

The Bible And The Space Age

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Preface

HAS ANYTHING HAPPENED in the past few years to make the Bible out of date? Could it be that men in orbit, satellites, moon and planet probes are making the Word of God a dead letter? These are questions that men everywhere are asking. And they are legitimate questions. What has happened to the Bible in this the beginning of the space age?

It somehow is fitting that this series of timely articles should come from one of the sources of today's tremendous advances in space technology-radio. "The Bible and the Space Age," presents a series of addresses that have been broadcast by the international radio program, The Voice of Prophecy. In them you will find counsel that is both timely and refreshing.

Each article is designed to answer one or more questions about the relating of the Bible and Christianity to the days in which we live. Because these answers come from men who write from personal experience, as well as from a deep knowledge of the Bible, you will find much to satisfy and encourage. In addition, you will find reasonable answers to many questions that may be puzzling you personally. Five different speakers on the broadcast have prepared these articles, though this may be hard to detect because of their common doctrinal background.

The Voice of Prophecy broadcast may be heard throughout Australia and much of the remainder of the world. Those who are listeners will recognize these radio sermons as typical of the regular broadcast made each Sunday. If perchance you are not a regular listener to this broadcast, it is the hope of the authors and publishers that this work will make you want to listen. Surely we are living in a time when our faith is being challenged. But we believe that this challenge can be met by understanding what the Bible teaches about the really big issues of life. It is to direct you to these big issues that this book has been written. Perhaps the answers will be a little different than you expect, but always they will be based on the Word of God, for the authors believe that even in the space-conscious twentieth century, the words of Scripture apply: "Thy Word is Truth."

W. R. L. SCRAGG

Director of the Voice of Prophecy in Australia and New Zealand.

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CRITICS without number have attacked the Bible. Today the barrage is mounting against this book that has stood so many attacks through the ages. That it is still alive and vital today surely is evidence that it has a message for this space age. No one attacks something that already is dead. This year this book will sell upwards of 30,000,000 copies and portions, in over 1,200 languages.

Yet there are many who would challenge belief in the Bible. Like Major Titov, the Russian cosmonaut, they feel that man will not find God "up there." Science, philosophy, and the many branches of learning that space technology has spawned, purport to show that man has no need of divine revelation. More than that, they philosophize, if man can surmount the last of his physical barriers, is there any need for the God of the Bible? Can the Bible have an up-to-date message for this twentieth century? Is God really "out here"?

The Bible itself says: "Great is our Lord, and of great power: His understanding is infinite." Psalm 147: 5. Surely the answer must be that if man has not found God in space, it is because he has not found Him first on earth. And if he has not found Him on earth, it is because he has not found Him first in his heart. And if He is not in his heart, it is because he has not looked in faith to the revelation of God-the Holy Bible.

Titov said, "We did not find God." And yet Major Glenn used his experience in space to deliver a simple yet forceful sermon in which he gave his reasons for believing in God. Two men entered the same environment, one professed skepticism, but the other found God.

It was Robert Ingersoll who said, when he was visiting Denver in the United States in 1876: "In fifty years there will not be fifty Bible believers in this city." It is a matter of interest and of the record that today upwards of 100,000 Bibles or portions of Scripture are sold annually in this city. It is skepticism that is dead -not the Bible.

What message does the Bible have for the space age? Does it have a message at all? Can the book that has spoken to every age since it was written speak to us today? Is it still alive, still vital? Listen to what the Bible has to say about important issues of our day.

Will Man Find God In Space?

"Is not God in the height of heaven? and behold the height of the stars, how high they are!" Job 22: 12. The skeptic will never find God anywhere, let alone in space. He could not find Him before the space age. He will not find Him now. And yet the very message of the Word is that He dwells in the heavens, that He inhabits eternity. This is what the Bible teaches in the space age. Space exploration, rockets to the moon or beyond, will not in any way lessen the power of God. He is the God of Space. He created the laws that have enabled man to burst the bonds of gravity and free himself momentarily from this earth. Of course, man will not see God literally, but as we contemplate the intricate marvels of His universe, surely we are led to see Him in faith as Creator and upholder of all things.

Consider for a moment the fine tolerances of the earth and the solar system. Variations in timing do not equal even one thousandth of a second. Consider the study of the structure of the atom, with some particles that last for less than a billionth of a second, and yet each fitting into a pattern so precise that the existence of many of these particles has been foretold before it has been proved. "Who hath measured the waters in the hollow of His hand, and meted out heaven with the span, and weighed the mountains in scales, and the hills in a balance?" "It is He that sits upon the circle of the earth." "To whom shall you liken Me, or shall I be equal? said the Holy One. Lift up your eyes on high, and behold who hath created these things, that brings out their host by number: He calls them all by names by the greatness of His might, for that He is strong in power; not one fails." Isaiah 40: 12, 22, 25, 26.

To men in space, to man who after all has always been in space, the Bible says, "Consider God. He is the creator. He is in control. He made the world. He made you." By studying this world and the universe that surrounds us, we surely shall be led to the God of space who the Bible proclaims is also the God of our hearts.

How Far Will Man Go?

We do not know. But there is nothing said in the Bible which would prevent his ranging far and wide through the arches of space. And yet remember this, man is frail. Space, we are told, is the most

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hostile of all environments. Life is easily snuffed out in its reaches. Scientists doubt that man will be able to escape too far from earth. Space travel will never be commonplace or easy.

One thing is certain, wherever man goes he will take with him the curse of his sin. "For all have sinned, and come short of the glory of God." Romans 3:23. Today there is a tendency to attempt to cure the malady of sin by giving it fancy names. Psychology says it is the result of frustrations and complexes. Search the unconscious, and you will free yourself, say Freud and his followers. Evolutionary science tells us that we have not been purged of the habits of the jungle. Sociologists say a new environment can work wonders. But sin still persists, and will persist wherever man goes through his own efforts in space. We know this to be true. Man frequently has sought to establish a Utopia which would give him freedom from himself. But no Utopia has conquered the inner demon. No panacea has calmed and relieved the gnawing cancer of sin.

The Meaning of Life

Today as never before men are asking the meaning of life. Purpose seems to have been lost. Holocausts like Hiroshima and Nagasaki have left a scar on the souls of men. Planned methods of destruction seem to make pointless even trying to live a good and fruitful life. It is little wonder that many are drifting, that we are plagued with juvenile delinquency, and mounting crime rates. Says the Bible of these days: "Evil men and seducers shall wax worse and worse, deceiving, and being deceived." 2 Timothy 3:13.

And yet there is meaning to this present life. It is the age-old conflict between the spiritual and the materialistic that must be resolved by us. Asked the Master Himself: "For what shall it profit a man, if he shall gain the whole world, and lose his own soul?" Mark 8: 36. Again He said: "Seek you first the kingdom of God, and His righteousness; and all these things shall be added unto you." Matthew 6: 33. Satisfaction in life is found in living in a different manner to that of the vast majority. Yet by conforming to the will of God as expressed in the Bible we are not cutting ourselves off from the realities of life. We are coming closer to them. Jesus' counsel as found in the Golden Rule and the Sermon on the Mount is just as much for today as for any other age. These principles have not lost one whit of their power.

Life Beyond Death

In our day we have seen a tremendous interest in the possible existence of life after death. Is there anything about this in the Holy Word? Jesus says: "I will come again, and receive you unto Myself; that where I am, there you may be also." John 14: 3. Whatever this world holds for us, the Bible tells of a better and happier day coming for those who are faithful to God's will as expressed in His Word. Is this just wishful thinking? The evidence found in the lives of thousands upon thousands is that the hope of eternal life has meant more to them than anything else in which they have believed. The Bible speaks of it again and again. It is a central truth of Christianity. It is a beacon of hope to all who look for better things.

"And the dead in Christ shall rise first: then we which are alive and remain shall be caught up together with them in the clouds, to meet the Lord in the air: and so shall we ever be with the Lord." 1 Thessalonians 4: 16, 17.

The Future of This World

In words that remind us of an atomic nightmare, the Apostle Peter speaks to our day: "The day of the Lord will come as a thief in the night; in the which the heavens shall pass away with a great noise, and the elements shall melt with fervent heat, the earth also and the works that are therein shall be burned up." 2 Peter 3: 10.

But this is not all. If it were, then there would be no hope for us. We might just as well "eat, drink, and be merry." But the Bible is not a book of dismal conclusions. It is a book of hope. We who today can see how easily Peter's prophecy could be fulfilled, have lived in the dread that some man might make it real. We might understand what he means, but let us also heed the word of hope that he gives us.

"Nevertheless we, according to His promise, look for new heavens and a new earth, wherein dwells righteousness." 2 Peter 3: 13.

Is There Hope?

Science answers this question in varying shades of black, brown, and gray. No scientist dares offer hope, without painting the terrible "ifs" that confront us. Statesmen talk of peace, but practice for

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war-war that means annihilation of all hope for most of us. Does the Holy Book, written so many years ago, speak to us today? Listen: "Lay hold upon the hope set before us: which hope we have as an anchor of the soul." Hebrews 6: 18, 19. Millions today cry, "Give me an anchor! Give me something to fasten my life to." The Bible has the answer to that need. It is a book of hope. That hope is centered in a Man. It is centered in Jesus, the Hope of the World.

After all, your Bible is a book about a Man. It is a book about Christ. This is why it was written. This is why it speaks to our day. We might be perplexed about sin and suffering, about God and space, about war and trouble, but the answer can be found. It is found in the Man of the Book. Take your Bible down from the shelf, dust it off, and let it speak to you about Jesus. Its answers are as true today as they were when the book first was written. It is as vital now as it was centuries ago. It can satisfy in space, just as fully as it does on the earth. It will always answer the heart-cry of mankind. It will never die until sin has been destroyed and a new world has been born.

This book points to a coming day when Christ shall be King, when the united nations of a new creation will worship in a beautiful new land, when sorrow and suffering, death and disease shall be no more. This is the hope of man in the space age. It is a hope that is nearer fulfillment today than ever before. This hope centers in Jesus Christ. It centers in His life, lived without sin that we might have hope. It centers in the death He died in recompense for sin, that we might have hope. It centers in His resurrection, that we might have hope of life everlasting. It centers in His promised return, that we might have hope amid the hopelessness of this present world.

"Now we are homeward bound; the breaking light
Of God's eternal day gleams through this hour!
Lift up your eyes! The shadowed form of night
Must flee before the arrows of His power!

Fail not to hold thy faith; all will be well!
Let not thy heart be touched by earthly fear;
Behold! The quickening signs of chaos tell
How soon the Hope of Ages will be here!"

Dan H. Reese

Wonders of The Sky

IN the Holy Bible we read of three heavens. The first heaven is the atmospheric heaven which surrounds the earth. This is sometimes called in Scripture the firmament, or expansion. (Genesis 1:8.) This is a good name for the atmosphere, for the expansion and contraction of the air above the earth accompanies changes of weather-storms, droughts, and many meteorological phenomena.

The atmosphere is one of the great wonders of the universe about us. We could not exist without it. No life would be possible on the earth without this overcoat of air which surrounds us, protecting us from the cold of space and also from the burning heat of the direct rays of the sun blazing toward the earth.

The air also protects us from the deadly actinic rays and cosmic rays always flowing toward the earth, and from the hundreds of millions of meteorites which, like tiny bullets, are constantly falling in our direction. The air, of course, is a gas, a loose mixture of elements which do not combine chemically, and which are easily separated in the lungs of living beings.

The air is so constructed that its weight and density are greatest nearest the earth, and it becomes increasingly thin up to the part called the stratosphere. The air finally diminishes until it is practically non-existent about 2,000 miles from the surface of the earth. The Creator made the earth just the right size to make life possible upon it, as far as the atmosphere is concerned. In Job 38:5, the question is asked concerning the earth: "Who determined the measures thereof, if thou knows? Or who stretched the line upon it?" (A.R.V.)

God did determine the size of the earth and made it just right for the habitation of man. Someone has explored the possibilities of life here on earth had it been made a little smaller or a little larger. Had it

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been just a little smaller, the density of the air would have been too little to maintain life. At night the earth would be so cold that life would be impossible, and in the daytime the direct rays of the sun would make life impossible because of the extreme heat. On the other hand, if the earth were just a little larger, the solar radiation would be absorbed and retained, and life would be impossible because of the extreme heat.

You see, our Creator has balanced things just right. The atmosphere continually flowing around the earth makes life possible on it. No wonder the Scripture says: "The heavens declare the glory of God." Psalm 19: 1.

By the way, why do clouds float? We know that water is heavier than air, and the clouds are formed of tiny droplets of water. Why do they not all sink to the ground? Why are not the skies absolutely clear at all times? Why doesn't the earth dry up and life become extinct? Why? Since the clouds are heavier than the air, what holds them up? For many years men have wondered about this.

Some time ago it was discovered that on the edges of the water mist, which we call clouds, the air is compressed to about twice its ordinary density. Because of this, the clouds are supported. Men have discovered this by scientific means, but centuries ago it was written in Job 26: 8, "He binds up the waters in His thick clouds; and the cloud is not rent under them." Remember, the Book of Job was written about 3,500 years ago.

Beyond this first, or atmospheric, heaven we have the second heaven-the heaven of the moon, planets, and stars, in which we see the handiwork of God. The moon and other satellites are dark bodies which shine only with the reflected light from the sun. This light is called polarized light. It is entirely different from the direct light of luminous bodies, and reflects at different angles. This difference in light seems to be suggested by the apostle in 1 Corinthians 15:40,41: "There are also celestial bodies, and bodies terrestrial: but the glory of the celestial is one, and the glory of the terrestrial is another. There is one glory of the sun, and another glory of the moon, and another glory of the stars: for one star differs from another star in glory."

Who told the apostle that, nearly two thousand years before the difference in the light of the heavenly bodies was discovered by modern science? The Holy Bible is not a textbook on science, but where it touches science the statements are always accurate. Notice the words of Psalm 89:37, A.R.V. Speaking of the throne of David, the inspired writer said: "It shall be established for ever as the moon, and as the faithful witness in the sky." That is what the moon is, a faithful witness. It reflects the light of the sun and witnesses to the fact that the sun is still shining, even on what might otherwise be the darkest night.

And, by the way, Christians are to be witnesses for Christ. By their lives they are to shine in the dark world, and witness for Him. The Bible makes a distinction between the sun and the planets, as we read in 2 Kings 23:5. King Josiah was attempting to destroy the pagan worship of the heavenly bodies. Speaking of the people who followed that worship, the writer said: "Them also that burned incense unto Baal, to the sun, and to the moon, and to the planets, and to all the host of heaven."

"The host of heaven" refers to the stars. (Deuteronomy 4: 19; 17: 3.) So we see that the Scriptures recognize the difference between the planets and the stars. The planets circle the sun in orbits, and shine by the reflected light of the sun. The stars shine by their own light, for each one is a burning, glowing sun.

God said to Abraham, His servant, that his descendants would be as the stars of the sky for multitude. Then He added that they would also be as the grains of sand on the seashore. (Genesis 22: 17.) Now almost anyone knows that, with the unaided eye, only about 6,000 stars can be seen on the darkest night, and with the clearest vision. This would not compare with the sands of the sea. Just suppose you had to count all the grains of sand in one barrel. What a job it would be, and how hopeless! Then think of all the sand on all the seashores of the world. So God must be talking here about all the stars, rather than just those we can see with the naked eye.

Scientists now have discovered that the stars are innumerable, as far as our ability to count them is concerned. The size of the universe is so vast that we cannot imagine it. Our own Milky Way system in which we are living, is just one galaxy not far from its center. Our world circles around our sun, which we are told is just one of the one hundred thousand million individual stars, or other suns. The Milky Way galaxy is shaped like a lens, approximately two hundred million light-years across-that is, light travelling at the terrific speed of 186,000 miles a second would take two hundred million years to make just one journey from one edge of our island universe to the other. Can we imagine it? Of course we can't. And, by the way, this whole island universe of ours is revolving like a gigantic pinwheel, so our earth is really travelling in a number of directions at once.

As we look at our island or continent in the sky, we are reminded by the astronomers that out

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beyond what seems to us such a tremendous gathering of shining, blazing suns, there are at least one thousand million other universes. They seem to go on and on into infinite space, without any diminution of their number. As far as the mightiest telescopes have been able to pierce, the estimated number of these galaxies, someone has said, runs into the sextillions, whatever that is—a sextillion being a number followed by twenty one ciphers. This is completely beyond our imagination. No wonder the ancient prophet, referring to the stars which are visible to us, said: “Lo, these are but the outskirts of His ways: and how small a whisper do we hear of Him! But of the thunder of His power who can understand?” Job 26: 14, A.R.V.

No wonder the apostle says that when Abraham began to realize what the promise of God included, “he staggered not at the promise.” (Romans 4:20.) Today millions of people are interested in astronomy and interstellar space who never thought of it before, and this is good. More and more people everywhere will be looking upon the works of God, and with David they may say: “When I consider Thy heavens, the work of Thy fingers, the moon and the stars, which Thou has ordained; what is man, that Thou art mindful of him? and the son of man, that Thou visits him?” Psalm 8:3,4.

How can we look at the wonders on and in the earth itself, and out at the universe beyond us, without saying: “In the beginning God created the heaven and the earth”? Genesis 1:1.

And beyond all these wonders which are seen and measured by man, is the “third heaven,” as the apostle calls it (2 Corinthians 12: 2), the “heaven of heavens” (Psalm 148:4), the great center of the universe, the very dwelling place of God.

The first and second heavens are a part of God’s book of nature which we study with the tools of science, but of this third heaven we may learn only from His Book of Holy Writ, the Bible.

Will you not, friend, whoever you are, give heed to God’s two books of revelation—His book of the earth and the sky, and His Book of Holy Scripture? They agree in their testimony that the Creator is a God of wisdom, power, and love.

Where did the Word “Bible” Come from?

THE word “Bible” means “the book,” and certainly it is well named, for there is no more important book in the world. Not only has it been the most loved and most hated of all books, but no book or collection of books in the history of mankind has had such an attentive reading, such a wide circulation, nor has had such diligent investigation. This wonderful book has survived the extinction of the ancient world, the Roman empire. It was the first book printed with movable type. Its sale has continuously increased, even in times of business depression. In fact, even its very enemies have circulated it and have borne witness to its truthfulness and power. This book not only has altered individual lives but also has changed empires. It is well-named—the Book, the Bible.

The Bible received its name from the little town of Byblos, an ancient city of Phoenicia. Lying about seventeen miles to the north of the city of Beirut in Lebanon, for some 2,000 years before Christ it was the principal city of the Phoenicians. Here on its altars human sacrifices were offered to the blazing orb of the sun. It is so ancient that authorities claim it to be the oldest city in the world. Long before the time of Sidon or Tyre, Byblos was a great commercial center. It was also the sacred city of the Phoenicians. The Biblical name of this ancient city is still preserved in the name of the city that occupies the site.

In Psalm 83:7 you will read of Gebal. Gebal is the ancient name of the town that later became known as Byblos. It is said that the Greek people were unable to pronounce the “G” in Gebal, so they called it Bebal or Bebaal. Later on the Egyptians captured Bebal.

The Egyptians were the first people to manufacture and use writing paper. They made it from a reed that grew in abundance along the marshes of the Delta of the Nile. From the Greek names of this plant, “papyrus,” and “byblos,” our words “paper” and “Bible” have been derived. The fibrous inside lining was cut lengthwise in strips and laid side by side. Over these was laid at right angles another layer of these strips. After being treated with a gum solution, the sheets were pounded and pressed, dried in the sun, and became the famous writing paper of ancient times.

While these paper reeds were still growing in abundance along the Nile delta this remarkable Bible prophecy was made: “The paper reeds by the brooks, by the mouth of the brooks, and every thing sown by the brooks shall wither, be driven away, and be no more.” Isaiah 19: 7. True to this remarkable

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prediction, the paper reeds have long since disappeared from Egypt. When the Egyptians captured Bebal they planted the papyrus reeds there and they grew very well. Later on, because of political upheavals, the export of the paper reeds from Egypt was cut off and the Greeks had to import it from Bebal. The paper which they received from Bebal became known as Bebal, or Byblos, and hence we have the word Bible.

Our Bibles today are made of paper, ink, and leather, or other materials. They consist of a series of printed words. To this extent the Bible is a book made by the skill and energy of men, but the message it contains did not originate in the minds of men. It came from God. Anyone who has read the Bible through knows that time and time again it claims to come from God, and to be His revelation to men. For instance in 2 Peter 1: 21 we read: "For the prophecy came not in old time by the will of man: but holy men of God spoke as they were moved by the Holy Ghost."

Man certainly needs a revelation from God because he must face so many problems he can never solve by reason alone. Some of these great questions are: Where did man come from? What must we do to please God? What offends God? What is to become of us in the hereafter? The answers to these questions must come by revelation from God.

There is one great fact concerning which experience and the Bible agree; this is that all men are sinners. You can ask any large congregation of people, "Is there anyone here who has never done anything wrong? Is there anyone here who has never sinned?" No one will maintain that he is perfect and has never sinned. If anyone should say such a thing, others present would condemn him quickly as mistaken, or even worse. Man's conscience agrees with the Bible, which in Romans 3: 23 tells us that all have sinned.

But the questions come: How can we be pardoned? How can we find God's favor? What must we do? Torture ourselves? Give our wealth to God? Offer human sacrifices of our loved ones? What does God require? In the Bible we read: "Wherewith shall I come before the Lord, and bow myself before the high God? Shall I come before Him with burnt offerings, with calves of a year old? Will the Lord be pleased with thousands of rams, or with ten thousands of rivers of oil? Shall I give my firstborn for my transgression, the fruit of my body for the sin of my soul? He has showed thee, O man, what is good; and what does the Lord require of thee, but to do justly, and to love mercy, and to walk humbly with thy God?" Micah 6: 6-8.

On this all-important subject nature is silent. Not a word about salvation comes from the mighty ocean or the beautiful stars. We must have a revelation direct from God, if we are ever to know how to be saved; and the Bible repeatedly claims to be that revelation. In the sacred books of the East we find men talking about God, but in the Bible we hear God talking to man. This wonderful book, the Bible, today is the most widely circulated volume, and speaks in more languages than any other book.

A journalist once wrote, "The French infidel Voltaire is reported to have claimed that in a hundred years the Bible would be an extinct book. Not long ago the library of Earl Dudley was auctioned in a London book store and ninety-two volumes of Voltaire's writings bound in calf were knocked down for the sum of eight shillings. Almost at the same time another transaction was made. The British Government paid the Soviet Union the sum of one hundred thousand pounds for an ancient Bible manuscript." Truly the Word of God endures for ever.

Gory sports, gladiatorial combats, the public sacrifice of hundreds of innocent children on the smoking altars of heathen gods, were a part of than ancient world. Without divine revelation the wisest of Egypt worshipped bulls, dogs, cats, rats, reptiles, and beetles. It is said that a Roman soldier accidentally killed one of their gods, a cat, and was put to death for sacrilege. Even the gods of the classic and cultured Greeks were merely the deified passions, fears, and diseases of men. Their supreme god, Zeus, or Jupiter, was loose in family life. Mars was a murderer, Mercury a thief, Bacchus a drunkard, Venus a wicked woman. These deities were worshipped with ceremonies of lust, drunkenness, and cruelty. Not even the wisest heathen philosophers and teachers were able to rise above this awful darkness.

We are told that Plato taught the expedience of exposing children to the elements. In some cases things that Aristotle taught as lawful would send him to prison today. The Spartans put weak children to death. Other philosophers maintained that it was right for a wise man to steal, to commit adultery, or commit sacrilege when the opportunity offered. Socrates and his associates, despite their learning and influence, by their example and teachings were no better than others. They were wise, but not in righteousness. As the Apostle Paul says in 1 Corinthians 1:21, "The world by wisdom knew not God."

If it is thought that the heathen world of recent centuries is better than it was in the days of Socrates, then look at one country where paganism is rife-India. In the nineteenth century, Christian missionaries found the populace recognizing 330 million gods.

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Intelligent human beings were rendering worship to sacred cows, divine monkeys, adored cats, and holy crocodiles, while widows were being burned to death on the funeral pyres of their husbands. Read the first chapter of Romans. It certainly is not an untrue picture of pagan corruption in all ages. Jesus gave us a good rule to follow: "By their fruits you shall know them." Matthew 7: 20. "Prove all things, hold fast that which is good." 1 Thessalonians 5: 21.

Wherever the Bible has gone it has proved a spiritual antiseptic to counteract pagan corruption. Where do we find the schoolrooms, the colleges, and the hospitals? It is where the light of the Holy Scriptures has shone. Has infidelity ever civilized any nation? Who ever heard of infidels sending out missionaries to enlighten the dark corners of earth? What apostles of infidelity have left home and loved ones to spend life itself in heathen lands to help savage and barbarous tribes? How many hospitals for lepers have they established? Infidels largely have confined their efforts to finding fault with the Bible, and with those who are trying to follow its teachings.

Without doubt the Bible came from God, and it proves itself. It contains many wonderful prophecies made hundreds of years ago which have been fulfilled. In fact, the whole life story of Jesus was written in the prophecies of the Old Testament, long before He was born, and they were fulfilled to the very letter, even to the day and the hour. History proves that the great prophecies of Daniel and Revelation have also been fulfilled.

The Bible claims to be a revelation from God. It contains the very things we need to know, and can never learn apart from a direct revelation from God. Bible prophecies and their wonderful fulfillment prove God's Word to be true. Moreover, history proves that we have the authentic Bible right from the days of the apostles. Therefore, what reasonable man would refuse to give the Scriptures an honest hearing. We invite you one and all to consider the words of the Apostle Paul found in 2 Timothy 2: 15: "Study to show thyself approved unto God, a workman that needs not to be ashamed, rightly dividing the word of truth."

We stress also the words of Christ: "Search the Scriptures; for in them you think you have eternal life: and they are they which testify of Me." John 5: 39.

Prophecies Concerning This Planet

GOD'S promises are prophecies. Why? Because they always come to pass. They are certain. When God promises to do something, it is just as certain that it will be done as if it were already accomplished. Fulfilled promises, or prophecies, of the Bible prove that it is the Word of God. And these fulfilled prophecies of Bible prophets provide testimony that God lives and reigns. The Bible literally is filled with prophecies concerning nations and men, prophecies that have been fulfilled exactly, and that bear the stamp of divine inspiration.

More than a hundred years before Nineveh, the mighty capital of Assyria, was sacked and burned by the allied armies of Nabopolassar of Babylonia and Cyaxares of Media, Assyria was still the greatest power in the world. No one thought it could ever be overthrown. Nahum, God's prophet, had written that Nineveh would be "empty, and void and waste." (Nahum 2:10.) And so it came to pass. These ancient allies destroyed the city so thoroughly that for thousands of years no one knew where the place had been. They had read of such a great city, but no, one on earth knew where it had been located.

When I visited the ruins of Nineveh, I saw excavations that identified its mighty walls. Sheep and cows were feeding in what had been part of the great city. The rest of it was covered with wheat fields and various other farms, with not a sign of a city's having ever been there.

Mighty Babylon, which had overthrown Assyria, was in its very prime when Jeremiah, the prophet of God, dared to foretell its doom in these words: "Babylon shall become heaps ... without an inhabitant." Jeremiah 51: 37.

We visited the ruins of Babylon also. That once great city is nothing now but sand-infested ruins in a desert place. The mighty river Euphrates which used to flow through it is now many miles away.

In the days when Tyre was the greatest naval and shipping power on earth, its island fortress defied the whole world a rid its ships ruled the waves. But through the prophet Ezekiel God declared: "They shall destroy the walls of Tyrus, . . . and make her like the top of a rock. It shall be a place for the spreading of nets in the midst of the sea." Ezekiel 26: 4, 5. With my own eyes I have seen it, and that is

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exactly as it is today. We saw the fishermen with their nets spread out to dry upon the rocks where the mighty city had once stood.

Egypt was a mighty empire—one of the big three, and finally of the big two—to be reckoned with in world affairs. The same prophet said: “It shall be the basest of the kingdoms; neither shall it exalt itself any more above the nations.” Ezekiel 29:15. And so it has been, as we all know.

And there was the beautiful temple of Jerusalem, built by Solomon to the honor of the living God; but because of the apostasy of its worshippers, our Lord Jesus Himself declared: “There shall not be left here one stone upon another, that shall not be thrown down.” Matthew 24: 2.

One may visit Jerusalem today and see the great temple platform, covering about forty acres, on which the temple used to stand. There is not one stone of the temple standing there today, just as Jesus said it would be. Men have attempted to rebuild it, but God’s Word has been fulfilled.

As for the Holy City itself, Jesus said: “Jerusalem shall be trodden down of the Gentiles, until the times of the Gentiles be fulfilled.” Luke 21: 24. This also has come to pass. From the day that the city of Jerusalem fell to the Romans in AD 70, it has been under the control of non-Israelite powers called “Gentiles.” In other words, the nations of this world have controlled it, and still control it today. No wonder H. L. Hastings, that student of prophecy of a generation ago, wrote: “So long as Babylon is in heaps, so long as Nineveh lies empty, void and waste, so long as Egypt is the basest of kingdoms, so long as Tyre is a place for the spreading of nets in the midst of the sea, so long as Israel is scattered among all nations, so long as Jerusalem is trodden under foot of the Gentiles, so long as the great empires of the world march on in their predicted course, so long we have proof that one Omniscient Mind dictated the predictions of that Book, and that ‘prophecy came not in old time by the will of man: but holy men of God spoke as they were moved by the Holy Ghost.’” 2 Peter 1: 21.

So also God’s prophecies of this earth as a planet will all come true. Let us look at some of these prophecies, for they are all interesting to us who live on this planet. Someday this whole earth will be filled with the glory of God. Listen to the words of the prophet Habakkuk: “For the earth shall be filled with the knowledge of the glory of the Lord, as the waters cover the sea.” Habakkuk 2:14.

Another prophecy with almost the same wording is found in Numbers 14: 21: “As truly as I live, all the earth shall be filled with the glory of the Lord.” This isn’t true now. These and several other promises in regard to this planet have not yet been fulfilled, and cannot be fulfilled prior to the coming of Christ. How do we know? From the very fact that the Bible says: “Evil men and seducers shall wax worse and worse, deceiving, and being deceived.” 2 Timothy 3: 13. And according to one of Christ’s parables, even in the church the wheat and the tares are to grow together until the harvest; and “the harvest is the end of the world.” Matthew 13:39

If these promises concerning the earth as a planet have not been fulfilled, and cannot be fulfilled before the close of probation and the coming of Christ, then the time must come when all the saints shall possess the earth, and these promises meet their fulfillment.

As boys, my brother and I were taught the Word of God. Our father, being a minister, was away from home a great deal in evangelistic work. So, in his absence the burden of training us in the things of God fell largely on our mother. She was very faithful and did all she could to teach us a love for, and an understanding of, the holy Word of God. One thing she consistently did was to train us in the memorization of great chapters of the Bible. One of these was the thirty-seventh psalm. I remember how difficult it was to learn, because its verses are all separate statements of truth. They do not seem to be connected one with the other as in most Bible passages, yet each one is a jewel. I am so glad that she continued her efforts until we actually memorized every verse of that tremendous chapter. The thirty-seventh psalm contains prophecies of the restoration of this planet.

As we see the power of wicked men and their influence in the world, we may be tempted to conclude that it never can be broken. The prophet said: “I have seen the wicked in great power, and spreading himself like a green bay tree.” Psalm 37: 35.

We, too, can say that we have seen it in our day. Sin seems to march on to victory. We know that the end of it is ruin and death for men and for the world, but still on it goes. However, God has decreed that sin shall cease to exist. He has prophesied that it will, and His prophecy will come true. The time will come when there will be no more sin, and therefore no more death, no more pain, no more war, no more evil in this world. Although a man may seem to prosper in his evil doings, the psalmist-prophet continues: “Yet he passed away, and, lo, he was not: yea, I sought him, but he could not be found.” Verse 36.

It is good for us to remember the first verses of this chapter: “Fret not thyself because of evildoers,

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neither be thou envious against the workers of iniquity. For they shall soon be cut down like the grass, and wither as the green herb." Verses 1, 2. The final destruction of sin and sinners is certain. All who have not found salvation by grace through faith in Jesus Christ are on dangerous ground today and every day. Only His imputed and imparted righteousness can bring the salvation for which our souls really hunger, though we may not know it.

Speaking of those who walk by faith, those who in the Scriptures are called the "righteous," the prophecy continues: "For evildoers shall be cut off: but those that wait upon the Lord, they shall inherit the earth." Verse 9.

Notice this prophecy of the earth as a planet: The righteous shall inherit the earth;" not some vague, unknown, unknowable, strange, mystical heaven, "beyond the bounds of time and space," as one man said, but something real. "They shall inherit the earth."

Continuing the same thought in verse 11, the psalmist said: "The meek shall inherit the earth; and shall delight themselves in the abundance of peace." And again: "For such as be blessed of Him [that is, of God] shall inherit the earth; and they that be cursed of Him shall be cut off." "The righteous shall inherit the land, and dwell therein for ever." Verses 22, 29.

This cutting off of the wicked refers to their destruction. In verse 10 we read: "For yet a little while, and the wicked shall not be: yea, thou shall diligently consider his place, and it shall not be.

Even the lake of fire, into which the wicked will be cast, will pass away. There will be no sign of it, no memory of the wicked for ever. God will have no moral cesspool in His universe, no place where sin, or its punishing, will be immortalized.

The way in which the wicked will be cut off is described in verse 20: "The wicked shall perish, and the enemies of the Lord shall be as the fat of lambs: they shall consume; into smoke shall they consume away." Read this entire thirty-seventh psalm Memorize it, and you will learn a great deal about how the world will be purified of all sin and sinners and come forth before the admiring eyes of the redeemed as their eternal home, pure and lovely as Eden was in the beginning.

In Jesus' Sermon on the Mount He said to His entranced listeners: "Blessed are the meek: for they shall inherit the earth." Matthew 5:5. Notice, this is a direct statement of Christ's. "They shall inherit the earth." This is certainly not true today, therefore it will be true in the future, for all God's promises are prophecies. They cannot fail.

The earth today shows the marks of sin. It is covered with graveyards and battlefields. Its hospitals filled with suffering and pain are everywhere, and are necessary for the care of the sick and the dying. Storms, tidal waves, earthquakes, epidemics, great fires and floods rage on the surface of our earth. The very atmosphere becomes infected with the smog of industry and the radioactive materials of atomic and hydrogen fission. But in spite of its broken and desolated surfaces, the earth still has many places of beauty, and life can be pleasant. There is much to be desired. Yet think what it will be like when it comes forth from the creative hand of God, completely renewed as it was in the beginning when He said that it was very good.

Do not misunderstand me-there is a heaven where God dwells, and where the children of the Lord will be taken when Christ returns at His second advent. But in due course they will return to this earth, the very place where sin first appeared in the heart and home of man. The very place where prophets and apostles bore their messages of warning and salvation; where Jesus came and lived, the very earth He trod; where He finally died on Calvary's cross; the earth which received His blood on the hill of Golgotha. This same earth is to be honored with the presence of the Holy City, with the Savior Himself, and with the people of God.

The prophet Isaiah proclaimed this wonderful promise for our planet and penned these beautiful words of God Himself: "Behold, I create new heavens and a new earth: and the former shall not be remembered, nor come into mind. But be you glad and rejoice for ever in that which I create: for, behold, I create Jerusalem a rejoicing, and her people a joy." Isaiah 65:17,18.

The evil of past days in this old earth will not oppress the mind or cause worry and sorrow to the inhabitants of that earth made new. They will see all the events of this world as in the providence of God, leading to the salvation of souls. They will recognize God's hand in His providence as they cannot now see it. They will rejoice in their salvation, and gladness will fill the world. So today we ought to be happy and joyful when we think of the wonderful future of this planet. And also we ought to heed the command of the apostle found in 2 Peter 3: 13, 14: "Nevertheless we, according to His promise, look for new heavens and a new earth, wherein dwells righteousness. Wherefore, beloved, seeing that you look for such things, be

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diligent that you may be found of Him in peace, without spot, and blameless.”

So, friends, let us look for these things, and let us indeed be diligent that we may be found of Him in peace at His returning, and by His redeeming grace prepared for a home with the holy and the good of all ages and with our blessed Savior, whom having not seen, we love.

The Miracle Man of Prophec4

WHEN the mutineers of the Bounty landed on Pitcairn Island, they had only two books with them—a prayer book and a Bible. There was not a converted man or woman among them. As time passed, John Adams, the leader, read the Bible and found Christ in it. He became transformed. This Bible became the only statute book for the island. Under its influence, the little colony also became transformed. Today all on the island look to Christ as their Savior, as a result of reading the Word of God.

In the Old Testament, the New Testament is concealed, and in the New Testament, the Old Testament is revealed. Very few realize that there are more than three hundred prophecies and references to Christ in the Old Testament, which are mentioned in the New Testament as predictions fulfilled in Him. Not one of those predictions could have been written after Christ’s time, because between the Old and the New Testaments is a gap of four hundred years, during which no prophecies were recorded. This period of silence makes sure that those who wrote the prophecies could have had no hand in bringing them to pass. Man cannot reach across a gap of four centuries, either for good or for evil purposes. And these three hundred predictions of the Old Testament concerning Christ could not by accident “just happen” to focus upon one man, in one place, at one time.

Centuries before the Christian era, the prophets of the Old Testament gave the world these prophecies concerning the coming of the Messiah, His work, His life, His death, etc. These predictions went into the details of His trial, crucifixion, and burial, half a millennium before He was born.

The law of compound probability tells us that these predictions consisting of three hundred particulars, had one chance out of eighty-four followed by one hundred ciphers of being fulfilled. Yet, believe it or not, not one failed! Against such stupendous chances of failure they came true to the very letter. Truly “holy men of God spoke as they were moved by the Holy Ghost.”

It is easy to see the truthfulness of this statement when we consider the infinite accuracy of prophetic prediction, for it is far beyond the ken of man. “Thou, Bethlehem Ephrathah, though thou be little among the thousands of Judah, yet out of thee shall He come forth unto Me that is to be ruler in Israel; whose goings forth have been from of old, from everlasting.” Micah 5: 2. This prophecy was written about 710 BC. Seven hundred years before Jesus was born, the very town in which this miracle would happen was named.

Out of the countless cities, towns, and villages in all the world, Micah placed his finger on that little village of Bethlehem, about eight miles from Jerusalem, and declared that this was the place where the long-looked-for Messiah was to be born.

Mary, the mother of Jesus, lived in Nazareth, which is about seventy miles north of Bethlehem. Seventy miles then meant a four-day journey. If you had lived in Nazareth even a few weeks before the birth of Jesus, you would have said, “Since Nazareth is Mary’s home, her son will be born in Nazareth.” But seven hundred years beforehand, as God looked ahead through the distant centuries, He directed Micah to write that Christ’s birth would take place not at Nazareth, but at Bethlehem.

What happened? At the exact time, a decree came from Caesar Augustus at Rome, which caused Mary to journey from Nazareth to Bethlehem, which resulted in Christ’s being born at the place appointed of God seven centuries beforehand. Surely “God moves in a mysterious way His wonders to perform.”

A biography usually tells something about the person’s parents. So the prophet Isaiah, seven hundred years before Jesus was born, made this prediction concerning Jesus’ mother: “The Lord Himself shall give you a sign; Behold, a virgin shall conceive, and bear a son, and shall call His name Emmanuel.” Isaiah 7: 14.

In fulfillment of this prophecy, Jesus was born of the Virgin Mary. Some persons find great difficulty in accepting the doctrine of the virgin birth of Christ. But when one notes that the prophecy declared beforehand that thus it would be, and also remembers that Bible prophecy always is fulfilled with exactness, it becomes easy to believe the words of Scripture found in Matthew 1:18-25 about His virgin

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birth.

But someone says: "Such a thing seems impossible, and nobody can understand how it could be." This is no reason to doubt it. It seems impossible that any man could speak into a microphone and his voice be heard ten thousand miles away. Nobody really understands how it is done. But we accept it as a commonplace fact today. No one can explain electricity, but we all believe in it, and we all use it. Nobody would want to be deprived of electricity, or do without it, just because he could not explain it. If one will be as reasonable about the virgin birth, it will trouble him no more.

Prophecy foretold seven centuries beforehand that the Messiah and Savior would come from the family of David. (See Isaiah 11:1.) Every reader of the gospel story is aware of the fact that Jesus was known as the Son of David.

In Daniel 9: 25 God foretold the time when the Messiah would begin His public work among men. The exact year when He would step out of that carpenter shop at Nazareth and begin His ministry was clearly pointed out. It was to be 69 prophetic weeks, or 483 literal years, from "the going forth of the commandment to restore and to build Jerusalem." This decree concerning Jerusalem's reconstruction was given in 457 BC. The allotted period of 69 weeks from this year 457 BC brings us to the autumn of AD 27, when Jesus was baptized by John and began His ministry.

Everybody knows that Jesus was betrayed by one of His own disciples, named Judas Iscariot. But did you know that prophecy foretold this one thousand years beforehand? This is found in Psalm 41: 9.

One thousand years beforehand, even when death by crucifixion was unknown, the Bible foretold how persecutors would pierce the Messiah's body. Psalm 22: 16 says: "They pierced My hands and My feet."

In twelve verses of Isaiah 53, the doctrine of vicarious sacrifice for sin is announced fourteen times: "He hath borne our grief," "carried our sorrows," "was wounded for our transgressions," "was bruised for our iniquities," "the chastisement of our peace was upon Him," "with His stripes we are healed," "the Lord hath laid upon Him the iniquity of us all. Thou shall make His soul an offering for sin," "by His knowledge shall My righteous servant justify many," "He shall bear their iniquities."

This chapter is also a bundle of paradoxes, or apparent contradictions—one for every verse of the chapter—yet every one has been proved true. "He is a root out of a dry ground, yet fruitful: He has no form nor beauty, yet is the chosen servant of God. He is despised of man, yet is appointed our Savior; He suffers death, yet lives; He has no offspring, yet has countless spiritual posterity. He makes His grave with the wicked, yet is buried in the sepulchre of the rich. He suffers adversity, yet enjoys prosperity; He is triumphed over, yet He triumphs. He is despoiled, yet He despoils; He is cut off in the midst of His days, yet He prolongs His days. He is condemned Himself, yet He justifies the condemned."

These things could not be understood until Jesus died upon the cross, arose from Joseph's new tomb, and ascended to reign at the right hand of God. However, they were fulfilled in Jesus of Nazareth that we might have a sure and immovable basis for our faith in Him as our only Savior. In telling His disciples beforehand who should betray Him, Jesus said: "Now I tell you before it come, that, when it is come to pass, you may believe that I am He." John 13:19.

Christ used these prophecies to confirm the faith of His disciples when they were overcome with doubt and discouragement. "Beginning at Moses and all the prophets, He expounded unto them in all the Scriptures the things concerning Himself." Luke 24:27. Zechariah's prophecy pointed out, five centuries before the Messiah was due to appear before men, the exact price that Judas would receive for his Lord—thirty pieces of silver—the exact place where finally, in remorse, he would throw his money down, and the exact use to which his money would be put.

Notice carefully this prophecy of Zechariah 11:12,13: "And I said unto them, If you think good, give me my price; and if not, forbear. So they weighed for my price thirty pieces of silver. And the Lord said unto me, Cast It unto the potter: a goodly price that I was priced at of them. And I took the thirty pieces of silver, and cast them to the potter in the house of the Lord." How wonderfully all this was fulfilled in the life of Jesus. He was sold for thirty pieces of silver; in his remorse Judas went to the temple to hand the money back to the priests, but they refused to take it. Then he threw it on the temple floor, and went out and hanged himself. He cast it down just where the prophecy, five hundred years before, said he would.

The priests said to one another, "What shall we do with this money?" It seems that the suggestion was made to put it in the treasury. If they had done this, the Bible would not be a true Book. It had been written that this money would be cast to the potter. The priests finally agreed that they would use the

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money to buy a potter's field to bury strangers in. This was exactly what the prophecy said they would do with this money.

As Jesus hung upon the cross, and the moment drew near for Him to give up His life, He knew that every detail of the prophecies concerning Him had been fulfilled up to this time, except the item mentioned in Psalm 69: 21: "In My thirst they gave Me vinegar to drink." Note what they offered Him to drink as recorded in John 19: 29, 30. "Now there was set a vessel full of vinegar: and they filled a sponge with vinegar, and put it upon hyssop, and put it to His mouth." They held up before Him the very liquid which the prophecy had designated one thousand years earlier. When this last detail of prophecy referring to His earthly life had been fulfilled, Jesus said: "It is finished: and He bowed His head," and died for you and for me.

As we trace the fulfillment of these predictions we can see the over-ruling providence of God. The soldiers broke the legs of the two thieves who were crucified with Jesus; when they came to Jesus, they did not break His legs. Why not? What hindered them from doing it? "He was dead already." John 19: 33. In this we see God's hand fulfilling two more prophecies. (1) Christ's death was due to a broken heart, in fulfillment of Psalm 69:20, and (2) as the anti-type of the Passover lamb, none of His bones were to be broken. (Exodus 12:46; Psalm 34:20; John 19:36.)

The Scriptures foretold what disposal was to be made of His garments: "They part My garments among them, and cast lots upon My vesture." Psalm 22: 18. In dividing the garments of Jesus among the soldiers, the seamless coat was left over. How was this to be divided? To tear it would be to ruin it. "They said therefore among themselves, Let us not rend it, but cast lots for it, whose it shall be: that the Scripture might be fulfilled, which said, They parted My raiment among them, and for My vesture they did cast lots. These things therefore the soldiers did." John 19: 24. If they had torn that garment into pieces, the Bible would not be a true Book. The prophecy had said that they would distribute His garments among them, and cast lots for His vesture; and this is what finally they agreed to do.

The enemies of Christ expected to bury Him among criminals; but in the providence of God, Joseph of Arimathea, a wealthy and influential Jew, went to Pilate and obtained permission to bury Jesus in his own new tomb. Thus the Savior made His grave with the rich in fulfillment of Isaiah 53: 9.

God so ordered affairs that not the minutest prophetic detail failed, that we should have an unshakable foundation for our faith in the Messiah. The biography of a great man of the world is brought to an end when it gives the account of his death, because there is nothing more for the biographer to record. But this prophetic biography of Christ is unique, not only in that it was all written hundreds of years before He came to earth, but also because it traces His career beyond the tomb.

The prophecies predicted that Christ would be resurrected from the tomb before His body saw corruption. (Psalm 16:10.) Do you know that God actually caused it to be recorded centuries beforehand that the Christ would be raised the third day? Look at Hosea 6: 2. "After two days will He revive us: in the third day He will raise us up, and we shall live in His sight." David foretold Christ's ascension to the Father, and His reception in the Holy City above. (Psalm 24: 7-10.) Prophecy even foretold the very place He should occupy on the Father's right hand as man's great High Priest. (Psalm 110:1; Zechariah 6:13.)

Thus we have in prophecy a complete, though brief, biography of Jesus Christ, including His crucifixion, resurrection, ascension, and priestly mediation. This is incontrovertible evidence that Jesus is the only true Messiah, the Son of God.

The fulfillment of these wonderful prophecies of Christ is a double argument. It absolutely proves, first, that the Old Testament is an inspired Book, and second, that Jesus is the Son of God. The prophecies move as in procession before the person of Christ, and like soldiers, salute Him as their General-in-chief. He to whom they thus pay homage, must be none other than He "whose goings forth have been from of old, from everlasting." To Him give all the prophets witness. Their witness cannot be ignored by those who are truly thoughtful.

Prediction joins prediction in one great chorus: "Hallelujah, for the Lord God Omnipotent reigns." And as the final outcome of prophecy is disclosed, the Promised Seed of the Woman, and the crucified Christ is seen to be King of kings and Lord of lords.

How Big Is God?

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I AM Alpha and Omega, the beginning and the ending, said the Lord, which is, and which was and which is to come, the Almighty.” Revelation 1:8. This is the answer to our question, “How big is God?” He is the Alpha and Omega or, as we would say, the A and the Z, the beginning and the ending. He was ‘ He is, and He is to be. He is the Almighty. The Bible says that even the heaven of heavens cannot contain God (1 Kings 8:27), so how much less can our hearts understand and fully explain Him. “Can thou by searching find out God? Can thou find out the Almighty unto perfection? It is as high as heaven; what can thou do? Deeper than hell; what can thou know? The measure thereof is longer than the earth, and broader than the sea.” Job 11: 7-9. No human mind can measure God. The most accurate instrument made possible by our electronic science cannot tell us how great God is. They can show us some of His works. They can reveal a little of His power and wisdom. But they cannot answer the question, “How big is God?”

We read: “In the beginning God created the heaven and the earth.” Genesis 1: 1. He is the Creator. Therefore He is bigger than His creation. By, “bigness” we mean His wisdom, His power, His understanding, His glory. The Bible says, and this is the Word of God Himself: “Thus said the high and lofty One that inhabits eternity, whose name is Holy. I dwell in the high and holy place, with him also that is of a contrite and humble spirit, to revive the spirit of the humble, and to revive the heart of the contrite ones.” Isaiah 57: 15.

God is big. He created the whole universe. He lighted the torches of the sky. We see His glory in the revolutions of the planets and in the shining of the stars. We hear a little whisper of His power in the solemn march of the constellations of unnumbered universes. He inhabits eternity. Every moment of duration, from the eternal past to the eternal future, is in the hands of God. The further modern science probes into what seems to be the endless depths of space, the greater God grows in the minds of men. The bigger the flaming suns, the vaster the island universes of stars, the greater we see God to be.

God challenges men to look at His glory-to point their telescopes upward, their electronic microscopes downward. “TO whom then will you liken Me, or shall I be equal? said the Holy One. Lift up your eyes on high, and behold who hath created these things, that brings out their host by number: He calls them all by names by the greatness of His might, for that He is strong in power; not one fails.” Isaiah 40:25, 26.

How big is God? Listen: “Has thou not known? has thou not heard, that the everlasting God, the Lord, the Creator of the ends of the earth, fains not, neither is weary? there is no searching of His understanding.” Verse 28.

But He dwells not only in the infinitely great of the universe. He dwells in the heart of every true believer; not only “in the high and holy place [but], with him also that is of a contrite and humble spirit.” (Isaiah 57:15.) Why? What does He do in the heart of man? “He gives power to the faint; and to them that have no might He increases strength. Even the youths shall faint and be weary, and the young men shall utterly fall: but they that wait upon the Lord shall renew their strength; they shall mount up with wings as eagles; they shall run, and not be weary; and they shall walk, and not faint.” Isaiah 40: 29-31.

Jesus said that not one sparrow can fall to the ground without the notice of God. (Matthew 10: 29.) And the prophet Daniel declares that nations rise and fall because there is a God in heaven who foresees and overrules. (Daniel 2: 21; 4: 25.) It was Benjamin Franklin who declared: “God governs in the affairs of men, and if a sparrow cannot fall to the ground without His notice, neither can a kingdom rise without His aid.” The Bible says that, in the sight of God, “the nations are as a drop of a bucket.” Isaiah 40: 15. It also says that “The king’s heart is in the hand of the Lord.” Proverbs 21:1.

How big is God? He is big enough to create a mighty universe, which is so vast that it is far beyond our imagination. God is big enough to know all about little things, even about us. God is big enough to guide the most tremendous sun in some far-off stellar universe. He is also big enough to control the tiniest electron in its constant vibrations. The Bible says that His wisdom is infinite. (Psalm 146: 5.) He is interested also in individuals, for it was Job who said: “He knows the way that I take.” Job 23: 10.

God also is a God of love. “For God so loved the world, that He gave His only begotten Son, that whosoever believes in Him should not perish, but have everlasting life.” John 3:16. God is a God of wisdom, a God of knowledge, a God of will, a God of understanding which is infinite, and a God of love. Therefore, He is a person.

God is over all things. We call this transcendence. The Bible says that God “is over all, blessed for ever.” (Romans 9: 5.) He is apart in the universe, but reigns as a personal Creator. If every bit of this universe should be extinguished, and every living thing disappear, still there would be, eternal in the heavens, the Being we designate as God.

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Then, beyond that, God is everywhere. We cannot understand it, but there is no place where He is not. This is the immanence of God. His habits, His thoughts, we might call the laws of nature. They are the way God does things. We should be able to see His handiwork and His character in His creation, though it has been marred by human sin and rebellion.

Nature is not now perfect as it once was, neither is the mind of man to see and understand it. Therefore, God has given another revelation in the Holy Scriptures, and still another in the person of Jesus Christ. He came to show us God, to reveal God, to do the work of God, and to win us back to God. In Christ, God is in the world, "reconciling the world unto Himself." (2 Corinthians 5: 19.)

God is not merely the God of the abstract, the God of thought, the God of philosophy. He is something more than that. He is our God, the God of every living being. Pascal, the great French genius and philosopher, a man of romantic greatness, considered this his greatest discovery. As a young man he had made a study of physics, and discovered the law of fluid pressure, still known in scientific circles as Pascal's law. He will always have a place among the leading scientists of the world. Some time before his death, he wrote on a piece of paper his answer to the question, "What is your greatest discovery?" and sewed it in his clothing and wore it next to his heart. It was found there after his death. Those who knew little about his life were amazed to learn the words on that piece of paper. They were these: "My greatest discovery is that God is not the God of philosophy, but He is the God of Abraham, the God of Isaac, the God of Jacob, and the God of Jesus." In these troublous times, how often we need to hear the words of Jesus: "Let not your heart be troubled; you believe in God." John 14: 1. As any little boy or girl has perfect confidence and trust in his or her father and mother, and feels absolutely safe when with them, so we should be in the presence of God-and we are always in His presence.

Do not try, my friend, to carry the burden of the world. Let God hold up the world. Do not worry yourself about the nations, the winds, the billows of the sea, or even the erratic, unpredictable minds of men. Leave everything in the hands of God. Do your duty where you are, remembering the words of the ancient one who said, "Thou God sees me." (Genesis 16: 13.)

When I was a lad of about fourteen, I heard a sermon by Bishop Quayle of the Methodist Episcopal Church, and I have never forgotten it. Such a winsome and mighty preacher one seldom hears. He told of a night when he was sitting alone in his study, worrying desperately about the affairs of this world. He was torturing himself with anxiety. "Along about midnight," he said, "it seemed that God came to me and said, 'Quayle, you go to bed now. I'll sit up the rest of the night.'"

Let us cast our cares upon Him, for He cares for us. (1 Peter 5: 7.) During some of the darkest days of the Reformation in Europe, Martin Luther wrote to his friend Melancthon, saying: "I am against those worrying cares that are taking the heart out of you. Why make God a liar in not believing His wonderful promises, when He commands us to be of good cheer and cast all our cares upon Him, for He will sustain us? Do you think He throws such words to the winds? What more can the devil do than slay us? Christ has died for sin, once for all; but for righteousness He will not die, but live and reign. Why then worry, seeing He is at the helm? He who has been our Father will also be the Father of our children. As for me, whether it proceed from God's Spirit or my stupidity-my Lord Jesus knows-I do not torment myself about such matters."

And we know that it was not Luther's stupidity. It was the presence of God with him; the God who has thought things through from the beginning to the end, who knows the future as well as the past, who goes with us through the darkness as well as the light, and will see us through to the consummation of His final purpose.

The Bible says that it is the Lord our God "which stretches forth the heavens, and lays the foundation of the earth, and forms the spirit of man within him." Zechariah 12: 1. We see evidence of the bigness of God in the heavens above us, in the world about us, and in the mind of man within us. These are three great proofs of God.

Yes, go to Mount Palomar in California, or to any observatory, and look out into the heavens and study there the greatness of God. Go into the laboratory and gaze through the electronic microscope and see the power and wisdom of God in the minute things of the world about you. But above all, look deep into your own heart and hear there the voice of God, your Creator, saying: "I formed you. Before you were born I knew you and planned for you. You have sinned against My righteousness, but I love you and will redeem you, if you will turn your will toward Me."

"I have loved thee with an everlasting love: therefore with loving kindness have I drawn thee." Jeremiah 31: 3. And so, friend, let us turn homeward. There's a light in God's window shining for

us.

Why Do the Innocent Suffer?

WHY do the innocent suffer? Did a good God make a bad world? Why are the evil, and sin, and suffering in this world permitted by God? Why doesn't God destroy the devil? In trying to answer these questions, various people at various times have given different answers.

First, many have denied that there is a God. Such people are called atheists. But there are too many evidences of God's existence in the universe about us, and within us, to ever let atheism get a very strong hold on the thinkers of the world.

Others have denied the concept of this world itself; that is, they say that this entire universe is just a gigantic illusion. So is all the suffering which is the lot of human beings. There is nothing to it, they say. But too many people suffer, to let this idea become very widespread.

And then there are those who deny that God made the world bad, but say that He found it bad, and is trying His best to make it over into a better world. That was the view of H. G. Wells, and others, who taught the idea of a limited God.

The fourth class also deny that God made the world bad. They say that He made it good, as the Scriptures declare. At the end of the six days of creation, God beheld His work and said it was "very good." (Genesis 1: 31.) This last group of people say that evil, or something called sin, came into the universe and perverted its original condition. They say that God is permitting that sort of thing while He is working out a great plan, which, when finished, will bring the world back to His original program. Therefore, it would not be wise for us to judge the efficiency of this plan of God's for the regeneration of the universe from the experiences that we have while the plan is still incomplete; and this, we believe, is the Christian's concept.

The Holy Scriptures tell us that all the evil in our world is the result of sin. Sin is rebellion by free moral beings against God's plan. Christianity teaches that God is a God of love. He also is a God of justice and of perfect righteousness. He hates sin, but sin is the only thing in the universe that He does hate. In order to show its hideousness, He must let it go on developing, bringing its inevitable consequences, so that all the universe-not only this world and angels, but the unfallen worlds above us and about us-may see that God truly is love, and that all sin and rebellion bring only misery, and sorrow, and death. Sin is the real cause of all pain past, present, and yet to come-the cause of every tear, and every heartache.

My friends, God is not governing the world arbitrarily. He is governing it through love. He could have smitten sin out of existence, together with all the sinners in whose hearts it grew, including Lucifer. But, had He done so, He would have been looked upon as a tyrant, and the seed of insecurity and doubt would still have been in the universe. But, when God's plan is finally completed, there will be no doubt, and "affliction shall not rise up the second time." (Nahum 1: 9.)

Someone may say: "Well, what would cause a free, happy being to enter upon a course of deliberate rebellion against his Creator, anyway? How hopeless and foolish such a warfare would be!" We cannot give all the reasons for this rebellion. If we could, we would have an excuse for it. All we can say is that the first sinner abused the high freedom which the Creator had given him. All God's created beings are free moral agents. God is no tyrant, no dictator. He is our heavenly Father, and as the Scriptures declare, "He is love."

The whole plan of redemption, including the death of the divine Son of God, is simply a phase of the plan of God for dealing with the moral disease of the universe. The death of One equal with God was the only means His divine wisdom could devise for curing the disease of sin. And finally, out of this troubled world will come the "new earth wherein dwells righteousness." (2 Peter 3:11) This final redemption will include a clean, happy universe, filled with free and immortal beings, still retaining the power of choice.

God's wisdom is rapidly working out the vindication of His plan. The fault is with men, not with God. We must remember the words of Abraham: "Shall not the judge of all the earth do right?" Genesis 18: 25. "For God so loved the world, that He gave His only begotten Son, that whosoever believes in Him should not perish, but have everlasting life." John 3: 16.

No man can say, "I was lost because God permitted sin to come." God has made full provision for

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the salvation of every being. If finally we are lost, it will be our own fault, not God's. However, the innocent do suffer-by the guilty, with the guilty, and for the guilty. Christ Himself is the greatest example of this. On the cross He suffered for the guilty, "the just for the unjust."

It is not true, then, that all the suffering that comes to people is because of their personal misdeeds. Many children suffer because of the misdeeds of their parents or others. Every generation inherits confusion, difficulty, and suffering from the follies and crimes of the ages preceding it. There is the law of cause and effect. We read in the Scriptures, "Be not deceived; God is not mocked: for whatsoever a man sows, that shall he also reap." Galatians 6:7. Children inevitably suffer the consequences of parental wrongdoing, but they are not punished for the parents guilt unless they partake of their sins.

There is also the law of heredity. "The Lord is long suffering, and of great mercy, forgiving iniquity and transgression, and by no means clearing the guilty, visiting the iniquity of the fathers upon the children unto the third and fourth generation." Numbers 14:18. From ancient times, men have wondered why God permits the innocent to suffer at the hands of wicked men. But friends, don't think that God is indifferent to all their suffering. Proverbs 17:5 tells us that "who so mocks the poor reproaches his Maker: and he that is glad at calamities shall not be unpunished." They will be punished, but when? Not always in this world. But there is a judgment coming in which things will be brought to rights.

God does not settle everything with men in this life, you know, but sometimes people ask, "Why aren't wrongdoers cut off before this time of judgment?" The Apostle Peter tells us why. He says, "The Lord is not slack concerning His promise, as some men count slackness; but is long suffering to us-ward, not willing that any should perish, but that all should come to repentance." 2 Peter 3: 9.

You will remember that God delayed the Flood so that the wicked in that day might repent. So, today, He is giving extra time to the world. He gives extra time to individuals. He is longsuffering, not willing that any should perish, but giving more opportunity for repentance.

Then, too, the Lord reveals His sympathy for the afflicted. He says: "As one whom his mother comforts, so will I comfort you." Isaiah 66: 13. The Psalmist declared, "In my distress I called upon the Lord, and cried unto my God: He heard my voice out of His temple, and my cry came before Him, even unto His ears." Psalm 18: 6. "The Lord also will be a refuge for the oppressed, a refuge in times of trouble." Psalm 9: 9. Millions can testify to the truth that in this world with its disturbing and perplexing problems, and amid the clouds of trouble that sometimes assail us, God will be a refuge.

Yes, He is a refuge to His people. So do not be discouraged because you cannot understand the perplexing problem of why so many must suffer, apparently unjustly. Job wondered about it, too. He couldn't understand it. When so many troubles came upon him, although he had attempted to be a righteous man, his wife said, "Curse God, and die." (Job 2: 9.) Job didn't attempt to understand all the mysteries of God's providence, but only said, "Though He slay me, yet will I trust in Him." Job 13: 15.

One ancient servant of 'the Lord's said that when he saw the prosperity of the wicked, his feet almost slipped. (Psalm 73: 2, 3.) He saw the wicked in prosperity. He saw good men suffer. And he was almost discouraged, he said, until he went into the sanctuary of God. Then he understood their end. (Psalm 73: 17.)

There he saw that God doesn't make full settlement at the end of every year. But God's plans, when fully worked out, will bring full, complete, and impartial justice. There in the sanctuary of God he saw revealed the plan of redemption. He saw revealed this age and the age to come. He saw Christ's sacrifice for sin. He saw the final end of the wicked. And, seeing things as God sees them, his heart again was filled with trust, he saw that all God's plans are right, and what had seemed reproof was love most true. He saw the great truth that the Apostle Paul expressed in Romans 8: 28: "We know that all things work together for good to them that love God, to them who are the called according to His purpose."

No, we cannot understand this always, but we can believe it. Many of God's people have been oppressed during the ages, but they looked forward to final deliverance. The Apostle James urges: "Be patient therefore, brethren, unto the coming of the Lord. Behold, the husbandman waits for the precious fruit of the earth, and hath long patience for it, until he receive the early and latter rain. Be you also patient; establish your hearts: for the coming of the Lord draws nigh." James 5: 7, 8. When this event transpires, the sorrow of the righteous will be turned into joy. (John 16: 20.)

Great changes will follow the Second Coming of Christ. Moral evil will be eliminated from the universe. "Behold, I make all things new. And I saw a new heaven and a new earth [says the revelator]: for the first heaven and the first earth were passed away." Revelation 21:1,5. This will mean Eden restored. There will be no hurt, no pain, no death, because there is no sin. God's plan for the human race finally will

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be fulfilled. There will be a clean universe with a clean race, immortal, undying. Amongst the changes then to be seen will be the elimination of all physical afflictions. "Then the eyes of the blind shall be opened, and the ears of the deaf shall be unstopped. Then shall the lame man leap as an hart, and the tongue of the dumb sing." Isaiah 35: 5, 6.

Nature itself will be restored. "Because the creature itself also shall be delivered from the bondage of corruption into, the glorious liberty of the children of God." Romans 8:21. "Behold, I create new heavens and a new earth: and the former shall not be remembered, nor come into mind." Isaiah 65: 17.

But the most convincing evidence of all will be the complete elimination of suffering from nature and from the experience of mankind, for "God shall wipe away all tears from their eyes. And there shall be no more death, neither sorrow, nor crying, neither shall there be any more pain: for the former things are passed away." Revelation 21:4.

We now are living in the midst of those "former things." We know that all suffering is the result of sin, direct or indirect. We find the answers to some of our questions revealed in Holy Scriptures; others we still wonder about. As we read in Deuteronomy 29:29, "The secret things belong unto the Lord our God: but those things which are revealed belong unto us." But, in the new world which is to come, when all the shadows of this life have passed away, the Lord Jesus Christ will be our teacher. Then we will see as God sees, and look back upon this present experience with a fuller knowledge, and we shall see that all God's plans were right. We shall then join with all intelligent beings of the universe in saying: "Just and true are Thy ways, Thou King of the ages." Revelation 15:3, A.R.V.

Sky City Sighted

TWO cities with the same name dominate the Bible story. No city is mentioned so often in Holy Writ as Jerusalem. Some students believe that it is first identified with the city of Salem, of King Melchizedek, mentioned in Genesis 14: 18. Later on it was called Jebus, belonging to the Jebusites. (Judges 10: 10, II.) From these two names, Jebus and Salem, came the name Jerusalem. In the days of its earliest existence, it was made sacred by Abraham's trial of faith in the offering of Isaac (Genesis 22), and the descendants of Abraham have looked upon the city with reverence ever since.

When it was captured by the Babylonians, and its inhabitants were carried into captivity, they wept when they remembered Zion, which is another name for Jerusalem. They hung their harps upon the willows and ceased to sing. (Psalm 137:2-4.)

The city was very strong from a military point of view and held out against the attacks of the Israelites in the days of Joshua. Finally it was stormed and taken by David (2 Samuel 5: 7), and often after that it was called "the city of David." There his son, King Solomon, built the glorious temple to the one true and living God, and there the Lord revealed Himself to His people. We read in Jeremiah 17:25 that, had the inhabitants of Jerusalem remained true to God the city would have stood for ever. But, on account of their Sabbath-breaking and consequent idolatry "till there was no remedy," the wrath of God arose against it. (2 Chronicles 36:16.)

You see, the Sabbath commandment, which is one of the Ten Commandments, is based upon the fact that the God of heaven created the world in six days and rested on the seventh. Had people always kept this fact in mind, there never would have been an idol worshipper or an atheist. Through the ages it has been Satan's studied effort to obscure the Sabbath so that people would be led into error, become idolatrous, and forget the Creator, the living God of heaven.

After the Israelites had been in captivity in Babylon for seventy years, some of them returned from exile and rebuilt Jerusalem. Into this rebuilt city Jesus came, having been born in Bethlehem, just a few miles to the south. There He preached His mighty sermons, healed the sick, opened the eyes of the blind, caused the deaf to hear and the dumb to speak. God had given many blessings to His people and to the city of Jerusalem. It was the very center of His truth, and it was His plan that from here the light of truth would go out to all the world. Had God's people been faithful to Him, they would have become the leading nation of earth. We read this in the twenty-eighth chapter of the Book of Deuteronomy.

And God's servant, Moses, also predicted that if they should disobey the commandments of God, they would be scattered into all the world. At the close of this chapter there is recorded a vision of future destruction. Here are the words of the prophet Moses: "The Lord shall bring a nation against thee from far,

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from the end of the earth, as swift as the eagle flieth; a nation whose tongue thou shalt not understand; a nation of fierce countenance, which shall not regard the person of the old, nor show favour to the young.” Deuteronomy 28: 49, 50.

When our Savior’s feet trod the streets of Jerusalem, this prophecy was about to be fulfilled. He foresaw it and did all He could to turn the people back to God in order to avert the terrible destruction that was hovering over them. He performed His wonderful miracles, gave His stirring appeals, preached as no man ever preached before or since. As our Savior’s ministry was about to close, He attended His last Passover in Jerusalem, just before His death upon the cross outside the gate of the city.

Zion was a beautiful city then, with its temple like a mountain of snow crowned with gold, and the great palaces of Herod. Surely, as the prophet said, it was the joy of the whole earth, one of the most beautiful cities the world has ever known. People would come from afar to offer their sacrificial lambs at the Passover feast. It was a time of worship and rejoicing. Jesus knew that the Passover lamb sacrificed at the temple was a symbol of Himself and that His own blood was about to be shed for the sins of the world. He Himself was to be brought as a lamb to the slaughter, and as a sheep before her shearers is dumb so He was to open not His mouth. (Isaiah 53: 7.)

Coming over the brow of the Mount of Olives, He suddenly saw the beauty of the city before Him. The Scripture says that He burst into tears and said: “If thou had known, even thou, at least in this thy day, the things which belong unto thy peace! but now they are hid from your eyes. For the days shall come upon thee that your enemies shall cast a trench about thee, and compass thee round, and keep thee in on every side. And shall lay thee even with the ground, and thy children within thee; and they shall not leave in thee one stone upon another; because thou knew not the time of thy visitation.” Luke 19: 42-44.

Jesus saw the fate of a rebellious people. Overwhelmed with sadness which we cannot realize, His divine pity and grief were expressed in these sorrowful words: “O Jerusalem, Jerusalem, thou that kills the prophets, and stones them which are sent unto thee, how often would I have gathered thy children together, even as a hen gathers her chickens under her wings, and you would not! Behold, your house is left unto you desolate.” Matthew 23: 37, 38.

Soon after this, our Savior was crucified; but on the third day He arose from the dead and ascended into heaven. This was in AD 31. A few more years rolled by, and God’s mercy was still extended to the people, but in AD 70 the great Roman army commanded by General Titus surrounded the city. Some of this army camped on the Mount of Olives, on the very spot where Christ had wept over Jerusalem. Many thousands perished in the siege, and Israel drank the cup of God’s wrath to the very dregs. After one of the most terrible sieges of history, the city collapsed in fire and bloodshed. Over a million people were destroyed, taken into captivity, or sold as slaves through the world. From that day to this, Jerusalem has been in Gentile hands, controlled and guided by those hostile to Israel as a nation, thus fulfilling the prophecy of Moses and of Christ.

Just think of it, had Israel been loyal to God, this nation would have been the greatest on earth, and Jerusalem still would be standing in its original glory. Through apostasy, the plan of God seemed to have been frustrated and set aside. But not so. God has something else in reserve. He has provided that the New Jerusalem shall be the capital of His kingdom, His world-wide empire of righteousness and holiness, which is soon to come, and which the saints shall possess. Christ will be King of kings and Lord of lords, and the saints will possess the kingdom.

From the Scriptures we learn that God promised the entire world to Abraham and to his seed for an inheritance. We learn also that this Seed was Christ, and that the promise was to be fulfilled through Him. Therefore, the Apostle Paul declares in Galatians 3: 18 that this inheritance is not to be obtained through the law, but through the righteousness of faith. It comes by promise, and that promise is fulfilled in Christ.

In Galatians 4: 21-27 the apostle inquires: “Tell me, you that desire to be under the law do you not hear the law? For it is written, that Abraham had two sons, the one by a bond maid, the other by a free woman. But he who was of the bondwoman was born after the flesh; but he of the free woman was by promise. Which things are an allegory: for these are the two covenants; the one from the mount Sinai, which genders to bondage, which is Agar. For this Agar is mount Sinai in Arabia, and answers to Jerusalem which now is, and is in bondage with her children. But Jerusalem which is above is free, which is the mother of us all. For it is written, Rejoice thou barren that bears not; break forth and cry, thou that travailest not: for the desolate hath many more children than she which hath an husband.”

This is the story, the allegory, the picture of the two cities the earthly Jerusalem, and the heavenly

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Jerusalem-one in bondage, the other in freedom. And what a wonderful story-picture it is! It sets forth that there are two cities called Jerusalem. Paul declares that the one standing in his day was in bondage, and that her children, the early nation, also was in bondage. It was in bondage to sin, and later in bondage to other nations. But the Jerusalem which is above, is the spiritual mother of every Christian.

These two cities are symbolized by the two wives of Abraham. Sarah was Abraham's lawful wife; Hagar was a slave. Sarah was advanced in years and had no child, yet God's promise was that the seed of Abraham should inherit the earth. His posterity was to be blessed above all nations. Sarah could not understand this. She could not see how, at her age, she could ever be a mother. Still she believed that God would bestow a son upon Abraham, and she suggested that her handmaid be given to him. Hagar gave birth to Ishmael, who, by the way, was the progenitor of many of the peoples living in the Holy Land and nearby countries today. God was not pleased with Sarah's unbelief. He had declared that she would bear a son, and that declaration was fulfilled in the birth of Isaac, the child of promise, the son of the miracle birth.

“And He that sat upon the throne said, Behold, I make all things new.” “And I saw a new heaven and a new earth,” declared John, “for the first heaven and the first earth were passed away. And God shall wipe away all tears from their eyes; and there shall be no more death, neither sorrow nor crying, neither shall there be any more pain.” “And there shall be no night there; for the Lord God gives them light: and they shall reign forever and ever.” See Revelation 21, 22.

To Isaac, Jacob was born; and through Jacob came the twelve tribes of the Israelite nation. Through one of these tribes Christ, the Savior of the world, was born, thus fulfilling the promise made to Abraham so long before. Through Him all nations of the earth have been blessed, and shall be blessed, and a great multitude as numberless as the sands of the sea, and as countless as the glittering stars of the sky, finally will be saved.

Thousands lived in old Jerusalem, and thousands live there today; but the New Jerusalem, the mother of us all, will receive her host of redeemed ones when the blood-washed throng comes marching home. Then it will be seen that “the desolate hath many more children than she which hath an husband.” The Apostle Paul, writing to Christians says: “Now we, brethren, as Isaac was, are the children of promise.” Galatians 4: 28.

So we see that the story of salvation is the story of two cities. One an earthly city, the other a heavenly city-both with the same name. One has been a place of bloodshed. It has been conquered, devastated, rebuilt, captured, and besieged many times. The other is the glorious city of God which someday will come down out of heaven “prepared as a bride adorned for her husband.” (Revelation 21: 2.)

Just before our Savior ascended to heaven, He said to His disciples: “Let not your heart be troubled: you believe in God, believe also in Me. In My Father's house are many mansions: if it were not so, I would have told, you. I go to prepare a place for you. And if I go and prepare a place for you [that is, the New Jerusalem], I will come again, and receive you unto Myself; that where I am, there you may be also.” John 14: 1-3.

What about a new home in the New Jerusalem? Have you ever thought of it? According to the Scriptures, it is for the children of promise; it is for those who have received Christ by faith, not by their own works. This gives everybody an opportunity to have a home there. Why not accept Christ's invitation today, for the Spirit and the bride say, “Come.” According to the Book of Revelation, the city says to every one, “Come.” In that coming city there will be wonderful days to spend, for Christ will be there; and wherever Christ is, there is heaven.

Speaking of days, which is the longest day on this earth? That depends upon where you are. In New York City the longest day is fifteen hours. In London it is sixteen and a half hours. In Stockholm, Sweden, it is eighteen and a half hours. In Faroe, Finland, it is twenty-two hours. In Wardbury, Norway, the longest day lasts for two months; in Spitsbergen, for three and one-half months. But in the New Jerusalem, to which all who believe on the Lord Jesus Christ will have a welcome, it lasts for ever, for “there shall be no night there.” (Revelation 21: 25.) A wonderful city! A wonderful day!

A King, A Dream, and You

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YEARS ago, an elderly Christian lady died, leaving all her possessions to a nephew. The will read: "To my beloved Nephew Stephen, I will and bequeath my family Bible and all it contains, with the residue of my estate after my funeral expenses and just and lawful debts are paid." The nephew was lazy, shiftless, and soon the cash was spent. For forty years he lived a poverty-stricken life. Then one day, he opened the Bible that had been left to him, and found fifty 100-dollar notes scattered between its leaves. Yes, 5,000 dollars! He had a small fortune in his possession all the time he was living in poverty. And so it is with many today. God's Word contains great treasure, yet how many fail to find it.

Something that money cannot buy is a knowledge of the future. There are many who would like to know what the future holds in store for them personally, and for the world. Who is going to rule this world? Many rulers have aspired to set up a great world empire that would stand forever. Alexander the Great, Caesar, Napoleon, Kaiser Wilhelm, Mussolini, Hitler, Stalin—all have been obsessed with this desire. The great question is, just who is going to rule the world?

A world ruler of centuries ago was asking the same question. It was Nebuchadnezzar, king of Babylon. While he was wondering if his empire would last forever, he fell asleep and had a dream. But he did not understand the dream. In fact, he could not even remember what it was about, so he sent for his astrologers and wise men to tell him. When they were unable to comply with the king's demand, he was furious and ordered that they be put to death.

Among the wise men of the court, was Daniel, a captive from Judah, who worshipped the God of heaven. He asked for a little time to pray to his God and see if the dream would be revealed to him. His request was granted, and God did reveal to him not only the king's dream, but its interpretation. When ushered into the king's presence, the king asked him: "Art thou able to make known unto me the dream which I have seen, and the interpretation thereof?" Daniel 2: 26.

Daniel first pointed out to the king that all his wise men and astrologers could not tell him the dream. Then he continued: "But there is a God in heaven that reveals secrets, and makes known to the king Nebuchadnezzar what shall be in the latter days." Verse 28.

Daniel then described to King Nebuchadnezzar the magnificent image he had seen in his dream: "Thou, O king, saw, and beheld a great image. This great image, whose brightness was excellent, stood before thee; and the form thereof was terrible. This image's head was of fine gold, his breast and his arms of silver, his belly and his thighs of brass, his legs of iron, his feet part of iron and part of clay. Thou saw till that a stone was cut out without hands, which smote the image upon his feet that were of iron and clay, and brake them to pieces." Verses 31-34.

This outline of the dream was followed by its interpretation: "Thou, O king, art a king of kings: for the God of heaven hath given thee a kingdom, power, and strength, and glory. And where so ever the children of men dwell, the beasts of the field and the fowls of the heaven hath He given into your hand, and hath made thee ruler over them all. Thou art this head of gold." Verses 37, 38.

So far the interpretation pleased the king, but what followed showed that his kingdom would not last forever. "And after thee shall arise another kingdom inferior to thee, and another third kingdom of brass, which shall bear rule over all the earth. And the fourth kingdom shall be strong as iron: forasmuch as iron breaks in pieces and subdues all things: and as iron that breaks all these, shall it break in pieces and bruise. And whereas thou saw the feet and toes, part of potters' clay, and part of iron, the kingdom shall be divided, but there shall be in it of the strength of the iron, forasmuch as thou saw the iron mixed with miry clay. And as the toes of the feet were part of iron, and part of clay, so the kingdom shall be partly strong, and partly broken. And whereas thou saw iron mixed with miry clay, they shall mingle themselves with the seed of men: but they shall not cleave one to another, even as iron is not mixed with clay." Verses 39-43.

After Daniel had told Nebuchadnezzar the meaning of the great image which he had seen in his dream, he stated what would happen after these kingdoms had run their allotted span.

"In the days of these kings shall the God of heaven set up a kingdom, which shall never be destroyed: and the kingdom shall not be left to other people, but it shall break in pieces, and consume all these kingdoms and it shall stand for ever. Forasmuch as thou saw that the stone was cut out of the mountain without hands, and that it brake in pieces the iron, the brass, the clay, the silver, and the gold. The great God hath made known to the king what shall come to pass hereafter: and the dream is certain, and the interpretation thereof sure." Verses 44, 45.

After the king heard these words, the Bible says that he "fell upon his face, and worshipped Daniel, and commanded that they should offer an oblation and sweet odors unto him." Verse 46. Then he acknowledged that the God of Daniel was "a God of gods, and a Lord of kings, and a revealer of secrets."

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Verse 47.

Babylon at that time was the great world empire. It was called the “golden kingdom,” and was noted for its wealth and beauty. The city of Babylon was fifteen miles square, surrounded by two mighty walls 350 feet high, with a moat between. The Euphrates River ran right through the city. Its beautiful hanging gardens were one of the seven wonders of the ancient world. History tells us that they had enough food stored up to feed a million people for fifteen years. But more than a hundred years before Nebuchadnezzar had this dream, the Bible had prophesied the downfall of his kingdom, as we read in Isaiah 44: 27-45: 2.

So Daniel told the king of Babylon that a second kingdom would arise after him. When, during the reign of Belshazzar, the grandson of Nebuchadnezzar, the Persians besieged the city, the Babylonians laughed at them and even threw food over the walls to them to show that they had enough and to spare. But the Persians stayed right there and tried to batter down the walls.

To celebrate his seeming superiority over the enemy, Belshazzar called a thousand of his lords to a great feast. While this banquet was being carried on, the Medes and Persians, under the leadership of Cyrus, were altering the course of the Euphrates so they could enter the city. It was at this time that Belshazzar saw the mysterious handwriting on the wall, telling him that his kingdom was weighed in the balances and found wanting. Thus, as we find in Daniel 5: 28, Babylon was overthrown by the Medo-Persian Empire, which was called the “silver kingdom.” This empire ruled for quite some time-in fact, for over two hundred years.

Just as Daniel had told the king that a third kingdom, represented in his dream by the belly and thighs of brass, would rule the world, history tells us that Grecia followed the Medo-Persian Empire. At the Battle of Arbela, in 331 BC, Alexander the Great destroyed the Persian army, although he was outnumbered 20 to 1. Again prophecy was fulfilled.

After ruling the then-known world from 331 to 168 BC, the Grecian Empire was overthrown by the Romans at the Battle of Pydna. From “The History of the Decline and Fall of the Roman Empire,” by Gibbon, we read: “The arms of the republic, sometimes vanquished in battle, always victorious in war, advanced with rapid steps to the Euphrates, the Danube, the Rhine, the ocean. The images of gold, or silver, or brass, that might serve to represent the nations and their kings, were successively broken by the iron monarchy of Rome.”

It was during this period of the pagan Roman Empire that the Christ-child was born as we read in the second chapter of Luke. “And it came to pass in those days, that there went out a decree from Caesar Augustus, that all the world should be taxed.” The power that can tax the world, rules the world, so pagan Rome was the world empire at that time, and no one dared to fight or oppose it. But as the people began to live lustful, luxurious lives, they became weak and soon lost, not only their strength of character, but their courage and power, and finally their world prestige.

The great barbaric tribes swept down into the Roman Empire, sacked the city of Rome time and time again, and finally broke up the empire in AD 476. The Roman Empire was divided into the ten kingdoms of Western Europe, which today are represented by Britain, Germany, France, Italy, etc. This was all a direct fulfillment of Nebuchadnezzar’s dream, for we read in Daniel 2: 42: “As the toes of the feet were part of iron, and part of clay, so the kingdom shall be partly strong, and partly broken.”

Many great leaders have tried to unite the kingdoms of Europe, but the Bible says they will not unite. “Whereas thou saw iron mixed with miry clay, they shall mingle themselves with the seed of men: but they shall not cleave one to another, even as iron is not mixed with clay.” Daniel 2: 43.

According to God’s Word, these kingdoms of Western Europe will never cleave. Charlemagne tried to unite Europe in the eighth century. Charles V tried but failed. Louis XIV failed in the eighteenth century. Napoleon tried hard, but failed. He said: “I will cement Europe. I will make one nation of all Europe.” Later, in exile on the island of St. Helena, he said, “God Almighty has been too much for me.” He did not reckon with the Scripture pronouncement “They shall not cleave one to another.” Kaiser Wilhelm fought hard to unite Europe under his rule. He stepped across the stage of history, but finally went down in disgrace and obscurity.

Later, Adolph Hitler made the same attempt, and was so nearly successful that many people cried: “We can’t stop Hitler. Nothing can stop him.” But there stood God’s word, “They shall not cleave.” So he failed and went down in disgrace. The nations of Europe cannot be united, and they will not be welded into another world empire. The prophet Daniel saw what was going to happen during the days of these ten kingdoms. “In the days of these kings shall the God of heaven set up a kingdom, which shall never be

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destroyed. And the kingdom shall not be left to other people, but it shall break in pieces and consume all these kingdoms, and it [that is, God's kingdom] shall stand for ever." Daniel 2: 44.

With dramatic suddenness the kingdoms of this world are smitten and the kingdom of God is established in their place. We are living now down in the ten toes of Nebuchadrezzar's prophetic image. Christ will come "in the days of these kings," the days in which we live. Where do you stand today? Where does the world stand? We all stand right down near the end of this earth's history, and can look for the Prince of Peace to set up His kingdom which no man shall destroy. "For unto us a child is born, unto us a son is given: and the government shall be upon His shoulder; and His name shall be called Wonderful, Counselor, The Mighty God, The Everlasting Father, The Prince of Peace." Isaiah 9: 6.

"Wonderful" - the marvel of the ages. "Counselor" - no more endless troubles without a solution. "The Everlasting Father"-no more fatherless, for He is the Father of all. "The Prince of Peace" -no more intrigue between nations, no more atomic bombs, no more bloodshed, no more tears. Do you have citizenship in that everlasting kingdom, that kingdom which God will establish, and that will last forever? I ask you now to accept Christ's wonderful invitation: "Come, you blessed of My Father, inherit the kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the world." Matthew 25: 34.

"Down in the feet of iron and of clay, Weak and divided, soon to pass away; What will the next great, glorious drama be? Christ and His coming, and eternity."

Twelve Great Future Events

WOULD you like to know some of the greatest coming events destined to take place in our world in the near future? Close study of the one-thousand-year period mentioned in the Book of Revelation, the 20th chapter, will furnish you with this information. In this interesting chapter God draws aside the curtain and reveals the future of this world for a thousand years ahead. Let us read Revelation 20: 1-9 in part: "I saw an angel come down from heaven, having the key of the bottomless pit and a great chain in his hand. And he laid hold on the dragon, that old serpent, which is the Devil, and Satan, and bound him a thousand years, and cast him into the bottomless pit, and shut him up, and set a seal upon him, that he should deceive the nations no more, till the thousand years should be fulfilled. And after that he must be loosed a little season. And I saw thrones, and they sat upon them and they lived and reigned with Christ a thousand years.

"But the rest of the dead lived not again until the thousand years were finished. This is the first resurrection. Blessed and holy is he that hath part in the first resurrection: on such the second death hath no power, but they shall be priests of God and of Christ, and shall reign with Him a thousand years. And when the thousand years are expired, Satan shall be loosed out of his prison, and shall go out to deceive the nations which are in the four quarters of the earth, God and Magog, to gather them together to battle: the number of whom is as the sand of the sea. And they went up on the breadth of the earth, and compassed the camp of the saints about, and the beloved city: and fire came down from God out of heaven, and devoured them."

This 20th chapter of Revelation shows there are to be two great resurrections. The first of these will take place at the beginning of the one thousand years, which commonly is called "the millennium," while the other will take place at the end of that period. Of those who are raised in the first resurrection, Revelation 20: 6 has this to say: "Blessed and holy is he that hath part in the first resurrection." Did you get that, friends? It is the holy people, the righteous people, the good people, who will have a part in the first resurrection.

Let us now determine just when this first resurrection will take place. We turn to Revelation 20:4,5, and read this text from Weymouth's translation: "And they [the righteous] came to life and shared Christ's kingdom for a thousand years. The rest of the dead did not come to life until the thousand years were at an end." So you see, the righteous dead are raised in the first resurrection, that they may reign with Christ during the one thousand years.

The next question is, when will the unjust people, the wicked, be resurrected? Read again Revelation 20:5: "As for the rest of the dead [that is the wicked], they did not come to life until the thousand years were completed." (Moffatt's translation.) So you see the righteous are raised at the beginning of the thousand years, and the wicked at the end of the same period. The millennium, therefore, commences with a resurrection, and ends with a resurrection. In other words, the millennium is a period of

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one thousand years between two resurrections.

The Scriptures also show that the resurrection of the righteous, which commences the millennial period, will take place at the Second Coming of Jesus. In 1 Thessalonians 4: 16, Paul says: "The Lord Himself shall descend from heaven with a shout, with the voice of the archangel, and with the trump of God: and the dead in Christ shall rise first." The righteous dead will rise when the Lord Jesus descends from heaven at His Second Coming.

Some of the greatest events in the history of this world will take place at the beginning of this one-thousand-year period. The first of these is the Second Coming of Christ to raise the sleeping saints, and to translate the righteous living. A wonderful change will take place in that great day.

When Jesus comes, all the resurrected saints, and the changed, living saints, will be caught up to meet the Lord in the air, to be with Him for evermore. You will find this in 1 Thessalonians 4: 16, 17. But where do all these righteous people go with the Lord on the great resurrection morn? John 14: 2, 3, records the promise of our Lord and Redeemer made nearly two thousand years ago: "I go to prepare a place for you. And if I go and prepare a place for you, I will come again, and receive you unto Myself; that where I am, there you may be also."

"Some golden daybreak Jesus will come; Some golden daybreak, battles all won, We'll rise to glory through heaven's blue, Jesus is coming, for me, for you."

The next question is, What will happen to the millions of wicked people who will be living on the earth when Jesus comes the second time? Turn to 2 Thessalonians 2: 8 and you will discover that the wicked will be destroyed by the brightness of His coming. And Jeremiah 25:33 says: "The slain of the Lord shall be at that day from one end of the earth even unto the other end of the earth: they shall not be lamented, neither gathered, nor buried; they shall be dung upon the ground." It would appear from these texts, that wherever the wicked are when Christ appears, they will be struck dead by His glory as though a bolt of lightning struck them, and they will lie on the surface of the earth, unburied. Jeremiah 25: 33 says: "They shall not be lamented, neither gathered, nor buried."

Why will they not be buried? and why will they not be lamented? For the simple reason that when Jesus appears, all the righteous people are caught up to meet Him in the air, and they then are taken to the new Jerusalem. Thus there will be no one left upon this earth to gather or bury the dead, or lament over them. Can you not then see that only one of two things can happen to every soul on this earth when Jesus appears? He either will be taken or left.

There are some people who believe and teach that many of those who have never accepted the gospel during their lifetime will be raised in little groups during this one thousand years, and that the righteous people will preach to them, and that many of them will accept the Lord during the millennium. This is not true, and here is the proof in Revelation 20: 5, (Moffatt's translation): "As for the rest of the dead, they did not come to life until the thousand years were completed." Instead of the wicked being alive, and having someone to preach to them, they all are dead. Not one of them comes to life until the thousand years are at an end. It is just as impossible for any person to hear the gospel and be saved during the millennium, as it is for a dead person to be converted during the funeral service.

No one dare believe that by putting off accepting Jesus as his Savior now, he will have another chance after death. If you are doing that, then you are living in a fool's paradise. The Bible clearly declares that death seals a man's fate for eternity. Isaiah 38:18, declares: "They that go down into the pit [or the grave] cannot hope for Thy truth." God says to you and to me, "Now is the accepted time; now is the day of salvation. Today, if you will hear My voice, harden not your heart." In other words, you are having your chance now; make the most of it.

At the beginning of this one thousand years, as we have already noticed from the Scriptures, all the righteous are taken from the earth to the mansions Jesus is preparing for them. The wicked who are alive at His coming will be struck dead and lie unburied, and this temporarily will depopulate the earth. That is just what Isaiah 24:1 says will happen: "Behold, the Lord makes the earth empty." It is this state of affairs that binds the devil for one thousand years, as described in Revelation 20:1-3. There are two ways to bind a person. You can take a rope or a chain and bind a man literally, so that he can't do what he would like to do. But then, I have heard people say, "I would like to help you, but my hands are tied." What did they mean by that? Was there a rope around their hands? No, they were bound by circumstances that prevented them from helping, even though they desired so to do.

Let us now notice the situation of the devil during this one thousand-year period. All the righteous are in heaven, and the wicked are dead. The righteous are beyond his reach, and he can't tempt a dead man.

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So you see, he is out of a job for a thousand years. So the next great event to happen at the beginning of the millennium, is the binding of Satan. He is bound by a chain of circumstances, for he will have no one to tempt.

At the close of the one thousand years, Jesus will descend upon the Mount of Olives. In Zechariah 14: 4, 5, we read that “His feet shall stand in that day on the mount of Olives, and there shall be a very great valley. And half of the mountain shall be removed toward the north, and half of it toward the south and the Lord my God shall come, and all the saints with Thee.”

Some people teach that there will be seven years between the coming of Jesus for His saints, and the coming of Jesus with His saints. The Scriptures show clearly that Christ comes for His saints at the beginning of the one thousand years, and that He comes with His saints at the end of that period.

When Jesus descends upon the Mount of Olives at the end of the millennium, the Holy City, the new Jerusalem, descends, too. “I John saw the holy city, New Jerusalem, coming down from God out of heaven.” Revelation 21: 2. Then, too, at this time the wicked dead are raised, and this event naturally looses Satan, for now he has someone to tempt and deceive. According to Revelation 20:7,8, he marshals the resurrected wicked of all ages, and then marches up to the new Jerusalem, encompasses the city, and attempts to overthrow it. Just when it appears as though he might be successful, fire comes down from God out of heaven, and destroys him with all his wicked host. This heavenly fire purifies the earth, and in due time God recreates it to be the eternal abode of the saints. And in this new earth Jesus will rule on the throne of David forever.

Where will you stand in that great day? All the people who have ever lived upon this earth will stand before God at the end of the millennium. This is the judgment of the great white throne described in Revelation 20. Everyone who has ever given his heart to Jesus, and has remained true to Him, will be inside the glorious new Jerusalem, saved for ever; and everyone who has refused to give himself, or who has turned away from Christ, will be outside the new Jerusalem, lost for evermore.

There will be no third position in which one can stand. Every man, woman, and child is bound at that day either to be inside the new Jerusalem, saved for ever, or outside, lost for ever. To the people who are outside Jesus will say, “Depart from Me, you cursed, into everlasting fire, prepared for the devil and his angels.” But those who are inside the New Jerusalem will hear the sweetest words ever spoken to men: “Come, you blessed of My Father, inherit the kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the world.”

If you will accept the Lord Jesus, and claim Him as your Savior, and live for Him day by day, then you are assured of a place in the kingdom to come; but if you don’t, then you are doomed to a terrible disappointment when that great day dawns.

About one hundred and fifteen years ago, a man in Pennsylvania was convicted of murder, and was sentenced to be hanged. Andrew Jackson, the then President of the United States, granted this man, George Wilson, a pardon. Wilson refused to accept it. Strange as it may seem, he refused to accept the presidential pardon, and he argued that it wasn’t a pardon unless he accepted it. They appealed to the Attorney General, who said the law was silent on this point. They finally argued the case in the Supreme Court, and John Marghall, Chief justice of the United States, ruled: “A pardon is only a piece of paper unless it is accepted by the person who is implicated. If he refuses the pardon, then it is not a pardon: therefore, George Wilson must hang.” And he was hanged.

The United States government couldn’t force this prisoner to take a pardon, if he didn’t want it. God Himself doesn’t force men to accept His pardon, or salvation. Jesus is ready to forgive you, but you must be ready to accept His forgiveness. Some of you might be saying, Well, that man Wilson was very foolish to reject the president’s pardon, and thus lose his life. My friends, if he was foolish, pray tell me what about the people who refuse the pardon of Jesus today, and who will lose eternal life.

We need to pray for God’s forgiveness. We need to ask Him to accept the price that Jesus paid for our sins, and He will. We don’t need to pray to make Him willing to save us. At this very moment He is beseeching you to take salvation. It is a free gift from the pierced hands of the Lord Jesus. Romans 6: 23 declares: “The wages of sin is death; but the gift of God is eternal life through Jesus Christ our Lord.” May you accept that gift now, for His name’s sake.

The Command of Love

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JOHN RUSKIN, the renowned writer, tells about his first and greatest lesson in the meaning of liberty. When he was but a little child, he was being carried past a tea-table by his nurse. In his childish way he reached out to grasp the shining teapot. His mother said, "Oh, no, don't touch that." The little fellow persisted in his endeavor. The nurse was about to take him away when his mother said, "Well, let him touch it." He did. It was the last time he endeavored to touch a hot tea-pot. Thus he learnt that liberty is subject to laws which are designed for the good of men. There was curiosity and disobedience behind his endeavor to reach for the shining thing. But he learned a much needed lesson through the things that he suffered.

Our God is the Author of all true liberty. He has given man permission to worship or not to worship; to obey or not to obey as it seems best to the individual. When at Sinai He proclaimed His Ten imperial Commandments, the thunder rolled, the lightning flashed, and the earth trembled. But, behind that display of power was the heart of divine love, as it is recorded in Deuteronomy 33: 2, 3, "From His right hand went a fiery law for them. Yea, He loved the people."

In the governments of earth, love and law are not often associated, but in God's plan it is quite different, for there love and law go hand in hand. In fact, these two features are but two parts of the one great plan. It was love that prompted Ruskin's mother to forbid him from touching the burning tea-pot. So, behind every one of God's prohibitions, there lies the infinite love that is in the heart of our God.

When Christ was talking to the lawyer, He set forth the two great principles of love-love to God and love to man; and then He said, as recorded in Matthew 22: 40, "On these two commandments hang all the law and the prophets." Think for a moment of the Ten Commandments. Love to God is summed up in the first four, for in these commandments we have our relationship to God set forth. Love to our fellow men is summed up in the last six, for in these commandments we have outlined our relationship to our fellow men.

Look over these Ten Commandments for a moment and see how they read. You will find them recorded in Exodus 20. The first commandment states, "Thou shall have no other gods before Me." This commandment guards God's position in the mind of His people, for no angel or any other being must claim equality with the Eternal. Our God must stand supreme in the veneration of His people.

The second commandment guards the worship of God. No made or existing object on earth or heaven may have a share in our adoration of God. The neglect of this command has opened the gates to paganism, with its thousands of obscene, immoral, and hideous deities. Athens is said to have had thirty thousand objects of worship, besides the altar erected to the unknown God. It is claimed that India has three million objects of adoration, but this divine commandment sweeps them all aside, for they are but the products of defiled human imagination. Man has never made himself any false god without its worship becoming imbued with human passion, and ultimately degradation.

The third commandment guards the name of God. "Thou shall not take the name of the Lord thy God in vain." In Psalm 111: 9, that name is said to be holy and reverend. The word "reverend" appears but once in the Bible, and is applied only to God. May we always remember, "holy and reverend is His name."

The fourth commandment protects God's property. "The seventh day is the Sabbath of the Lord thy God." Exodus 20: 10. When men use this sacred day for their own business, they are stealing from the King of heaven. The Sabbath does not belong to either Jew or Gentile. It is not the property of mankind. All that man can do is to keep holy that which God has hallowed for His own service. When measuring days by the earth's revolution on its axis, the seventh day does not differ from any other day, but, in the mind of God it is the sacred line that has measured His work from Creation until now. It is Creation's memorial, a monument that sin and Satan cannot destroy. God alone can make a day holy, and no human substitute is possible.

The fifth commandment guards the home government: "Honor thy father and thy mother." The first four commandments stand between man and his God; the last six between man and his fellow men. It will be seen that the home government stands next to the government of heaven. Honor to parents must be a vital part in Christian life. Unfortunately, this largely has been discarded by the world with the consequence that disobedience and disregard of parental authority is rapidly paving the way to the law courts and to prison.

The sixth commandment of the ten guards life: "Thou shall not kill." Life is the most valuable and sacred trust ever given to humanity. Not only is the taking of life forbidden by this commandment, but also any practice that shortens or injures life. God is the Author of life, and He alone has the right to dispose of that sacred gift. God has written this commandment into every nerve, every muscle, every fiber, which He

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has entrusted to man, and every misuse of any part of our human organism is a violation of this sacred commandment.

Purity of life is guarded by the seventh commandment. This commandment forbids adultery, the highest crime against purity, but it also includes all the lesser evils in the long line of impurity. The antediluvian world was destroyed because of the violation of this law. The fires that swept Sodom and Gomorrah were kindled for the same reason.

The eighth commandment guards human property, as the fourth commandment guards God's property. "Thou shall not steal," makes the property of our neighbors a sacred thing. But today the world is full of thieves. They are to be found in every village and in every city. Banks and safe deposits have to be built doubly strong to withstand their cunning, and the power of the instruments they employ. Thieving has become a big business in these momentous days.

In the ninth commandment character is guarded. "Thou shall not bear false witness." The human tongue often is given to the transgression of this sacred command. Unguarded, it lends itself to criticism and scandal. It is liable to become a fire and a world of iniquity, a power that man cannot tame. It may speak in blessing or in cursing, in the sweetness of praise, or in the bitterness of blame. Words are living things, and we must ever remember that in touching a person's character we are touching a very vital part of that man.

The tenth commandment is God's law of contentment: "Thou shall not covet." Covetousness desires that which it does not, or need not, possess. Saint Paul speaks of it as idolatry, because it binds the mind to the adoration of some unnecessary or evil object, as to a god.

A man is said to have placed on a piece of valuable property a notice reading, "I will give this land to anyone who is perfectly contented." Sometime after, a person called and said, "I'd like your piece of land." The owner looked at him and inquired, "Are you perfectly contented?" "Oh, yes," was the reply. "Then why do you desire my property?" Covetousness often lives in the heart of man without writing its name on his face.

Let us remember that love has dictated every one of these Ten Commandments. It is only love that can lead us to true obedience. Solomon describes the law of God as "the whole duty of man," while Christ has pronounced it to be the very law of life. St. John writes in 1 John 5: 3, Weymouth's translation, "Love to God means obedience to His commands: and His commands are not irksome."

God loves man, and in response to that love He asks for obedience to His divine will. Obedience really is the highest evidence that we can give of our love to God. Jesus said, "If you love Me, keep My commandments." Love cannot be commanded. It cannot be won by force or authority. Love only comes from love, and love cannot live without action. We read: "God so loved the world that He gave." Then remember, friends, that when God gave the Ten Commandments because He loved His people, He set up these words as the great standard of love. Love will keep men in harmony with its every requirement, because love and obedience always will walk hand in hand. It is because God loved that He traced these immortal words with His own finger on the tables of stone.

Years ago, as a Christian merchant walked through the slave markets of old Egypt, he saw a young woman weeping bitterly. He stepped over and asked the reason for her tears. "Oh, sir," she said, "I was brought up in a Christian home. My master was a good man, and now I am here to be sold. I don't know what kind of man my new master will be. He may be a wicked, cruel man." And at the thought of that, once again she wept bitterly. Touched by her grief, the merchant went over to the agent and inquired her price. He paid the money, obtained the receipt, and on going back he handed her the receipt with the words, "Now you're free." Speechless and wide-eyed she looked at him, and as he turned away she cried out, "Does that mean I can do what I like with myself?" "Yes," he said. Then bowing at his feet she exclaimed, "Oh, sir, let me be your servant for ever!"

It is love alone that can transform a slave into a servant. Just let me ask, Which are you, a slave or a servant? Remember, the slave fears the master and his commands, the servant loves the will of his master. There is nothing that love cannot do. Love bore our Savior from the glory land down to a rebel's camp, and now, that same love plans to bring these transformed rebels back to the glory land. Let me ask you, Will you go with them?

Christ and the Sabbath

A HINDU writer once said that although there have been Mohammedans in India for a thousand years, no one has ever heard a Hindu say, "I wish you were more like Moharnmed." Then he continued, that although Christianity had been in India for only a quarter of that time, there was no educated Hindu who would not say to a Christian, "I wish you were more like Christ." The more that Christians are like Christ, the more they serve Him in this world, and the more good they do.

Through faith in Him we are justified and born again. Through His atoning sacrifice we find salvation. Why then should we not love Him and seek to be more like Him? Does not the Holy Spirit, in the Scriptures, hold Jesus up before us as our perfect example? Should we not therefore look at Him by studying His life, and by beholding Him become changed? If every Christian were more like Jesus, the world would be a better place in which to live. Then multitudes of non-Christians, seeing the likeness of Christ in His followers, would be drawn to serve Him also.

Our Christian witness should include not only what Christ has done for us in regeneration and justification, but what He is doing for us in transforming our lives day by day. Obedience to God is the evidence of regeneration. How can I say that I love Christ, yet refuse to obey His Word, and do all I can to follow His righteous example?

A radio listener once asked us this question: "Why do you observe the Sabbath, the seventh day of the week, instead of Sunday? In this, you differ from the great majority of Christians." My reply, in general, was this: "I keep the Sabbath because I believe that the example and teaching of the Lord Jesus Christ should be accepted as authoritative by all Christians." It's just as simple as that. It is a matter of following the revealed will and teaching of Christ, as recorded in the New Testament. And that is all in harmony with "the law and the prophets" of the Old Testament also.

In the fullness of time, the Scriptures tell us, God sent forth His Son to be the Savior of the world. (Galatians 4:4,5.) He was our Lord and holy Savior, who is both Son of God and Son of man. He was with the Father before the world was created (John 17:5), and by Him God created all things. (John 1:1-10.) "All things were made by Him; and without Him was not anything made that was made." John 1:3.

The Sabbath, being one of the things that was made, according to Mark 2:27, Christ must have made it. And so in a special sense, He must be Lord of it. The Sabbath was made at the end of creation week and thus was given to mankind long before the human race was divided into nations. It was for everybody, and for all time. And certainly the Lord Jesus, who Himself made the Sabbath, must be the perfect judge of its purpose and proper observance.

When our Savior appeared in this world as a babe, and later began His ministry, the Sabbath had been perverted by the human race. Even the chosen people of God had hedged it around with merely human teaching, which largely had obscured its purpose. The Sabbath was intended to be, not only a memorial of the creative and redeeming power of God in Christ, but also a source of refreshment and delight to everyone.

We read that, at the very start of our Savior's blessed ministry, He went to His home town of Nazareth and there in the synagogue, or church of that day, attended divine service. "And, as His custom was, He went into the synagogue on the Sabbath day, and stood up for to read." Luke 4: 16.

This was His custom. It was customary for Him to take part in the service on the Sabbath day. This was His "custom," His habit. In other places also He taught on the Sabbath day. (See Mark 1:21.) And on this day He performed miracles of blessing for the people.

On one Sabbath the Savior and His disciples were passing through a grain field, and the disciples, being hungry, picked some of the heads of wheat and ate them. Some of the local theologians found fault with this and claimed that the disciples were breaking the Sabbath. According to their human laws, the rolling of a few heads of grain in their hands actually was threshing. But Jesus said that the disciples were guiltless, and declared: "The Son of man is Lord even of the Sabbath day." Matthew 12: 8.

Our Savior taught the meaning of true Sabbath-keeping. He brushed away the false accumulation of the ages, the human enactment that had no divine authority, and claimed Himself to be the Lord of the Sabbath. This of course ' proves that the Sabbath is the Lord's day, and it is the only day that is so called between the lids of the New Testament. Jesus made the Sabbath in the beginning and when He came to this earth He showed men how to observe it. Jesus is the supreme authority, and calls Himself "the Lord of the Sabbath." It is the Lord's day. It belongs to Him. And He said it was made for man's good, for man's

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blessing.

Jesus told His critics that the Sabbath was made for man. If it was made, there were certain acts necessary to give it existence. What were these acts?

A. First: God rested on the seventh day and thus made it the rest day, or the Sabbath of the Lord.

B. Second: He blessed the seventh day, and it became His holy day.

C. Third: He sanctified it and set it apart for a holy use, thus making its observance a part of man's duty toward God.

There must have been a time when these acts were performed, and on this point there is no doubt whatever. They were not performed at Mount Sinai, when God gave the Ten Commandments, but in the Garden of Eden, at the very beginning of the world. A record of this is found in the first few verses of the second chapter of Genesis.

The local theologians and critics accused our Savior of breaking the Sabbath, because He had healed various persons on the Sabbath day. In one case He asked those who were condemning Him: "What man shall there be among you, that shall have one sheep, and if it fall into a pit on the Sabbath day, will he not lay hold on it, and lift it out? How much then is a man better than a sheep? Wherefore it is lawful [that means according to the law] to do well on the Sabbath days." Matthew 12: 11, 12. Then He healed the afflicted one. (Matthew 12: 9-14.)

In His work of mercy and blessing, Jesus came one Sabbath day to the pool of Bethesda, in Jerusalem. There He found a man who had been sick for thirty-eight years, who had sought healing but never had found it. By Christ's divine and creative word, the man was completely healed. We read John 5: 9: "Immediately the man was made whole, and took up his bed, and walked." He did this at the command of Christ. But Christ's critics said: "It is the Sabbath day: it is not lawful for thee to carry thy bed." John 5: 10.

These men were determined to destroy Christ, and they made this issue of what they called Sabbath-breaking, the test. To them, it appeared that the existence of the whole nation was at stake, and they thought that they were justified in killing Christ in order to save the nation. In their minds, there seemed to be danger of the whole nation's becoming a nation of Sabbath-breakers, and this, they were convinced from their past history, would result in their national destruction. They knew that one reason they had been carried into captivity to Babylon long before, as we read in the last chapter of Jeremiah, was their failure to observe the Sabbath.

This controversy over the proper observance of the Sabbath was one of the chief reasons why these theologians sought to slay Jesus. (John 5: 16.) They found no fault with Him as to the day of the Sabbath, or the necessity of its observance, but they blamed Him for breaking the church laws, or, as we might call them, "blue 72

laws", which had been built up around the Sabbath, and had obscured its real meaning and blessing. It is surprising how bitter some people can become over this Sabbath question, especially against those who are desirous of following the example of Christ, and of honouring Him in its observance by calling the Sabbath a delight, and honourable. (Isaiah 58: 13, 14.)

Our Saviour continued His work of blessing, healing, and teaching on the Sabbath, and finally His opponents, really in ignorance of what they actually were doing, put Him to death. Yet His death had been predicted by the holy prophets from the beginning of time. His redeeming love was extended to all the world in order to bring every human being back into true obedience to the will and Word of God.

Now just a few questions about the Sabbath that Christ made:

Does the Lord truly have a special day? The answer is found in Revelation 1: 10, where the prophet and Apostle John says: "I was in the Spirit on the Lord's day."

And which day is the Lord's day? We read in Matthew 12: 8: "The Son of man is Lord even of the Sabbath day."

But there are seven days in the week. Which one is the Sabbath, the Lord's day? "The seventh day is the Sabbath of the Lord thy God." Exodus 20: 10.

We ask the question, Wasn't the Sabbath for just one race of people, in one time of the world? "The Sabbath was made for man," said Jesus in Mark 2: 27. And, of course, we know that it was made 2,500 years before there were any specific nations. (See Genesis 2:1-3)

In Bible times, when did the Sabbath begin? "From even unto even, shall you celebrate your Sabbath." Leviticus 23: 32. So the Sabbath begins and closes at evening.

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But, according to the Scriptures, when is evening? In Mark 1: 32, we read: “At even, when the sun did set.” We see here that the Sabbath, or Lord’s day, according to, Scriptures begins on what we now call Friday evening, and ends on what we now call Saturday evening. The popular concept of midnight-to-midnight observance is not the Scriptural plan.

According to our reckoning, which day is the seventh day, or Lords day? We read in Mark 16: 1, 2: “And when the Sabbath was past, Mary Magdalene, and Mary the mother of James, and Salome, had bought sweet spices, that they might come and anoint Him. And very early in the morning the first day of the week, they came unto the sepulchre at the rising of the sun.”

Sunday generally is recognized as the resurrection day, and when that day came, we read that the “Sabbath was past.” Therefore, the Sabbath must have been Saturday, the seventh day, for the true Sabbath begins on Friday evening and ends on Saturday evening.

According to the teaching of Christ, did He not abolish the law which contains the Sabbath commandment? Here are His words: “Think not that I am come to destroy the law, or the prophets: I am not come to destroy, but to fulfil.” Matthew 5: 17.

But didn’t the Savior change one of the commandments, so that today His followers may observe another day? We read in Matthew 5: 18 (Goodspeed’s translation) these words of Christ: “I tell you, as long as heaven and earth endure, not one dotting of an I or the crossing of a T will be dropped from the law until it is all observed.”

What did the teaching of our Savior lead His disciples to do after His crucifixion? Our answer is found in Luke 23: 54-56.. “And that day was the preparation [the day spoken of here was the crucifixion day], and the Sabbath drew on. And the women also, which came with Him from Galilee, followed after, and beheld the sepulchre, and how His body was laid. And they returned and prepared spices and ointments; and rested the Sabbath day according to the commandment.”

The teaching and example of our Lord Jesus Christ always were in harmony with the will of the heavenly Father, for He said: “I do always those things that please Him.” John 8: 29. Is this not a good and holy example for us to follow? Why should we not seek to do as He did? The fact that to follow Christ in observing the Sabbath which He made, might cause one to seem odd or different, or might even incur business or social loss, is no reason why the true child of God should not obey Him. To love Christ is to seek to serve Him and be like Him, to accept His Word, His teaching, and His example, as recorded in Holy Writ.

We could read many more statements in the Holy Scriptures regarding the Sabbath, but every person can read them for himself. The question is not, “Can I afford to obey Christ’s will for me?” The real question is, “Can I afford to disobey?” Study for yourself the words and teaching of our Lord Jesus, and see if they do not speak to your heart, and say, “Follow Me.”

During the First World War, some Turkish soldiers attempted to drive away a flock of sheep that were grazing on a hillside near Jerusalem, while the shepherd was sleeping. Awaking suddenly, he saw his sheep being driven off. Single-handed, he could not cope with the soldiers, but the thought came to him, If my sheep hear my voice, they will obey. So he put his hand to his mouth and gave his own peculiar sheep call. The sheep heard it, listened for a moment, then turned and rushed down one side of the ravine and up the other, before the soldiers could stop them. The shepherd quickly led them to a place of safety before the marauders could decide what to do. It was Jesus who said: “My sheep hear My voice.” John 10: 27. Temporarily they may be led astray, but eventually, when they hear His voice, they will come rushing back to Him. So why not follow Him in all things now?

Divine Healing

MILLIONS of people today are in need of physical health and healing. There probably is no more disappointing experience in this world, than to place your trust in some man, or medicine, or course of treatment, and find that the person or thing you have trusted has failed.

As we study the life of Jesus, we find that the attitude He took toward the sick and suffering was one of compassion and sympathy. He was the Great Physician. In Luke 5: 17 we read: “And it came to pass on a certain day, as He was teaching, that there were Pharisees and doctors of the law sitting by, which were come out of every town of Galilee, and Judah, and Jerusalem. And the power of the Lord was present

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to heal them.”

According to this Scripture, there are special occasions when the Spirit of God is present to heal. In this same chapter (Luke 5), we read of a man who had great faith in Christ. He had faith to believe that Jesus could do for him what he needed to have done. So he requested four of his friends to carry him into the presence of Jesus, and because they were unable to get into this house through the door, because of the great crowd present, they went up on the roof and let the man down through the roof. They lowered him, bed and all, right down into the presence of Jesus. Here was a man who was helpless, and who no doubt had tried everything that the science of his day could give, but who in desperation went to the Lord for help.

We do not despise medical science, for it has accomplished many wonderful things. Self-sacrificing doctors and nurses have done, and are performing a great service to humanity, and undoubtedly we are indebted to them for the many blessings they have brought to the world; but there are times when the medical profession is unable to accomplish that which the physician himself desires. Then it is the privilege of every soul to reach out in faith to the Lord Jesus.

When this poor, helpless man looked up with those piteous, pleading eyes into the face of Jesus, the Savior looked at him and spoke just a few words. He knew the man's real need was peace of heart and mind, and the Scripture says in verse 20, “He said unto him, Man, thy sins are forgiven thee.” This statement of our Lord's caused an uproar. The scribes and Pharisees present said: Who is this which speaks blasphemies? Who can forgive sins, but God alone?”

Jesus had read the heart of the poor sufferer, and He knew that the burden of sin, and a guilty conscience, had done more to bring on his physical illness than anything else, and His first act was to assure this poor man that his sins were forgiven him. And then Jesus turned to His critics and said, “Whether is easier, to say, Thy sins be forgiven thee; or to say, Rise up and walk?” Verse 23. In other words, If I really have power to heal this man, then it is the power of God, and it is also the prerogative of God to forgive sins. And then He turned to the poor sufferer on his bed, and said, “I say unto thee, Arise, and take up thy couch, and go into thy house.” The man arose, picked up his bed, and started for his own home completely healed, and glorifying God as he went.

How thankful we should be that there is power with God which is greater than that of anything else on earth; that His power endures when all earthly help fails. And this power today can reach out and heal a poor sick man living at this present time. Before we can experience His healing power, though, we must have faith; we must learn to trust Him, and to believe in Him.

In John the 4th chapter we have the story of the healing of the nobleman's son. You can be sure that this wealthy man had done everything possible to save the life of his boy: but his lad was beyond human help. In desperation the nobleman came to Christ, and begged Him to come down and heal his son, who was at the point of death. Jesus tested his faith by saying, “Except you see signs and wonders, you will not believe.” That is certainly true of many people living in the world today, who demand miracles and signs before they will believe; but notice the reply of the nobleman. He said, “Sir, come down ere my child die.”

He was concerned for his boy. He loved him, and he had a burden for him. Jesus said to him, “Go thy way; thy son lives.” The man never doubted: he believed. The Scripture says that his servants met him on the way home and told him that his son lived. And then he inquired of them at just what hour it was that he began to recover, and he learned that it was the same hour that Jesus said to him, “Thy son lives.” It was because of his faith that his son was restored.

While on this earth the Savior displayed His power to heal diseases time and time again. He was well able to do this, for was He not the Creator? According to, John the first chapter, He it was who made this world and everything in it. He made the human body. He understands it better than anybody else, and His power is supreme.

Possibly someone is saying right now, “Why do we not see more of this kind of thing today?” I'll tell you. We have come to a faithless age, and faith is going to be more and more rare as we draw near the end of time, for Jesus Himself asked, “When the Son of man comes, shall He find faith on the earth?” Luke 18: 8. In our hour of need we must have faith in God. When the time comes and the physician shakes his head and says, “I can do no more for you,” may God help you and me to find the way to the power that can bring us help. Christ stressed that it was faith in Him which made folk whole. Faith was the hand that reached out and took hold of the power of God.

Wherever Jesus went when He was on this earth, He left singing and smiling faces, and gladness

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and joy behind Him. He unstopped deaf ears; and His voice was the first many had ever heard. He opened blind eyes; and His face was the first many had ever seen. He gave words to the dumb; His name was the first word that many had ever spoken. Why shouldn't they glorify Him? Why shouldn't they honor Him? He had changed their darkness into light, and had brought hope and blessing to the world.

'These twelve Jesus sent forth, and commanded them, saying, Go not into the way of the Gentiles, and into any city of the Samaritans enter you not: but go rather to, the lost sheep of the house of Israel. And as you go, preach, saying, The kingdom of heaven is at hand. Heal the sick, cleanse the lepers, raise the dead, cast out devils: freely you have received, freely give.'" Matthew 10:5-8. In this great commission Jesus gave His disciples power against unclean spirits, and power to heal all manner of diseases. That same power is available today. God's power has not faded., but unfortunately man's faith has weakened.

We read in James 5: 14-16: "Is any sick among you? Let him call for the elders of the church; and let them pray over him, anointing him with oil in the name of the Lord: and the prayer of faith shall save the sick, and the Lord shall raise him up. And if he have committed sins, they shall be forgiven him. Confess your faults one to another, and pray one for another, that you may be healed. The effectual fervent prayer of a righteous man avails much." Here is God's definite arrangement which He prescribes for His faithful children when human science fails. It is wrong to despise true medical science. If my arm is broken, I should go to, a good physician and allow him to set the bone. That is cooperating with God, and with nature which reveals the power of God. We should not go to God and ask Him to do the things we can do for ourselves. It would be foolish to ask God to set the bone so long as we have access to men who can do that part of the work.

To illustrate my point: when Jesus came to the tomb of Lazarus, He said to those who stood by: "Take you away the stone." And then He cried out, "Lazarus, come forth. And he that was dead came forth." John 11:39-44. You see, Christ instructed the friends of Lazarus to do all that they could. They could roll away the stone, but they couldn't raise Lazarus from the dead. The same power that raised Lazarus from the dead could have rolled away the stone; but God's plan is that man should co-operate with Him. We are to be workers with Him, and thus we share in the blessing. God does what man cannot do. Divine healing continues where human help ceases.

In our prayer for the sick, we must make no demands on God. Our prayers for the suffering must be in humble submission to our Father in heaven who sees the end from the beginning, and who knows what is best for each one of us. It is interesting to note that the great Apostle Paul, who was the agent God used in healing others, even raising the dead to life, was himself afflicted with what he called, "a thorn in the flesh." He prayed three times that the Lord would take this from him; but the answer on each occasion was, "My grace is sufficient for thee: for My strength is made perfect in weakness." Finally this great man of God who was resigned to God's will said, "Most gladly therefore will I rather glory in my infirmities, that the power of Christ may rest upon me." 2 Corinthians 12: 9.

The fact that a true child of God is not healed at once when prayer is made on his behalf, is by no means evidence of lack of faith, or God's displeasure. Paul was a man of faith and a child of God, but he did not receive the blessing of healing that his heart so much desired. But I am sure we are going to see more and more of the manifestations of God's power as we come nearer to the end of human history.

In this faithless age let us have faith in God. We need to express faith, talk faith, and spread faith. You might feel that you have very little influence in this world. Well, what you have ought to be on God's side. Let your faith, and trust, and service for God tell for Him just where you are, whether it be in the kitchen, or in the shop, or in some other place of duty. May God help and bless you, wherever you are, and give you faith. While it is true that God does not heal everyone today, for reasons best known to Him, let us have faith in Him. For His love and mercy and blessing will be manifest to everyone who has faith in Him, and even in the sickroom you can be a blessing to those who minister to you, and as a result of your witness, you can draw souls to Him.

There is a work of preparation that needs to be done before we can experience the healing power of God. All sin, whether it be against God or our fellow men, must be put out of the life. It is interesting to note just how closely associated are spiritual and physical healing. In His work for suffering and sorrowing humanity, the Lord relieved physical suffering that He might also minister to the spiritual needs of the people. He healed the body that He might in turn heal the soul. When the paralytic was brought to Jesus for healing, the first words that our Lord spoke to this sufferer were, "Son, thy sins be forgiven thee." Yes, sin must be cleared out of the way, that we might experience the healing power of God. The Psalmist wrote, "If I regard iniquity in my heart, the Lord will not hear me."

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Another condition with which we must comply in order to experience answers to our prayers is that of obedience. John makes this clear in 1 John 3: 22, where we read: "Whatsoever we ask, we receive of Him, because we keep His commandments, and do those things that are pleasing in His sight."

Then, too, we must recognize that our bodies are the temples of the Holy Spirit, (1 Corinthians 6:19, 20), and we should take as our rule of physical life, the motto, "Whether therefore you eat or drink or whatsoever you do, do all to the glory of God." To pray for divine healing while, at the same time, the individual is transgressing the laws of nature, would be an act of sacrilege, for if God performed a miracle to restore such a person to health, He would be encouraging sin.

Again, it is the prayer of faith that saves the sick. To the woman who touched the hem of His garment, the Lord said: "Be of good cheer, thy faith hath made thee whole." To the sorrowing father mourning for his only daughter, there was given the divine assurance: "Fear not: believe only, and she shall be made whole." And to yet another petitioner, the despised Canaanite woman, He gave this word of commendation: "O woman, great is thy faith. Be it unto thee, even as thou wilt."

Just before our Lord left this earth, He called His twelve disciples together and gave them authority over devils, and power to cure diseases. He then sent them forth to preach the kingdom of God, and to heal the sick. That they did this work is abundantly clear from a reading of the Book of Acts. Here we find Peter, and Paul, and the other apostles performing wonderful miracles in the name of the Lord, Jesus Christ. How often we need to pray with the disciples of old, "Lord, increase our faith." If we had more faith in God we would see mountains of difficulty removed far from us.

It is only natural that we should look for immediate and favorable answers to our prayers, and often, when the answer is unfavorable or long delayed, we are tempted to become discouraged. We should remember that finite, erring mortals sometimes "ask amiss." God, who knows what is best for us at all times, is too wise to err. He sees the end from the beginning. He is acquainted with the heart, and reads every secret of the soul. He knows whether healing would be a blessing or a curse, and whether it is best for the individual to wake or to sleep; but of this one thing we can be assured: "No good thing will He withhold from them that walk uprightly." Psalm 84: 11.

Loose Marriages

IT IS a wonderful thing when two people, who were strangers to each other, are drawn together by an irresistible attraction so that their souls henceforth cannot be divided by time or space. When a man sees in a woman that dream of purity and sweetness which ever has haunted his soul, or when in one man, a woman finds the love and satisfaction that her heart unconsciously has been seeking, they can know they have found true love and the basis for lasting happiness.

Love is one of the most sacred, tender, and beautiful things that God has ever bestowed upon mankind, and when true love results in the union of two souls, God's great plan has unfolded. The poet declares:

**"I saw two clouds at morning
Tinged with the rising sun,
And in the dawn they floated on
And mingled into one."**

Unfortunately, this fine and beautiful arrangement that God has given to mankind, has, in altogether too many cases, been so cheapened and abused in these latter days, that it bears little resemblance to what God intended it to be. Holy wedlock too often has been transformed into an unholy deadlock. Marriage partners on many sides do not know which way to turn. There are many who frankly are confused, not knowing why or how they got into their difficulty, and why or how their hopes have been so bitterly blasted. Others are distressingly aware that there has been some shortcoming, some sin which has placed them in difficulty and confusion. Whichever it be, they need God's help.

Whatever the difficulty, however serious the complications, however hopeless your case may appear, remember, the Christian should never regard divorce as the easy backdoor way out of an unfortunate situation. Unfortunately, divorce has assumed popular proportions these days. One writer

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suggests: "Let us call marriage a belt that we can buckle and unbuckle." In other words, if you don't like it, and if it doesn't seem to fit, just unhook it. But God never intended that this sacred relationship should be assumed or discharged so lightly. Remember friend, when you entered into this alliance, it was "Till death do us part."

The Bible predicts this loose marital situation to be a sign of the last days. The times immediately prior to Christ's Second Coming are likened by our Savior to the days of Noah, and to the days of Sodom and Gomorrah, when every imagination of man's heart was only evil continually. In the heart of the Ten Commandments, we have a reasonable warning which, if obeyed, would guard the purity of the race. It reads, "Thou shall not commit adultery." Moreover, the sin of Sodom at the present time is eating its way into the very vitals of our society. This floodtide of immorality is threatening the very existence of our home life, and home is the basis of almost everything that is worthwhile in a Christian democracy.

Jesus says, as recorded in Matthew 19:9: "And I say unto you, Whosoever shall put away his wife, except it be for fornication, and marry another, commits adultery: and whosoever marries her which is put away does commit adultery." In this verse, our Lord makes it very clear that the trivial excuses men use to become separated from their companions, simply will not stand in the day of judgment.

Our Lord's statement is very, very clear. He gives us the one and only reason whereby men or women may choose to remarry. It simply is this: When he or she discovers himself to be the innocent party in a moral fall.

But one should not conclude that here is the happy solution, and grasp at the sin of a mate as the opening for a release from an unhappy situation. No, friend! The true Christian should do everything he or she can do to forgive and restore the fallen one to Divine favor, for remember this, a divorce not only seriously mars the life, but it tragically undermines the lives of your children. If only parents could understand and see the full and eventual cost of a divorce gained through following selfish interests, they would stop short in their tracks. "But," someone might be saying, "Unfortunately, I was divorced and remarried a number of years ago. I didn't study the matter in the light of Christianity. I didn't understand God's requirements, and now I'm not sure who was the more innocent or the more guilty, for I didn't care at the time. What shall I do about it now?"

We do find serious and confusing marital mix-ups, but let me say this, if any individual in the past committed acts of which he is ashamed, and is deeply and sincerely repentant, remember that we have a heavenly Father who delights to forgive and to save. If in the past we did not fully understand God's requirements, and were not aware of His Word, and became involved in situations which were unfortunate, then God will forgive according to His promises, and He accepts us where He finds us. You know, the Lord Jesus has a wonderful way in dealing with sin. When He faces the man who sincerely repents of the past, He always adds: "Go and sin no more."

The formula for a happy marriage is a very simple one. It is not so complex a matter to lay the groundwork for happiness. In fact, the little things, the simple things that will bring joy and peace into our households so often are overlooked because they are so simple. Happy marriages do not happen. We make them.

Some years ago a husband and wife were about to celebrate their golden wedding anniversary, and the local newspaper sent out a reporter for an interview. The wife was not at home but the husband was there, and he volunteered the information. "What is your recipe for a long, happy marriage?" the reporter asked. "Well, I'll tell you, young fellow," the old man said slowly. "I was an orphan, and I always had to work pretty hard for my board and keep. I never even looked at a girl until I was grown, and Sarah was the first one I ever kept company with. When she maneuvered me into proposing, I was scared stiff, but after the wedding, her father took me aside and handed me a little package. 'Here is all you really need to know,' he said. And this is what it was." The old man took a large gold watch out of his pocket. He opened the case and handed it to the reporter. Across the face of the watch where he would see it a dozen times a day, were written these words, "Say something nice to Sarah." Yes, it's just as simple as that.

The ruin of a marriage is not always a dramatic affair. There need be no unfaithfulness, no blows, no desertion-just a slow accumulation of dissatisfaction-a gradual growth of misunderstanding and irritation, until one day the companion says "I can't stand it any longer." And the tragedy is that many such individuals do not truly sense what is happening, or just how to stop it.

In Ephesians 4: 26 the Apostle Paul says: "Let not the sun go down upon your wrath." In other words, try to make it a rule never to go to sleep at night until disagreements are settled, if there have been any. Those who have made a study of the brain, tell us that the human mind continues to function all night

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subconsciously, on the level we leave it when we go to sleep. If we go to sleep in a state of bitterness, anger, or, confusion, there will be marks left on the subconscious life-marks that cannot easily be traced at first. Although there may be forgiveness and loving attention the next day, never forget that unsolved problems become set in the mind's attitude, and maybe five years or even ten years later a companion may reason, Did I marry the wrong person? He or she doubtless will feel very wicked for thinking such a thing, and yet might not know why those thoughts are there. If only we could realize how impressionable our lives and minds are, we certainly would be more careful in what we say. Margaret Sangster was right when she wrote:-

**“We have careful thoughts for the stranger,
Sweet smiles for the sometime guest,
But for our own, the bitter tone,
Though we love our own the best.”**

Here is a suggestion, simple yet sure, to make your marriage a success. If you make Christ the center of Your home, then your happiness will be complete. This is the only complete solution, the only satisfying answer to our whole problem. Two hearts beating in unison, and looking to the heavenly Father for guidance and blessing day by day, are almost sure to make their marriage a success and a source of abiding joy. We need the love of God in our hearts and in our homes-that love of which the apostle writes in 1 Corinthians 13, Weymouth's translation: “Love is forbearing and kind; love knows no jealousy; love does not brag, is not conceited; she is not unmannerly. Nor selfish, nor irritable, nor mindful of wrongs. She does not rejoice in injustice, but joyfully sides with truth. She can overlook faults. She is full of trust; full of endurance.”

You want that kind of love in your home, I am sure. May God help us to seek it and find it, and may He bless your home with His abiding presence.

Juvenile Delinquency

ONE of the most serious problems facing the world today is that of juvenile delinquency. Yet these things do not just happen. The Bible says: “The curse causeless shall not come.” Proverbs 26:2.

There are different causes for our rising wave of crimes committed by boys and girls. Mr. J. Edgar Hoover, who is the head of the world-famed American Federal Bureau of Investigation, says that people commit crimes because they lack moral responsibility, and because their spiritual growth has been retarded. “We have youth committing crime,” he declared, “because we have failed to provide youth with the proper upbringing. Children are driven to crime because of deep-laid faults in society, such as poverty, degeneracy, parental neglect, and lack of religious training.” Then Mr. Hoover went on to say that he believes the prime factor in this dangerous situation is an even greater disregard of law and order on the part of the adults of our generation. No youth ever developed a heroic ideal that was not first centered about some adult. So it is right at the door of his home, in the attitude of parents and adults, that the delinquency of most juveniles starts.

What can we expect when so many of our fellow citizens profess no religion whatsoever, and many do not believe in God? If parents do not believe in a divine Governor of the universe, in the moral standard in the Ten Commandments, nor in the judgment to come, how can they lead young minds to regard any rules of righteous, social behavior? If, according to this God-ignoring, popular philosophy, men are only partially educated animals with no heaven to win and no hell to shun, how can morality exist? Is it any wonder that this generation is causing grave concern to the law-enforcing agencies of every civilized country?

The home is the final bulwark of the nation, and of civilization itself. The hand that rocks the cradle is the hand that ultimately guides the country for good or for ill. It is clear today that all too often the hand that rocks the cradle is rocking the boat of our national life, and rocking it dangerously. The largest responsibility for juvenile delinquency rests upon parents. The schools and churches cannot take the place of fathers, and mothers, and homes.

As the home is, so the young people will be, nine times out of ten. When the father and mother

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forget God, the results will be seen in the children. A revival of prayer and Bible reading in tens of thousands of our homes would do more good than the most tireless efforts of the police. A home where, day by day, the Word of God is read, where the voice of prayer ascends, and where the father and mother love each other and love their children—there is a fortress for good living and right citizenship.

The cause of juvenile delinquency is set forth in Scriptural words of tremendous power. Note the warning of Hosea 4: 6, 7: “My people are destroyed for lack of knowledge: because thou has rejected knowledge, I will also reject thee, that thou shall be no priest to Me: seeing thou has forgotten the law of thy God, I will also forget thy children.”

You will notice that when parents forget God’s law, the children follow the same tragic footsteps. Of the days before the Flood, we read that “every imagination of the thoughts of his heart was only evil continually.” (Genesis 6: 5.) Our Lord warned that as it was in the days of Noah, so also would it be in the last days. Not only is the cause of juvenile delinquency set forth in the Sacred Scriptures, but also it is revealed as a sign of the times—it is a fulfillment of Bible prophecy.

I have discussed this problem of child delinquency with educators, social workers, preachers, and parents, and I have come to the conclusion that this largely is a matter of parental delinquency. We should be honest and face the issue. Our children are what we make them. You say, “Wait a minute! Isn’t that being pretty hard on us parents?”

Fin not so sure. A proud mother said recently: “I always take Freddie to Sunday school. Of course Henry (referring to her husband) and I never go.” In other words, “We are not interested in church or religion, but we want Freddie to be.” Freddie will go to Sunday school and church just as long as they take him, but doubtless he will stop going as soon as he is a little older, because, he will reason, if his parents don’t need church, he doesn’t need it either.

In a restaurant, not long ago, a mother and her ten-year-old boy sat at a table. Mother had a bottle of beer, but insisted that her boy have milk, and he had milk. But how long do you suppose it will be before he has beer? Daddy slapped junior for having a try at cigarettes, and of course the father was reminded that he and the boy’s mother smoked. Why couldn’t the boy smoke?

Recently a judge decided to visit the home of a boy in his teens who had appeared in his court for stealing. It was Monday morning, and the family wash was on the line. There were drying on the clothes-line towels from a dozen different hotels, the names of which were stamped on them. The judge had, in the actions of the parents, the answer to his question as to why a boy from such a good home was stealing.

Another father arrived home one evening, and the mother suggested that he should go upstairs and punish Herbert, for Herbert had been using bad language. On the way up, the father stumbled over a toy, and both the mother and Herbert heard a string of oaths. Herbert didn’t get that spanking for using bad language, for the father knew quite well who was to blame.

Father and mother, it is up to you. You cannot evade or sidestep the responsibility placed upon you by God. The Bible says, “Train up a child in the way he should go: and when he is old, he will not depart from it.” Proverbs 22: 6. This does not mean harsh, cruel words, but it does mean that we are to live right, and to talk right before our children, to love them, and to do our very best to lead them, not drive them, into a path of honest, God-fearing living. While we must have obedience in a real home, it is no place for harshness or cruelty. “Provoke not your children to wrath,” we are told in Ephesians 6: 4, “but bring them up in the nurture and admonition of the Lord.”

In all God’s merciful dealings with us, we can learn lessons that will help us in training our children, and building a true home that will be a strength to the nation, and a blessing to the world.

The story of how a father dealt with his boy who was heading for trouble, might help us somewhat. A minister had a son who was fourteen years old. One afternoon his school teacher came to the house and asked the father, “Is Philip sick?” “No, why?” was the answer. “He hasn’t been at school for three days, so I thought he might be sick.” “No, he is not sick.” “Well, I thought you should know about it.” So saying, the teacher went away. Soon the father heard the gate click, and went out to open the door. When the boy saw him, he realized that his father knew all about those last three days.

Father said, “Come into my room, Phil.” They went in, and the door was shut. The father said, “Phil, your teacher has been here, and has said that you have not been at school today, nor yesterday, nor the day before. And we supposed that you were. You have let us think so. You don’t know how badly I feel. I have always said I can trust Phil, and here you have been living a lie for three days.”

It was hard to be talked to quietly that way. It would have been easier to have taken a whipping. But the father said, “Phil, we are going to pray.” And they got down on their knees and the father prayed

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for his boy. Phil listened and knew how badly his father felt. When they got up, there were tears in his eyes, and the father said, "Phil, it is a law of life that where there is sin, there also must be suffering. Whenever there is suffering, there is sin somewhere. You can't separate the two. You have done wrong. I am in this house as God is in the world, so we will do this. You'll go up to the attic. I'll make a bed for you there and bring your meals up to you. And you Will stay there as long as you have been living a lie-three days and three nights."

Phil didn't say a word. He went up to the attic and father prepared a bed for him, kissed him, and left him alone. When evening mealtime came, neither the father nor mother could eat. They went into the living room and tried to read, but the words all ran together. Finally they went to bed, but neither could sleep. About midnight the father said, "I can't stand it any longer. I am going upstairs with Phil." So he took his pillow and went quietly up so as not to awaken his boy. He tiptoed across the floor to the corner by the window, and there Phil lay wide awake, with something glittering in his eyes, and with stains on his cheeks. The father got into bed with his boy and soon their arms were round about each other's necks. They had always been great pals. Their tears got all mixed up together, and then they both fell asleep. The next night the father said, "Good-night, mother, I am going upstairs with Phil." And again the third night he slept in the place of punishment with his son.

If our homes are to be "Home Sweet Home," we must needs have obedience and love-lots of love. Nothing but loving hearts can make a true home, and in such homes, all the hope of our country lies today. It is the father's kingdom, the mother's world and the children's paradise. May God help us to make our homes what they ought to be, and what they might be. Our home life here is to prepare us for a place in the home over there, where the heavenly Father will welcome His children to love, rest, and eternal life.

The Church of Christ

IN REFERRING to the "Church of Christ," we are speaking of that body of believers in every land, under every name, of every race, in every communion, which, in the sight of God, is known as His church. No one Christian denomination contains them all. As we draw nearer and nearer to the consummation of all things and the Second Coming of Christ, these believers will be more and more alike, and more and more will be known to each other.

In the New Testament the church is spoken of in different ways as, for instance, "the church of God" (Acts 20:28), and the "church of the firstborn, which are written in heaven." (Hebrews 12:21) Usually the New Testament writers simply speak of "the church," "the churches," or sometimes "the churches of Christ."

After the Apostle Peter, speaking for all of the apostles at that time, made his great confession that Jesus Christ was the Son of God our Savior Himself said: "Upon this rock I will build My church; and the gates of hell shall not prevail against it." Matthew 16:18. Christ founded His church, therefore it must be important. Sometimes we hear people say: "I can live a good Christian life outside the church, so I will not join any church. I have more freedom by staying outside, and just being a Christian on my own." However this may be, the fact is that Christ Jesus did found a church. If the church were not important, if it were not the best place for us to be, then why did He found it, and why did He declare that all the powers of evil would not be able to overcome it?

God has made an appeal to a sinful world. We find it in these words in 2 Corinthians 6: 17: "Wherefore come out from among them, and be you separate, said the Lord, and touch not the unclean thing; and I will receive you." God expects those who believe in Him to separate themselves from evil, and to be separate not only from evil, but separate unto Him. "Come out from among them," is the call. And it is interesting to know that the word "church" comes from the Greek word ecclesia, which means "the called-out-ones." Those who are called out from the world are called together unto God, to be His people.

Even in Old Testament times God had a special people, as we read in Acts 7:38: "This is He, that was in the church in the wilderness with the angel which spoke to him in the mount Sinai, and with our fathers." The church, then, was represented by Israel in their wilderness wanderings.

Coming to the New Testament, we read in Acts 2:47: "And the Lord added to the church daily such as should be saved." If Christ founded the church, and if the Lord adds to it those who believe and are

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in the way of salvation, how can we ignore the church, or neglect it, or reject it? It was founded by Christ, and added to by the Lord Himself.

Now just a word about the foundation of the church. It is built upon Jesus Christ, as the Son of God. The Apostle Paul said, as we read in 1 Corinthians 3:11: "Other foundation can no man lay than that is laid, which is Jesus Christ." Again in Ephesians 2:20, we read: "And are built upon the foundation of the apostles and prophets, Jesus Christ Himself being the chief corner stone." Here we find Christ's church represented as God's building. In fact those very words are used in 1 Corinthians 3: 9.

One of the finest names ever given to the church outside the Holy Book of God, is Bunyan's appellation, the "Palace Beautiful"; yet the only churches with which he was acquainted were the little Baptist meeting houses in Bedfordshire. To common eyes they may have looked like mere barns, but to him each was a "Palace Beautiful." Why? Because, when seated on one of the hard benches, the eye of his imagination could look through the dingy rafters and see the gorgeous dome of the Church Universal. Love to God, whose house it is, can make any humble structure a true home of the Spirit, a "Palace Beautiful."

Two other figures are used to show the relationship of Christ to His church. First, in Ephesians 5:23, we find the figure of husband and wife.

"The husband is the head of the wife, even as Christ is the head of the church." The other figure is used in verse 30: "We are members of His body, of His flesh, and of His bones." The same idea is found in Colossians 1:18: "He [Christ] is the head of the body, the church." With this close relationship to Christ, how can anyone ignore the importance of the church?

Then, a special name is given to the individuals comprising the church. We read it in Psalm 89: 7: "God is greatly to be feared in the assembly of the saints, and to be had in reverence of all them that are about Him." The Lord's saints are those who are separated unto Him. If they are the sort of saints that they ought to be, they are not only separated unto God, but they are separated from self and from sin.

Someone says, "But there are so many imperfect people in the church." That certainly is true. However, notice how the Apostle Paul addresses "the church of God which is at Corinth, to them that are sanctified in Christ Jesus, called to be saints." 1 Corinthians 1: 2. Then read on through this wonderful book, and see the faults that he finds with these saints. In many ways they certainly were not saintly. There were some great evils that needed to be corrected in their lives, and yet they are called "saints," and we find the same name given to the believers in Rome. "To all that be in Rome, beloved of God, called to be saints [or called saints]." Romans 1:7. Henry Ward Beecher said, and it's true, that the church is not a gallery for the exhibition of eminent Christians, but a school for the education of imperfect ones.

In the very beginning, when Jesus founded His church with the twelve apostles, He Himself said that one of them was a devil-in other words, he was being led by Satan and possessed with his spirit. Should we reject Jesus because He associated with such a man? Should we turn down His church because all the disciples forsook Him and fled at the hour of His greatest need? No! The church will not be perfect until it is gathered home at last, glorified, and immortalized.

If the church were perfect, it would cease to be so as soon as we joined it. William Spencer said that the church should be the society of the forgiven, and the forgiving. The church is the hope of the world, but even so, there -are tares growing among the wheat, as Jesus put it in His great parable of Matthew 13:24-30.

What is necessary for the one seeking' admission to the church? We read in Acts 11: 26 that "the disciples were called Christians first in Antioch." A Christian is a disciple of Christ. A disciple is a follower, one who believes and accepts the teachings of the Master. One of the teachings of Christ is that one must believe-in other words, he must have faith. "He that believes and is baptized shall be saved." Mark 16:16. Repentance follows belief. "Except you repent you shall all likewise perish." Luke 13:5. Then comes confession of Christ as our Savior. "Whosoever therefore shall confess Me before men, him will I confess also before My Father which is in heaven." Matthew 10: 32.

Baptism, then, is the open, public confession of faith to all the world. "Go you therefore [Jesus told His followers], and make disciples [margin] of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost. Teaching them to observe all things whatsoever I have commanded you: and, lo, I am with you always, even unto the end of the world." Matthew 28: 19, 20.

Belief, faith, repentance, confession of Christ, baptism. Faith and obedience go together, for "God is no respecter of persons: but in every nation he that fears Him, and works righteousness, is accepted with Him." Acts 10: 34, 35. Obedience is shown in baptism, and in following all the teachings of the Lord Jesus. Race, nationality, previous condition, have nothing to do with it, for we read in Galatians 3: 28: "There is

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neither Jew nor Greek, there is neither bond nor free, there is neither male nor female: for you are all one in Christ Jesus.”

“No distinction on account of nationality, race, or caste, is recognized by God. He is the Maker of all mankind. All men are of one family by creation, and all are one through redemption. Christ came to demolish every wall of partition, to throw open every compartment of the temple courts, that every soul may have free access to God. In Christ there is neither Jew nor Greek, bond nor free.”-”Prophets and Kings,” pages 369, 370.

The church has a heavenly citizenship. “And hath raised us up together, and made us sit together in heavenly places in Christ Jesus.” Ephesians 2:6. We are Christ’s purchased, redeemed possession; and our inheritance is sure. We read in Ephesians 1:14: “Which is the earnest of our inheritance until the redemption of the purchased possession, unto the praise of His glory.”

Christ’s church is to uphold His truth in the world. It is to be the guardian of the truth. “But if I tarry long, that thou may know how thou ought to behave thyself in the house of God, which is the church of the living God, the pillar and ground of the truth.” 1 Timothy 3: 15.

Christ’s church is to be the visible spectacle to show to all the world what God’s grace can do. “You are a chosen generation, a royal priesthood, an holy nation, a peculiar people; that you should show forth the praises of Him that has called you out of darkness into His marvelous light.” 1 Peter 2: 9.

Though there are many imperfections in the church on earth, many people in it who do live up to their possibilities-even some hypocrites-still the church on earth is the object of Christ’s supreme regard. In the church we find those who have been changed from lives of evil to good and purity. “When the soul surrenders itself to Christ, a new power takes possession of the new heart. A change is wrought which man can never accomplish for himself. It is a supernatural work, bringing a supernatural element into human nature. The soul that is yielded to Christ becomes His own fortress which He holds in a revolted world, and He intends that no authority shall be known in it but His own. A soul thus kept in possession by the heavenly agencies is impregnable to the assaults of Satan.” – “The Desire of Ages,” page 324.

The church is God’s witness to a lost and unbelieving world. “You shall be witnesses unto Me,” were the words of Jesus. (Acts 1: 8.) The final end to which Christ is working with His church is, “That He might sanctify and cleanse it with the washing of water by the word, that He might present it to Himself a glorious church, not having spot, or wrinkle, or any such thing. But that it should be holy and without blemish.” Ephesians 5: 26, 27.

This will be accomplished, and ultimately the great plan of God in Christ will be fulfilled in the absolute unity of all His children. “That in the dispensation of the fullness of times He might gather together in one all things in Christ, both which are in heaven, and which are on earth, even in Him.” Ephesians 1:10.

This is coming; this is certain; this is sure. Do not ignore the church. Accept Christ’s call today. Believe, repent, confess, obey. Enter into fellowship with Christ. Become His disciple, and by Him be added to His church, share in its labors and blessings and, at last, in its eternal victory.

**“The church has one foundation,
Is Jesus Christ her Lord;
She is His new creation,
By water and the Word;
From heaven He came and sought her
To be His holy bride;
With His own blood He bought her,
And for her life He died.”**

**“Mid toil and tribulation,
And tumult of her war,
She waits the consummation
Of peace for evermore.
Till with the vision glorious
Her longing eyes are blest,
And the great church victorious
Shall be the church at rest.”**

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