



# BBC UPDATE

## BBTS STARTS THIRTEENTH SPRING SEMESTER



Dr. Thomas M. Strouse

Bible Baptist Theological Seminary under the *aegis* of Bible Baptist Church started her thirteenth Spring Semester with eight “in resident” students in the courses Greek IV and II Corinthians. Seminarians and church members take these formal classroom courses in Bible and Theology for not only degrees but also for personal edification. Bible Baptist Theological Seminary is anticipating nine candidates for seminary degrees on Sunday, May 15, 2022. There will be a Graduation Banquet on Saturday, May 14, 2022 at the Marriot-Cromwell from 5-9 PM, honoring the candidates.

### BBTS 2022 SPRING SEMESTER

*Bible Baptist Theological Seminary* have classes started!

**TUESDAY:** GREEK IV

**THURSDAY:** II CORINTHIANS

Classes are taught by Dr. Thomas M. Strouse from 6-9PM.



## HBTS MODULE

During the week of January 17-21, 2022, Dr. Thomas Strouse taught the Bible Baptist Theological Seminary module on “The Alleged Errors in the KJV” at Heritage Baptist Theological Seminary housed in Heritage Baptist Church, Endicott, NY. Good friend and Bible Baptist Theological Seminary graduate Dr. Cas Reeves pastors the church and Dr. Keith Main is the dean of HBTS. Close to 40 church members attended each night. Several men are anticipating graduation later this spring, 2022. The module dealt with many words and passages omitted (about 7%) by the modern versions (including the Modern English Version), as well as rebuttals to the “inspired English words” or Ruckman heresy, and to the effort of textual critics to restore or reconstruct the Greek text that the LORD purportedly did not preserve. The precious Saviour said, “*Heaven and earth shall pass away, but my words shall not pass away*” (Mt. 24:35).



# HOW SAFE IS YOUR CITY?

Ezekiel 11:1-24



M. Ryan Strouse

## INTRODUCTION

Jeremiah and Ezekiel were both tasked with repudiating the Jewish leaders that promoted safety and peace in systematic Judaism (i.e., being covenant descendants of Abraham, the Temple, and the City of Jerusalem – Jer.6:14). The Jews basked in the blessings of the LORD passed down to them by obedient men who sincerely worshiped Jehovah. Two key blessings included the glorious city of Jerusalem built by David and the splendor of Solomon’s Temple; however, subsequent leaders, not remembering the obedient hearts and inspired instruction of David and Solomon, took advantage of Jehovah’s covenant love and fell into the rut of insincere worship that led to ritualism and eventually, gross idolatry (Jer.7:8-9; Ezek.8:5-18). Hence, they rejected the warnings of judgment; it seemed impossible that their system could fail, and they scorned the prophets who provided warning. Nevertheless, His divine glory and presence would gradually leave the physical place they found safety; in time, the LORD would emphatically destroy the blessings that they abused and found protection within (Ezek.9:3, 10:18, 11:22-24). The account implores one to consider where they find their safety; is it found in the physical blessings that one has become proud over? As well, why is safety found in anything other than the LORD? Is it because one has successfully checked all the boxes of external righteousness, all the while forsaking their own heart? Let each one consider their own spiritual safety.

## CONTEXT

Jeremiah warned Judah of its impending doom and judgment of the LORD prior to, during, and after the conquest by the Babylonian Empire between 605-586 BC (Jer.4:6; Lam.1:1ff). The Jewish leaders denied the incoming judgment of the LORD and its effect because they had the Temple, which was the earthly abode of Jehovah; consequently, they felt Jerusalem was impregnable to external attack, thinking the LORD would not abandon His city or temple. Jeremiah 7:4 reveals the prophets rebuke of the leaders abuse of the LORD’s presence in their Temple, “*Trust ye not in lying words, saying, The temple of the LORD, The temple of the LORD, The temple of the LORD, are these.*” All the while, the Jewish leaders led the people into idolatry within the city and temple (Jer.2:1-37).

Ezekiel was carried away in the second deportation to Babylon in 597 BC; he prophesied to the captives by the river Chebar regarding the current and future affairs of Jerusalem and the Temple. The LORD used Ezekiel to warn the captives that further, more severe judgment would come upon Jerusalem (i.e., destruction in 586 BC). The LORD revealed the putrid wickedness that occurred within the city and the Temple, which would commence the LORD’s fury and withdraw His pity (Ezek.8:5-18). As well, the LORD exhorted Ezekiel and the captives that had family in Jerusalem that He would send cherubim there with an inkhorn to mark the believing remnant that feared Him, who would be protected from the destruction (Gen.12:1-3; Is.1:9; Ezek.9:1-10).

## INTERPRETATION

Ezekiel 11 reveals that the LORD targeted the twenty-five princes of the people that devised mischief and gave wicked counsel to the LORD’s people (Ezek.11:1-2). Two detrimental men had names with spiritual meanings: Jaazaniah (“*He will be heard of the LORD*”) and Pelatiah (“*Delivered of the LORD*”). The double responsibility the LORD lays on His spiritual leaders is obvious in this passage (cf. Jms.3:1). Despite their hierarchical authority and spiritual overture, they had wicked and proud hearts they used to steer constituents away from men that feared the LORD and trembled at His word!

*Continued on next page*

In particular, they denied and refuted that judgment would come upon them because they found safety in the mighty city of Jerusalem. Ezekiel 11:3 states, *“Which say, It is not near; let us build houses: this city is the caldron, and we be the flesh.”* The proud heart says it cannot fall or fail; the proud heart pushes off judgment and misses the omnipotence of the LORD to disrupt the most sound and secure systems. The princes declared that they were as flesh in a cauldron or cooking pot, which protected from the fire outside. Their trust was in the cauldron – the city of Jerusalem, given to them by the LORD (Deut.26:1; II Sam.5:5-10).

Nevertheless, the LORD reminded them *“I know the things that come into your mind, every one of them.”* He knew where they placed their trust – the city and not Him. Hence, the omnipotent Jehovah declared, *“But I will bring you forth out of the midst of it”* (Ezek.11:7). In repetition He declared in Ezekiel 11:11, *“This city shall not be your caldron, neither shall ye be the flesh in the midst thereof; but I will judge you in the border of Israel.”* Man cannot hide behind any previously given blessing of the LORD for safety. The LORD is not limited; He can dismantle the strongest of cities and disintegrate the greatest of systems that mass-produce legislated righteousness. As well, the chief instigator, Pelatiah, died upon hearing the condemnation of the LORD; presumably, his proud heart sneered at the rebuke (Ezek.11:13).

Prior to destroying His city and His temple, the LORD would withdraw His Glory from the Temple, which was the very thing the proud princes thought He would never do (Ezek.9:3, 10:18, 11:22-24). The Glory of the LORD gradually left His presence in the Holy of Holies between the cherubim by moving to the threshold of the Temple (Ezek.9:3). Next, the Glory of the LORD dwelt above the cherubim at the door of the East gate of the temple (Ezek.10:18). Finally, the Glory of the LORD departed the temple and Jerusalem and stood upon the Mount of Olives (Ezek.11:22-24). Once the Glory of the LORD left, the city and temple were ripe for destruction.

### APPLICATION

Local churches are under constant spiritual attack, and the LORD has tasked pastors to ensure they do not leave their first love and ultimately lose their status as one of His candlesticks (Rev.2:5). Pride and complacency open the door to a myriad of possibilities for spiritual failure personally and corporately as an assembly. Specific to this passage, there is always temptation to find safety in the blessings of the LORD instead of the LORD.

Furthermore, long term “spiritual success” of a church (the LORD’s longsuffering mercy) can breed complacency in proud hearts that do not think failure and judgment can occur to their church; subsequently, they grow weary of the warnings regarding apostasy (II Pt. 2:10; III Jn.1:8-10). Enter Diotrephes, who opportunistically desired the preeminence in the assembly while the pastor was infirmed (III Jn.1:1, 9-10). Diotrephes refused John’s second letter and the brethren that upheld the Word of God. Subsequently, the LORD believing remnant of that assembly left Diotrephes and assembled with Demetrius (III Jn.1:12).

Christians have the tendency to be puffed up with the blessings that the Lord gives. The Corinthians were puffed up about the two divinely given ordinances, baptism (I Cor. 1:10-13) and the Lord’s Supper (I Cor. 11:18-34). The LORD is the One Who gives wealth (Dt. 8:18). He certainly has blessed America and American Christians. It is an easy and disastrous shift in the flesh for Christians to become proud of the Lord’s material blessings and violate Mt. 6:24 by serving what they love. When the Lord blesses Christians materially there is a tendency to be proud of buildings, bank accounts, real estate, vehicles, etc., and trust in these rather than the Lord. It is one thing to say “I still love the Lord” but when the wealth diminishes, heart issues become apparent. When the Lord blesses believers it shows His love; what do His blessings show about us? *“For all that is in the world, the lust of the flesh, and the lust of the eyes, and the pride of life, is not of the Father, but is of the world”* (I Jn. 2:16).

## PHOTOS



*Top: Eager students at the HBC Module.*

*Bottom: During his week of teaching in Endicott, NY, Dr. Strouse was able to find time to visit with former church member Amanda (Gagnon) Reeves who showed him around the doggy daycare.*



*Single Christian man, enjoys devotions with coffee by the fireplace.*



*Aiko reflecting on the balmy breezes of the Philippines!*

## BBC/BBTS 2022 SCHEDULE

**January 24, 2022**

13th BBTS Spring Semester  
Begins

**February 28-March 4**

Module  
Bible Baptist Church, Cromwell  
*Greek Text of II Timothy 1-4*

**April 15, 2022**

13th Annual BBTS Spring Lecture  
Series

**May 15, 2022**

13th Annual BBTS  
Commencement Service

**August 22-26**

Module  
Fairhaven Baptist College  
*Acts, Vol. 1 (Chapters 1-9)*

## THE PERSON THAT GOD USES



Pastor Cas Reeves

It is interesting to study the people in the Bible that the Lord used in one way or another to serve His purposes. When God uses a man, or a woman, there are always exemplifying characteristics that can be gleaned from their life for our own Christian life so that we may be used, and of service to our great God and Savior Jesus Christ. The man Zacharias and his wife Elizabeth are such people to learn from in order to serve.

We note certain things about their life that help us understand that the person who God uses is a person of righteousness (v.6). This person walks rightly before God, he walks in the commands or principles of God, he walks in the ordinances or practices of God, and he walks blamelessly or holy before God.

Secondly, we note the person that God uses is a person through whom God can show Himself strong (v.7). We are told in Eccl.9:11, *“that the race is not to the swift, nor the battle to the strong”*. In another place, the Apostle Paul says, *“Therefore I take pleasure in infirmities, in reproaches, in necessities, in persecutions, in distresses for Christ's sake: for when I am weak, then am I strong”* (2 Cor.12:10). The Lord likes to use the weak things to show Himself strong. In our text

Text: *Luke 1:1-22*

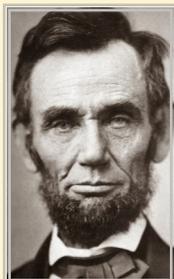
this couple is barren and of great age, yet the Lord will perform a miracle and give them a son, who will be called John. Thus, God will use this couple to glorify Himself.

Thirdly, we note the person that God uses is presently serving in his duties in the normal course of his life (vv.8-9). It could be one who is faithful to their local church in their attendance, giving, and helping. In Zacharias's case, he was a priest and was serving in his scheduled time in the temple burning incense. It is at this moment that God chose to inform and use him as the father of the forerunner to the Savior, John the Baptist. Many times our opportunities to serve come while we are serving the Lord at church or a church event, such as visitation.

Finally, we note the person that God calls is one who also has his own personal difficulties, but continues to serve the Lord (vv.12-22). Perhaps, like Zacharias, one may be wrestling some kind of fear (v.12) or an unbelief regarding something in God's Word (v.20). They may even be the objects of someone's marvel (vv.21-22) or even ridicule. But through it all they are still willing to be used of God.

Such are the characteristics and manners of Zacharias and Elizabeth, and God used them. Will you let God use you? -CAR

### QUOTES FROM THE PAST



*“You cannot help the poor by destroying the rich.  
You cannot strengthen the weak by weakening the strong.  
You cannot bring about prosperity by discouraging thrift.  
You cannot lift a wage earner up by pulling the wage payer down.”*

Abraham Lincoln

1809-1865

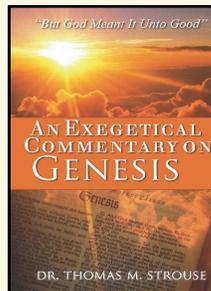
16th President of the United States

## THE BOOK CORNER

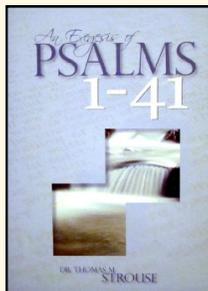
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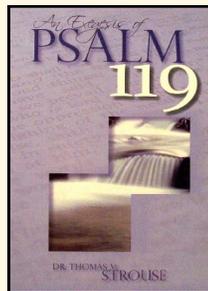
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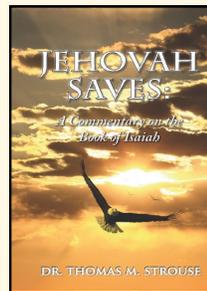
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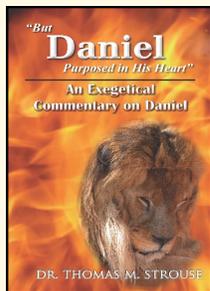
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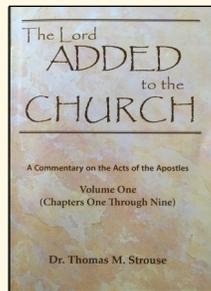
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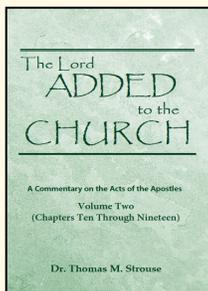
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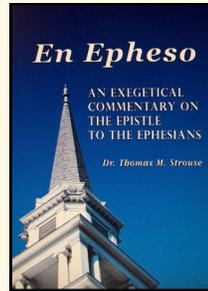
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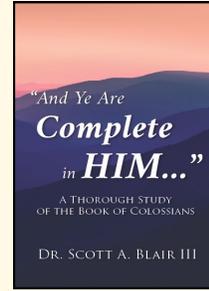
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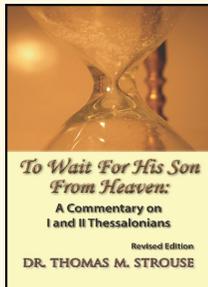
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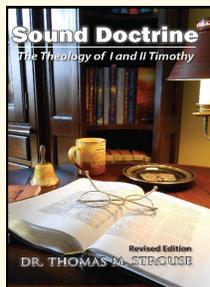
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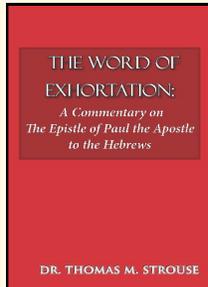
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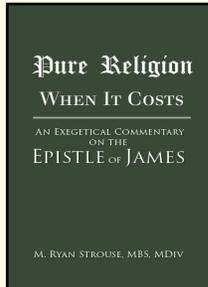
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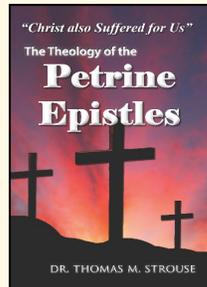
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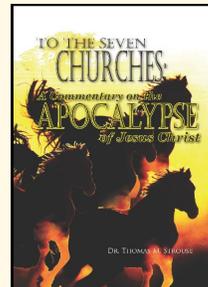
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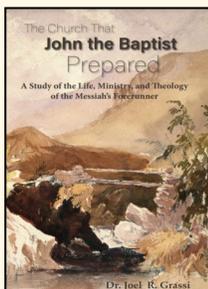
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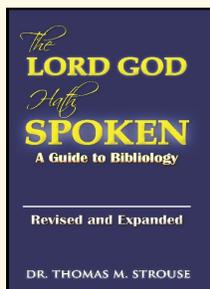
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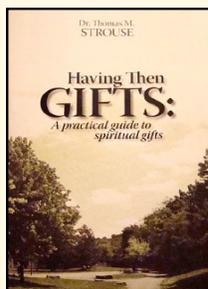
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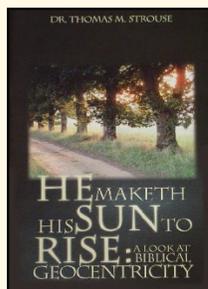
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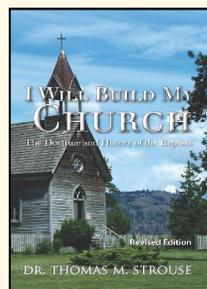
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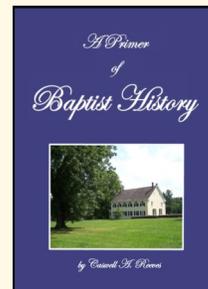
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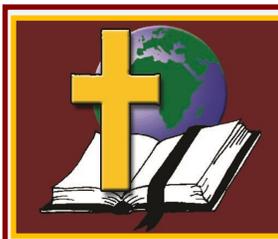


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