



# BBC UPDATE

## Seventh Annual BBTS Lecture Series

Dr. Thomas M. Strouse



*Dr. Thomas Strouse*

On November 11, 2016, BBC hosted the seventh annual BBTS Fall Lecture Series at the Courtyard, Marriott in Cromwell, CT. The subject was "The Bible, Creation, and Evolution" with two lectures dealing with Biblical Creation and the Noachic Flood (Dr. Thomas M. Strouse) and with the Creation of Man and Intelligent Design (Dr. Greg Breeden). At least seventy-three attendees enjoyed the time of instruction and fellowship during the presentations and the luncheon provided by BBC. Twelve churches were represented, and ten pastors attended with some of their respective congregations. Subjects covered included the first thing created, the creation week, the creation and constitution of man, the creation of angels, the creation of giants, the details of the flood, dinosaurs on the Ark, the creation of meteors, the creation of the continents, the creation of the races, the creation of the languages, and the possible biblical answer to the destruction of the woolly mammoths. The speakers' syllabi are available at [www.bbc-cromwell.org](http://www.bbc-cromwell.org).



*Dr. Greg Breeden*



*Dr. Thomas Strouse*



*The speakers*



*Pastors and Staff Members*

# SEVENTH ANNUAL BBTS LECTURE SERIES

BBTS Lecture Series

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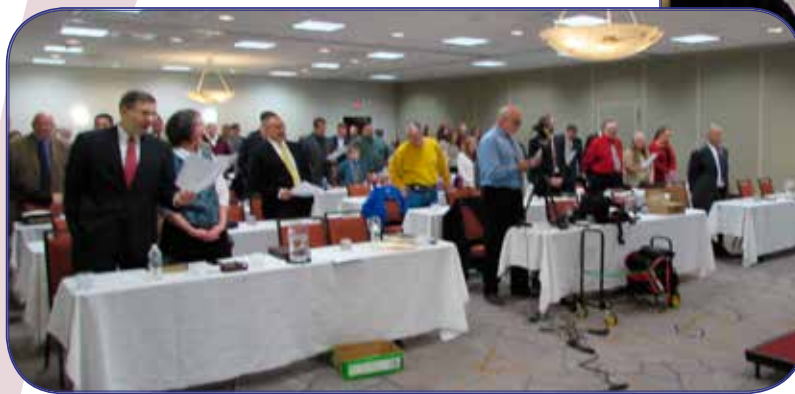
Photos



^^ Ladies enjoying fellowship



Below: Bobbie Chakraborty covering book table



<<Audience Singing "Victory in Jesus"

*Join us! For the  
BBC Annual Christmas Program  
with the BBC Children's Choir  
December 18, 2016 1:30 pm  
At Bible Baptist Church in Cromwell, Ct.*





Dr. Thomas Strouse

## WHEN THE WICKED “WIN”

(Psalm 73)

Dr. Thomas M. Strouse

## Article Continuation and Conclusion

## C. The Status of the Wicked: Their Prosperity (vv. 4-12)

The seer Asaph began to enumerate the “blessings” of the wicked. 1) It seemed that they enjoyed a pain-free (“no bands”) life to the very end, having firm physical strength until death (v. 4). 2) They seemed to be trouble-free and plague-free; they were immune to all miseries that occurred among men (*enosh* and *adam*, respectively [v. 5])! 3) With another figure of speech, Asaph declared that they clothed themselves with the appropriate garb of a “chain” of “pride” and garments of “violence” (v. 6). They wore their violent haughtiness for all to see their “beauty.” They were not ashamed to put on a display of hubris as they strutted around in their greedy garb. 4) They seemed to be “bug-eyed”<sup>6</sup> as they desired all things that they saw and then obtained their desires (v. 7). 5) The psalmist declared that their behaviour was being “corrupt” (*muq* = *moq* = “mock”)<sup>7</sup>, or literally they “mocked” others. Their sins with the tongue included mocking, saying “wicked” things in their “oppression” of others, and speaking “loftily” or in a puffed up manner (v. 8). Peter gave the essence of the scoffers, saying,

6 The Hebrew is well expressed in the KJV, giving the sense that the wicked are fat with bulging eyes (cf. Job 15:27; Ps. 17:10). Their eyes were bigger than their stomach—no, their eyes and stomachs were both quite large!

7 Hebrew was the original language and therefore the etymological source for all words.

“For when they speak great swelling words of vanity, they allure through the lusts of the flesh, through much wantonness, those that were clean escaped from them who live in error” (II Pet. 2:18; vide Jude 1:16). 6) They blasphemed God (cf. Ps. 14:1), Asaph asseverated using the periphrastic Hebrew expression “set their mouth against the heavens” (cf. Ps. 2:2; 74:10). Their reviling was united (singular “mouth”) and ubiquitous (“through the earth” [v. 9]).<sup>8</sup> 7) They seemed to have a strong influence over God’s people (“his people”) with their prosperity and riches. When the saints succumbed to following the wicked, as Asaph almost did, they found great disappointment and dissatisfaction in the vanity of the world.<sup>9</sup> Expecting a full cup of water in the wealth of the world, God’s people received “wrung out” drips of impotable glitz. Solomon warned, saying, “Wilt thou set thine eyes upon that which is not? for riches certainly make themselves wings; they fly away as an eagle toward heaven” (Prov. 23:5). 8) The wicked reviled Jehovah, taunting Him about so-called “divine omniscience” with

8 David bemoaned the mouth of the wicked, saying, “For the wicked boasteth of his heart’s desire, and blesseth the covetous, whom the LORD abhorreth. 4 The wicked, through the pride of his countenance, will not seek after God: God is not in all his thoughts. . . 11 He hath said in his heart, God hath forgotten: he hideth his face; he will never see it” (Ps. 10:3-4, 11).

9 Solomon acknowledged the truth, saying, “There is one alone, and there is not a second; yea, he hath neither child nor brother: yet is there no end of all his labour; neither is his eye satisfied with riches; neither saith he, For whom do I labour, and bereave my soul of good? This is also vanity, yea, it is a sore travail” (Eccl. 4:8).

rhetorical questions: “*how doth God know*” and “*is there knowledge in the most High*” (v. 11; cf. Job 22:14)?<sup>10</sup>

9) Asaph summarized his arguments about the wicked to his audience. With the challenge, “*behold,*” it was obvious for all to see that the ungodly “*prosper*” (*shalew*)<sup>11</sup> in this “*world*” (*‘olam* or age) as they increase in “*riches*” (*chayil*) or hordes of wealth (v. 12).

#### D. His Reaction: Divine Revelation (vv. 13-17)

The focus of the psalm pointed to his reaction. As a spiritually compliant Israelite, Asaph admitted to the biblical practice of dealing with the purity of his heart before obeying the rituals of animal sacrifices (Ps. 26:6).<sup>12</sup> Now he confessed honestly his questioning of the value of spiritual and ritual cleansing. Was this all in “*vain*” (*riyq*) without real purpose, Asaph queried, since he was perplexed by the prosperity of the wicked and the afflictions of the righteous (v. 13)?<sup>13</sup> In fact, as a spiritually religious Jew, the psalmist declared that instead of a prosperous life of wealth and ease, he was plagued (*naga`*) daily, starting with chastening every morning (v. 14). Asaph

<sup>10</sup> The psalmist gave the biblical answer, saying, “*The LORD knoweth the thoughts of man, that they are vanity*” (Ps. 94:11).

<sup>11</sup> The Hebrew noun gives the sense of peaceable luxury, i.e., “the life of ease.”

<sup>12</sup> Cf. “*He that hath clean hands, and a pure heart; who hath not lifted up his soul unto vanity, nor sworn deceitfully*” (Ps. 24:4).

<sup>13</sup> Asaph’s testimony was in harmony with David’s, who said, “*The LORD hath chastened me sore: but he hath not given me over unto death*” (Ps. 118:18).

was faced with a very “*painful*” (*‘amal*) spiritual and theological conundrum: express his “*true sentiments*” and offend God’s children. He recognized that he could not forsake his good God and offend His saints. Since apostasy was out of the question, the last option for Asaph was divine revelation!

The place of revelatory truth was in “*the sanctuary of God*” (*miqdeshey ‘el*)<sup>14</sup> which to Asaph was either the tent pitched by David (I Chr. 15:1) or the Temple built by Solomon (I Ki. 7:51). The oracle of God, the holiest of holies in the Temple, contained the Ark of the Covenant (I Ki. 6:16-20),<sup>15</sup> the place from which divine revelation emanated (II Sam. 16:23; II Ki. 19:15).<sup>16</sup> There in the house of God, he may have heard readings from Psalm 12 that dealt with the LORD cutting off “*flattering lips*” (vv. 3-4) or from Psalms 1, 23, and 118 about the blessings of the righteous. Perhaps he read from King Solomon the proverbial truths, such as the following: “*Riches profit not in the day of wrath: but righteousness delivereth from death*” (Prov. 11:4), “*A good name is rather to be chosen than great riches, and loving favour rather than silver and gold*” (Prov. 22:1) and “*Wilt thou set thine eyes upon that which is not? for riches certainly make*

<sup>14</sup> The Hebrew word for “*sanctuary*” is plural; i.e., the sanctuaries of God. This plural may be a literary means for emphasizing the majesty of the sanctuary (cf. Jer. 51:51).

<sup>15</sup> Since his father was a doorkeeper for the Ark of the Covenant, Asaph would have had familiarity with the Sanctuary.

<sup>16</sup> In the New Testament dispensation, the immersionist assembly is the exclusive institution for divine revelation, as Paul affirmed, saying, “*But if I tarry long, that thou mayest know how thou oughtest to behave thyself in the house of God, which is the church of the living God, the pillar and ground of the truth*” (I Tim. 3:15). The Book of Revelation written to the Lord’s assemblies indicated that commercial Babylonianism would be destroyed (Rev. 18).

themselves wings; they fly away as an eagle toward heaven” (Prov. 23:5). Nevertheless, Asaph understood the bigger picture which included “their end” (v. 17): time versus eternity! David had already revealed the destiny of the wicked, saying, “The wicked shall be turned into hell, and all the nations that forget God” (Ps. 9:17), and “But the transgressors shall be destroyed together: the end of the wicked shall be cut off” (Ps. 37:38).<sup>17</sup> The Scripture has the final say.<sup>18</sup>

### C. The Status of the Wicked: Their Judgment (vv. 18-22)

Now having a biblical mindset, Asaph recognized that the righteous will have the final victory, and the wicked should not be envied. Theodicy will be exacted perfectly! This biblical revelation helped the psalmist to view the wicked and his “envy” of them scripturally. First, he enumerated their present and ultimate predicament. The current status of the wicked was precarious because Jehovah had set them in “slippery

places” (*chalaq*).<sup>19</sup> David’s prayer of imprecation included this reality, saying, “Let their way be dark and slippery: and let the angel of the LORD persecute them” (Ps. 35:6). They are cast down and immediately become “destruction” (or desolation), Asaph realized (vide Pss. 35:8 and 36:12).<sup>20</sup> In a sudden “moment” (*rega`*)<sup>21</sup> the wicked are consumed with “terrors” (*ballahoth* is a plural noun),<sup>22</sup> the psalmist revealed (vv. 18-19). Second, using poignant imagery likening the Jehovah’s inactivity concerning the wicked as being asleep, the seer/psalmist suggested to the Lord that upon awakening He would despise their mere images as imaginary phantoms menacing His dream (v. 20).

This reality and request led Asaph to bemoan his wicked heart as the biblical revelation convicted (“pricked in my reins” [Act 2:37]) him, causing spiritual “grief” in his heart (vv. 21-22). He confessed that his status before the Lord was “foolish” (*ba`ar* = “brutish” [4x]) and “ignorant,” senseless like an animal

<sup>17</sup> The Apocalypse stated, saying, “And whosoever was not found written in the book of life was cast into the lake of fire” (Rev. 20:15). The redeemed of the LORD will view the wicked in their final fiery judgment, as Isaiah prophesied, saying, “And it shall come to pass, that from one new moon to another, and from one sabbath to another, shall all flesh come to worship before me, saith the LORD. 24 And they shall go forth, and look upon the carcasses of the men that have transgressed against me: for their worm shall not die, neither shall their fire be quenched; and they shall be an abhorring unto all flesh” (Isa. 66:23-24).

<sup>18</sup> The New Testament Scripture revealed the sudden destruction of the wealthy as in the account of the rich man; “And it came to pass, that the beggar died, and was carried by the angels into Abraham’s bosom: the rich man also died, and was buried; 23 And in hell he lift up his eyes, being in torments, and seeth Abraham afar off, and Lazarus in his bosom. 24 And he cried and said, Father Abraham, have mercy on me, and send Lazarus, that he may dip the tip of his finger in water, and cool my tongue; for I am tormented in this flame” (Lk. 16:22-24).

<sup>19</sup> The Hebrew finds literal translation as “smooth” neck (Gen. 27:16) and figurative translation for “smooth, flattering” talk (Prov. 6:24).

<sup>20</sup> In the first ground-breaking ceremony of the judgment on the wicked, Moses prophesied this sudden destruction, saying, “Separate yourselves from among this congregation, that I may consume them in a moment...And the earth opened her mouth, and swallowed them up, and their houses, and all the men that appertained unto Korah, and all their goods. 33 They, and all that appertained to them, went down alive into the pit, and the earth closed upon them: and they perished from among the congregation” (Num. 16:21, 32-33).

<sup>21</sup> The Hebrew connotes “the wink of the eyes” (cf. Job 20:5).

<sup>22</sup> Is Job referring to Satan, the king of terrors, saying, “His confidence shall be rooted out of his tabernacle, and it shall bring him to the king of terrors” (Job 18:15)?



(Ps. 49:20).

### B. His Situation with the Wicked: His Grief (vv. 23-27)

Asaph’s folly with envying the wealthy wicked no doubt grieved his heart concerning his status with Jehovah (vv. 23-26), and then the status of the wicked (v. 27). Firstly, therefore, the psalmist disavowed any apostasy, claiming that he was with the Lord Who was with him (cf. Ps. 23:4), holding the psalmist’s right hand (cf. Ps. 16:8). In essence, he used the imagery that Asaph and Jehovah were walking together holding hands! He vowed that in the future the Lord would guide him with the divine counsel and afterward receive the psalmist in glory with Jehovah. Asaph re-affirmed his spiritual focus with a theological question (“*Whom have I in heaven*”) answered with his testimony (“*I desire none beside thee*”). He acknowledged his human frailty of flesh and heart, which constantly failed (*calah*) him. The antidote to Asaph’s weakness was God Who is the “*strength*” (*tzur* = *rock*) of his heart and also his inheritance (Ps. 16:5).

Secondly, he realized that the wicked were far from Jehovah and would “*perish*” (*avad*).<sup>23</sup> Having biblical revelation about the lost, he was grieved over their state as is the LORD (cf. Lk. 15:4 ff.). Scripture revealed the compassion of the Lord (cf. Mt. 9:36),

<sup>23</sup> This is the root word for Satan’s title—Abaddon (Rev. 9:11).

saying, “*The Lord is not slack concerning his promise, as some men count slackness; but is longsuffering to us-ward, not willing that any should perish, but that all should come to repentance*” (II Pet. 3:9) and “*And he prayed unto the LORD, and said, I pray thee, O LORD, was not this my saying, when I was yet in my country? Therefore I fled before unto Tarshish: for I knew that thou art a gracious God, and merciful, slow to anger, and of great kindness, and repentest thee of the evil*” (Jon. 4:2). Showing strong and firm finality for judgment on the wicked, Asaph used the *Hiphil* perfect verb *tzamath*<sup>24</sup> connoting that Jehovah had already caused them to be “*destroyed*.” The expression “*all them*” is all inclusive, obviously (Rev. 20:13-15). He identified the nature of apostasy in intimate terms, namely that they rejected their bride-groom and went “*a whoring*”<sup>25</sup> (*zoneh*) with other lovers.

### A. His Experience with Good: His Walk (v. 28)

Returning to the truth of the goodness of God, he realized that what was “*good*” (*tov*) for him was to draw near to the “*good*” (*tov*) God. With strong acclamation

<sup>24</sup> The verb is the *Hiphil* stem indicating that the subject (God) caused the action to happen to the object (the wicked). It is perfect tense indicating that the action has already occurred from the divine perspective (prophetic perfect). The root is *tzamath* meaning “to compress,” and is the etymological source for “smite” and “smith.” The (black) smith smites the metal to smithereens! The doom of the wicked is settled.

<sup>25</sup> The English expression occurs in the KJV 19x, indicating that this apostate spiritual harlotry was with idols (Jdg. 8:33), gods (Ex. 34:15), demons (Lev. 17:7), their own inventions (Ps. 106:39), and the heathen (Ezk. 23:30).

the psalmist/seer Asaph declared “I have put” (*shatiy*)<sup>26</sup> my “trust” (*machaseh* = refuge) in Adonay Jehovah (cf. Ps. 71:16). With great affirmation he stated that “I may declare (by inscribing; i.e., Psalm 73)” the works of God, including His perfect theodicy!

## CONCLUSION

In Asaph’s day it seemed that the wicked always won, having material and physical prosperity throughout their corrupt, deceitful, and puffed-up lives while reviling God and despising man. The righteous seemed to suffer with no let up of afflictions and distress. Where was the justice of God, His theodicy, the psalmist queried? Once he received revelatory truth in the house of God that theodicy will be perfected in the end, his faith was restored as he testified. Then the wicked “winners” will lose eternally, and the righteous, faithfully trusting the LORD in the midst of seeming injustice, will be rewarded.

As American Christians in New Testament assemblies view the current moral and materialistic corruption in government, politics, and business, they may have the same “envious” sentiments of Asaph that the wicked prosper and the righteous struggle. As biblical Christians personify the men of Issachar “which were men that had understanding of the times” (I Chr. 12:32), we recognize that it is evident that a “lying spirit”

(I Ki. 22:22) of deception<sup>27</sup> prevails in the land. The Lord’s assemblies must pray for those in authority, as Paul revealed, saying, “I exhort therefore, that, first of all, supplications, prayers, intercessions, and giving of thanks, be made for all men; 2 For kings, and for all that are in authority; that we may lead a quiet and peaceable life in all godliness and honesty” (I Tim. 2:2). What can the individual church member do as he or she looks on at the prosperity of the ungodly and their wicked influence? James said, “The effectual fervent prayer of a righteous man availeth much” (Jam. 5:16). When it seems that the wicked always “win,” believers need to take Asaph’s godly counsel: “*it is good for me to draw near to God*” (Ps. 73:29).

<sup>26</sup> One should notice Paul’s statement of declaration, saying, “for I know whom I have believed, and am persuaded that he is able to keep that which I have committed unto him against that day” (II Tim. 1:12b).

<sup>27</sup> This of course is the “*spirit of antichrist*” (I Jn. 2:18, 22; 4:3; II Jn. 1:7) preparing the world for a global leader.

# THE BLESSED MAN

## DEVOTIONAL CORNER



Dr. Caswell A. Reeves

### *The Blessed Man*

*Blessed is the man that walketh not in the counsel of the ungodly, nor standeth in the way of sinners, nor sitteth in the seat of the scornful. But his delight is in the law of the LORD; and in his law doth he meditate day and night. And he shall be like a tree planted by the rivers of water, that bringeth forth his fruit in his season; his leaf also shall not wither; and whatsoever he doeth shall prosper (Psalm 1:1-3).*

The word phrase, *blessed man*, is an umbrella like phrase that reflects a person who is happy, joyous, content, and prosperous. What makes this man a blessed man is described by the Psalmist. Notice first, the blessed man is careful in his social life with others. He does not take heed, nor does he walk in the counsel of the ungodly; he is careful not to associate by standing with them in their ungodly ideas and efforts; and he does not compromise his godly principles by sitting in the seat of the ungodly scorners of truth (v.1).

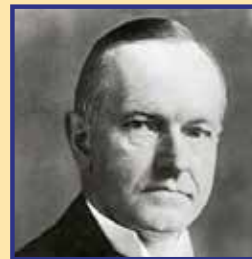
Second, the blessed man is blessed because he delights in the law of the LORD. Any man who takes pleasure in the truths of Gods words will be a happy man. His delight is noticed in that he meditates upon the scriptures day and night. The idea of meditate is to speak the words and ideas of truth over and over to ones self and to think

upon them continually (v.2). The reason for this diligence to the word of God can be found in Psalm 119:11, *"Thy word have I hid in mine heart, that I might not sin against thee."*

For this behavior and love of God's truth, the blessed man is rewarded in pleasantness and strength as *like a tree planted by the rivers of water*. He is also fruitful, like as a *fruitful tree in his season*. And he is a prosperous man in all that he endeavors to accomplish (v.3).

Finally, the LORD identifies the blessed man as a righteous man, one who is saved. A man of whom the LORD declares, I know his ways (v.6). Are you a blessed man who is saved, sanctified in your social life, and in love with God's words of truth? -CAR

Quotes From the Past:  
**Calvin Coolidge**  
30th President of USA  
1872-1933



Calvin Coolidge

*"Never go out to meet trouble. If you just sit still, nine cases out of ten, someone will intercept it before it reaches you."*



## *Grow in Grace for Women*

**Romans 16:15** Salute Philologus, and Julia, Nereus, and his sister, and Olympas, and all the saints which are with them.

**Reflection:** There are many women in the Bible that are mentioned only once but today we will focus on Julia.

**Julia** (meaning: soft haired) is only found one time in the Bible. Her reference in this verse is found discreetly, unembellished, and delicately couched between two men.

One website refers to Julia as a "Minor character" in a New Testament Roman Church and yet the Lord sees fit to mention Julia in His inspired Words. The end of this verse says..."and all the saints which are with them." So what we can learn from this is that not all the church members were written in the Scriptures by name. Why then was Julia acknowledged? What would set her apart from other church members?

### **What can we surmise about Julia from this one verse?**

- \*She was Born-A\_\_\_\_\_
- \*She was a member one of the Roman C\_\_\_\_\_
- \*She used her gift to S\_\_\_\_\_
- \*She loved the L\_\_\_\_\_
- \*She had a testimony of F\_\_\_\_\_

**Insert your name** in the place of ,Julia, in this verse...does this put a deeper value in having her name in the for ever preserved Word of God?

**Challenge:** What is your testimony? Write out how others would describe you? Does the Lord see you as a church member who is a faithful servant in His House?

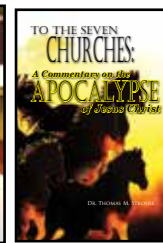
# THE BOOK CORNER

## The Book Corner

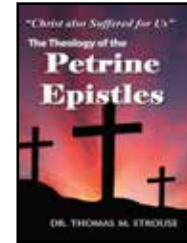
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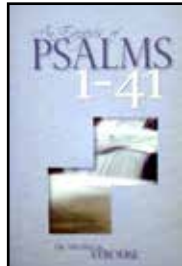
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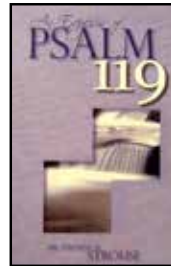
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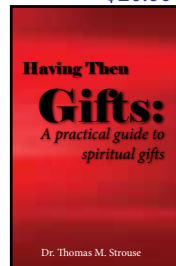
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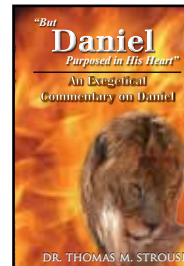
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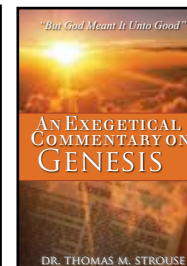
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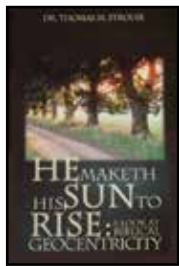
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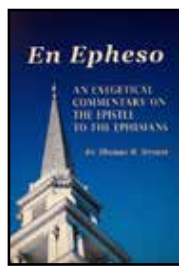
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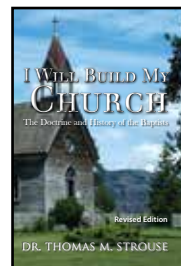
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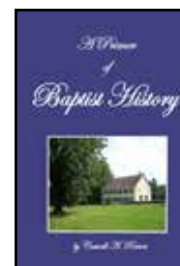
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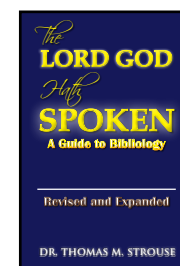
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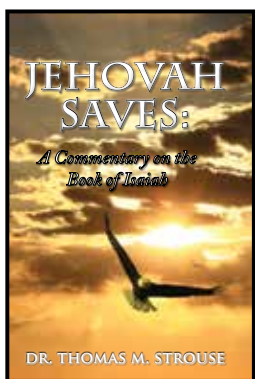
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The Book Corner

10

New Book

## NEW BOOK: JEHOVAH SAVES: A COMMENTARY ON THE BOOK OF ISAIAH



The new book by Dr. Thomas M. Strouse entitled *Jehovah Saves: A Commentary on the Book of Isaiah* is available for purchase. The book is an effort to exegete the contents of all sixty-six chapters of Isaiah, resulting in 508 pages of commentary with 746 footnotes chocked full of word studies, grammatical explanations, and theological teachings. It reflects over forty years of study, research, and reflection from the author. Available now! \$30.00

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