’s people cannot idly stand by while false teachers twist the truth and line their pockets in God’s name. We need to be outraged when wolves attempt to fleece God’s flock. And we need to protect and care for those who are most susceptible to their lies.



Discovery of Moabite Altar Mentioning Hebrews—by Brian Rickett

SUMMARY: Details surrounding the discovery of a Moabite sanctuary at the archaeological site of Khirbat Ataruz in central Jordan have finally been published. The most exciting find was an inscribed Moabite altar, which makes the earliest known reference to Hebrews.

“See, I have taught you statutes and rules, as the LORD my God commanded me, that you should do them in the land that you are entering to take possession of it. Keep them and do them, for that will be your wisdom and your understanding in the sight of the peoples, who, when they hear all these statutes, will say, ‘Surely this great nation is a wise and understanding people.’ – Deuteronomy 4:5-6 (ESV)

Israel and Other Nations

Throughout the sweep of biblical history, varying people groups from among the neighbors of the Hebrews rose, generally bringing with them drama. These peoples contributed to the cultural environment of the Hebrews possessing similarities in language and material culture, as well as agricultural, religious, and other such practices. They serve as important actors in the biblical narrative, often as sources of hostility, and they are presented as the primary source of a never ending threat of religious corruption.

There were many points of overlap between Israel and its neighbors, since they had common points of ancestry, lived in the same world, and possessed similar modes of thought and expression. However, there were distinctions, the chief being the difference between the God that Israel worshipped, and the gods of the nations. A second key difference was Israel’s unique connection to this God who had made promises to the patriarchs, brought the multiplied people out of Egypt with a strong hand in fulfilment of those promises, and renewed the covenant when they entered the Promised Land (Deut. 29:1-18).

Part of maximally understanding the Bible includes gaining a grasp of its Ancient Near Eastern context. This includes any detectable social and cultural parallels between the Hebrews and their neighbors, as well as differences in history, geography or even climate in the setting in which they were positioned. Sometimes, insight may be discoverable in details related to distance and elevation (Judges 16:3), or in linguistic subtleties as slight as the practice of forming individual names.

For example, the various inhabitants of Canaan had the practice of creating names that referenced their favorite deity, just like the Hebrews. However,

Discovery of Moabite Altar Mentioning Hebrews—by Brian Rickett (continued)

Hebrew names normally lacked references to Chemosh, or Astarte, or the sun or the moon, giving historical evidence of monotheistic loyalty even in this subtle linguistic practice.

Although there was rampant idol worship in ancient Israel among individuals, the Torah constitution was not officially replaced. This reality was reflected in many distinctive ways in their culture, which show up in archaeological evidence being found today. Everything from the unmistakable form of Hebrew names to the lack of pig bones or graven images at places like Khirbet Qeiyafa in the valley of David and Goliath's battle, to remarkable evidence of the worship of Israel's God as prescribed in the Bible at the site of Dan.

The Hebrews were unique in that they were officially, covenantally, related to their God, and He consistently communicated with them throughout the centuries. That communication produced a huge body of ancient Hebrew religious material that Jews and Christians refer to as the Tanach, or Old Testament.

Textual Artifacts and Nations

One of the most coveted forms of material culture for archaeologists to discover is that which possesses text. Material artifacts become textual artifacts with this one feature. The reason textual artifacts are special is because text carries meaning, communicates ideas, and gives indication about how meaning and ideas were conveyed. In any great mystery, the sleuth wants to know, "Who knew what, and when did they know it?" When archaeologists discover ancient written communication, they get direct access to extinct cultures.

However, written materials from the nations that surrounded ancient Israel are very sparse. For example, the overall corpus of Moabite literature we have exists in the form of the Mesha Stele, along with a few other inscriptions, and some seals. For perspective, the total corpus of Moabite literature is less than the content of a single panel of a Hebrew Torah scroll. (See more on Christian connections to Hebrew scrolls.) So, any discovery is a special treasure and helps researchers to fill in gaps in their understanding.

Readers may remember that one of those rare, special textual artifacts from one of Israel's neighbors is the famous Moabite Stone, also termed the Meshe Stele. It was erected by King Mesha of Moab (2 Kings 3:4) in honor of the Moabite god Chemosh on the occasion of his victory of independence

Discovery of Moabite Altar Mentioning Hebrews—by Brian Rickett (continued)

from Israel. In that stone, King Mesha referenced the city of Ataruz, which had been occupied by Hebrews, but which he had taken back from the son of the Hebrew King Omri. This city was referenced in the Bible as Ataroth. It was part of the tribal allotment of Reuben, but built up by the Gadites, and eventually conquered or retaken by King Mesha. The details of the capture are mentioned in the Moabite stone where Mesha gives credit to his god Chemosh for his success.

The traditional site of Ataruz is located in modern-day Jordan and is now the site of an archaeological park where excavations are currently underway. Over the past few years it has yielded some discoveries which have finally been published this summer. The below describes some of the details and highlights for those interested in how Moab and Israel intersected in antiquity.

Moabite Ritual Objects Discovered at Khirbit Ataruz

In June and July, two separate articles were published in *Levant: The Journal of the Council for British Research in the Levant*, about the discovery of a cult building, or sanctuary, in Khirbit Ataruz. The building is identifiable due to the presence of a “built-in platform altar, fireplace, offering tables, portable altars and other cultic objects,” said Chang-Ho Ji, director of the Khirbat Ataruz Project

Most interesting, is that among the archeological discoveries was an inscribed portable altar, meaning a small altar with Moabite text has been discovered, and that text has now been published.

Discovery of such a sanctuary housing instruments of sacrifice is grizzly when one considers what is known of Moabite sacrifices. At least on some occasions, human sacrifice occurred.

Then he [the king of Moab] took his oldest son who was to reign in his place and offered him for a burnt offering on the wall... – 2 Kings 3:27 (ESV)

Here is what we know so far about the altar. It stands 50 cm high, is sculpted from polished limestone block, and is cylindrical in shape. It is inscribed with seven lines of text that form two short inscriptions. Three lines of text are written horizontally on the upper section (referred to as Inscription A), and four lines are written vertically from bottom to top (referred to as Inscription B).

Discovery of Moabite Altar Mentioning Hebrews—by Brian Rickett (continued)

Inscription B was apparently written last and intersects with and overlaps A at one point with one letter written over the top of another, increasing the difficulty of reading. The two inscriptions do not appear to be related, and the legibility of the text is very difficult due to epigraphic and interpretive difficulties. The authors publishing the findings make repeated qualifications about the preliminary nature of their evaluation and urge caution about premature conclusions. Thus, they strongly emphasize that their conclusions are preliminary and must be understood as tentative.

This ongoing excavation by an international team led by the University of North Carolina at Charlotte is the site of a recent discovery that has churned up quite a bit of excitement over the past few weeks.

New Moabite Text Referencing Hebrews

There are some things about the altar inscription that are clearly definitive. The characters used in the inscriptions are alphabetic of the paleo-Hebrew style combined with Hieratic (ancient Egyptian cursive) numerals. This pattern of combining the two was customary of similar Iron Age Hebrew inscriptions used in recording the quantities of goods, which was at least part of the purpose of this writing. Inscription B is more difficult to read and interpret than Inscription A, but appears to make clear reference to Hebrews, making this the oldest known reference to the Hebrew people.

The age of the script can be reliably dated to the 9th century to early 8th century BCE closely reflecting the Hebrew script of the same era, and which it had borrowed. Yet, it has features that suggest it was at the earliest stages of the development of a distinct Moabite script.

The use of Hebrew-style script fits the biblical narrative in that it is doubtless due to the “Israelite Hegemony over Moab during the reign of Omri and (at least part of) the reign of his son Ahab (2 Kings 3:4-8; cf. Mesha Stele, lines 4-8).” However, some slight deviations in the script style anticipate the development of the independent script style that appears in later Moabite inscriptions. This development was possible due in part to the overthrow of Hebrew dominance described in the Mesha Stela. The preliminary translation for the two inscriptions is as follows.

Inscription A’s suggested reading is:

- “For/with 8 shekels of bronze
- And this: 2 shekels of bronze

Discovery of Moabite Altar Mentioning Hebrews—by Brian Rickett (continued)

- Total plunder:10”

21: Inscription B’s suggested reading is:

- “4 + 60 from the Hebrews? ...
- And 4,000 foreign men were scattered, and abandoned in great number
- From the desolate city... which...
- a burnt offering/incense altar?
- Acquired/acquiring? land...”

As is clear, there is much uncertainty about the reading. The ellipses indicate uncertainty about some letters or interpretations. What seems most likely, however, is that these inscriptions are dedicatory or commemorative in nature. The location of the inscribed altar inside a Moabite cult shrine, in Ataruz, from this period is very suggestive. More work will be done both in the excavation as well as on the inscribed altar. In advance of those discoveries, keep thinking!

A Reminder...



If you leave Sunday mornings feeling entertained and self-confident, not convicted and assured in Christ, you are not encountering the God of Scripture.

Desiring God

You can view the photos at:

<https://patternsofevidence.com/2019/09/20/discovery-of-moabite-altar-mentioning-hebrews/>



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Reformed and Refreshing

3535 Delree Street

West Columbia, SC 29170

<https://covenantbaptistsc.org>



*If you are interested in joining our church, please speak to one of our elders or deacons.
They will be happy to give you the information you need.*