

Berachah Bible Church Doctrinal Statement

THE SCRIPTURES - We believe in **THE HOLY SCRIPTURES**: accepting fully the writings of the Old and New Testaments as the very word of God, verbally inspired in all parts and therefore wholly without error as originally given of God, altogether sufficient in themselves as our only infallible rule of faith and practice. (Matthew 5:18; John 10:35; 12:42; 17:17; 2 Timothy 3:16; 2 Peter 1:21).

THE TRIUNITY OF THE GODHEAD - We believe in **THE ONE TRIUNE GOD**: who is personal, spirit, and sovereign (Mark 12:29; John 4:24; 14:9; Psalm 135:6); perfect, infinite and eternal in His being; holiness, love, wisdom, and power (Psalm 18:30; 147:5; Deuteronomy 33:27); absolutely separate and above the world as its Creator; yet everywhere present in the world as the Upholder of all things (Genesis 1:1; Psalm 104); Self-existent and self-revealing in three distinct Persons--the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit (John 5:26; Matthew 28:19; 2 Corinthians 13:14), each of whom is to be honored and worshiped equally as true God (John 5:23; Acts 5:3-4). While the three members of the triune Godhead are fully equal in essence and authority, there is a *functional* subordination between the members. The Father does not proceed from anyone; all things are from Him (1 Corinthians 8:6). The Son is sent from the Father (John 3:16; 1 John 4:9), and the Holy Spirit is sent from both the Father and the Son (John 14:26; 16:7). When all things are finally subjected to the Son, then the Son Himself will be subjected to the Father, that God might be all in all (1 Corinthians 15:28).

GOD THE FATHER - We believe in **GOD THE FATHER**: who is the first person of the Trinity, and who orders and disposes all things according to His own purpose and grace (Ps. 145:8, 9; 1 Cor. 8:6). He is the Creator of all things (Gen. 1:1-31; Eph. 3:9). As the only absolute and omnipotent ruler in the universe, He is sovereign in creation, providence, and redemption (Ps. 103:19; Rom. 11:36). His fatherhood involves both His designation within the Trinity and His relationship with mankind. As Creator He is Father to all men (Eph. 4:6), but He is Spiritual Father only to believers (Rom. 8:14; 2 Cor. 6:18). He has decreed for His own glory all things that come to pass (Eph. 1:11). He continually upholds, directs, and governs all creatures and events (1 Chr. 29:11). In His sovereignty He is neither author nor approver of sin (Hab. 1:13), nor does He abridge the accountability of moral, intelligent creatures (1 Pet. 1:17). He has graciously chosen from eternity past those whom He would have as His own (Eph. 1:4-6); He saves from sin all those who come to Him; and He becomes, upon adoption, Father to His own (John 1:12; Rom. 8:15; Gal. 4:5; Heb. 12:5-9).

THE LORD JESUS CHRIST - We believe in **THE LORD JESUS CHRIST**: who is the Second Person of the Triune God, the eternal Word and Only Begotten Son, our Great God and Savior (John 1:1; 3:16; Titus 2:13; Romans 9:5); that, without any essential change in His divine Person (Hebrews 13:8) became man by the miracle of Virgin Birth (John 1:14; Matthew 1:23), thus to continue forever as both true God and true Man, one Person with two natures (Colossians 2:9; Revelation 22:16); that as Man, He was in all points tempted like as we are, yet without sin (Hebrews 4:15; John 8:46); that as the perfect Lamb of God, He gave Himself in death upon the cross, bearing there the sin of the world, and suffering its full penalty of divine wrath in our stead

(Isaiah 53:5-6; Matthew 20:28; Galatians 3:13; John 1:29); that He rose again from the dead and was glorified in the same body in which He suffered and died (Luke 24:36-43; John 20:25-28); that as our great High Priest, He ascended into heaven, there to appear before the face of God as our Advocate and Intercessor (Hebrews 4:14; 9:24; 1 John 2:1).

THE HOLY SPIRIT - We believe in THE HOLY SPIRIT: who is the third person of the Triune God (Matthew 28:19; Acts 5:3-4), the divine agent in nature, revelation and redemption (Genesis 1:2; Psalm 104:30; 1 Corinthians 2:10; 2 Corinthians 3:18); that He convicts the world of sin (John 16:8-11), regenerates those who believe (John 3:5), and indwells, baptizes, seals, empowers, guides, teaches and sanctifies all who become children of God through Christ (1 Corinthians 6:19; 12:13; Ephesians 4:30; 3:16; Romans 8:14; John 14:26; 1 Corinthians 6:11).

THE CREATION AND FALL OF MAN - We believe in THE CREATION AND FALL OF MAN: that the universe and man were both directly created by God in six literal days, apart from any process of evolution and that in no sense is man the product of an animal ancestry, but made in the divine image (Genesis 1:26-28; 2:7; 18-24; Matthew 19:4; 1 Thessalonians 5:23); that by personal disobedience to the revealed will of God, man became a sinful creature and the progenitor of a fallen race (Genesis 3:1-24; 5:3), which is universally sinful in both nature and practice (Ephesians 4:18; Romans 3:23; 5:12), alienated from the life and family of God (Ephesians 4:18; John 8:42-44), under the righteous judgment and wrath of God (Romans 3:19; 1:18), and have within themselves no possible means of recovery of salvation (Mark 7:21-23; Matthew 19:26; Romans 7:18).

SALVATION ONLY THROUGH CHRIST - We believe in SALVATION BY GRACE ALONE THROUGH FAITH ALONE in the Lord Jesus Christ (Acts 2:38); that salvation is the free gift of God (Romans 3:24, 6:23) and is not the result of any work of man (Ephesians 2:8-9). Because of the universal sinfulness of man (Romans 3:23), no one can enter the kingdom of God unless they are born again (John 3:5-8). We believe that no degree of reformation however great, no attainments in morality however high, no culture however attractive, no baptism, sacrament, or any other ordinance however administered, can move any sinner one step toward heaven. A new nature imparted from above, a new life implanted by the Holy Spirit through the Word, is absolutely essential to salvation (Isaiah 64:6). We believe and teach that individual salvation from sin is only attained by a true personal confession of faith in the Lord Jesus Christ alone, and only those thus saved are born again as sons of God to eternal life. We also believe that our redemption from sin has been accomplished solely by the blood atonement of our Lord Jesus Christ who was made to be sin and a curse for us, dying in our place, suffering the wrath of God and penalty of death as propitiation for our sins (Matthew 26:28). This means that no human act of any kind including good works, penance, prayers to departed saints or the Virgin Mary, emotional experiences, visions, good resolutions, sincere efforts, or submission to the rules and regulations of any church can add anything to the finished work of the Lord Jesus Christ. The benefits of Christ's redemptive work must be appropriated individually by repentance and faith in the Lord Jesus Christ. In repentance, the sinner turns from the sin of rejection of Christ and in faith the sinner trusts in the Lord Jesus Christ for the forgiveness of sin and is immediately and everlastingly born again to eternal life. Once truly born again, believers cannot lose their salvation (Leviticus 17:11; John 3:16; Acts 16:31, 17:30; 2 Peter 3:9; Romans 5:6-9;

2 Corinthians 5:21; Galatians 3:13, 6:15; Ephesians 1:7; Philippians 3:4-9; Titus 3:5; James 1:18; 1 Peter 1:18-19, 23).

SANCTIFICATION - We believe that SANCTIFICATION, which is a setting-apart unto God, is threefold: It is already complete for every saved person because his position toward God is the same as Christ's position. Since the believer is in Christ, he is set apart unto God in the measure in which Christ is set apart unto God. We believe, however, that he retains his sin nature, which cannot be eradicated in this life. Therefore, while the standing of the Christian in Christ is perfect, his present state is not more perfect than his experience in daily life. There is, therefore, a progressive sanctification wherein the Christian is to "grow in grace," and to "be changed" by the unhindered power of the Spirit. We believe, also, that the child of God will yet be fully sanctified in his state as he is now sanctified in his standing in Christ when he shall see his Lord and shall be "like Him" (John 17:17; 2 Corinthians 3:18; 7:1; Ephesians 4:24; 5:25-27; 1 Thessalonians 5:23; Hebrews 10:10,14; 12:10).

ETERNAL SECURITY - We believe that all who receive the Lord Jesus Christ as Savior by faith are born again of the Holy Spirit and thereby become children of God, and are ETERNALLY SECURE in Jesus Christ (John 1:11-12, 3:3, 10:28-29; Romans 8:35-39, 10:9-10; John 5:24; 1 Corinthians 6:19; Jude 1:24). We believe, however, that God is a holy, righteous Father and that, since He cannot overlook the sin of His children, He will, when they persistently sin, chasten them and correct them in infinite love; but having undertaken to save them, He will in the end present every one of them faultless before the presence of His glory and conformed to the image of His Son (Hebrews 12:5-11; 1 John 5:13, 16-17).

ANGELS, DEMONS, SATAN - We believe in the personal existence of angels (Luke 22:43) and demons (Luke 8:26-39) and Satan who originally was created a holy and perfect being, but through pride and unlawful ambition, rebelled against God (Ezekiel 28:13-17; Isaiah 14:13-14; 1 Timothy 3:7), thus becoming utterly depraved in character (John 8:44), the great adversary of God and His people (Matthew 4:1-11; Revelation 12:10), the leader of all other evil angels and spirits (Matthew 12:24-26, 25:41), the deceiver and god of this present world (Revelation 12:9; 2 Corinthians 4:4), that he was defeated and judged at the Cross, and therefore his final doom is certain (John 22:31-32, 16:11; Revelation 20:10), that we are able to resist and overcome him only in the armor of God and by the blood of the Lamb (Ephesians 6:12-18; revelation 12:11).

THE BODY OF CHRIST - We believe that all who are united to the risen and ascended Son of God are members of the church which is the body and bride of Christ, which began at Pentecost and is completely distinct from Israel. Its members are constituted as such regardless of membership or non-membership in the organized churches of earth. We believe that by the same Spirit all believers in this age, whether Jews or Gentiles, regardless of race, color, national origin, have become members in the bond of peace, rising above all sectarian differences, and loving one another with a pure heart fervently (Matthew 16:16-18; Acts 2:42-47; Romans 12:5; 1 Corinthians 12:12-27; Ephesians 1:20-23; 4:3-10; Colossians 3:14-15).

THE LOCAL CHURCH - We believe in the local church as a company of Spirit baptized believers, independent and self-governing, which should fellowship with other churches of like faith and order. It is the responsibility of the local church to meet faithfully for worship, prayer, fellowship, teaching, united testimony; and the observance of the ordinance of baptism by immersion, and the Lord's Supper (preceded by careful examination of self). It is the responsibility of the local church to propagate the gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ as commanded by Christ in His "Great Commission." We believe also that the scriptural officers of the local church are Elders and Deacons (Acts 2:41,42, 47; 13:1-3; 6:2,3; Ephesians 4:11; Matthew 28:19,20; 1 Timothy 3:1,8; Hebrews 10:25; 1 Timothy 3:1-12).

THE ORDINANCES - We believe the ordinances of the local church to be Baptism by immersion and the Lord's Supper. We believe that the scriptural mode of believer's baptism is that of immersion, and that it is to be administered in the name of the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit and that it is symbolic of our faith in the crucified, buried and risen Savior; and that it is for believers only and is a prerequisite for church membership (Matthew 28:19, 20; Acts 8:36-39). We believe that the Lord's Supper is commemorative of our Lord's death until He comes and of our continual fellowship with Him. Observance of the Lord's Supper should be preceded by careful self-examination (Matthew 26:29-29; 1 Corinthians 11:23-32).

SEPARATION FROM THE WORLD - We believe in SEPARATION FROM THE WORLD: that since our Christian citizenship is in heaven, as the children of God we should walk in separation from this present world, having no fellowship with its evil ways (Philippians 3:20; 2 Corinthians 6:14-18; Romans 12:2; Ephesians 5:11), abstaining from all worldly amusements and unclean habits which defile mind and body (Luke 8:14; 1 Thessalonians 5:22; 1 Timothy 5:6; 1 Peter 2:11; Ephesians 5:3-11; Colossians 3:17; Ephesians 5:3-5,18; 1 Corinthians 6:19-20). We also believe in the Biblical command to separate entirely from ecclesiastical apostasy, and that the believer's separation is to be unto the Lord in whole-hearted devotion to the cause of Christ (1 John 2:15-17; John 4:1; 2 Corinthians 6:11-18).

THE SECOND COMING OF CHRIST - We believe in THE SECOND COMING OF CHRIST: that His return from heaven will be personal, visible, and glorious - a Blessed Hope for which we should constantly watch and pray, the time being unrevealed but always imminent (Acts 1:11; Revelation 1:7; Mark 13:33-37; Titus 2:11-13; Revelation 22:20); that when He comes He will first by resurrection and translation remove from the earth His waiting Church (1 Thessalonians 4:16-18), then pour out the righteous judgments of God upon the unbelieving world (Revelation 6:1-8:24), afterward descend with His Church and establish His glorious and literal kingdom over all the nations for a thousand years (Revelation 19:1-20:6; Matthew 13:41-43), at the close of which He will raise and judge the unsaved dead (Revelation 20:11-15), and finally as the Son of David deliver up His Messianic Kingdom to God the Father (1 Corinthians 15:24-28), in order that as the Eternal Son He may reign forever with the Father in the New Heavens and the New Earth (Luke 1:32-33; Revelation 21:1-22:6).

FUTURE LIFE, BODILY RESURRECTION, AND ETERNAL JUDGMENT - We believe that at death the spirits and souls of those who trusted in the Lord Jesus Christ for salvation pass immediately into His presence and there remain in conscious bliss until the resurrection of the glorified body when Christ comes for His own, at which time their works shall be brought before the Judgment Seat of Christ for the determination of rewards, a judgment which may issue in the loss of rewards, but not the loss of the soul (Philippians 1:22-23; 2 Corinthians 3:8-15); and that the spirits and souls of the unbelieving remain after death conscious of condemnation and in misery until the final judgment of the Great White Throne at the close of the millennium, when soul and body reunited, shall be cast into the lake of fire, not to be annihilated, but to be punished with everlasting destruction from the presence of the Lord, and from the glory of His power (Luke 16:19-26; 23:42; 2 Thessalonians 1:7-9; Jude 1:6-7,13; Revelation 20:11-15).

WE UNDERSTAND THAT THE ABOVE SECTIONS DO NOT BY ANY MEANS EXHAUST THE CONTENT OF OUR CREED, WHICH IS THE WHOLE WORD OF GOD, AND THEY ARE NOT INTENDED TO SET A LIMIT BEYOND WHICH FAITH CANNOT GO WITHIN THIS WORD.

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