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"In the Beginning"



HAROLD W. CLARK



"Before the mountains were brought forth, or ever Thou hadst formed the earth and the world, even from everlasting to everlasting Thou art God." Ps. 90: 2. The picture gives a view of Mirror Lake and mountains at Yosemite, United States.



THE Bible contains the only positive and authoritative statement regarding creation. The record in the first chapter declares that creation took place in six days. The fourth commandment says that "in six days the Lord made heaven and earth, the sea, and all that in them is." Ex. 20: 11. The Psalmist declares, "By the word of the Lord were the heavens made." "For He spake and it was done, He commanded, and it stood fast." Ps. 33: 6, 9.

In spite of these definite statements, few people believe that the Bible record is literally true. Nearly all scientists believe and teach evolution, and the majority of Christian scholars think that it was by evolution that God brought the earth and its life into existence. The Genesis record is generally regarded as allegory or poetry, and not as an inspired record of historical fact.

How are we to know what is truth? In the first place we must realize that our own reason is not sufficient to guide us in a study of this question.

We must depend on the Word of God to tell us some things that we cannot learn from our own studies. But this does not mean that we should close our eyes to the facts of science. By studying nature we may learn many things that will help us to better understand the Bible.

On the other hand, we must be very careful not to overestimate the value of scientific discoveries. Many great men have reached wrong conclusions by making this mistake. Our judgment may not always be the best, and some things that appear to be true may perhaps be very wrong. Therefore, in all our study we must be on our guard against being too sure of the truthfulness of our own conclu-

sions. We must remember that scientific data are only our records of what we find by studying nature. We may make mistakes, or may change our scientific views from time to time.

The Bible must be accepted as God's word to man, or it is of no value. All its interesting history, its beautiful literature, its inspiring religious themes, will not save man from sin. If the Genesis record is only a folk tale of ancient Hebrew days, it is no better than early Australian or American history. As a basis for our salvation, the Bible must be accepted as inspired. It is not safe to accept some parts and reject others.

While the Bible is not a textbook of science, its statements and the

principles of true science must be in perfect agreement. God is the Creator and upholder of nature. The Bible and nature must agree, since both have the same Author. We must try to understand both. Each helps to shed light on the other.

Science and Faith

Man has discovered many things about nature. Whenever he learns anything about the workings of nature, he is said to have discovered a fact. In order to explain these facts, he invents theories. Theories are not the same as facts—they are our attempts to explain how or why certain facts are as they are. Sometimes enough proof is gathered to prove beyond any doubt that a certain theory is true. Then that theory becomes a law. This is the way we arrive at our knowledge of the laws of nature. We are continually discovering new facts, forming new theories to explain them, and hoping thus to learn new laws. Science is bringing us closer and closer to an understanding of the working of God in the world of nature.

The greatest scientists in the world believe in God. They see the evidence of His power in the works of nature. The atheist refuses to believe in God, because he fails to reason correctly. Anyone who will accept the evidence from nature is led to acknowledge the existence and the greatness of God.

Some men feel that it is not scientific to have faith. They feel that faith and reason cannot go together. This is not true. Faith in God is the foundation of all true knowledge. The man who refuses to accept God is left with nothing but human speculation on which to stand. He cannot explain the great secrets of nature. The Christian can understand science much better than anyone else. He knows the source of all the wonderful things he studies. Science, in turn, helps us to be better Christians, because it teaches us much of the marvellous power of God. In the laws of science we see how God works through His vast creation. The wonder and beauty of the creation strengthen our faith in God. Science and faith go hand in hand, and neither is complete without the other.

The Bible Record

"In the beginning God created the heaven and the earth." Gen. 1:1. Here is a statement of the principle that God brought the material of the earth into existence. He spoke all things into being, although not always in the same manner. "Through faith we understand that the worlds were framed by the word of God, so that things which are seen were not made of things which do appear."

Heb. 11:3. The original substance of the earth, as well as of other worlds, was created from nothing. The voice of God has power to cause matter to appear where previously none has ever existed. This is the greatest power which we can imagine, and only by faith can we understand it, because we have never seen anything like it in our experience.

The issue is that God is the Creator, and that He, and not natural forces, has brought the earth into existence. Modern scientists have placed evolutionary forces in the place of God, and today we find it necessary to choose between faith in human theories and faith in the statements of the Bible.

The story of creation declares that each day consisted of an evening and a morning. The Bible way of reckoning time has always been from sunset until sunset. Each of the six days must have been a real twenty-four-hour day. If any of them were indefinite periods, then they all must have been such, for they were all alike, according to the record.

During the succeeding days the creative work was of a different nature from the first creative step. Having brought the substance into being, God proceeded to form and mould it, and to bring forth living creatures to

inhabit the earth. The daily cycle was established on the first day. On the second day the atmosphere was made. During this day also the solid earth was separated from the waters.

On the fourth day the sun, moon, and stars were set in the heavens to become the time markers for the earth. When we get a comprehensive view of the greatness of the universe as compared with this earth, we cannot believe that all these bodies were actually brought into existence on the fourth day of creation. The command in Gen. 1:14-18 plainly refers to the establishment of our time units rather than to the original formation of the sun, moon, and stars. We know that some stars are so far away that their light, travelling at the rate of 186,000 miles a second, takes millions of years to reach the earth.

It is no denial of the creation story to believe that these heavenly bodies were made at different times. Let us remember, as has already been pointed out, that the Genesis record likely deals only with the earth, its life, and the relation of the sun, moon, and stars to the earth. As for the sun and the moon, the record says that God made them, but does not say when. What it does say is that on the fourth day He commanded them to be set in the heavens. The creation process involved two stages: (1) the bringing into existence of the substance, and (2) its moulding into completed form. The placing of the sun, moon, and stars in the heavens to give light to the earth, and to make the seasons, could just as truly have been a part of the work of creation week as was the actual making of the plants and the animals on different days from material brought into existence on the first day.

The third, fifth, and sixth days were concerned with the making of plants, animals, and man. The earth was commanded to "bring forth" grass, herbs, fruit trees, cattle, and beasts. The waters brought forth moving creatures. God's power was exercised upon the substance of the earth, causing it to produce every kind of living creature.

According to the Bible record, at creation the earth brought forth plants and animals "after their kind." This implies different types or designs in the living creatures. In plants we see the moss, the fern, the lily, the orchid, the pea, the violet, the sunflower, and many other patterns, or designs. Among animals we see the starfish pattern, the worm, crab, clam, fish, frog, reptile, bird, and mammal patterns. Often these types are subdivided into smaller groups. The mammals are divided into the mole, bat, rodent, carnivore, cattle, and sev-

Everlasting Arms

ROBERT HARE

WHAT if the night is darkly, wild and rude
the blast,

And distant day is frighted with alarms,
Why should I fear, with starlit heavens that
smile above,

While underneath are everlasting arms?

What if false friends betray while critics
scorn and frown;

The Master that I serve found hearts
untrue,

His love is pledged, and in that glad and
holy thought

I walk the darkness, with heaven's clearer
view.

What if the burden presses, and the thorny
way

Stretches afar o'er rugged steep unknown;
The cross He lifted marked His weary path
with blood,

I walk with Him—He leads me to the
throne.

Though passing days decline and suns go
down in gloom,

And cherished hopes lose all their gilded
charms,

I rest in confidence supremely sweet—
divine;

No change can change the "everlasting
arms."

eral other types, or patterns, or designs. A careful study of the classification of living things shows that the command for the earth to bring forth according to patterns has a very interesting and beautiful meaning. We must study God's plans in the plants and the animals before we can fully appreciate this great truth.

In His Image

Above all the other forms, God placed man, who was created in His own image. Man is different from the animals in pattern, and, in addition, because of his likeness to his Maker, he is capable of understanding the divine plan in creation. It is a tragic fact that the great men of the world have refused to see the beautiful truths of creationism, and have turned their attention to the evolutionary interpretation of nature. When man realizes his relation to God, he is led to make an effort to conduct himself in a manner worthy of his high position. By trying to comprehend the great truths of the Bible, he is drawn closer to his Creator. The study of science in relation to the Bible places new meaning in the expression, "In the beginning God created the heaven and the earth."

Bible Writers Support Genesis

All the writers of books of the Bible agree with the simple Genesis story whenever they have occasion to mention the origin of man or of other living creatures. The fourth commandment in Exodus 20 tells us that everything was created in six days.

The Psalms make many references to the creative power of God, such as, "Which made heaven, and earth, the sea, and all that therein is." Ps. 146: 6. Isaiah and Jeremiah and other prophets speak of God as the Creator. Isa. 40: 28; Jer. 51: 15. Nowhere in the New Testament do we find any suggestion of anything different, and a few very positive statements emphasize the truth of creation. John declares that "all things were made by Him." John 1: 3. Paul says that God "made the world and all things therein" (Acts 17: 24) by the power of Jesus Christ. Col. 1: 16; Heb. 1: 2. Other Scriptural references to creation might be made, but these are sufficient to show that from first to last the Bible writers are in perfect agreement on this vital doctrine.

(Continued in a fortnight)

NOTE and COMMENT

Current Topics Reviewed



A Shattered Myth

THE past few years have provided devastating evidence of the fallacy of the belief that human progress is inevitable. The disillusionment has been bitter, and many are bewildered and uncertain as they face the future, and feel that they have no solid foundation upon which to build a new philosophy of life.

Leslie D. Weatherhead, an Anglican clergyman whose books on psychology applied to everyday life and religion are well known, faces the problem with these words:—

"Before we can see what faith in God means, I feel sure we must let faith in man go. To use an expressive, if ugly, modern phrase, we must 'debunk' the idea of the inevitability of progress, an idea, it may be remembered, which is comparatively new in the thought of man.

"For years now the dominant ideas round about us have encouraged us to believe that humanity was progressing. The magic word 'evolution' played its part. The thought took root in men's minds that physically, mentally, and spiritually mankind was in an elevator, and, as they say at the stores, 'going up.' Herbert Spencer, the philosopher of evolution,

wrote, 'Progress is not an accident nor a thing within human control, but a beneficent necessity. This advancement is due to the working of a universal law; . . . in virtue of that law it must combine until the state we call perfection is reached. . . . What we call evil and immorality must disappear. It is certain that man must become perfect.' Sadly enough now, we see no reason for the use of the word 'must.' Modern man may respond to his friend by means of the telephone instead of the letter which served in earlier days, but the content of the response is not thus altered, and no speeding up of methods of man's response to man leads him to that response to God which is the only test of true progress."

It is only too apparent now that man's boasted scientific and material progress contributed nothing to his real, or spiritual, progress. On the contrary, it so ministered to his pride and feeling of superiority and self-sufficiency that he rejected God, and refused to admit his need of a Saviour. Thus, with God banished from His creation, and from control of His universe, man felt free to follow his own inclinations. For a time he rejoiced in the freedom from the old restraint that belief in a personal God, in the Ten Commandments, and in a coming judgment had before imposed.



A sturdy United States army plane, which has been used in the primary training of army pilots at the Air Corps Training Centre, Randolph Field, Texas.

But he has found the bitter bondage that holds all who refuse to be made free by the Son of God. He finds that the current of his own impulses and desires, to which he yielded himself with such free abandon, is sweeping him onward toward the abyss, and that he is powerless to extricate himself. The progress in which he rejoiced is progress downstream, toward the precipice.

Of himself, man is powerless to save himself. But when he realizes this, and humbly turns to God, he will not be disappointed. By the miracle of conversion, God is able to lift man from the pit of sin, and set his feet upon the road that leads to life. He will forgive the past, and give power to live above sin day by day.

The only possibility of human progress is by continually abiding in Christ, by buttressing our human weakness with His divine strength. His promise to us is:—

"Fear thou not; for I am with thee; be not dismayed; for I am thy God; I will strengthen thee; yea, I will help thee; yea, I will uphold thee with the right hand of My righteousness." Isa. 41: 10. H.



Wanted --- a Super Brain to Boss the World

UNDER the above heading, H. G. Wells wrote an article which appeared in the Washington, D.C., *Sphere* for December, and which was condensed by the *Magazine Digest*.

From his view of the world, Mr. Wells sees nothing but extinction facing humanity unless they adapt themselves to a mode of life that could survive. The abolition of distance brought about by the radio, the aeroplane, and kindred methods of communication and travel, he considers must be met with the formation of a new world order based on complete federation, not only political, but economic, legal, and educational.

Mr. Wells complains that the trouble today is due to the fact that there is no world-mind yet developed, but only a vast dementia. His title suggests the need for a supreme ruler who will take command, but he does not develop this phase.

There are many leaders and groups who today are calling for a world federation. It is widely felt that only by some such method will the world be saved from destruction. But the difficulty is that no one leader has emerged powerful enough to command the respect and obedience of the entire warring world. That is, no

one leader has yet come out into the open and been proclaimed leader; but ever since this war began, there have been repeated suggestions that one man, one system, stands supreme in authority, and would be willing to step in and guide and control. That man is the pope, that system, the Papacy. We quote from the Catholic journal *America*:—

"The Papacy and what it stands for, can be the only insurance against recurrent war. But that can come about only if the pope be given his rightful place at any table round which the peace terms will be, in God's own time, discussed. His rightful place on two counts: first as the vicar of Christ, who still has a place in this world; second, as a temporal ruler of a fully sovereign nation, who has an equal place with all the kings and presidents of other nations. As Catholics, then, we must first of all talk peace—peace not on Hitler's or Churchill's or Roosevelt's terms, but on God's.

"Secondly, for these terms to come to fruition, we must talk up, in season and out, the corollary that the pope must have a place in the settlement. We want insurance against wars, and only the peace of Christ in the kingdom of Christ (of which the pope is the visible head) can take out the policy."

Rome has again taken her place as a religio-political power, and it is evident that she considers "her rightful place" to be at the head of the peace table.

Another significant article recently appeared in the *Atlantic Monthly* for January. It comes from the pen of Prince Hubertus zu Loewenstein, staunch Roman Catholic youth leader, who was banished from Germany some years ago. He sees the coming of a Christian world revolution motivated by the Catholic Church.

"The political, economic, and intellectual order of the future will be determined by the outcome of the struggle between agnostic statecraft and living Christianity, which are contending for leadership the world over. . . .

"With the reawakening of religious and spiritual forces, which we witness in our day, Christianity should be assured of ultimate triumph, if its leaders live up to the greatness of their task."

He then refers to the religious awakening among students noticeable throughout America, and concludes: "If their knowledge of forces greater than death, war, and hatred, and more powerful than the remedies tried by the previous generation, shall become the common good of all, those

are not hoping in vain who through the darkness and the ruin of our time perceive the coming of a world-wide Christian revolution."

But his most significant paragraph follows his mention of the pope's peace plan. He says: "Bishop Bell of Chichester, a high dignitary of the Anglican Church, added a most constructive suggestion to make this peace programme practically effective. In his book, 'Christianity and World Order,' he proposes the formation of a permanent Christian consultative body, at Rome itself or at some other place acceptable to the Holy See, over which the pope or his representative should preside, while certain of the great churches of the world—for example, the Orthodox, Lutheran, Reformed, and Anglican confessions—would send their own accredited representatives."

We include the comment of another writer on this article:—

"Here is the picture described in this article. A world facing ruin. A bewildered and disillusioned generation. A revival of religion in colleges and universities. A church (the Catholic Church) infallible and alert, ready to occupy the role of Christian leadership. A generally accepted peace plan offered by the pope. A Christian consultative body to be set up in Rome, with the pope at its head, to make the peace programme practically effective. Then a Christian world revolution. Truly a most significant picture to be found in a secular journal."

Let it ever be remembered that no human schemes for world federation, no one human brain, will ever prove effective in uniting the world in a reign of prosperity and peace. Nor would a peace engineered and dictated by the Papacy prove a just or lasting peace; for it would have to be a peace of submission to her will, and of surrender of individual religious freedom. We may judge from the past how Rome, when the power is in her hands, will act toward those who refuse to bow to her decrees.

No, it is beyond the power of man to bring about a just or enduring peace. But nevertheless peace will reign on this earth—perfect and lasting peace, under the benign rulership of the Prince of Peace, who is soon to come and take control of our chaotic, disrupted world. Now is the time for all to accept His rulership in their lives, and conform to His great law of liberty, that at His coming they might meet Him with joy. But for those who persist in rebellion or indifference, there can be nothing but anguish and destruction at that great day. The choice is with us individually. H.

SIGNS of the TIMES

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Events at Second Advent and Afterwards

(Second and Concluding Article)

A FORTNIGHT ago, when dealing with the subject of the events that occur at Christ's second advent and afterwards, we promised to examine a chart that had been sent to us for examination in connection with the subject. The chart is entitled, "A Brief Outline of Things Which Must Shortly Come to Pass."

We cannot harmonize this chart with the teachings of the Scriptures, and it shows an arrangement that is wholly arbitrary in many ways. We shall mention some of the fundamental weaknesses, or errors, in the chart.

For instance, the chart detaches the last week of the seventy weeks of Dan. 9: 24, and tries to place the seventieth week in the future (or between the so-called "secret rapture" and the public appearance of Christ—a division of the second advent into two parts for which there is no proof whatsoever in Scripture, as we shall show later). It wrongly declares that "all prophecy passes over" the "period from Pentecost to the rapture."

But to break off the last portion of a time prophecy and to try to transfer, or carry, that detached portion over more than nineteen hundred years to a point yet in the future, is purely arbitrary and something for which there is no Scriptural authority. It is something entirely without precedent and warrant. All the time periods of the Bible have been periods that, having once commenced, ran their complete term. Take the 120 years, for instance, that God allotted as the utmost period of human probation at the time of the Flood. Gen 6: 3. The last seven years could not possibly be detached, and were not detached. So with the seventy years' captivity. Jer. 25: 11, 12. Having once commenced, the seventy years' captivity ran its entire period, and none of the concluding years could be transferred to a later date.

The seventy weeks of Dan. 9: 24 are an intact period, and the last week cannot be detached from the preceding sixty-nine weeks and carried down over nineteen centuries to the future. That is something purely arbitrary and unscriptural.

Seventy Weeks Cut Off from Longer Period

The fact is that the seventy weeks, or 490 days, or rather 490 years (for a day in symbolic prophecy represents a year—Num. 14: 34; Eze. 4: 6), are cut off from the longer period of 2,300 days, or 2,300 years, of Dan. 8: 14. The year-day principle is one that the leading Protestant commentators have recognized. "Seventy weeks are determined upon thy people and upon thy holy city." Dan. 9: 24. The Hebrew word translated "determined" is *chathak*, and means to cut off. Many translations so render the word. The seventy weeks, or 490 years, were cut off from the 2,300 years of Dan. 8: 14. One writer thus comments upon the Hebrew word *chathak*, translated "determined":—

"This word [*chathak*] Gesenius, in his Hebrew Lexicon, defines as follows: 'Properly, to cut off; tropically, to divide; and so to determine, to decree.'

"In the Chaldeo-Rabbinic Dictionary of Stockius, the word *chathak* is thus defined: 'Scidit, abscondit, conscidit, inscidit, excidit—to cut, to cut away, to cut in pieces, to cut or engrave, to cut off.'

"Mercerus, in his Thesaurus, furnishes a specimen of Rabbinical usage in the phrase *chatikah shel basar*, 'a piece of flesh,' or 'a cut of flesh.' He translates the word, as it occurs in Dan. 9: 24, by *præcisa est*, is cut off.

"In the literal version of Arias Montanus it is translated *decisa est*, is cut off. In the marginal reading, which is grammatically correct, it is

rendered by the plural, *decisæ sunt*, are cut off.

"In the Latin version of Junius and Tremellius, *nechtak* (the passive of *chatak*) is rendered *decisæ sunt*, are cut off.

"Again, in Theodotion's Greek version of Daniel (which is the version used in the Vatican copy of the Septuagint, as being the most faithful), it is rendered by *sunet-mēthēsan*, were cut off; and in the Venetian copy by *tetmētai*, have been cut.

"The idea of cutting off is preserved in the Vulgate, where the phrase is *abbreviatæ sunt*, are shortened.

"Thus Chaldaic and Rabbinical authority, and that of the earliest versions, the Septuagint and Vulgate, give the single signification of cutting off, to this verb."

"Hengstenberg, who enters into a critical examination of the original text, says: 'But the very use of the word, which does not elsewhere occur, while others much more frequently were used, were at hand if Daniel had wished to express the idea of determination, and of which he has elsewhere, and even in this portion availed himself, seems to argue that the word stands from regard to its original meaning, and represents the seventy weeks in contrast with a determination of time (*en platei*) as a period cut off from subsequent duration, and accurately limited.'—"Christology of the Old Testament," Vol. II, page 301.

Hence the seventy weeks were cut off. They represent 490 years, and were cut off from the longer period of 2,300 years (Dan. 8: 14) and allotted to the Jews. The 2,300 years began in the seventh year of Artaxerxes Longimanus, or in 457 B.C., and ended in A.D. 1844. The seventy weeks, or 490 years, which were cut off from the longer period of 2,300 years and allotted to the Jews, began in 457 B.C. and ended in A.D. 34, when Stephen was stoned and the gospel was given to the Gentiles. With the ending of seventy weeks, or 490 years, in A.D. 34, the period allotted to the Jews ended. Being cut off, for the Jews, from the longer period of 2,300 years, the 490 years have necessarily the same starting-point as the 2,300 years, namely, 457 B.C. The 490 years ended in A.D. 34, and the 2,300 years in 1844.

The attempt, therefore, to detach the last week from the seventy weeks, and to carry it from the time of Christ over more than nineteen centuries to a time still in the future, is obviously unjustifiable, purely arbitrary, and wrong. Those who so deal with Scripture are obviously bent on bolstering up some fancy of their own and are not making Scripture truth the great object of their search.

The Secret Rapture Unknown to Scripture

The chart mentioned endeavours to divide Christ's second advent into two parts, namely, the secret rapture and the second advent. At the secret rapture, it teaches, Christ takes the church, or believers, away to heaven. Christ appears publicly, it says, seven years later. Between the alleged secret rapture and the public appearing of Christ, the chart places the last week, or seven years, of the seventy weeks of Dan. 8: 24.

Not only is the chart wrong, as already pointed out, in endeavouring to detach the seventieth week, or seven years, of Dan. 9: 27 from the preceding sixty-nine weeks, but it is also unscriptural and wrong in trying to divide Christ's second advent into two phases—the alleged secret rapture and the public appearing of Christ.

The Bible does not mention any secret rapture at all, nor was the secret rapture ever heard of until the year A.D. 1830, when the idea had its origin in an Irvingite meeting in England.

Says John A. Anderson, M.D.:—

"In the book entitled 'The Restoration of Apostles and Prophets in the Catholic Apostolic Church,' written by R. N. (Dr. Nolan), a loyal and faithful member of that church, we have verbatim accounts of the origin of the 'secret coming' and other theories. At page 171 we read: 'The testimony of the Holy Ghost now breaking through the silence of centuries with His glorious voice of prophecy and song in perfect unison with all Holy Scripture is this: that these are the last days, that the Lord is now coming again, that before revealing Himself to the world as its Judge He will reveal Himself to the church as her glorious Bridegroom, and not to all at once; but first of all to His sealed ones as the first-fruits of a general harvest of which they shall be the angel-reapers.'

"Again, we read at page 15, of 'An evening (in March, 1830) during which the power of the Holy Ghost rested upon her (Miss M. M.) for several successive hours, in mingled prophecy and vision. We have an instance (of prophecy) for here we first see the distinction between that final stage of the Lord's coming, when every eye shall see Him, and His prior appearing in glory to them that look for Him.'

"Here we have a straightforward account of the origin of the 'secret coming' and the 'two-stage coming' theories. Neither theory is found in the Bible."

Dr. John A. Anderson also says:—

"This theory of a secret coming for the saints before a later public ap-

pearing, was based not on Scripture, but upon the revelation which their prophets claimed to have received from the Holy Spirit. After these so-called revelations were announced, Mr. Irving and others sought for Scripture analogies to corroborate them. They fixed upon Revelation 12 and the taking up of the Man-child, as the analogy to prove that their prophets' revelations were divinely inspired. But Revelation 12 is capable of a wholly different interpretation."

The English scholar S. P. Tregelles, the noted authority upon the text of the Greek New Testament, thus comments upon the "secret rapture" theory:—

"In 1863 I heard it publicly and definitely maintained that the secret coming is the *second* coming promised in Scripture, and that the manifest appearing of our Lord is His *third* coming. Many seem to think this who do not say so in definite words. But a third coming is something very different from His coming again. . . . When proofs have been asked for the doctrine of the secret advent and secret removal of the church, certain supposed analogies have been sometimes presented instead, which were thought to bear on the subject. But as analogy is a resemblance of relations, it is needful that the facts should be first known and demonstrated, instead of their being merely supposed. It has been asked if the crossing of Jordan by the children of Israel was not a thing known to them only at the time and not heard of by the Canaanites till afterwards? Whether Elijah is not to be taken as a type of the church, and Elisha as that of 'the Jewish remnant'?"

"Some, indeed, ask, 'Have you not overlooked how plainly the secret rapture of the church is set forth in the Canticles [Song of Solomon]?' But is it intended that we should interpret the New Testament by the Canticles? Should we not rather let the full light of the Christian revelation shine on the ancient Scriptures? Of one thing we may be certain, that nothing in the Canticles can contradict our Lord's words, and His promise that His elect shall be gathered unto Him by His angels, at His manifest coming with power and great glory."

"Whatever may be the import of passages in the Canticles which speak of secrecy ('the secret places of the stairs,' etc.) or of the withdrawal of the bride from any particular scene ('Come with me from Lebanon,' etc.), we ought to be so established in the New Testament truth, as not to imagine that these can set forth a secret rapture, unless such a rapture had been definitely taught in the Word, instead of its being contradicted. To

learn the distinct hope of the Lord's coming is a far simpler thing than it is to interpret the Canticles."—"The Hope of Christ's Second Coming," by S. P. Tregelles, LL.D., pages 25-27, 30, 54, 55.

The text of Scripture chiefly relied on to teach the secret rapture is 1 Thess. 4: 16-18. The choice is singularly unfortunate, and one writer has commented upon it as follows:—

"Let us look at the passage [1 Thess. 4: 16-18]. Is a *shout*, the *voice of the Archangel*, and the *trump of God*, consistent with the idea of secrecy? Observe, too, the region in which this glorious manifestation is made. It is 'in the air'—that is, in the atmosphere immediately overhead. *In the very nature of things, this event cannot be secret.* What does it comprehend? The resurrection of saints from the days of Abel, down to the last who had died in the Lord, the transformation of all the saints who shall then be living on the earth, and their ascension to meet Him. The idea of an event so stupendous, being in any sense secret, is absurd. Even were it possible to call dead saints unobserved from their graves, how is it possible to call living saints to meet the Lord in the air, unobserved? . . . Are we to believe, then, the possibility of His people being transformed into His image, and caught up into the air, and those left behind knowing nothing at all about it?"

When the advocates of a secret rapture are asked for a text of Scripture mentioning such a thing, they are wholly unable to do so. Seeing that the theory never arose until the year 1830, or about nineteen centuries after the time of Christ, their great difficulty in finding Scriptural proof for the theory is easily understood. They depend wholly upon very questionable and unsatisfactory suppositions drawn from analogies.

For instance, one of their advocates recently stated that Jesus was seen only by believers after He rose from the dead, and hence He will be seen only by believers when He comes again. But even if it were true (which it is not) that Jesus was seen only by believers after His resurrection, it does not necessarily follow that He will be seen only by believers when He comes again, particularly when the Bible makes no mention whatever of any secret rapture and many times declares that His second coming will be one that will be seen by all!

But it is clear from Matt. 28: 11-15 that the Roman guard, or watch, witnessed the resurrection of Jesus, and thus saw Him after He had risen from the dead. The Roman guard *must* have witnessed His resurrection in order to have been able to show,

or relate, "all the things that were done." Matt. 28: 11. Their mouths were closed only by bribery on the part of the Jewish leaders. What those Jewish leaders feared was the soldiers' testimony to the resurrection of Jesus. Had the soldiers not seen the angel appear and Jesus rise from the dead, they would not have been able to say anything that the Jewish rulers feared. But the soldiers *had* seen the angel appear and *Jesus rise from the dead*, and hence were bribed to say that the disciples came by night and stole Jesus while they slept.

Hence the Roman guard had, even before the disciples, seen the living Christ!

Other Points

Inasmuch as there is no such thing as a secret rapture, and there is only one second coming of Christ, which coming will be a public one, it is clear that it is absurd to try to place the last week of the seventy weeks between a secret rapture and the public appearing of Christ.

In the endeavour to hang something upon nothing, the chart under discussion tries to place in that imaginary seven years the conflict with the beast and his image. And after that conflict, it makes Christ reign with His saints for a thousand years "upon the earth." But it completely overlooks the Bible statements that show that those who get the victory over the beast and his image, and other overcomers, will stand on the sea of glass, which is before the throne of God in heaven. They are thus in heaven during the thousand years' reign. See Rev. 20: 4; 15: 2; 4: 2, 6. See also Rev. 7: 9; 14: 3; 19: 1, 4.

It also overlooks the Biblical passages stating that, at His second advent, Christ destroys the wicked by the brightness of His coming. 2 Thess. 2: 8; 1: 6-10.

How then can Christ and His church preach to the wicked during the thousand years, seeing that the wicked will then all be *dead*? They will all be dead and awaiting the second resurrection, that of the unrighteous, at the end of the thousand years.

How can Christ reign with His saints, including those victorious over the beast and his image, on the earth during the thousand years, when the Bible distinctly says that those who get the victory over the beast and his image, and other overcomers also, will all be in heaven during the thousand years? Rev. 20: 4; 15: 2; 4: 2, 6; etc.

Moreover, the chart under discussion overlooks Jer. 4: 23-27, which shows that the earth goes back to its dark, chaotic, waste condition (it will

be the prison of Satan and his angels) during the thousand years.

Further, after stating that Christ and His bride will reign gloriously over the earth during the thousand years, the chart says that there will be a "great multitude in rebellion" at the close of the thousand years! Hence the work of the "glorious" reign of Christ and His bride will be more or less undone! The chart's scheme is obviously wrong.

Human Probation Closes Before Christ Comes

What the chart completely overlooks is that before Jesus' appearing in the clouds of heaven, human probation will close, and there can be no gospel preaching or salvation afterwards. The Bible plainly says:—

"He that is unjust, let him be unjust still: and he which is filthy, let him be filthy still: and he that is righteous, let him be righteous still: and he that is holy, let him be holy still."

"And, behold, I come quickly; and My reward is with Me, to give every man according as his work shall be." Rev. 22: 11, 12.

Hence, before Christ's second coming, every case is decided for life or death. Those who are unjust, will remain unjust; those who are filthy, will remain so. Human probation will be closed for ever. No one who has not found salvation can find it at or after Christ's second coming. That is why the Apostle Paul says so distinctly and emphatically: "Behold, now is the accepted time; behold, now is the day of salvation." 2 Cor. 6: 2.

The Lord Jesus now ministers for us as our high priest before the throne of grace in heaven. Heb. 8: 1, 2;

9: 11, 12; 4: 14-16; 7: 25-27. But the time will come when He will lay aside His priestly vestments, and put on His royal robes and come as "King of kings, and Lord of lords." Rev. 19: 11-16. The day of salvation will then have ended. Rev. 22: 11, 12; 6: 14-17. The day of mercy will have given place to the day of wrath. Hence the scheme of the chart is very much in error. There can be no preaching of the gospel, no salvation, and no apostasy after Christ comes.

After the end of the thousand years, this sinful old earth will be cleansed and purified, and Edenic conditions will be restored; and the beautiful new earth, with its fadeless loveliness and eternal years, will be the home of the saints for ever. 2 Peter 3: 10-13; Revelation 21 and 22.

K.

All Not Well

"Is all well with us? I wish I could answer with assurance," said the Bishop of Chelmsford at a recent diocesan conference; "but I greatly fear that Christianity in England hangs by a thread." He denounced as dangerous delusions and "sickly optimism," the complacent talk about "diffused religion," "Christianity outside the churches," and the nation being "Christian at heart."

Not Appreciated

"THE greatest and most permanent of all cures" of human ills, writes Commander King Hall, M.P., in the *Sunday Times* with reference to the ministry of Christ, "only enjoyed the support of twelve disciples when it was first given to humanity."

All Have Gone Astray



We all, O Lord, have gone astray,
And wandered from Thy heavenly way.
The wilds of sin our feet have trod
Far from the paths of Thee, our God.

In penitential grief we sigh,
And lift to Thee our humble cry.
Won by Thy love, we turn to Him
Who died to save us from our sin.

Hear us, great Shepherd of Thy sheep!
We seek Thy shelter fold again,
Our wanderings heal, our footsteps keep:
Nor shall we seek Thee, Lord, in vain.

O God! we praise Thee for Thy grace.
How sweet the smiling of Thy face!
O let Thy grace our hearts control,
And fill with love each longing soul.

Teach us to know and love Thy way;
And grant to life's remotest day,
By Thine unerring guidance led,
Our willing feet Thy paths may tread.

—Josiah Pratt.

THE CHURCH and Its HISTORY

DO WE NEED THE CHURCH?

● LEONARD S. BARNES

FOR nearly three thousand of its six thousand years' history, this world was without a church, that is, an earthly organization as opposed to a heavenly. Not that man was pagan, or insufficiently evolved (as some believe) to appreciate an all-wise and loving God, but because the church, as we know it today, is the outcome by growth from the simpler organizations of past ages.

In patriarchal days each family or household, which, including servants and all related persons, sometimes numbered a thousand, was its own church, with the father or senior member serving as its presiding minister or priest. The families of Abraham, Jacob, and Job are Biblical examples. A church was first organized in the time of Moses, and is called by Stephen in his apology before the Sanhedrin council, "the church in the wilderness." It was not only ecclesiastical but national; the whole Israelitish nation from Moses and Aaron downward, being organized in worship and service.

Its commission was read by Moses to the elders, and then to the people, just a few weeks delivered from Egypt, as they were assembled about Mount Sinai. It read in part as follows: "Now therefore, if ye will obey My voice indeed, and keep My covenant, then ye shall be a peculiar treasure unto Me above all people; for all the earth is Mine: and ye shall be unto Me a kingdom of priests, and an holy nation." Ex. 19: 5, 6.

Later on in their history, God said of Israel, "They shall declare My glory among the Gentiles." This was God's great object for the nation which He had chosen. From the days of Abraham, to whom the promise, "and in thee shall all families of the earth be blessed" was made, and from the days of Isaac and Jacob, to whom it was repeated, God had been working for the success of this objective.

Did Israel fulfil its commission? The answer, as we all know, is in the negative. It failed because it lacked three things, without which no God-inspired programme can succeed: vision, faith, and obedience. Several similes are used throughout Scripture to typify both the nation and its failure, among them being a vineyard overgrown with weeds, a wife unfaithful to her husband, and a piece of pottery irrecoverably smashed.

While this was the fate of Israel, it was not so of the promises of God, and their ultimate fulfilment. Provision had been made should humanity fail in its task. "In thy seed shall all the nations of the earth be blessed," was the way the promise was given to Isaac. Now of this promised "seed," Paul says in Gal. 3: 16: "Now to Abraham and his seed were the promises made. He saith not, And to seeds, as of many; but as of one, And to thy seed, which is Christ." In Christ, then, are all nations to be blessed, and the promise fulfilled—but how?

Upon the ruins of the national church of Israel Christ founded another and greater church—the Christian church, "the general assembly and church of the first-born." Heb. 12: 23. Christ is Himself its high priest. Not the Jerusalem in bondage here on earth, but "Jerusalem which is above" is the objective of our earthly pilgrimage. Not in a building or sanctuary "made with hands," but in "the true tabernacle, which the Lord pitched, and not man," is our "throne of grace" to be found.

By belief in the atonement made by Jesus, and through the baptism of water and the Spirit, are penitent sinners assured of a place in the records of the Lamb's book of life. Not in one nation, but from every nation; not in one religion, but from every religion, is Christ to make up the final number of saints whom He



shall transport in joy to the heavenly mansions in His Father's house. "Of a truth I perceive that God is no respecter of persons: but in every nation he that feareth Him, and worketh righteousness, is accepted with Him." Acts 10: 34, 35. These are the incorruptible, eternal, and perfect elements of the Christian church; they are such because they are heavenly and God-appointed; but what of its earthly components?

Man is a body and he is a soul, a living soul. As a soul he aspires to heavenly places and ideals; as a body he seeks to put into operation those ideals, and give expression to his emotions and desires. Now these desires are very strong in some men. David says in Ps. 84: 2: "My soul longeth, yea, even fainteth for the courts of the Lord; my heart and my flesh crieth out for the living God." But they are present in all men, and no organization on earth meets so well the fulfilment of these desires as the Christian church—in fact it is the only one. As a soul crying out after God, man can live above the things of earth; he can commune with God through prayer; he can share with God in the perfection of all virtues and beauty by meditation and spiritual reflection. As a body he can, in the multitudinous duties of Christian service to his fellow-men, find ample expression for his God-inspired ideals.

Should We Join a Church?

Under the question, "Should we belong to a church?" let us discuss this subject of affiliation with an earthly organization. Some Christians decry all organization, allowing the body to do only what their own soul decrees, and taking guidance

from no so-called church. Can we get along without a church, without membership, without attendance, without regular fellowship, without a treasury, without a programme of expansion? Never can we do without them in the light of our commission, "Go ye into all the world, and preach the gospel to every creature." What a stupendous task! Its very magnitude calls for order and organization.

Christ Himself was the first organizer, and there are many similarities between His organization of the Christian church, and of the church in the wilderness, or of Israel, and that of the great antitype in heaven. The number twelve is prominent throughout, e.g., twelve tribes, twelve disciples, twenty-four elders, and the 144,000 mentioned in the Book of Revelation, chapters seven and fourteen. Jesus chose twelve, then ordained seventy to go forth into the cities of Israel and preach the gospel. After His ascension, the first step of the eleven disciples was to choose a successor to Judas. After Pentecost, when conversions multiplied and certain social problems relating thereto demanded attention, action was taken to appoint deacons and ordain a greater number of full-time evangelistic workers. As communities of believers developed, churches were organized, particularly by Paul, and it was in one of these centres, Antioch, where the believers in Jesus were first called Christians. Church finance was also ordered to serve the growing cause in as economical and far-reaching a way as possible. If every Christian worshipped solely at his own shrine, and gave only to his own interests, and preached only his own doctrine, how long do you suppose it would take to evangelize the world? The progress of missions in the last one hundred and fifty years has been due to the united labours, united sacrifices, and prayers of the great majority of Christians.

The church is a body, with Christ its head, and the communicants as members or functionary parts of the body. The Holy Spirit is the coordinating power between the many parts, assuring harmony, power, and success in its operation. "And He is the head of the body, the church, . . . that in all things He might have the pre-eminence." Col. 1: 18. No bishop, priest, minister, or elder is to have the pre-eminence, only Christ. For the first three centuries Christ was the great Leader of the church. Under the banner of Prince Emmanuel the early Christians went forth to conquer, in spite of the fire and sword which were wielded against them; and tens of thousands were won for their

Master. "And they went forth, and preached everywhere, the Lord working with them, and confirming the Word with signs following." Mark 16: 20.

Not Dependent on Costly Buildings

The success of the church's work does not lie in the erection of costly cathedrals, or the establishment of richly endowed theological colleges.



Shall I Crucify Him?

SHALL I crucify my Saviour,
When for me He bore such loss?
Shall I put to shame my Saviour?
Can I nail Him to the cross?

Are temptations so alluring,
Do earth's pleasures so enthrall,
That I cannot love my Saviour
Well enough to leave them all?

'Twas my sins that crucified Him;
Shall they crucify Him yet?
Blackest day of nameless anguish,
Can my thankless soul forget?

Oh, the kindly hands of Jesus,
Pouring blessings on all men!
Bleeding, nail-scarred hands of Jesus,
Can I nail them once again?

Shall I crucify my Saviour,
Crucify my Lord again?
Once, oh, once I crucified Him,
Shall I crucify again?

—Mrs. Frank A. Breck.

In the early church there is little mention made of buildings and externals. Paul refers to the individual church unit in 1 Tim. 3: 15, where he admonishes Timothy: "That thou mayest know how thou oughtest to behave thyself in the house of God, which is the church of the living God, the pillar and ground of the truth." Truly, any edifice of worship should be "the house of God" to its worshippers.

The church building is, or should be, the true sanctuary and material refuge of the Christian. It should be the depository of divine truth, and a meeting-place where its members can hear that truth dispensed, and participate in its divinely established sacraments.

Of our duty in attending a place of worship, Paul writes in Heb. 10: 25: "Not forsaking the assembling of ourselves together, as the manner of some is; but exhorting one another: and so much the more, as ye see the day approaching." For the sake of our own spiritual growth and knowledge, and also for that of others, we cannot afford to stay away from church. Not until the gospel commission has been completed, may we dispense with the church, that is, its earthly organization, for still in heaven and later on in this redeemed and re-created earth, shall we have need of worship and spiritual communion. Now we gather before the oaken desk and open Word; then, around the great white throne and the living Word.

Triumph Sure

Israel failed through lack of vision, faith, and obedience. Shall we? We may fail, but God's purpose for His earthly Christian church will succeed. Victory is coming to the church of God. It is coming now as thousands from the darkness of heathenism and the soul-degrading and soul-destroying civilization of our cities, flow into its light and life. Now, when, in the words of the Moderator of the General Assembly of the Church of Scotland, "It is humbling to reflect that the spiritual forces of Christian Europe have been powerless to prevent this war," we should "arise, shine; for thy light is come, and the glory of the Lord is risen upon thee. For, behold, the darkness shall cover the earth, and gross darkness the people: but the Lord shall arise upon thee, and His glory shall be seen upon thee. And the Gentiles shall come to thy light, and kings to the brightness of thy rising." Isa. 60: 1-3.

We need the church, and the church needs us. While wars rage and kingdoms rise and fall, while fortunes fail and human achievement grows dim, let us prepare for the task of the evangelization of mankind, and the preparation of men for the coming kingdom of Jesus Christ, which, if we all do our part in hastening, may come more quickly than we hoped.

A LARGE proportion of men and a still larger proportion of women owe their initial debauch to the influence of alcohol. Perhaps more than any other agency, alcohol relaxes the morals while it stimulates the sexual impulse. — "Social Diseases and Marriage," by Dr. Prince A. Morrow, Bellevue Hospital Medical College.

"FLYING over the peaks the eagle is not concerned with crossing streams."

The Sealing of the Saints

The Most Important Work Proceeding in the World Today

JAMES ORVILLE WILSON

THE prophecy of the seven seals, found in chapters five, six, and seven of the Book of Revelation, deals—in advance—with the history of the church from the time of Christ to the end of the world. It is represented as written in a book, or scroll, and sealed with seven seals. No one is found who can open the seals, save the Lamb. Only Christ shares with the Father the ability to read the future. He took the book and opened the seven seals, revealing in this prophecy the future history of the Christian church in seven stages or periods.

"I saw when the Lamb opened one of the seals, and I heard, as it were the noise of thunder, one of the four beasts saying, Come and see. And I saw, and behold a white horse: and He that sat on him had a bow; and a crown was given unto Him; and He went forth conquering, and to conquer." Rev. 6: 1, 2.

This was a representation of the apostolic age, that period of purity and triumph of the church. In like manner the opening of seal after seal represented one stage after another of the Christian church, through the time of apostasy, the Dark Ages, the Reformation, and so on down to the second coming of Christ.

Coming to the record of the opening of the sixth seal, we read:—

"I beheld when He had opened the sixth seal, and, lo, there was a great earthquake; and the sun became black as sackcloth of hair, and the moon became as blood; and the stars of heaven fell unto the earth, even as a fig tree casteth her untimely figs, when she is shaken of a mighty wind. And the heaven departed as a scroll when it is rolled together; and every mountain and island were moved out of their places. And the kings of the earth, and the great men, and the rich men, and the chief captains, and the mighty men, and every bondman, and every freeman, hid themselves in the dens and in the rocks of the mountains; and said to the mountains and rocks, Fall on us, and hide us from the face of Him that sitteth on the throne, and from the wrath of the Lamb: for the great

day of His wrath is come; and who shall be able to stand?" Rev. 6: 12-17.

The earthquake that fulfilled this prophecy was the great Lisbon earthquake of November 1, 1755. It was the most terrible in history up to that time. The historian says: "In six minutes sixty thousand persons perished." "Half the world felt the convulsion."

A few years later, on May 19, 1780, the sun was darkened. Many eye-witnesses have left on record the impression that was made on the people by the unnatural darkness of that day. It could not be explained by astronomers. Being at the time of full moon, an eclipse of the sun was impossible. And that night the appearance of the moon was like blood.

Fifty-three years later, on November 13, 1833, "the stars of heaven fell unto the earth." Verse 13. There have been other smaller meteoric showers, but the one of that date surpassed all others in extent and grandeur. Many who saw it thought the day of judgment had come.

Thus, at the predicted time, the promised signs were fulfilled.

Now when the seventh seal was opened, we read, "There was silence in heaven about the space of half an hour." Rev. 8: 1. This, we believe, will have its application in connection with the coming of Christ; for, when He comes, He will be accompanied by all the holy angels, leaving heaven silent. Matt. 25: 31.

Between the sixth and seventh seals, therefore, must occur the events foretold in the seventh chapter of Revelation. Here we read of a special work for God's people to be done some time between the giving of the signs in the sun, moon, and stars, under the sixth seal, and the coming of Christ under the seventh seal. It is that particular work for God's people to which we wish to give special study now.

The Seal of the Living God

"After these things I saw four angels standing on the four corners of the earth, holding the four winds of the earth, that the wind should not

blow on the earth, nor on the sea, nor on any tree. And I saw another angel ascending from the east, having the seal of the living God: and he cried with a loud voice to the four angels, to whom it was given to hurt the earth and the sea, saying, Hurt not the earth, neither the sea, nor the trees, till we have sealed the servants of our God in their foreheads." Rev. 7: 1-3.

Here it is stated that God's people, in the generation living just before the second coming of Christ, are to be sealed in their foreheads with "the seal of the living God."

We find ourselves living in that time today. We have passed those signs that took place at the opening of the sixth seal. We have not yet reached the coming of Christ, which takes place at the opening of the seventh seal. We are between the opening of the sixth seal and the opening of the seventh. We are in the very time when the servants of God are to be sealed with the seal of the living God. Surely it is of the greatest importance that we should know what the seal of the living God is, and what it means to be sealed.

Now, a seal is a mark, or sign, to distinguish that which is sealed from all other things. It is a mark of ownership, a sign of authority.

The seal of a ruler contains the name of the ruler, his title or authority for ruling, and the extent of his dominion.

The seal of a government is used in connection with its laws and legal documents. The law is not official until the seal is affixed. If God has a seal, it will be found in connection with His law. This is suggested by the prophet in these words: "Bind up the testimony, seal the law among My disciples." Isa. 8: 16. We have already noticed that the fourth commandment in the Decalogue is the only one of the ten that shows God's authority for giving the law and requiring obedience to that law. Let us now examine that commandment to see if it contains the information that would constitute it God's seal.

"Remember the Sabbath day, to keep it holy. Six days shalt thou

labour, and do all thy work; but the seventh day is the Sabbath of the Lord thy God: in it thou shalt not do any work, thou, nor thy son, nor thy daughter, thy manservant, nor thy maidservant, nor thy cattle, nor thy stranger that is within thy gates: for in six days the Lord made heaven and earth, the sea, and all that in them is, and rested the seventh day: wherefore the Lord blessed the Sabbath day, and hallowed it." Ex. 20: 8-11.

Note these important facts:—

Name: "Lord" ("Jehovah" in Hebrew).

Title, or right to rule: "Made heaven and earth" (Creator).

Extent of dominion: "Heaven and earth" (the universe).

The Sabbath is God's Seal

Here are the essentials of a seal. And God says it is His seal. "Moreover also I gave them My Sabbaths, to be a sign between Me and them, that they might know that I am the Lord that sanctify them." Eze. 20: 12.

To sanctify a man, making him a new creature, requires creative power. The Sabbath is the memorial of creation. And God says in this scripture that it is also the sign of His recreation of men, His seal of possession of the re-created man. It indicates by what power He makes a man a new creature. "If any man be in Christ, he is a new creature." 2 Cor. 5: 17. "We are His workmanship, created in Christ Jesus unto good works." Eph. 2: 10. "Create in me a clean heart, O God." Ps. 51: 10.

The Sabbath is the seal of the living God. If the fourth commandment were taken from the law, there would be nothing left to tell whose law it is. The first commandment says, "Thou shalt have no other gods before Me." Gautama Buddha could say that was his commandment. He could say the second was his. The same with the third. He could say that of the last six also. But he could not claim the fourth. The Sabbath commandment is the seal of the whole law.

In Rev. 14: 1 we are given a glimpse of the people who receive the seal of the living God in their foreheads; and it says there that they have the "Father's name written in their foreheads." This is in harmony with what we have learned about the nature of a seal—it must contain the name of the one whose seal it is. It must contain his official position or authority, and the extent of his dominion. The fourth commandment contains God's name and authority, and the extent of His dominion—His right to give the whole law, and to require obedience to it. It is the seal of Jehovah God, that which gives

force to the whole law. And this company of saints who are sealed with the seal of the living God, and who have the Father's name written in their foreheads, must be a company of people in whose lives and worship has been restored the true Sabbath of the Lord, His seal.

This prophecy (in Revelation 7) of the sealing of the saints is a most interesting and important one. Notice these points that stand out in the prophecy:—

1. The sealing of the saints is something that takes place in the closing days of earth's history—after the signs in the sun, moon, and stars, but before the coming of Christ—the very time in which we are now living.

2. The sealing of the saints is some special work that is done for people who are already Christians—"saints."

3. This sealing work is a world-wide movement, something that takes place among God's people in the "four

corners" (or four quarters) of the earth. It is not something that is done in one place only.

4. The harvest of this world-wide sealing movement is a special representative company of "an hundred and forty and four thousand," then "a great multitude, which no man could number, of all nations, and kindreds, and people, and tongues," who are prepared to stand "before the throne, and before the Lamb, clothed with white robes, and palms in their hands." Rev. 7: 9.

This is a picture of a people who have lived in the time of the complete restoration of truth, and who have, by God's grace, walked in all its light. They are sealed. The Reformation, so well begun by earlier Reformers, has been carried to completion, in their experience, and, having "the faith of Jesus," they are made ready to stand before God "without fault." Rev. 14: 12, 5.

The Aged Women Likewise

THE glad tidings of a soon-coming Saviour are for old and young. In many mission lands the aged women seem almost beyond reach, because of lifelong ignorance and overwork. But this is not always the case, as Missionary J. J. Hyde shows from the following two experiences:—

"At our station in northern Nigeria, when discussing the candidates for a forthcoming baptism, one of our strong young local officers said, 'My mother, sir, would also like to be baptized.' I was almost surprised.

"This elderly woman was the mother of a large family of boys and girls, almost all of whom were Christians and were married to Christians. She was frequently at Sabbath school, but not so frequently at the Bible classes. She could not read.

"I knew her best as a kindly, busy woman, going hither and yon as various of her sons and daughters and their families were sick or busy and needed her help. Perhaps what had most prevented me from realizing that she wished to be a Christian was the fact that she was the elder of two wives of a heathen man. Her home, therefore, was rather more heathen than Christian.

"Hence my surprise when I heard her son say, 'My mother humbly asks if she may be baptized. She is sorry that her age has prevented her from learning to read, but she attends worship each morning and evening, learns the memory verses, and wishes to serve Jesus. She wishes me to say that if you are unable to baptize her

because of her ignorance, she will serve Jesus nevertheless. But if you could—'

"I did when the necessary adjustments were made in her life.

"And today she is still standing firmly by her baptismal vows, the mother, mother-in-law, or grandmother of a score of Christian young people, and the ever-ready helper of anyone in need."

Another experience from northern Nigeria:—

"A missionary is standing in the swift, muddy waters of a rain-swollen stream. On the bank high above him is a company of Christians. Beneath his feet are large rocks. It is difficult to find a spot where missionary and baptismal candidate can both find a foothold. In the water also stands an African Christian, to pilot the candidates around the hidden rocks.

"Down the bank comes an African woman—an old woman—her wrinkled skin revealing a shrunken form. Her hands lack fingers, toes are missing from her feet, sores and the scars of sores can be seen upon her legs. She is a leper. She should not be touched.

"But she has given her heart to Jesus. She has passed a period of probation. She desires to be baptized. She enters the water. She is baptized. And the group of Christians sing:—

"Just as I am, Thou wilt receive,
Wilt welcome, pardon, cleanse, relieve;
Because Thy promise I believe,
O Lamb of God, I come."

The Greatest MASTERPIECE Of All

The MASTERPIECE OF SALVATION

☆ D. E. Reiner



THE greatest tragedy of all the tragedies of earth is the tragedy of sin. There is nothing so demoralizing, so destructive, and so far-reaching and bound up with such awful eternal consequences in all the life of man as his experience in sin. Wherever sin is allowed to take root, operate, and carry on to its fearful end, it always leads to death—eternal death. Man is helpless to meet it, defeat it, and deliver himself from it. All the combined forces of all the man power of earth focused upon one single effort to cleanse, purify, and liberate man, results in a total failure. The sum total of man's experience through the history of the past millenniums proves that man cannot save himself without God. He is hopelessly lost.

The greatest masterpiece of all the masterpieces of heaven and earth is the masterpiece of salvation. This wondrous salvation was born and wrought out in the great heart of God. It is not man-made, but God-made. It is not a rushed, nervous act or plan to meet an unforeseen emergency, but a well-contemplated plan of eternal redemption worked out in the mind of our Creator long before the foundations of the world were laid. To bring it about and to make it effective in the experience of lost man—to bring him back and to save his poor soul, took the life and meant the death of Christ, co-Creator and Saviour of the world. If man is willing to accept this wondrous salvation and meet the conditions enjoined by God, his eternal salvation is assured.

According to the teaching of both the Old and the New Testament, man's only hope of escaping the eternal results and penalty of sin is *Christ*. In Isa. 43: 10, 11 we read: "Before Me there was no God formed, neither shall there be after Me. I, even I, am the Lord; and beside Me there is no Saviour." This agrees

with the teaching of the Apostle Peter: "Neither is there salvation in any other: for there is none other name under heaven given among men, whereby we must be saved." Acts 4: 12. He who rejects Christ and this only means of salvation is destined to eternal death.

Let us study briefly the ways and means God uses in saving lost souls. When we understand that, we shall know why it is so important that we exercise great care in the way we relate ourselves to holy things, and that we do not carelessly commit acts which carry us beyond the line of hope and salvation.

Means of Salvation

Christ does not deal with man direct or face to face today, because man cannot see God and live. He employs many other means, but it is the same loving Saviour working in and through all these to the saving of a poor lost sinner. He uses:—

His Word. "Search the Scriptures; for in them ye think ye have eternal life: and they are they which testify of Me." John 5: 39. "All Scripture is given by inspiration of God, and is profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness: that the man of God may be perfect, thoroughly furnished unto all good works." 2 Tim. 3: 16, 17. Man therefore must give heed to and obey God's Word; for this is God's way of communicating the plan of redemption to man.

His Holy Spirit. The Holy Spirit takes the place of Christ, and works in His stead. "Nevertheless I tell you the truth: It is expedient for you that I go away: for if I go not away, the Comforter will not come unto you; but if I depart, I will send Him unto you. And when He is come, He will reprove the world of sin, and of righteousness, and of judgment." "Howbeit when He, the Spirit of truth, is come, He will guide you

into all truth: for He shall not speak of Himself; but whatsoever He shall hear, that shall He speak: and He will show you things to come." John 16: 7, 8, 13.

Through this Spirit Christ invites us to come to God. "The Spirit and the bride say, Come." Rev. 22: 17. The Holy Spirit makes intercession for us. "Likewise the Spirit also helpeth our infirmities: for we know not what we should pray for as we ought: but the Spirit itself maketh intercession for us with groanings which cannot be uttered." Rom. 8: 26. Through Him we have access to our Father. "Through Him we both have access by one Spirit unto the Father." Eph. 2: 18. Through Him we are sealed. "Grieve not the Holy Spirit of God, whereby ye are sealed unto the day of redemption." Eph. 4: 30. All our needs are met in Christ through the divine agency of the Holy Spirit.

His Angels. Does not Paul tell us in Heb. 1: 14: "Are they not all ministering spirits, sent forth to minister for them who shall be heirs of salvation?" In the eighth and tenth chapters of Acts we have examples of how angels are used in man's salvation.

His Servants, Men. God has always used man in helping other men, and He will continue to do it even to the end of time. His commission therefore is: "Go ye therefore, and teach 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 alway, even unto the end of the world." Matt. 28: 19, 20. And again: "But ye shall receive power, after that the Holy Ghost is come upon you: and ye shall be witnesses unto Me both in Jerusalem, and in all Judea, and in Samaria, and unto the uttermost part of the earth." Acts 1: 8. It is important that we

heed the voice and entreaties of good men who love us and desire to help us on the way to the kingdom.

The Prayer of the Saints. There is great help and power in the prayer of the saints. We read in Acts 4: 31: "When they had prayed, the place was shaken where they were assembled together; and they were all filled with the Holy Ghost, and they spake the Word of God with boldness." Again in the Book of Acts we find a report of mighty deliverances wrought through the prayer of the saved. Acts 12: 12-17.

Christian Literature. Good books, tracts, magazines, and periodicals that carry the seed of God's truth to man have always been a great blessing to those who are seeking the kingdom of righteousness.

The Songs of the Church. When Paul and Silas were in prison, lying on their backs with their feet in stocks, they prayed and sang the hymns of the church. "At midnight Paul and Silas prayed, and sang praises unto God; and the prisoners heard them." Acts 16: 25. The church of today also has her hymns and her songs of deliverance, and we must learn to sing them, and step out in faith in response to the invitations given in songs, especially like this one:—

"I've wandered far away from God,
Now I'm coming home."

And again—

"Softly and tenderly Jesus is calling,
Calling for you and for me."

Strange Experiences. God speaks to us through great visitations, through sickness, through accidents, through business and crop failures, and sometimes even through the death of some loved one in the family.

It is when man is hard pressed and finds himself helpless that God often seems the nearest and can speak most clearly to man's heart. Of this we have an example in Jonah who, when in the depth of the sea, thought of God and cried out, "Then I said, I am cast out of Thy sight; yet I will look again toward Thy holy temple." "When my soul fainted within me I remembered the Lord; and my prayer came in unto Thee, into Thine holy temple." Jonah 2: 4, 7. Read Ps. 18: 6. All these and many more experiences and circumstances of life have been used by a loving heavenly Father to save us and bring us back to Him. Christ is determined to put every force of earth and heaven into play to save us from our sins. He brings about a combination of voices, efforts, and experiences to call us, woo us, beg us, and entreat us to return from our evil way and turn to our

(Concluded on page 14)

THE NEW TESTAMENT SABBATH

A Bible Study by W. R. CARSWELL

1. WHAT was our Saviour's attitude towards the Sabbath?

"He came to Nazareth, where He had been brought up: and, as His custom was, *He went into the synagogue on the Sabbath day, and stood up for to read.*" Luke 4: 16.

2. Before healing a man with a withered hand, how did Jesus uphold the Sabbath law?

"*It is lawful to do well on the Sabbath days.*" Matt. 12: 12.

3. After healing a woman who had been bowed together for eighteen years, how did our Lord answer the objector?

"*Thou hypocrite, doth not each one of you on the Sabbath loose his ox or his ass from the stall, and lead him away to watering? And ought not this woman, being a daughter of Abraham . . . be loosed from this bond on the Sabbath day?*" Luke 13: 15, 16.

Note.—Jesus who had wrought as a carpenter in Nazareth (Mark 6: 3), was nevertheless accustomed to cease from labour on the day which He had set apart at creation. But He wished to remove the rubbish of tradition, which the Jewish leaders had heaped upon it, from the day, that men might make it a day of kindness to the sick and suffering, and thus fulfil its purpose of love.

4. What was our Lord's teaching regarding the whole moral law, of which the Sabbath command is a part?

"*It is easier for heaven and earth to pass, than one tittle of the law to fail.*" Luke 16: 17.

5. Foretelling the destruction of Jerusalem, nearly forty years in the future, what mention of the Sabbath did our Master make?

"*Pray ye that your flight be not in the winter, neither on the Sabbath day.*" Matt. 24: 20.

6. After our Saviour was crucified and laid in Joseph's tomb on Friday afternoon, what did the believing women do?

"They returned, and prepared spices and ointments; and *rested the Sabbath day according to the commandment.*" Luke 23: 56.

7. What conclusion does Paul, writing to the Hebrew Christians years later, express?

"*It follows that there still remains a Sabbath rest for the people of God.*" Heb. 4: 9, Weymouth's translation.

8. How did Paul the apostle act out this teaching?

"*They [Paul's company] came to Antioch in Pisidia, and went into the synagogue on the Sabbath day, and sat down.*" Acts 13: 14.

9. After Paul, by invitation, had preached to the assembled company, what request was made by the non-Jewish members?

"*The Gentiles besought that these words might be preached to them the next Sabbath.*" Acts 13: 42.

10. What remarkable demonstration of interest was manifested on the next Sabbath?

"*The next Sabbath day came almost the whole city together to hear the Word of God.*" Acts 13: 44.

Note.—This experience proves that the worshippers of the true God, from among the Gentiles, knew of no other weekly rest-day but that observed by the Jews, the seventh-day Sabbath. Neither did Paul teach any other. See Acts 28: 17.

11. What is said of Paul's experience in the synagogue at Thessalonica?

"*Paul—following his usual custom—betook himself to it, and for three successive Sabbaths reasoned with them from the Scriptures.*" Acts 17: 2, Weymouth's translation.

12. How does this custom appear in Paul's work at Corinth, where he laboured as a tentmaker?

"*He reasoned in the synagogue every Sabbath, and persuaded the Jews and the Greeks.*" Acts 18: 1-4.

13. For what length of time did Paul labour among the people of Corinth?

"*He continued there a year and six months, teaching the Word of God among them.*" Acts 18: 11.

14. On what day did the beloved John receive his first vision on the isle of Patmos?

"*I was in the Spirit on the Lord's day.*" Rev. 1: 10.

Note.—As we have already observed, the only weekly rest-day which the Lord claims as His is the seventh-day Sabbath. Mark 2: 28. It is called "My holy day," and "the Sabbath of the Lord thy God." Isa. 58: 13; Ex. 20: 10.

It will be noted in the careful reading of the New Testament (although its various parts were written years after our Lord's ascension), that the only day of the week called "the Sabbath" is the seventh day.

Therefore, as the Lord did not take His sanctification from it, it is still holy.

15. How does James emphasize the importance of all the Ten Commandments?

"Whosoever shall keep the whole law, and yet offend in one point, he is guilty of all. . . . So speak ye, and so do, as they that shall be judged by the law of liberty [i.e., the moral law]." James 2: 10-12.

Greatest Masterpiece of All

(Concluded from page 13)

Father and home. He will work with us as long as there is any hope of salvation, until we have closed up the last avenue to our life through which He can approach us, and save us from sin.

Time for Salvation. God's programme runs on time. Man may hinder it for a period, but can never frustrate it. We read in Gal. 4: 4: "When the fullness of the time was come, God sent forth His Son, made of a woman, made under the law." So again when the final hour will come for the clock of God to strike out the hour for the second return of our Lord and for the close of probation, Christ will again come forth to finish His work. As we study the Bible, we find that Christ was baptized on time, that He died on time, that He rose on time, and went to the heavenly sanctuary on time. All through Christ's earthly experience from the cradle to the grave He walked in full harmony with the prophecies.

There is therefore also a definite time set for the close of probation and for the judgment. We read: "He hath appointed a day, in the which He will judge the world in righteousness by that Man whom He hath ordained; whereof He hath given assurance unto all men, in that He hath raised Him from the dead." Acts 17: 31. Man must find salvation during these probationary hours, for when once death comes upon us or Christ appears to redeem His own, it will be for ever too late. "I must work the works of Him that sent Me, while it is day: the night cometh, when no man can work." John 9: 4.

THIS scourge of drink has a prominent place in all our social miseries. We meet it everywhere. It hides itself behind tuberculosis, in madness, in crime, but it is always at the bottom of all our evils, of all our democracies. It is the chief enemy of the race.—*M. Leon Bourgeois, the French ex-Cabinet Minister.*



Fact or Fiction

JANET T. VAN OSDEL

THE purpose of this article is to help parents not to deal unreasonably with children. Often unreasonableness on the part of parents brings needless suffering into the lives of children.

On her way home from her day's teaching, Bess Devon stopped at her sister Martha's. She found her five-year-old nephew Tommy seated in a

corner of the living-room, face to the wall.

"Hello, Tommy! Where's mother?" she asked.

"At the store. I can't talk, Aunt Bess! Hello!"

"When will she be back?"

"Mother said I can't talk, Aunt Bess."

"Sorry, Tommy!"

She kissed the back of his neck and went out on the side porch.

"Hello, Bess!" greeted Martha, arriving with an acquaintance fifteen minutes later. "It's ages since I've seen you! But I'm tired. I'd give anything to own a car. This is Mrs. Urdeman. She came in to write a card. Mrs. Urdeman, there is the desk; help yourself."

"Why have you turned your honourable son's face to the wall?" asked Bess. "And I mean honourable! There he sits, conscientiously refusing to talk, as mum as though you were watching him!"

"And he'd rather talk to you than eat, Bess. Well, he's there for a good reason—he *will* say things that aren't true!"

"What was it this time?"

"He and the Malcolm twins were playing on the steps here when it began to rain. Tommy said, 'We'd better go in before we get wet.' Billy Malcolm answered, 'Rain won't hurt us. We can't melt.' Then Milly Malcolm piped up, 'I did melt once, and I ran away like a little brook!'"

"Children!" laughed Bess indulgently.

"Then Tommy said, 'I never did melt, but I can remember back a hundred years. We kept a lion under the bed.' Imagine!"

"Time seems much longer to children than to adults. As for the lion, perhaps he does think there was one under the bed long ago. He may have had a realistic dream; a mouse or a cat may have been there; a garment dropped that assumed a crouching shape! Who are we to say that Tommy's mind did not see a lion?"

"But, Bess, he can't go around talking like that. He'll grow up abso-



The True Home

SWEET are the joys of home,
And pure as sweet; for they,
Like dews of morn and evening, come
To wake and close the day.

The world has its delights,
And its delusions, too;
But home to calmer bliss invites,
More tranquil and more true.

The mountain flood is strong,
But fearful in its pride;
While gently rolls the stream along
The peaceful valley's side.

Life's charities, like light,
Spread smilingly afar;
But stars approached, become more
Bright,
And home is life's own star.

The pilgrim's step in vain
Seeks Eden's sacred ground;
But in home's holy joys, again
An Eden may be found.

A glance of heaven to see,
To none on earth is given;
And yet a happy family
Is but an earlier heaven.

—Bowring.

lutely unmoral! And for this once I'm punishing him: he's said a thousand things that I've let pass."

"Here is something to think of, Mat: children live in a world of their own. Only at rare moments does the most understanding adult get even a glimpse into their world. Two-thirds of that world is pure imagination. Did Tommy and Billy question Milly when she said she had melted and run away like a brook? Did they try to make Tommy prove he had seen a lion under the bed? No! That is all a part of the funny world they live in, and it passes except with a too-literally minded child. You say Tommy tells lies—would you trust a liar?"

"Not an inch. That is why——"

"Yet you trust Tommy to sit there,

his face to the wall, and take his punishment on this sweltering day—trust him to do it even when he knows you have left the house."

"All I want, Bess, is to bring Tommy up to be a good man."

"You don't have to destroy his imagination to do that! He might grow up to be good without imagination, but he'll never be great or live a full life without it. By the way, Mat, why don't you take your own punishment? You said you hadn't seen me for ages—I was here five days ago. You said you'd give anything for a car. Would you? You said that Tommy makes a thousand misstatements for which he should be punished——"

"But I was only speaking figuratively!"

"Granted! Why not let Tommy speak figuratively sometimes? What do you think, Mrs. Urdeman?" as that lady closed the desk.

"I think," she answered seriously, "that imagination is an almost priceless gift, but—also—that the confidence of others in one's word is priceless. Little children need to be helped to separate fact from fiction in their own thoughts and desires. Their failure to do this should neither be punished nor ignored. It means that we have not yet succeeded. Punish Tommy only if he lies maliciously, through cowardice, or to escape responsibility for his actions. At other times—pardon my frankness——" smiling at Martha, "it is the parent who should take the blame."—*National Kindergarten Association.*

A CORNER for



the CHILDREN

THE TRAMP'S DINNER

E. WARREN

MOTHER, mother! quick, where are you?"

Charlie burst open the kitchen door. He was obviously quite out of breath and very excited.

"Yes, dear, here I am. What is it?"

"Oh, mother, there's such a poor tramp coming down the road. I'm sure he must be very hungry. Could you—do you think——?"

Charlie was not afraid of this tramp. Oh, no; Charlie had often seen his mother ask a tramp into their dining-room and then give him a good dinner. She would never give them anything to take away; she always asked them indoors and gave them a comfortable chair to sit on, too. So, funny as it may sound, Charlie was quite used to having tramps in his home. He had learned the joy that comes through helping others.

That was why he asked, "Do you think, mother, you could give him some dinner?"

"Well," mother said slowly, "I haven't much in the house today; would you let me give him your dinner?"

Charlie blinked. He hadn't thought of that idea. But what could he say?

"All right," he said briefly.

So Charlie went out to the gate, and as the tramp came along, he asked him inside. The tramp was very grateful, but can you imagine Charlie's feelings as he sat there silently watching the tramp eating that dinner?

The other members of the family came in and ate theirs. Then when



Finish Your Task

It is easy enough to begin a task,
But to finish it—that's the thing!
The completed work holds the honey sweet,
But the undone leaves a sting.

Oh, the feet will lag and the heart grow faint

Offtimes ere the task is done,
But what joy is yours, as you rest at last,
With the hard-fought battle won!

Then here's to the lad who will see it through,

Whatever the task may be;
For my heart goes out to the boy of pluck,
But no half-done boy for me!

—*Florence Jones Hadley.*

all had finished, Charlie, still conscious of an unpleasant feeling down below, said, "Mother, do you think I could have just a slice or two of bread and some cheese before I go back to school?"

Mother smiled. She went into the kitchen, opened the oven door, and put on the table in front of Charlie a plate of dinner just like the others had had.

Charlie beamed with surprise. "Oh, mother, thank you so much!"

And how good that dinner tasted!

Points for Girls

THERE are several things always absent in a true lady, which girls will do well to notice and remember. A lady, for example, will never ignore little kindnesses; expect in a crowd that she has a right to push her way through; consume the time of people who can ill spare it; talk loudly in public places; wear a torn glove when a needle and a few stitches would make it all right; fail in answering letters or returning visits, unless she is ill or in trouble; fret about the heat or the cold, the sun or the rain, the air or lack of it; make an engagement and then not be there in time; complain of her family or discuss personal affairs with strangers; believe the worst rather than the best side of a story. A lady does not do any other than make the best of everything—the world, the weather, and herself. She believes in the golden rule, and endeavours, as far as possible, to live up to it.—*Home and Farm.*

THOUGH work is hard, it is much better than idleness. Work is really a blessing.

AROUND the WORLD

•THE female mosquito bites. The mouth parts of the male are not equipped for the sucking of blood.

•NEW YORK is now only two hours from Toronto by plane. Trans-Canada Air Lines makes three flights daily each way.

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•THE new official master map of the United States today shows 505,000,000 acres of public domain still unsurveyed after 150 years. Officials estimate that there are 127,000,000 uncharted acres in continental United States, and 376,000,000 in Alaska.

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