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The Herald of His Joy

Presenting *every man* mature in Christ Jesus. Colossians 1:28

Volume 44
Issue 1093

Freedom in the Midst of Tyranny

by – Steve Martin

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I talk a lot about freedom. It's kind of my thing. Freedom from religion. Freedom from rules.

Freedom from guilt, expectations, fear, shame, pressure, performance, judgment, condemnation ... Yeah, that list could go on for days.



When He stood before Pilate – the Roman governor, the authority figure, the man with the power to kill Him – Pilate tried to flex (John 19:10-11); *i.e.*, Pilate thought he was *IT*. He didn't know what he didn't know – yet.

“Don't You realize I have the authority to release You or crucify you?”

But let's get real: what happens when freedom bumps into outside control? What does it mean to be free when you're staring down a government that silences you, a culture that shames you, or a prison cell that physically cages you?

We know believers right now who are incarcerated. Others live under oppressive regimes, unable to speak openly about what they believe. They're limited. Restricted. Constrained. So where's the freedom in *that*?

The kind of freedom that I talk about doesn't always show up in external circumstances. It lives deeper than that. It's not about being able to say whatever you want or go wherever you please. It's about what's *inside* – freedom in your heart and mind.

It's the deep-down knowing that your Father has written your story. That He loves you – not just a little, but with unlimited, unending affection. That His grace is holding you, His joy is rising in you, and His plan is still in motion, even when everything around you feels like it's falling apart.

So how do we live in that kind of freedom when we feel chained up by life? Jesus shows us.

And Jesus calmly said, “You'd have no authority over Me at all unless it had been given to you from above.” – *Boom* (mic drop).

Jesus wasn't being snarky. He wasn't playing politics. He was living in freedom.

He knew that the only real authority belonged to His Father. That nothing – *nothing* – happens outside of His control. Pilate was just reading lines from a script that he didn't write.

You and I may never stand before a Roman governor, but we *will* face people who try to control us. Governments. Bosses. Bullies. Religious leaders. Even family members.

And in those moments, this is the truth that sets us free: they have no authority ([see FREEDOM, page 9169](#))

Freedom in the Midst of Tyranny	9165
The Bloody Truth: Chapter 8 – Fully Human: Why Christ Could Not Have Literally Pre-Existed	9167
The Divine Cycle (Bible Student's Courses) ..	9170
Don't Waste Your Time (quote: Shannon L. Alder)	9172



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Paul Our Guide – Christ Our Goal

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Scripture education in a weekly format!

This free electronic publication is dedicated to:

- the absolute sovereignty and deity of God (Romans 11:36);
- the proclamation of the riches of God's abundant, exceeding grace (Romans 5:20; 11:6; Ephesians 1:7);
- the affirmation that God will save all through the death, burial and resurrection of Christ (I Timothy 2:3-4; 4:10; Titus 2:11);
- the universality of death and resurrection (I Corinthians 15:21);
- the unique gospel of Paul – which he calls "my gospel" (Romans 2:16; 16:25; II Timothy 2:8; I Corinthians 15:1-4; Acts 13-28; Acts 20:24);
- the "preaching of Jesus Christ, according to the revelation of the mystery, which was kept secret in ages past" (Romans 16:25);
- the epistles of the present Secret Administration being Ephesians & Colossians (Ephesians 3:2, 9; Colossians 1:25);
- true freedom and liberty apart from law (Galatians 5:1);
- the organic nature of the One Body (Ephesians 4:16);
- the Secret Administration, being the operational revelation for today (Ephesians 3:9);
- the unprophesied, Celestial hope and calling of the One Body (Colossians 3:4);
- the distinct message and ministry of Paul, the apostle to the nations (Ephesians 3:1-3);
- the importance of receiving all whom Christ has received (Romans 14-15);
- the recovery of rich Biblical truth that has too long remained hidden under the veils of traditionalism, prejudice,

misunderstanding and fear (Mark 7:7, 13);

- the completeness of the believer in Christ (Colossians 2:10), with:
 - total freedom from sins (Colossians 1:14);
 - union in His death, burial and resurrection and ascended seated position among the celestials (Ephesians 2:6);
 - adult sonship position (Ephesians 1:5).

This publication is the product of humble efforts of saints intended to stimulate the earnest study of Scripture. We do not claim infallibility for the contents of this publication; thus they are not meant to imply finality on any subject discussed, or that further research would not add further light from the Word of God. God's storehouse of truth is inexhaustible, so draw on its wealth by prayerful study. Our readers are asked to be as the Bereans and search the Scriptures (Acts 17:10-11; I Thessalonians 5:21).

This publication is not connected with any "church," "denomination," "movement," "organization," "mission," "creed," "meeting," "school," "conference" or "fellowship."

We are always open for discussion, but never for disputation. – André Sneider

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The Bloody Truth

[Click here to listen to this article](#)

Chapter 8 – Fully Human: Why Christ Could Not Have Literally Pre-Existed

by – Stephen Hill

For Christ to be our true Champion, He had to share our human experience in every respect. This is not a theological side issue – it is central to the victory that He won for all humanity. If He had literally existed as a celestial being before His earthly birth, then took on human form, He would not have been one of us in the truest sense. He would have been a visitor, not a native.



logically the “*firstborn of all creation*” (a title of status, not mere birth order) and created all things that came into being after He was first created by the Father.

If this were true, the Adversary, who functions as part of God’s divine council (Job 1), was certainly well acquainted with his creator and the functioning head of God’s council. Why, then, would Satan go to such great lengths to prevent the prophesied Messiah – his designated destroyer – from being born?

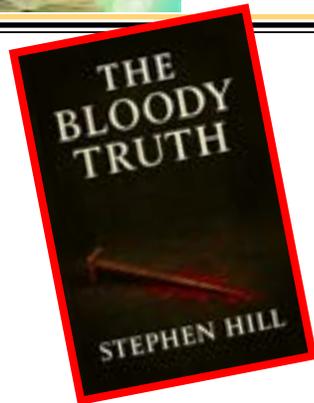
And visitors, no matter how powerful or benevolent, cannot qualify as the head of a race to which they do not fully belong. A champion must fight within the *same limits* as those he represents.

The flood in Noah’s day was necessary, because Satan contaminated the bloodline to the point where only one man was pure and capable of carrying on the true seed that would produce the eventual Son of Man, descended from Eve (Genesis 6:9).

A simple proof exists against Christ’s literal pre-existence that I have never heard anyone mention. Those who uphold this popular doctrine believe that, according to Colossians 1:15-16, Christ was chrono-

II Chronicles 21 and 22 describe Queen Athaliah killing all royal heirs except Joash as Satan attempted

Check out a **NEW BOOK!**



The Bloody Truth

(Pre-publication notice)

by — Stephen Hill

Blood runs like a crimson thread through the pages of Scripture – from the first sacrifice in Eden to the death of Christ. But what if its purpose has been misunderstood for centuries? What if blood was never about appeasing a wrathful God, but about healing, cleansing and reversing the curse of sin and death?

The Bloody Truth uncovers one of the Bible’s most profound and shocking reversals: that God Himself supplied the antidote to humanity’s greatest disease.

Through vivid storytelling and careful attention to Scripture, this book reveals how the sacrifices of old pointed, not to divine anger, but to a divine cure. It shows why Christ’s blood was poured out, not to satisfy vengeance, but to restore life, reconcile creation, and draw us near to God.

This is not another book of theological jargon. It is a bold journey into the heart of God’s plan—a plan that overturns human assumptions about punishment, atonement, and the very nature of salvation. If you’ve ever wrestled with questions about why blood is so central in the Bible, or if you’ve longed for a picture of God that is consistent with love, justice, and grace, this book will open your eyes to a truth both ancient and revolutionary.

Pre-Publication Sale

THE “LAST ADAM” PARALLEL

After the Babylonian exile, Haman plotted in Persia to annihilate the Jews entirely.

Herod, upon hearing of the “King of the Jews,” ordered the killing of all male children two years old and younger in Bethlehem.

And upon discovering that Mary was pregnant, the Adversary attempted to manipulate Joseph into leaving her – an act that would have led to Mary being disgraced and possibly even killed.

Certainly, if the Adversary had personally *known and frequently dealt with* Jesus as his divine creator and celestial ruler prior to His “coming to earth” – and since *long* before His genesis in Bethlehem – he would not even have attempted to prevent His birth, knowing his efforts would be completely futile.

SCRIPTURE’S EMPHASIS ON JESUS’ HUMANITY

The Apostle Paul goes to great lengths to affirm that Jesus was fully human:

- Hebrews 2:17 – “*Whence He ought, in all things, to be made like the brethren, that He may be becoming a merciful and faithful Chief Priest ...*”
- I Timothy 2:5 – “*For there is one God, and one Mediator of God and mankind, a MAN, Christ Jesus.*”
- Romans 8:3 – “*God, sending His own Son in the likeness of sin’s flesh and concerning sin ... condemns sin in the flesh.*”

Notice the language: “*made like the brethren,*” “*the man Christ Jesus,*” “*in the likeness of sin’s flesh.*” These are not the descriptions of a divine being temporarily wearing a human disguise. They are the characteristics of a Man Who was born, grew, learned, suffered, was tempted, and obeyed – even unto death.

In fact, Isaiah 7:15 contains a prophecy that the Messiah would eat butter and honey “*that He may know to refuse the evil and choose the good,*” and such an education hardly would be necessary for a divine celestial being who created all things and existed in the Heavens long before being “sent” to Earth.

Paul calls Christ the “last Adam,” as we’ve discussed, and the parallel is deliberate and complete: Adam (meaning “man”) was the first specimen of the human race, formed directly by God, without earthly parents. Jesus, as the last Adam, was likewise directly brought into existence by God through the miraculous conception in Mary – but fully human in every way, like Adam. Jesus had one earthly parent, Adam had none; yet, no one argues that Adam wasn’t fully human.

If Christ had been a pre-existent celestial being, the parallel collapses. The victory over sin and death required a true human specimen to undo what Adam had done, just as it required Adam’s act to bring sin and death into the world.

THE FAITH FACTOR

Most believe that pre-existence adds glory to Christ’s mission when, in reality, it greatly *diminishes* one of His grandest achievements: His perfect faith. If Jesus had previously lived as an all-knowing celestial being and creator, aware of the entire plan and outcome, His earthly obedience would not have been the same kind of faith we are called to. In fact, it could hardly be called “faith” at all. Faith is an assumption of what is being expected, a conviction concerning matters which are *not* being observed (Hebrews 11:1).

Christ’s obedience was genuine because He walked by faith, trusting His Father’s promises just as we strive to do – *without* prior firsthand experience of the end. Luke 2:52 – “*And Jesus progressed in wisdom and stature, and in favor with God and men.*”

Growth in wisdom is not something an all-knowing celestial being would need to do, but it is certainly something necessary for all members of the human race.

ADDRESSING THE “PLAIN READING” VERSES

Many English translations seem to speak plainly of Christ’s pre-existence – verses about Christ “descending from Heaven,” “being sent by the Father,” “emptying Himself,” and being the “Firstborn of all cre-

For example:

- John 6:38 – “*I have descended from Heaven*” is an idiomatic Hebrew-Greek expression for divine origin, not a literal travel itinerary.
- John 8:58 – “*Ere Abraham came into being, I am*” reflects the authority and identity given to Him by the Father – not a claim of personal pre-existence as a celestial being.

Proverbs 25:2 reminds us, “*It is the glory of God to conceal a matter, but the glory of kings is to search it out.*” A deeper study reveals that these verses affirm Christ’s divine mission, not a prior celestial life.

Many readers of this book have undoubtedly come to see the fallacies of some of the most widely accepted and false doctrines that pervade Christendom, like eternal torment, free will and the trinity; and it takes diligent study and realization from our Father to see that the pre-existence doctrine is yet another false, popular teaching (heavily promoted among nearly all professing Christians) that seems to glorify our Lord while actually *robbing* Him of the very faith that made Him worthy of all honor and headship.

FREEDOM ([continued from front page](#))

over us except what was given to them by God.

That doesn’t mean we go around quoting Jesus to everyone who mistreats us. (I don’t recommend it unless you want to escalate things.) But it *does* mean that we can rest. We don’t have to hate. We don’t have to judge. We don’t even have to panic.

We know something bigger.

We know that every single chapter of our story is written by a Father Who is good, wise and loving; that even when things feel unfair or unjust, He is working it all out for good; and that He hasn’t forgotten us or left us. He’s not pacing heaven, nervously wringing His hands. He’s in charge.

That’s freedom.

THE LAW AND THE SIN OFFERING

The Law of Moses explicitly forbade punishing one person for another’s sin (Deuteronomy 24:16; Jeremiah 31:30). Jesus did not die to take a penalty for our individual acts. Instead, He died as a sin *offering* to deal with our inherited condition. To do that lawfully, He had to be a true member of the human race, under the same condition, yet without committing sin Himself.

THE GLORY OF A HUMAN CHAMPION

Far from diminishing His glory, Christ’s full humanity magnifies it. He endured temptation without giving in to legitimate offers of power and glory that would be utterly irresistible to anyone else (Hebrews 4:15). He learned obedience through suffering (Hebrews 5:8). He entrusted Himself to the Father without the advantage of celestial foreknowledge.

By winning as a man, He secured the right to reign over all creation – not only as the Son of God by divine begetting, but as the Son of Man by shared nature.

He is worthy of all headship, because He won from *within our ranks*.

([see BLOODY, last page](#))

Not the kind that depends on perfect circumstances.
Not the kind that waits for governments to change.

But the kind that anchors your soul in unshakable love. So yes, even in the midst of tyranny, we are free.

Free to trust. Free to rest. Free to stop judging and start loving.

Free to be full of joy, even when the world around us is full of chaos.

Because freedom isn’t a place. It’s a Person.

And He lives in us. **BSN**

TOPICS:

Major: Freedom; Grace; Peace; Sovereignty

Minor: Division; Judging; Love; Tyranny

The Divine Cycle

Bible Student's Courses

[Click here to listen to this article](#)

Course 2: Creation / Unit 1: God the Creator / Lesson 3: The Divine Cycle

by — Mark D. Vogt

Seeing that out of Him and through Him and back to Him is all: to Him be the glory for the eons! (Romans 11:36).

To understand God's plan, we first need to understand a different way of thinking.

TWO WAYS OF SEEING THE WORLD

In Western culture, we tend to think in **straight lines**.

- School starts and ends on a schedule.
- We clock in and out of work.
- Events have a beginning, middle and end.

This way of thinking is called **linear**. We see things as moving forward from point A to point B to point C.

But in the **Eastern mindset**, many things are seen in **cycles**. What begins will return. What goes

around comes around. Life moves in circles, not lines.

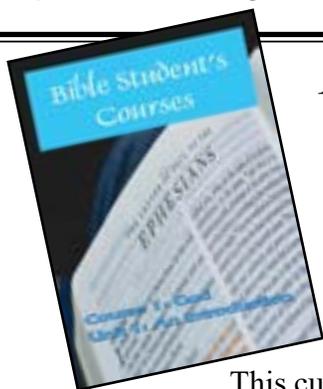


The Scripture was written by Jewish men who saw the world through this Eastern, cyclical lens. One of them – **Paul, the Apostle** – wrote a powerful verse that shows this kind of thinking:

Seeing that out of Him and through Him and for Him is all: to Him be the glory for the eons! (Romans 11:36, CV).

This is what we call **The Divine Cycle**.

This one verse, Romans 11:36, summarizes the **entire plan of God**:



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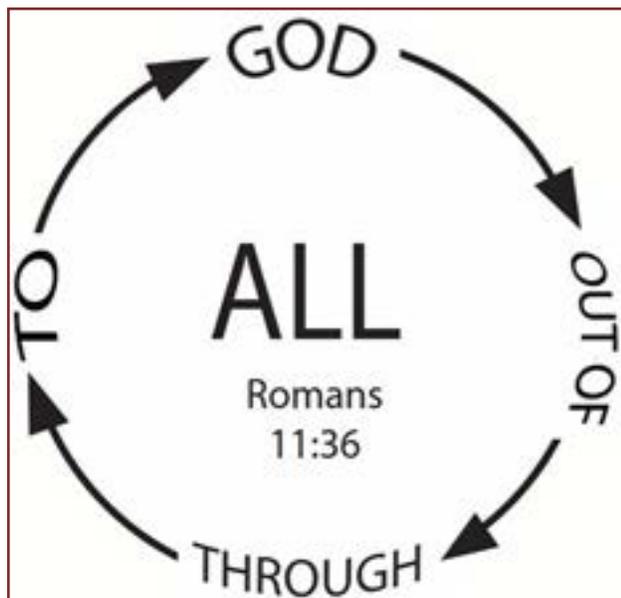
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Unit 3, The Love of God

Unit 5, The Attributes of God.

Unit 2, The Sovereignty of God

Unit 4, God as Father



GOD DIDN'T CREATE FROM NOTHING – HE CREATED FROM HIMSELF

Many people say that God created the Universe “out of nothing.” But Scripture paints a deeper picture:

God created everything out of Himself.

That’s why He is so deeply connected to His creation. It came from within Him. It matters to Him – every bit of it.

In **Job 14:15**, Job speaks of his confidence in God’s care:

You shall call, and I shall answer You; You shall long for the work of Your hands.

God longs for what He has made. For **all** that He has made.

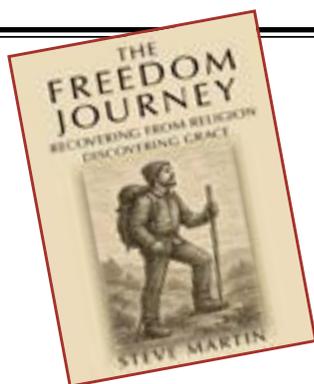
ALL IS GOING BACK TO HIM

God is not improvising. His plan was set **before the disruption of the world**. He knew every twist and turn before it happened. And the goal of it all? That everything – every created thing, every story, every person – will return to Him.

(see [CYCLE](#), next page)

1. **Out of Him** – Everything begins with God.
2. **Through Him** – Everything happens through His power and purpose.
3. **Back to Him** – Everything is returning to Him in the end.

Nothing is outside of this cycle. No one is left out. Everything that exists is part of God’s plan, and it all flows from Him, through Him, and back to Him.



86 pages

Freedom Journey:

Recovering from Religion ~ Discovering Grace

by — Steve Martin

This book is for every soul who’s felt the crushing weight of religion and wondered if walking away meant walking out on God. It doesn’t. In fact, leaving might be the first truly faithful thing you’ve ever done.

Steve Martin dismantles the myths that keep people trapped in church systems built on guilt, control, and the fear of hell. With clarity, compassion, and bold honesty, he exposes how religion hijacked grace and twisted God’s love into a performance-based nightmare. You’ll discover:

- Why obedience doesn’t earn you anything;
- How the threat of hell was a lie from the start;
- The truth about God’s unstoppable, unconditional love;
- How to trust a sovereign God Who doesn’t need your help;
- And what real spiritual freedom looks like – outside the church walls.

If you’re burned out, beaten down, or just barely hanging on to your faith, *The Freedom Journey* will help you breathe again. Because you were never meant to follow a system. You were meant to be free.

BLOODY (continued from page 9169)

THE COSMIC SIGNIFICANCE

The spiritual realm watched as the Son of Man – born of a woman, under the law – defeated sin and death on their own ground. This was God’s declaration not only to humanity but to every celestial being: the rule of the Most High is established through the perfect obedience of His appointed Champion.

The victory was not achieved by overwhelming force from outside creation, but by faithful endurance within it. That is why *every* knee will bow and every tongue confess that Jesus Christ is Lord (Philippians 2:9-11) and why Christ is fully worthy of the titles “King of kings” and “Lord of lords.”

Chapter 8 Key Takeaways

- ◆ To be our true Champion, Christ had to be fully human, born as one of us.
- ◆ Pre-existence undermines His genuine obedience and faith.
- ◆ The “Last Adam” parallel shows victory came through a real human, not a visiting celestial.

BSN

TOPICS:

Major: Champion; Jesus Christ; Jesus Christ (Pre-Existence of); Victory

Minor: Faithfulness; Law

CYCLE (continued from previous page)

All is out of Him. All is through Him. All is back to Him.

That’s **The Divine Cycle**. And when you see it, *really* see it, it brings a deep peace.

You don’t have to fear what’s ahead.

You don’t have to fix everything.

You don’t have to worry about who “wins.”

God already has it figured out.

And He’s bringing everything – including you – back to Himself. **BSN**

Topics:

Major: Creation; Divine Cycle; Sovereignty

Minor: Peace; Reconciliation; Salvation of All



100 pages

Suffering: God’s Forgotten Gift

by — Clyde L. Pilkington, Jr.

Two gifts given to the believer are mentioned by Paul in Philippians 1:29. The first is “to believe on Him.” This is a glorious gift. Every believer has been given this gift from God. Those who possess it may not even fully recognize it as a gift from Him, but indeed faith is God’s wonderful gift to us. Faith is a rich gift from God, but there is also another gift from God to the believer, mentioned by Paul in Philippians 1:29, that is equally as glorious. The second gift is “also to suffer for His sake.” This, too, is a glorious gift. Every believer has been given this gift from God as well, but those who possess it often do not fully recognize it for what it is. Indeed, suffering for His sake similarly is God’s wonderful gift to us. Paul teaches us to embrace this second gift as well as we do the first!

“After over 40 years of seriously searching the Scriptures with the aid of writings from men of many varied walks, no literature has so profoundly changed my life as this book. It needs to be in the hands of every believer!” – **LA**

“It is rare to find someone who even mentions the topic of suffering, but you wrote an entire book on it, which I highly recommend to everyone!” – **Facebook**

“After being surprised by a very unexpected and major surgery for stage III cancer, your book on Suffering was most welcome, putting a lot of things in perspective.” – **WI**