

# The Old Hickory Bulletin

## Old Hickory Church of Christ

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### Beautiful Sentiments at the Death of Abraham

"And these are the days of the years of Abraham's life which he lived, an hundred threescore and fifteen years. Then Abraham gave up the ghost, and died in a good old age, an old man, and full of years; and was gathered to his people." (Genesis 25:7-8 - KJV)

"These are all the years of Abraham's life that he lived, 175 years. Abraham breathed his last and died at a good old age, an old man and satisfied with life; and he was gathered to his people." (Genesis 25:7-8 - NASB)

I quoted from both the King James and New American Standard Bible versions. The reason for doing so is I believe the NASB to be clearer with one of the expressions associated with the death of Abraham. There are two things said about Abraham when he died that I wish to highlight:

1. Abraham died "satisfied with life" (full of years - KJV). What a beautiful sentiment. Abraham lived to a very old age of 175. Yet, it was not the length of his life that was exceptional, it was the quality of his life. Abraham had lived as a faithful friend and servant of God (James 2:23). God had richly rewarded Abraham during his life on earth. He experienced life to its fullest extent with all this life could offer. At the end, there was no remorse, no regrets, no desire to cling to this world any more. There was nothing left in this world Abraham would miss and leave him departing unsatisfied. May we also live as a faithful servant and friend of God so that when the time of our departure comes we can leave without remorse, without regret, and "satisfied."

2. After His death, Abraham "was gathered to his people." This expression does not mean that Abraham died. That fact is pointed out earlier in the text. No, this refers to what happened to Abraham after he died. Death is a separation of the soul from the body (see James 2:26). The expression means that Abraham went to live in Paradise with his ancestors. In the story of the rich man and Lazarus, Jesus tells of the conversation that

took place in Hades between the rich man and Abraham (see Luke 16). During His ministry, Jesus stated the following:

"But even Moses showed in the burning bush passage that the dead are raised, when he called the Lord 'the God of Abraham, the God of Isaac, and the God of Jacob.' For he is not the God of the dead but of the living, for all live to Him."  
(Luke 20:37-38, NKJV)

Jesus used implication (necessary inference) to state that Abraham was alive. Though Abraham had been dead for hundreds of years before God appeared to Moses, he still existed (lived), not in this world but in Paradise. Jesus affirmed this when He stated that God is a God of the living. So, after his death, Abraham "was gathered with his people." Another beautiful sentiment. The thought of going to be once again with people we have known and loved.

Are you prepared? When you depart this world, will you go to be with the righteous? Are you a faithful friend and servant of God who can pass from this world with no regrets or remorse, "satisfied with life"? If not, we want to help. Please join us for Bible Study and worship each Sunday.

- Keith Hamilton [slightly edited, GFS]

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## **Are Books Missing From The Bible?**

There is a popular assumption among some, that there are other books or epistles that should be in our Bible. The idea is that these writings have been lost down through the ages, or were intentionally left out by scribes over the years. Of course, those who make this claim, attempt to get us to accept something else as a rule of faith to go along with the Bible.

Some years ago, I had a study for several weeks with some so-called Mormon "elders." I say "so-called" because the Bible teaches that elders are older married men with children and certain other qualifications (see 1 Timothy 3:1-7; Titus 1:5). (Note: elders and bishops or overseers] are terms which refer to the same people; see Titus 1:5, 7 and Acts 20:17, 28.) During this study, these Mormons gave me a list of "Books the Bible talks about, but it doesn't contain, which makes it not perfect and complete." I answered this list of Books not in the Bible and gave it to the Mormons, but they decided it was time to go and never responded. I share their list and my answers to them with you here.

1. Book of the Covenant - Exodus 24:7. No missing book here. The book of the covenant was simply the book where the covenant was written. We find this covenant in Exodus and Deuteronomy.

2. Book of Wars - Numbers 21:14. "It would seem from the fragment in vv. 14b, 15 that the Book of the Wars of the Lord (v. 14a) was a collection of popular songs, like the book of Jasher (Joshua 10:13; 2 Samuel 1:18), made perhaps in the early days of the monarchy to preserve some of the most notable traditions of the tribes" (The Interpreter's Bible 11:244).

3. Book of Jasher - see answer number 2.

4. Book of the Acts of Solomon - 1 Kings 11:41. "There were other writings extant at the times covered by the biblical ones, besides those included in the Bible; inspired writers referred to them (Joshua 10:13; 2 Samuel 1:18; Acts 17:28)" (E.M. Zerr, Commentary I:110).

5. Books of Nathan and Gad - 1 Chronicles 29:29. Nathan and Gad were historians of David and Solomon's reign. See The Jewish Encyclopedia. They could certainly write things other than what God inspired them to write. And others could refer to these writings.

6. Book of Jehu - 2 Chronicles 20:34. He was another history writer and, like others, could write without God's inspiration upon him.

7. Another epistle of Paul - 1 Corinthians 5:9. If there is a missing epistle, we can be assured that the Holy Spirit saw fit to include all of that teaching in other epistles (as is here indicated). There is no evidence that any necessary Truth has been left out of the New Testament (see Matthew 24:35).

8. Another epistle of Paul to the Ephesians - Ephesians 3:3. To get another (missing) letter out of this is a grand assumption! As we have it, Paul had already written two chapters before what he was now writing. Why think he had anything else in mind?

9. A former epistle of Jude - Jude 3. This is simply wishful thinking!

10. Prophecy of Enoch - Jude 14. No mention is made in this verse of Enoch's having written his prophecies. The Holy Spirit knew of these prophecies, so informed Jude that we might know at least one of them.

If one is truly interested in Truth, he will "study to shew (himself) approved unto God, a workman that needeth not to be ashamed, rightly dividing the word of truth" (2 Timothy 2:15) and believe, not fight against, the Bible. The Schaff-Herzog Encyclopedia, quoted by E.M. Zerr at 1 Kings 14:19 says, "Chronicles contains a reliable history, being drawn from the official records of the Israelites." Let us not be like atheists, agnostics, or infidels and find fault with, and try to tear down, people's belief in the Bible, God's word. When we have a genuine question about something in the Bible, rather than condemn the Bible, let us really study and find out the right answer to the problem. If we have the kind of faith God expects us to have, we will trust the Bible, because we know it is God's Truth. There may be some things I do not know or understand right now, but I can have faith in the Bible because of what I do know!

I pointed out these things to the Mormons and then asked, "Since the Book of Mormon makes the claim 'that there are many plain and precious things taken away from the book' (referring to the Bible, MLG) - 1 Nephi 13:28, why don't we find the so-called 'missing' books, as listed by you, in the Book of Mormon or other 'new revelations'?" They never would give me an answer! And I think I know why - they see they are trapped! These so-called 'missing' books were never intended to be in the Bible and their "new" revelation is not from God.

It is a sad truth, but no book has ever been more abused, more attacked, nor more criticized than the Bible. With all the attacks heaped upon it over the years, by those claiming to be its friends, as well as its enemies, not one genuine fault has ever been found which stands upon investigation. It does not contradict one scientific fact, nor has any of its history been found to be in error. It is truly the Book given by God's inspiration (2 Timothy 3:16-17). Let us put our faith in it!

"Prove all things; hold fast that which is good" (1 Thessalonians 5:21). "Let God be true, but every man a liar" (Romans 3:4).

- Michael Garrison, via Guardian of Truth, 11/05/1992

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"seeing that His divine power has granted to us everything pertaining to life and godliness, through the true knowledge of Him who called us by His own glory and excellence." (2 Peter 1:3).

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## **Happy Renewal!**

We wish all of our brethren a very happy new year! It is certainly the time of year where many people contemplate renewing themselves in some respect. There is no more

important renewal that can take place within a person than the one prescribed by Christ: "be renewed in the spirit of your mind, and put on the new self, which in the likeness of God has been created in righteousness and holiness of the truth." (Ephesians 4:23b-24; cf. Romans 12:2). Remember, Christians "have put on the new self who is being renewed to a true knowledge according to the image of the One who created him" (Colossians 3:10). We are saved by such a renewal (Titus 3:5). Recall David's prayer to the Lord, "Create in me a clean heart, O God, And renew a steadfast spirit within me." (Psalms 51:10). For the Christian, renewals are not once per year when the calendar changes, but rather, each day: "Therefore we do not lose heart, but though our outer man is decaying, yet our inner man is being renewed day by day." (2 Corinthians 4:16).

- Gary Smalley

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\* "Anyone can become angry – that is easy. But to be angry with the right person at the right time and for the right purpose and in the right way – that is not easy!"

\* "Right is right even if no one is doing it; wrong is wrong even if everyone is doing it!"

\* "When you choose to be pleasant and positive in the way you treat others, you have also chosen, in most cases, how you are going to be treated by others!"

\* "People usually pay little attention to what you say, but they definitely watch what you do!"

\* "Men are often more limited by attitude than by opportunities!"

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## ***What Must I Do To Be Saved?***

### **HEAR THE GOSPEL**

(Romans 10:14-17; John 20:30-31; Romans 1:15-17)

### **BELIEVE IN JESUS CHRIST**

(Acts 8:37; John 8:24; Hebrews 11:6)

### **REPENT OF PAST SINS**

(Luke 13:3; Acts 2:38; Acts 17:30)

### **CONFESS CHRIST**

(Romans 10:9-10; Acts 8:37)

### **BE BAPTIZED**

(Romans 6:3-4; Mark 16:15-16; Acts 2:38; Acts 8:36-39; 1 Peter 3:21)

### **LIVE A FAITHFUL LIFE**

(Revelation 2:10; 2 Peter 1:5-11; John 15:1-8; Hebrews 10:23-25)