



# OUR TIMES

JULY 1966





# EVENTS and

# TRENDS

## “ONE WORLD OR NONE?”

We are in the midst of war. A world war is in progress—whether we realize it or not—just as surely as there was one going on twenty-five years ago. “It is a war of ideas, of ideologies, a war that can only be won in the hearts and minds of men and women,” said Sir Cyril Black, member of the British Parliament. “It concerns such fundamental questions as what we believe about man, his destiny, his way of life. . . . [whether he is] merely a pawn in the game of great tyrants and cruel dictators.”

One has but to listen to news reports on his radio or to read publications coming from countries of differing ideological viewpoints for an example of this. The same news topics may be commented on, but if they touch on ideologies you may sometimes begin to wonder whether the same topic is really under discussion, so different are the biases manifested.

This is only one illustration of the fact that there is indeed a battle for men’s minds going on. This is not to say that such a battle has not been an age-long one. In varying degrees and under varying conditions it has. But never has it been waged on such a vast scale and with such intensity as it is now, for never before have the minds of men been accessible to ideas as today, when the great media of communication put them in instant touch with any country anywhere on the globe.

The eventual objective is that all men everywhere shall be persuaded to accept one overriding ideology and to subscribe to one governmental system.

There are powerful arguments possible to show that some such thing is necessary. Some of them were presented under the slogan, “One world, or none,” by the late U. S. presidential candidate, Wendell L. Willkie. Persuasive arguments were offered some years back in the book, *Who Speaks for Man*, by Norman Cousins. “Either world problems will be settled through *real* world organization,” Mr. Cousins wrote, “or they will be settled by world war. World law is not the end but the means. It is no distant goal but a present and indispensable one. It is not merely a hope, but the *only* hope, the *only* chance.”

Today’s world is segmented into three major political philosophies; communism, democracy, and the so-called non-aligned nations. Some momentous question could resolve it to two. Or a devastating nuclear war or some world-shaking crisis perhaps not immediately apparent, could drive mankind as

a whole to the realization that there must be “one world, or none.”

By these few “straws in the wind” we have suggested that there are influences and conditions at work which are slowly but surely drawing together the multitudinous threads of thinking in certain areas to make the fabric of human opinion one.

But are we not dealing with fiction and fantasy when we suggest such possibilities? Will we ever see any really unifying global movement such as we have been hinting at? With such strong ideologies splitting mankind, and such bitter battles going on for men’s minds, is it possible that any organization or movement could develop in such a way as to be acceptable to and to receive the support of the masses of humanity?

The answer is, yes. The Bible makes it plain that events will develop in such a way that in the near future there will be a power that will receive global support

Space permits us to give no more than the merest outline of this. For those interested in further information, we suggest they write: The Voice of Prophecy, Box 17, Poona 1, India.

In Revelation, chapter 13, is described in figurative language a religio-political power, symbolized by a “beast.” Of this power the prophecy states, “The whole world went after the beast in wondering admiration” (Rev. 13:3, NEB). Moreover, it goes on to describe a world-wide compact under which all the governments of earth “have but a single purpose among them and will confer their power and authority upon the beast” (Rev. 17:13, NEB).

Is this power to be benevolent or despotic? Here is the prophetic answer: “No one was allowed to buy or sell unless he bore the beast’s mark.” And the beast caused “all who would not worship the image [of the beast] to be put to death” (Rev. 13:17, 15, NEB).

What will be the outcome of this development? We mention two. One, it will mean a time of great oppression for those who determine to follow truth. Two, it is a portent that shortly after it develops Jesus Christ is to appear in the heavens in a glory surpassing that of a thousand suns. At that time all who have followed evil will receive eternal damnation; all who have followed God will receive eternal life and happiness.

That great event will affect every person who has ever lived. It will affect YOU.

—T.A.D.

OUR TIMES



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## THE WORLD



## AROUND

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To provide compulsory treatment of chronic alcoholics, a public health code is being drafted in Russia. Coercive measures will be taken against those who refuse treatment.

\* \* \*

A California mechanical engineering teacher has developed a flying-saucer craft that can take off vertically. If commercially developed, the invention is expected to solve most big-city traffic problems and revolutionize travelling by providing personal, cheap, commercial vertical take-off craft. Now undergoing tests, the craft seats two passengers, flies more than 100 miles an hour, and has the ceiling range of a light aircraft.

\* \* \*

Russian scientists report that they have detected strange radio signals coming from outer space in the direction of the constellation Pegasus, from a source they call CTA-102. The signals are unlike any other known radio emission and are repeated every one hundred days. The scientists opine that it is possible that "we are not alone in the universe. A new civilization may have been discovered."

\* \* \*

For generations the stronger sex has been content to use soap and common lotions. Of late there has been a big boom in men's beauty aids in western countries. Several companies are testing facial creams, mascara, and pancake make-up for men.

The "in" thing with the young men of Stockholm, Sweden, is shoulder-long hair waved at least twice a month at the local beauty parlour, pink lipstick, light blue eye shadow, a touch of rouge, and a dab of perfume on the ear lobes.

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# Editorial

## THE NATURE OF MAN

*Disillusionment is always the ultimate experience of the man who puts his trust in man. We were vividly reminded of this when we recently read a statement from a speech of former President Truman given at the dedication of the Hebrew University Centre for the Advancement of Peace, in the U.S.A.: "It all seems to have been in vain. Memories are short, and appetites for power are insatiable. Old tyrants depart. New ones take their place. Old allies become the foe. The recent enemy becomes the friend. It's all very baffling and trying."*

*It is baffling and trying, but not surprising, for it merely manifests the evil nature of man which has been the same through practically all of his history.*

*"This is not the popular view of human nature," says one author. "Proud man does not like to admit that his very soul has been corrupted and that he is constitutionally selfish, rebellious, egotistical. You and I cherish the illusion that we are basically moral—uneducated and immature, perhaps, but good at heart. Yet it is more realistic to acknowledge that all men are selfish, rebellious, and egotistical, for by this alone can we account for the chaos of our world. Only from a corrupt nature could such savage deeds proceed as our generation has seen. In the last twenty-five years we have seen millions of Jews murdered in Nazi concentration camps. We have seen Communist brain-washings from which some men never recovered mentally or physically. . . . We have seen massive public indifference to injustice, discrimination, and brutality. But many still refuse to admit that man is a fallen creature whose very nature is corrupt."*

*And we find these black conditions in an age when science, education, and human knowledge is greater than it has ever been before. But what has it done for man? It has made him an educated, more refined, savage. Nothing more.*

*But we are not as pessimistic as the foregoing might seem. In fact, we are most optimistic. For God is taking men who are willing, and is making new men of them: "If any one is in Christ, he is a new creation; the old has passed away" (2 Corinthians 5:17, RSV). And in a little while He will make a new world for His new men with new natures.*





# Get me that Book

Let me tell you a story; an incident which happened decades ago. I was a Christian man, a surveyor in the employ of the Government, and was sent to survey the desert of Rajputana in the Northwest. I entered the desert with the necessary equipment. When night came on I would send a message to the little oasis; my servants would go and say, "Our master will be here and after the evening meal he wants to see you."

They knew I was an official of the Government, and perhaps there was a suspicion that I had a Government message.

When the time came I stepped out of the tent, and there were the people. There was the great silvery moon, dropping such light as is seen nowhere else as in the tropics. There was the moon, and there were the people, all men. I stood and looked out on that company and was strangely moved. I was six weeks out in the desert, 180 miles from any town in any direction. I suppose my thought was absolutely true that those who were listening to me had probably never once heard the name of Jesus Christ. Let me say that there is a certain high tension of spirit, a certain sense of tremendous responsibility, accompanied with a certain profound gladness, when you feel that those who are listening are absolutely hungry, famine-stricken without the Word of God.

I talked to those men that night. I spoke their language. At the close of that earnest and perhaps somewhat long address—who could help it?—this happened:

An old man came forward. He was the son of a king, his long beard flowing down to his waist. He came up to me, leaning on his staff. The young men courteously made way for him. He stood there looking up at me, his strong face alert in that bright moonlight. He said: "You are a young man, and yet the things you have been talking about—how do you know these things? How do you know them?"

I answered, "Father, I have not known these things because of my own personal righteousness or wisdom. But these questions which have troubled your heart and all human hearts—our Great Father has written down the answers in a Book, given to men of olden time who struggled with these questions. And the answers to these questions were written in a Book."

"Do you mean there is a book with all these things you have been telling us about—about a love that is good, and all the rest of it?"

Then I said, "There is a Book. It is God's Book, and the answers are in it."

"Young man," said he, "is that book in my language. Did you read it in my tongue?"

"Yes, I have the Book."

I wish you could have seen that old man. He straightened up, and pointing his long finger at me, I shall never forget it as he said:

"Get me that book!"

I ran back to my tent and brought back two copies of the Bible in their language. Forty hands were stretched out for them as I returned. I put one into his hand, and when I told him that the answers to the questions were in that Book, the old man looked up and said, "Sir, how long has this been in the world?"

"It has been here for hundreds of years; for hundreds of years."

"Did your people have it?"

"Yes."

"And I am an old man. All my friends have died hopeless. I am nearly gone myself. And all this time the book was here and nobody brought it to me. *Why didn't someone bring us the book long ago?*"

This story was told many years ago by the late William F. Oldham, a native of India, and a

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# Is Sickness



**G**OING back to the original condition of man, before the introduction of sin, as recorded in the book of Genesis, we find no disease. Under such circumstances health would have been difficult to define, for there was no disease with which it could be contrasted.

When the Lord forbade Adam and Eve to eat of the tree of knowledge of good and evil, He predicted that should they disobey, there would be a physical penalty: "But of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil, thou shalt not eat of it: for in the day that thou eatest thereof thou shalt surely die." Genesis 2:17. The marginal rendering of the final clause is, "dying thou shalt die." Thus was predicted the degeneration of the race, with death as the final result, should Adam and Eve disregard the instruction they were given. How literally this divine prediction has been fulfilled!

The Genesis record indicates that the first generations living upon the earth consisted of such vigorous individuals that the life-span frequently exceeded 900 years. The effects of sin have reduced this span to approximately the "threescore years and ten" mentioned later in the Scripture.

It is true that there has been some increase in life expectancy during the last few decades. This is explained by the improved understanding of the laws of health, which has resulted from the general "increase of knowledge," which the Scriptures foretell as the final period of earth's history. This fund of knowledge has brought better methods of protection against disease. But the fundamental vitality of the human organism continues to decline, generation by generation, as it has since the inception of sin.

A given case of illness does not represent an edict of God. It is the result of a disregard of the laws of health. A great deal of Christ's ministry when He was on earth consisted of healing those who were afflicted. To many of these He said, "Sin no more, lest a worse thing come unto thee" (John 5:14). In this He indicated that disease follows a violation of God's laws—either the laws of health or the moral laws which are summarized in the Ten Commandments.

Many persons violate the laws of health by intemperance in the use of stimulants, intoxicants, tobacco, or narcotics. Such indiscretions cause a physical debilitation and also deprive the succeeding generation of the legacy of good health to which it is entitled. The laws of health are also violated by those who practise excesses in eating, or working, and by those who indulge in vice. Unwholesome habits of thinking contribute to the breakdown of resistance to disease. Even perversions of the imagination may lay the foundation for invalidism.

In the second commandment it is mentioned that the "iniquity of the fathers" will be visited "upon the children unto the third and fourth generation" (Exodus 20:5). Thus, some of the disease which we see today is the result of the unwise habits of parents or other ancestors. We of the present generation obviously cannot now make amends for those of previous generations who, by their disregard for the principles of healthful living, have left to us an inferior heredity. But we can profit by an inspection of their unfortunate way of life so that we may avoid their shortcomings.

Physical law, as well as moral law, implies a promise to those who obey as much as it announces a penalty to those who transgress. This is a simple but vital concept in the scheme of healthful living. Within his own life span, an individual may choose whether he will live in harmony with the principles which tend toward health, or whether he will disregard these principles and pay the penalty in the form of increased susceptibility to disease. The reward for following a health-building programme may even include the ability to live above certain inherited handicaps.



# α Punishment for Sin ?

*Disease is caused by violation of the laws of health. A health-building programme is in conformity with the moral law of God and will help one to live above inherited handicaps.*

A patient in his late fifties became so ill that he had to discontinue his employment as a linotype operator. He suffered from spells of dizziness which occurred about twice a day. During an attack his breathing was difficult and his heart palpitated. He became nervous and exhausted and had to lie down for the remaining five or six minutes of the attack.

A careful physical examination, including proper laboratory tests, revealed no organic disease. But an inquiry into the man's personal history indicated that he had violated the laws of healthful living by devoting himself too strenuously to his work as a linotype operator. He had not even taken time for vacation or for systematic recreation. He prided himself in his efficiency. But he had hardly taken time to live. It was concluded from this that his symptoms were the result of prolonged overwork and his failure to provide for recreation and relaxation.

Another personal problem which readily undermines health is a sense of guilt or remorse. As an illustration we cite the case of a young woman, nineteen years of age, who complained of weakness, exhaustion, loss of appetite, loss of weight, and sleeplessness. She also experienced headache and occasional dizziness.

This patient's illness had begun two years previously. Prior to her illness, she had been perfectly well and active in athletics and social affairs in the high school which she was then attending as a senior.

The doctor's examination was careful and complete but he found no evidence of infection or any other organic disease. So he asked the young lady to describe to him the circumstances surrounding the beginning of her illness. The story was as interesting as it was pathetic and significant.

She had been sitting in the living-room of her parents' home one evening talking with her grandmother. The conversation became controversial and an argument developed. Finally, the young lady realized that she had made some harsh statements that might have offended her grandmother. She was about to apologize when suddenly the grandmother fell forward in her chair and died. Not knowing the actual cause of death the young woman began to fear that she was personally responsible. It was following this experience, as she brooded over the pos-

sibility of her own guilt for the grandmother's death, that her symptoms developed.

The physician whom this young woman consulted was a Christian physician who helped his patient to understand the divine plan for the forgiveness of mistakes. In addition, he explained that the grandmother's death was doubtless due to a heart attack and was quite independent of the harsh words she had spoken. With this understanding and with a new religious insight, her health improved and she soon enjoyed her normal vigour.

The sixth of the Ten Commandments states specifically, "Thou shalt not kill." Inasmuch as the commandments are intended to provide a complete way of life we will do well to examine the breadth of meaning to be found in this simple command. No one would question the application of the commandment as it forbids participation in violent forms of sudden death. But is it not logical to recognize that the intent of the commandment is to preserve life and to protect it even against those practices that destroy health and shorten life? It is in this sense, then, that we can recognize that a transgression of nature's laws for healthful living is, in truth, a transgression of the law of God. This kind of transgression is logically followed by illness, for "The wages of sin is death" (Romans 6:23).

But the same verse in the Bible which says "The wages of sin is death" says also, "the gift of God is eternal life through Jesus Christ our Lord." Thus it is that the sincere Christian has access to a divine power, manifest in his own life, which enables him to live victoriously instead of becoming a slave to habits and practices which undermine the health. "But unto you that fear my name shall the Sun of righteousness arise with healing in his wings" (Malachi 4:2).

The greatest prescription of all time for the healing of illness, whether it be physical, mental, or spiritual, is found in the Saviour's words, "Come unto me, all ye that labour and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest. Take my yoke upon you, and learn of me; for I am meek and lowly in heart: and ye shall find rest unto your souls. For my yoke is easy, and my burden is light" (Matthew 11:28 to 30).

—by HAROLD SHRYOCK, M.D.





# PRAYER

In the Old Testament story of Jacob and his dream at Bethel, he saw a ladder set up on the earth. The top of the ladder reached to heaven, and the angels of God ascended and descended upon it. God was encouraging him—and us—with the truth that heaven and earth are not separated, that there is still a highway, still a ladder between man and Himself.

There are several essential features of prayer. Fundamental to them all, however, is a recognition of the character of God and His relationship to us. Jesus taught us to say, "Our Father," when we pray. The purpose of prayer is to glorify God. "Praise waiteth for thee, O God. . . . O thou that hearest prayer, unto thee shall all flesh come" (Psalm 65:1, 2).

Prayer involves thanksgiving when we recognize the true character of God and His constant manifestations of love and mercy to us as our Father. "In every thing by prayer and supplication with thanksgiving let your requests be made known unto God" (Philippians 4:6). Before we make any requests to God, we are to recognize His universal dominion, His authority over all the universe and over ourselves, for "his kingdom ruleth over all" (Psalm 103:19).

There are three kinds of petitions concerning our own welfare which are proper in prayer: (1) those that recognize God as the provider of all our necessities; (2) petitions that confess our sinfulness and seek God's forgiveness; and (3) those that recognize Him as our hope and refuge against all the workings of the evil one.

True prayer demands faith. "He that cometh to God must believe that he is, and that he is a rewarder of them that diligently seek him" (Hebrews 11:6). Prayer involves submission to the revealed will of God. "He that turneth away his ear from hearing the law, even his prayer shall be abomination" (Proverbs 28:9). Real prayer means willingness to forsake all known sins. "If I regard iniquity in my heart, the Lord will not hear me" (Psalm 66:18).

Prayer must be earnest. Jesus illustrated this with the story of the unjust judge who would not give justice because it was right to do so, but because the widow who desired justice continued to come to him and would not be denied. At last the judge said, "Because this widow troubleth me, I will avenge her, lest by her continual coming she weary me" (Luke 18:5). And Jesus commented, "Shall not God avenge his own elect, which cry day and night unto him,

though he bear long with them?" (Verse 7).

And here is something important: True prayer must be accompanied with the spirit of forgiveness. Jesus said, "If ye do not forgive, neither will your Father which is in heaven forgive your trespasses" (Mark 11:26).

Prayer is to be offered not only in public but in private. We are to praise God in the great congregation, as David reminds us in Psalm 22:22, 25. At the same time we are to remember what Jesus said in Matthew 6:6. "But thou, when thou prayest, enter into thy closet, and when thou hast shut thy door, pray to thy Father which is in secret; and thy Father which seeth in secret shall reward thee openly."

Every day should open and close with prayer. In ancient Israel the morning and evening sacrifices continually turned the people's eyes and hearts toward God. In the morning our prayer should be one of dedication, giving ourselves anew to God for the day's work and service, and asking His care and protection. Evening prayer should be a prayer of retrospection. We should look back over the day that is past, confess our sins, thank God for His mercies, and commit ourselves in childlike faith into His hands during the hours of darkness and sleep.

The quiet spirit of meditation has its place in our prayers, especially in our secret prayers. It is said that Madame De Stael after a two-hour visit with a friend, in which she had talked continuously, remarked in parting, "What a delightful conversation we had!" So it is with some of us. We talk and talk to God and never listen to His voice speaking in our hearts. We forget that the Lord would like to speak to us. Savonarola, the great reformer and martyr, once remarked ironically that many of the saints in his days were "so busy talking to God that they could not hearken to Him." And so it is with us. We seldom wait to listen to God.

Our prayers should not be proud prayers. "And when thou prayest," Jesus said, "thou shalt not be as the hypocrites are: for they love to pray . . . that they may be seen of men" (Matthew 6:5). Two preachers, Dr. A. H. Franke and Dr. Anton, were walking along a country road when suddenly they heard someone praying. There, behind some bushes not far from the road, were two lads on their knees, one of them praying very loudly. It seemed to be a good prayer, and the ministers enjoyed listening to it. When he closed, the boy who had prayed turned



*In the morning, prayer is the key that opens to us the treasures of God's mercies and blessings; in the evening it is the key that shuts us up under His protection and safeguard.—Anon.*



to his friend and said, "Say, didn't I pray nice?" Of course the ministers were shocked. Such an attitude of spiritual pride pains us, but isn't that the experience of many, far too many, even now? Is it not possible to begin a prayer in humility and then, by an imperceptible change, end in some sort of self-praise?

The Apostle Paul by divine inspiration wrote, "We know not what we should pray for as we ought." But that wasn't all. "The Spirit also helpeth our infirmities: . . . the Spirit itself maketh intercession for us with groanings which cannot be uttered" (Romans 8:26). We may have God's help even in our prayers. He who desires to hear our prayers will help us to pray.

Jesus stressed three ingredients of real prayer: First, it is *conditional*. We approach God on a condition, and that condition is threefold: (1) We must have clean hearts, we cannot cling to idols. (2) We must have faith; we must believe that God can and will answer prayer. (3) We must be obedient. "And whatsoever we ask, we receive of him, because we keep his commandments, and do those things that are pleasing in his sight" (1 John 3:22).

Secondly prayer is *costly*. It takes a surrendered heart; it takes earnestness; it takes time. We are to be in a spirit of prayer all the time. We can pray while we work, while we walk, while we wash dishes, while we make beds, while we sit at our desks. But besides this, there must be earnest secret prayer. Jesus said, "But thou, when thou prayest, enter into thy closet" (Matthew 6:6). If Jesus should come to your home, you certainly would not walk around continuing your work while talking to Him. You would welcome Him; you would sit down and talk with Him. You would show Him every respect. You would spend time with Him. So in prayer; prayer costs time. The evil one will do all he can to stop such communion. He will interfere; he will bring interruptions.

Lastly, prayer is *victorious*. It conquers; it overcomes circumstances. And it will conquer not only in our own lives but in the lives of others. "If any man see his brother sin a sin which is not unto death, he shall ask, and he shall give him life for them that sin not unto death" (1 John 5:16). We need power if others need help. If the work of God needs victory, let us pray. "Ask and ye shall receive" (John 16:24). Let us not limit God in our unbelief or hold back the blessings that would come upon the world if we prayed for God's work and God's workers. "Thus saith the Lord, the Holy One of Israel, and his Maker, Ask me of things to come concerning my sons, and concerning the work of my hands command ye me" (Isaiah 45:11).

David Helfenstein tells of a time of special prayer in his own life. Great burdens were facing him, and apparent injustice was to be done to him. At the family altar he prayed earnestly that he might be delivered from those things and from unscrupulous men. The next day he expressed the same anxiety. His little girl, about nine years old, came and climbed up on his knee, put her hands on his cheeks, looked him in the eyes and said: "Father, you prayed about that last night. I wouldn't pray and worry both. Prayer is enough."

—H. M. S. RICHARDS

Prayer is the open highway to God. Jesus said, "Men ought always to pray, and not to faint." Luke 18:1. In our fast-moving age, when everyone is highway conscious, why have we forgotten the most important road of all? Through life, death, and the starlit spaces, prayer is the highroad, the King's highway.



**I**N AN OLD Scottish story a bridegroom was murdered by a friend on a festal day. The cup that his friend presented to him was mingled with poison, and while death held sway, the criminal took the fleetest horse from the stable and plunged into the forest. All night long the horse galloped through the woods.

The murderer wanted to get away from the scene of his crime, and would not let the animal rest, but plunged the spurs deep into the horse's flanks. On and on they rode all night, and as the dawn was breaking, he emerged from the forest, right before the castle. He had ridden all night long, around and around. He thought he was fleeing from his crime, but instead he came back to it and had to face the severe punishment.

So it will be with those who have neglected to be saved from their sins. If we fail to find salvation in Christ, we cannot escape the punishment for sin that is surely someday to be inflicted upon the wicked. The apostle Paul has endeavoured to warn all of us of this important matter. He has written: "Therefore we ought to give the more earnest heed to the things which we have heard, lest at any time we should let them slip. For if the word spoken by angels was stedfast, and every transgression and disobedience received a just recompense of reward; how shall we escape, if we neglect so great salvation?" (Hebrews 2:1-3). How shall we escape? How shall we escape the recompense for sin? What a solemn question! There is no escape if we neglect to surrender our hearts to Christ.

Angels that sinned were cast out of heaven and are awaiting severe punishment. The people of Sodom who gave themselves over to sinning were destroyed by fire. Those living in the days of Noah who refused to repent of their sins and forsake them were put to death. Likewise all the unrepentant wicked will someday meet the death penalty. "For if God spared not the angels that sinned, . . . and spared not the old world, but saved Noah the eighth person, a preacher of righteousness, bringing in the flood upon the world of the ungodly; and turning the cities of Sodom and Gomorrha into ashes condemned them with an overthrow, making them an ensample unto those that after should live ungodly." "The Lord knoweth how to deliver the godly out of temptations, and to reserve the unjust unto the day of judgment to be punished" (2 Peter 2:4 to 6, 9)

Some think there is to be no punishment for evil-doing. They do not believe there is to be a hell.

They doubt that the wicked will be burned with fire. But Jesus said the time will come when the words will be spoken to the wicked, "Depart from me, ye cursed, into everlasting fire, prepared for the devil and his angels" (Matthew 25:41).

The apostle Peter assures us that our God longs to save all from being destroyed; nevertheless He will consume with fire those who reject His offers of mercy. "The Lord is not slack concerning his promise, as some men count slackness; but is longsuffering to us-ward, not willing that any should perish, but that all should come to repentance. But 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. Seeing then that all these things shall be dissolved, what manner of persons ought ye to be in all holy conversation and godliness" (2 Peter 3:9 to 11).


Christ made it clear that there is to be a hell. "Ye serpents, ye generation of vipers, how can ye escape the damnation of hell?" (Matthew 23:33). This suggests the following questions: Where is hell? Is it burning now? How long will it burn? Do the wicked go to hell when they die? Are there multitudes of sinners in hell now? Will sinful men and women suffer torment without end? Will hell ever burn out?

The Bible clearly reveals that hell is to be located on this earth. This world of ours is to become a lake of fire. The apostle Peter has written concerning the fire that will destroy both this earth and sinners: "For this they willingly are ignorant of, that by the word of God the heavens were of old, and the earth standing out of the water and in the water; whereby the world that then was, being overflowed with water, perished: but the heavens and the earth, which are now, by the same word are kept in store, reserved unto fire against the day of judgment and perdition of ungodly men." "But 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 3:5 to 7, 10).

Here Peter referred to the earth being destroyed by the Flood in the days of Noah. He said, "The world that then was, being overflowed with water, perished." The earth was then a lake of water. All

# THE DAY THE EARTH





the wicked who were living at that time perished. Peter said the earth in its present state is to be destroyed by fire. It will be the day of the perdition or destruction of ungodly men. He said, "The earth also and the works that are therein shall be burned up."

The wicked are being kept in reserve in the grave until the day of destruction comes. "Do ye not know . . . that the wicked is reserved to the day of destruction? they shall be brought forth to the day of wrath" (Job 21:29, 30). "The Lord knoweth how to deliver the godly out of temptations, and to reserve the unjust unto the day of judgment to be punished" (2 Peter 2:9). "Marvel not at this: for the hour is coming, in the which all that are in the graves shall hear his voice, and shall come forth; they that have done good, unto the resurrection of life; and they that have done evil, unto the resurrection of damnation" (John 5:28, 29). The wicked will be brought out of their graves for damnation or destruction.

The wicked will be brought to ashes. They will not be tormented forever, but will be completely destroyed. They will consume away into smoke. The time will come when they will not be. This earth which has been contaminated by their sins will be burned up, and they will be burned up. "For, behold, the day cometh, that shall burn as an oven; and all the proud, yea, and all that do wickedly, shall be stubble: and the day that cometh shall burn them up, saith the Lord of hosts, that it shall leave them neither root nor branch." "And ye shall tread down the wicked; for they shall be ashes under the soles of your feet in the day that I shall do this, saith the Lord of hosts" (Malachi 4:1, 3).

"For evildoers shall be cut off: but those that wait upon the Lord, they shall inherit the earth. For yet a little while, and the wicked shall not be: yea, thou shalt diligently consider his place, and it shall not be. But the meek shall inherit the earth; and shall delight themselves in the abundance of peace." "But 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" (Psalm 37:9 to 11, 20).

When the wicked are brought to ashes, that will be their end for all eternity. They will never be any more. "Let the sinners be consumed out of the earth, and let the wicked be no more" (Psalm 104:35).

The multitudes of sinners will be burned with unquenchable fire. Jesus said: "and if thy hand offend thee, cut it off: it is better for thee to enter into life maimed, than having two hands to go into hell, into the fire that never shall be quenched: where their worm dieth not, and the fire is not quenched. And if thy foot offend thee, cut it off: it is better for thee to enter halt into life, than having two feet to be cast into hell, into the fire that never shall be quenched: where their worm dieth not, and the fire is not quenched. And if thine eye offend thee, pluck it out; it is better for thee to enter into the kingdom of God with one eye, than having two eyes to be cast into hell fire" (Mark 9:43 to 47).

This fire that cannot be quenched is God's fire. No man will be able to quench God's fire until it has brought the wicked to ashes.

Jerusalem was destroyed with unquenchable fire. "But if ye will not harken unto me to hallow the sabbath day, and not to bear a burden, even entering in at the gates of Jerusalem on the sabbath day; then will I kindle a fire in the gates thereof, and it shall devour the palaces of Jerusalem, and it shall not be quenched" (Jeremiah 17:27). The unquenchable fire that destroyed Jerusalem is not still burning; rather, that fire burned out long ago. The unquenchable fire

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# 1000 years of darkness



IMAGINE, if you can, a time when the only inhabitants on earth will be the devil and his angels; a time when good people will live one thousand years in a strange but beautiful country, far removed from this world with its sorrows and disappointments. You say, "Impossible! I don't believe it." Well, frankly, it does sound fantastic, but nevertheless it is true.

This truth, stranger than fiction, is graphically portrayed in the last book of the New Testament, in Revelation 20:1 to 9. This is the only reference in the Bible to a specific thousand-year period. In fact, in this chapter the thousand-year period is referred to six times. This thousand-year period is popularly called the millennium. Of course, the word *millennium* is not a Biblical term, that is to say, it is not found in the Bible. The word means "a thousand years." It comes from two Latin words: *mille*, meaning "a thousand," and *annus*, meaning "a year."

There are numerous ideas and theories relative to the millennium. One group believes it will usher in a time of peace and happiness on earth; that men will evolve an ideal, righteous, warless world out of the present order. Another theory is that Christianity will increase in popularity, ultimately converting the inhabitants of the world to its tenets, thereby ushering in the brotherhood of man with Christ reigning on the earth during this thousand-year period. It is further envisioned by the advocates of this school of thought that the Jews will at this time accept Christ and become His last messengers in converting the world to the religion of Jesus.

Surely no one would dispute the utopian aims set forth in these theories. We would like to endorse enthusiastically such glorious ideas and ideals for our old, weary, forlorn world. But they are not true.

These are mere fallacies. Not a single theory here expressed has any Scriptural foundation. Anyone looking for an ideal, righteous, warless world to be ushered in by the educational, scientific, or religious efforts of our so-called civilization is doomed to utter disappointment.

The truth about the millennium can be found only in relation to the Scriptural facts connected with the one thousand years of Revelation 20:1 to 9. In the millennial prophecy of Revelation 20, God draws aside the curtain and panoramically portrays before the inhabitants of the world what will really happen to all peoples and to the earth itself. The Holy Scriptures vividly describe the events during the period. We learn when the millennium begins and ends. We see clearly what happens to the devil and his angels. We understand the destiny of the righteous and also the fate of the wicked. We also see, with the prophet John, the chaotic condition of the earth during this period. And finally, with John the revelator as our guide, we join the saints in this strange, beautiful country called heaven. We see the saved ones actively engaged in judging the lost and participating in the decisions relative to the punishment of the wicked. We envision the events following the millennium and the events ushering in the earth made new.

Now to pinpoint, with accuracy and precision, the happenings referred to:

*The Beginning of the Millennium.*—Two general resurrections serve as important markers. In John 5:28, 29, we read of "the resurrection of life" for those who have done good and "the resurrection of damnation" for those who have done evil. In Revelation 20:4 to 6 the expression "the first resurrection"



## The Saved Will Live in a Beautiful Country; the Deceived Will Be No More.

is mentioned twice. This implies that there will be a second.

Now let us identify the class or the type of individuals in the first resurrection. The answer is in Revelation 20:6: "Blessed and holy is he that hath part in the first resurrection." Since it is the holy or the righteous that take part in the first resurrection, is it not logical to assume that it is the wicked, the unholy, who will be raised in the second? This group is referred to in verse 5: "The rest of the dead lived not again until the thousand years were finished." We are here establishing the fact that the first resurrection, involving only the righteous, occurs at the beginning of the millennium; and the second resurrection, involving the wicked, comes at the close of the one-thousand-year period, or the millennium. Here, then, is that one-thousand-year period between the two general resurrections.

*The Time of the First Resurrection.*—If we can with certainty ascertain the time of the first resurrection, we will discover the starting point for the millennium. Is there Scriptural evidence on this important point? Yes, there is!

*The Evidence of Scripture.*—Let us read 1 Corinthians 15:51 to 55 and 1 Thessalonians 4:15 to 17: "The Lord himself shall descend from heaven." "The dead in Christ shall rise first." "We which are alive and remain shall be caught up together with them [the resurrected ones] in the clouds, to meet the Lord in the air." "We shall all be changed." "This mortal must put on immortality." The No. 1 event marking the beginning of the millennium is the second coming of Christ. Let us nail that point down. And at this great earth-shaking event, the *first resurrection suddenly occurs*. The dead in Christ are raised.

Observe how plain truth becomes by comparing scripture with scripture. Revelation 20:4 to 6 states that the first resurrection, in which the righteous dead are raised, marks the beginning of the millennium. First Thessalonians 4:16 reveals the fact that the righteous are raised at the second coming of Christ. Hence, it is clear that the millennium begins at the second advent. Consequently the second coming of Christ is premillennial, not postmillennial.

The next question that looms up in our thinking is, What will happen to the righteous who are living? Where will they go? We are not left to guess on this point. Here again, we go to the source of knowledge, the Holy Bible. We mentioned earlier that the righteous living will be "changed" as "mortal must put on immortality." At the same instant, the righteous dead are raised, and the corruptible take on incorruption. Mortal bodies become immortal. And together these two groups meet the Lord in the air. But this is not the final destination.

With Jesus and the holy angels, this retinue of the saved of all ages begins a flight through the vast recesses of space to a place fondly and devotedly called heaven. The following references substantiate this fact: John 14:1 to 3; 17:24; Revelation 7:14, 15.

Now for a brief glimpse of the sojourn of the righteous in heaven during the millennial period.

First, how long will they be in heaven? The answer is found in Revelation 20:6—one thousand years. Need we comment on this thrilling, anticipated vacation? The second question, no doubt, would be, How will they occupy the time? What will they be doing? Do we have the answer? Yes, the Bible is the answer book.

In Revelation 20:4 we read that the righteous will be engaged in a work of judgment. Paul states that the saints shall judge the world. (1 Corinthians 6:2, 3.) The Bible states clearly that the righteous, in addition to the unspeakable joys of fellowship with heavenly beings, will sit with Christ on thrones to participate in the solemn task of judging the unsaved. The record of each life will be opened to the gaze of the saints. They will see the efforts of God to save the lost. The records will reveal the love, mercy, patience, and justice of God in His dealings with the wicked. The mystery surrounding the absence of this loved one or that friend from heaven will be made plain. When the judging is over, there will not be one bit of doubt relative to the justice and mercy of our God. And the punishment meted out will be just.

Since the wicked will be judged, it is quite obvious that they are not with the righteous. So it would seem that the next proposition to deal with is the whereabouts of the wicked during this thousand-year period. In the first place, the wicked living at the end of time will be destroyed or consumed by the brightness of the coming of Christ. Notice 2 Thessalonians 2:8. In Jeremiah 25:33 the prophet 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." Revelation 19:15 speaks of the smiting of the nations by Christ. The wicked dead in their graves will not be disturbed at this juncture. They remain in their graves. Revelation 20:5 confirms this point.

*Condition of Earth.*—No human language can describe the frightful, chaotic condition of the world during this period. These scenes should be sufficient to awaken in our hearts a genuine desire to spend the millennium with the saved in heaven.

Notice the descriptive language used in the following references: Jeremiah 4:23 to 26; Isaiah 24:1, 3, 19, 20; Revelation 6:14 to 17; 16:18, 19. Broken-down cities; huge, gaping chasms; putrefying bodies strewn over the entire face of the earth; not a single living human being. A dark, gloomy, dismal, dreadful silence prevails. It is crystal clear that the millennial reign of the saints with Christ could not possibly be enjoyed in this kind of environment. The righteous are far removed from this uninhabited spot; they are in heaven, and by God's grace I intend to join them. What about you?

Now we will deal with the whereabouts of the devil and his angels during this period. In Revelation 20:1 to 3 John the revelator speaks of the binding of Satan for a thousand years. The binding of Satan is not with a literal chain of steel, but rather with a chain of circumstances. Many of us have at some time used the expression "My hands are tied." We do



not mean with a literal rope, but certain circumstances or conditions hinder us from doing some things. Thus it is in this light that Satan will be at a standstill for a thousand years.

The business of the devil is to tempt and to deceive, and ultimately to destroy. His evil work will be at a standstill for a thousand years. The righteous are beyond his reach. They are in heaven. The wicked are dead and can no longer yield to his tempting designs. Consequently, for a millennium Satan and his angels roam the uninhabited earth without anything to do but to reflect over all the misery, suffering, and destruction they have caused. Bound by a chain of his own forging, confined to the earth, which gives the appearance of a bottomless pit, Satan has a thousand years to reflect and to think and to see the results of his rebellion against the God of the universe. (Revelation 20:1.)

*Satan Loosed.*—We now approach the final stages of the millennium. The end is now in sight. Here are the events that vividly portray the end: First, Christ and the saints descend to the earth in the New Jerusalem. Notice the descriptive language of this breath-taking event: Zechariah 14:4, 5; Revelation 21:2. The beautiful city descends to the earth and settles on the Mount of Olives. The walls are transparent, so that those within can see beyond and those without can see within. By God's grace, I want to be on the inside looking out, rather than outside looking in. How about you?

Secondly the appearance of the city automatically serves to free Satan from his chain of circumstances. He is "loosed a little season" (Revelation 20:3). The descending of the New Jerusalem is timed to occur simultaneously with the loosing of Satan from his

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chains, and this latter event is closely knitted to the other accompanying event—the resurrection of the wicked dead.

Now that the wicked are alive again, Satan begins to work once more. (Revelation 20:7, 8.) Satan goes to deceive them. He deceives the billions who are eager to do his biddings. He excites and incites them to frenzy in the belief that under his skilful leadership they can capture God, destroy His kingdom, and rule supreme in the universe.

The New Jerusalem becomes the central point of battle. Foolishly the wicked follow their leader and surround the City of God, the home of the saved. The latest weapons of destruction are brought into position; perhaps hidden rockets are based on some platform orbiting in space. Who knows to what length the ingenuity of man will go to defy his Maker? But ere Satan can give the signal to attack, the God of heaven suddenly strikes one terrifying fiery blow. The words of the prophets vividly describe this holocaust:

"And fire came down from God out of heaven, and devoured them" (Revelation 20:9). "The elements shall melt with fervent heat" (2 Peter 3:10). "For yet a little while, and the wicked shall not be" (Psalm 37:10). "The day that cometh shall burn them up"

(Malachi 4:1). "Their flesh shall consume away while they stand upon their feet" (Zechariah 14:12).

*The Final Picture.*—Thank God, the terrifying, awesome scenes of a world on fire soon end. With the beloved prophet, we see an earth made new, with the New Jerusalem as its capital. Peter pictures "new heavens and a new earth, wherein dwelleth righteousness" (2 Peter 3:13). John in Revelation 21 and the prophet Isaiah in Isaiah 65:17-25 pictures describe the scene of the beautiful city descending to earth.

*Conclusion.*—For over six thousand years the earth and its inhabitants have been groaning under the curse of sin. At long last, it is all over! Peace at last has come! The meek shall finally "inherit the earth." Oh, what a glorious future is in store for the redeemed! The millennium, my friend, is very near, because the coming of Christ is near. The question for sober reflection is, Are we getting ready for this climactic event? Will we spend it with the saved in heaven, or will we be with the lost? If we are Christ's completely, unreservedly; if we are obeying His Word, walking in His steps, we shall enjoy the bliss of the hereafter.

—W. W. Fordham

## GET ME THAT BOOK

*From page 5*

Bishop of the Methodist church.

"The question of the old man rings in my ears constantly," said the Bishop. "Why didn't someone bring us the book long ago?"

That "book", the Bible, is now available to almost everyone.

But there is another point we wish to make. In all his long years that old Indian had apparently never heard anything that spoke to his heart as did the words from the Bible.

Why?

Because it is a book which has the power to speak to men of every land, of every generation, of every colour and creed. It solves their problems, whatever they may be. Most books speak for a time to a community, a nation, a generation. But the Bible speaks to all men as long as time shall last, because it is the word of God.

I Would  
Go Up

I would go up a rain-swept hill  
When no bird sings and all is still.  
I would commune to keep alive  
All of my dreams where millions strive.  
I would go up—and then return  
To kindle hope for those who yearn.

—Inez Brasier





# OF HUMAN DIGNITY

"All celebrated people," said Napoleon Bonaparte, peering through a crack in the veneer of his own character, "lose dignity on a close view."

Now Napoleon was a great man. Ask any Frenchman today, a century and a half after the Little Corporal's greatest hour, and he will tell you in tones of hushed reverence that He was the Greatest Frenchman of All Time. The Greatest Man of History. His voice will convey the capital letters I have used. To suggest that Napoleon was second to any other human would be equivalent to sacrilege.

And I have to admit that, if you measure greatness in terms of lustful, amoral ambition and human butchery then he must surely be a candidate for that crown. And it is because I have no wish to have fifty million hornets in the shape of irate Frenchmen buzzing angrily around my defenceless head, I hesitated to take issue with even the lightest of his utterances. But it is no more than a hesitation. I must take up arms in defence of the truth.

Of course, Napoleon has his supporters. One of his countrymen, a lady this time, has uttered the immortal dictum—"No man is a hero to his valet." Never having had a valet, I cannot take issue with Mme. de Cornuel. But I can do battle with the principle she states. Her thought is exactly that of Napoleon's.

It is therefore time we brought this matter of human dignity out into the open. I am a passionate believer in the natural dignity of the human being. That he has certain inalienable rights and inherent freedoms seems at first glance to go without argument. But in this day and age, to say nothing of the past, and to prophesy nothing of the future, the rights and dignity of man are not always to be taken for granted.

Wherever slavery is practised—and slavery is practised today in some parts of the world—human dignity is affronted; wherever man is in the grip of some vice or evil habit, his facade of human dignity is crumbling; wherever man is not allowed political or religious freedom, human dignity receives a body blow; wherever men permit others to do their thinking for them, they sell the birthright of their innate dignity; wherever a husband dominates his wife, or permits himself to be dominated by his wife, the dignity of two people is shattered; wherever "everything that is not compulsory is forbidden," as in totalitarian government, the dignity of the citizens of that state becomes a worthless sham; wherever a man cannot perform his honourable and honest profession because of some petty ordinance or restriction, human dignity is insulted; wherever men must secretly meet to worship, human dignity is dragged in the gutter.

It is the inalienable right of men everywhere to do justly, to work honourably, to worship freely, to trade honestly, to live fearlessly, and to pursue their lawful happiness.

Take away those rights, one or all of them, and you aim a lethal blow at decency and dignity. But here is the strange thing that is so often overlooked. When this is done, most often it is not the victim, but the perpetrator of the act, who has the most damage done to his dignity. The victim, conversely enough, often adds to the stature of his dignity; he often reveals an unsuspected greatness, unconsciously using his persecutor as a foil whereby his true character is revealed.

What is this intangible quality of human dignity? Is it some nebulous aura that surrounds the saintly, or an indefinable something that hovers around the upright? Are we born with it, or do we acquire it? Is it the heritage of all, or a chance gift to a favoured few?

It is the right of all men to be born with the elements of dignity upon them. The Creator designed it that way, and no man can ever take it from us, except ourselves. None but he who possesses this happy faculty can divest himself of it.

A Hitler may hurl a Niemoller into a concentration camp, and subject him to vile indignities; yet

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## THE DAY EARTH BURNS UP

*From page 11*

does not mean that the fire will never burn out, but rather that the fire cannot be quenched until it has consumed that which it is burning.

Weymouth translates Mark 9:43, 44 as follows: "If your hand should cause you to sin, cut it off: it would be better for you to enter into life maimed, than remain in possession of both your hands and go away into Gehenna." One of the words from which we get our English word hell is Gehenna.

Jesus used this Gehenna as an illustration of how the wicked will be wholly devoured. Nothing will be left of them. Both the soul and body of the wicked are to be destroyed. Our Saviour is quoted by Matthew as saying "And fear not them which kill the body, but are not able to kill the soul; but rather fear him which is able to destroy both soul and body in hell" (Matthew 10:28).

The punishment for sin is an everlasting death. Said our Lord, "And these shall go away into everlasting punishment: but the righteous into life eternal" (Matthew 25:46). The apostle Paul contrasts the rewards of the righte-

ous and the wicked: "For the wages of sin is death; but the gift of God is eternal life through Jesus Christ our Lord" (Romans 6:23).

The fire that destroys the wicked is spoken of as everlasting fire. "Then shall he say also unto them on the left hand, Depart from me, ye cursed, into everlasting fire, prepared for the devil and his angels" (Matthew 25:41). It was an everlasting fire that brought an end to Sodom and Gomorrha. "Even as Sodom and Gomorrha, and the cities about them in like manner, giving themselves over to fornication, and going after strange flesh, are set forth for an example, suffering the vengeance of eternal fire" (Jude 7).

This everlasting, or eternal, fire brought Sodom and Gomorrha to ashes. "And turning the cities of Sodom and Gomorrha into ashes condemned them with an overthrow, making them an ensample unto those that after should live ungodly" (2 Peter 2:6). The apostle Peter here states that the destruction of these wicked cities is an example of what is to befall the wicked. Even as the eternal, or everlasting fire reduced those cities to ashes, so will it bring the wicked to ashes. "And ye shall tread down the wicked; for they shall be ashes under the soles of your feet in the day that I shall do this, saith the Lord of hosts" (Malachi 4:3). The results of the fire for Sodom and Gomorrha were eternal. They have never since existed. Likewise, the results of the fire for the wicked will be eternal. They shall never live again. They shall be no more.

After the earth and the wicked are burned, God is to make here a new earth. The apostle Peter has written: "But 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."

John in the Revelation describes the ultimate end as follows: "And I saw a new heaven and a new earth: for the first heaven and the first earth were passed away; and there was no more sea. And I John saw the holy city, new Jerusalem, coming down from God out of heaven, prepared as a bride adorned for her husband. . . . 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: for the former things are passed away. And he that sat upon the throne said, Behold, I make all things new" (Revelation 21:1 to 5).

Our Lord is to give to His redeemed a home of unending joy and unalloyed happiness. "For, behold, I create Jerusalem a rejoicing, and her people a joy. . . . And the voice of weeping shall be no more heard in her" (Isaiah 65:18, 19). To gain this home, Jesus said we had better, if necessary, be willing to give up that which is as dear to us as our hand, foot, or eye. The apostle John said, "He that overcometh shall inherit all things" (Revelation 21:7). "And they overcame him by the blood of the Lamb" (Revelation 12:11). Let us be determined to overcome by the blood of Jesus, and thereby escape hell and make sure of a home in a glorious heaven.

—ROBERT L. BOOTHBY

## OF HUMAN DESTINY

*From page 15*

it is the Niemoller who walks the taller while the dictator does himself irreparable harm. Or you may, on a more local level, attempt to tear down the character of a neighbour whom you do not like, yet, if his character is unimpeachable, your gossip damages the dignity of no one but yourself.

What a precious thing then, is human dignity! How carefully we should preserve our own! Paradoxically, dignity is like life itself, as Jesus pointed out; if you seek to save it, you lose it; if you are careless of it as you defend truth and justice, you acquire it and preserve it; you add to it and multiply it.

But if you cannot wear it as a comfortable garment, you cannot wear it at all; if you seek to add it to you as you would an ornament, you cannot lay claim to it at all. It is something with which you are born; but it grows upon you. Its very life and existence depend upon your having a conscience which is void of offence toward God and man.

—by ROBERT H. PARR



# ANSWERS FROM THE BOOK

Conducted by the Voice of Prophecy

Questions related to Bible subjects or personal spiritual problems are invited. Address to "From the Book", Box 35, Poona 1, India.



## Abraham as Ancestor

*How is it that both the Jews and Moslems claim Abraham as their ancestor?*

Not only the Jews and Moslems claim Abraham for their ancestor; Christians may make the same claim. But first to answer the question.

The Jews claim Abraham as their ancestor because they are descended from him through his son, Isaac. The Moslems claim him as their ancestor because their religion, Islam, began with the Arabs, and certain Arab tribes are descended from Abraham through another son, Ishmael.

But how may Christians claim to be of the line of Abraham?

The apostle Paul makes the claim on a spiritual basis. He points out that God's promises made to Abraham and his descendants were made on spiritual, not on natural, grounds, and that therefore, from God's view-point, Abraham's true descendants are those who serve Him on a spiritual plane, as Abraham did. Reasoned Paul: "They which are the children of the flesh, these are not the children of God" (Romans 9:8). "And if ye be Christ's, then are ye Abraham's seed, and heirs according to the promise" (Galatians 3:29).

## Origin of Angels

*How did the angels originate?*

The angels are created beings a little superior to man. (Heb. 1:4, 7, 13). They were in existence before the creation of this earth (Job 38:6, 7). The word "angel" in English is translated from Hebrew and Greek words meaning "messenger" and in many places in the Bible we read of angels as messengers from God to man.

## The Gospel

*What gospel is meant in Matthew 24:14?*

The verse reads: "And this gospel of the kingdom shall be preached in all the world for a witness unto all nations; and then shall the end come."

The word "gospel" means good news or good tidings. The gospel is the good news that Christ, the Son of God, died for our sins, rose from the dead, and will come again. Before His ascension He com-

missioned His followers to preach it in all the world. Matthew 28:19, 20; Mark 16:15; Luke 24:47.

That the gospel will be proclaimed with great power in the last days is clearly stated in Revelation 14:6, 7: "And I saw another angel fly in the midst of heaven, having the everlasting gospel to preach unto them that dwell on the earth, and to every nation, and kindred, and tongue, and people, saying with a loud voice, Fear God, and give glory to Him; for the hour of His judgment is come: and worship Him that made heaven, and earth, and the sea, and the fountains of waters."

When this work shall have been accomplished, the end will come. Matthew 24:14.

## Seeking God

*What is the meaning of Isaiah 55:6—"Seek ye the Lord while He may be found, call ye upon Him while He is near"?*

This is always timely counsel, for the sinner never knows what may happen if he delays seeking God. His life may be cut short by accident, or delay may lessen his inclination to find God. Some have said that after they make a fortune and retire, or attain some other goal, they will seek God. They may then find themselves indifferent to their own salvation. God is as willing as ever to be found, but they no longer want to seek Him. This truth is expressed in Ecclesiastes 12:1. "Remember now thy Creator in the days of thy youth, while the evil days come not, nor the years draw nigh, when thou shalt say, I have no pleasure in them."

The Bible plainly teaches that there will come a time when no more sinners will be saved. Someday the Judge of all men will decree: "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." Revelation 22:11. In the parable of the ten virgins the five foolish ones fully intended to go in to the marriage, but they neglected needed preparation. Matthew 25:1-12.

The only safe course is to seek God now. "For He saith, I have heard thee in a time accepted, and in the day of salvation have I succoured thee: behold, now is the accepted time; behold, now is the day of salvation." 2 Corinthians 6:2.



(Note: That this study might be of permanent value, readers are invited to underline all the texts and to follow a simple plan of annotating alongside each text in the margin of their Bibles the next text in the study. Begin by entering the following information about the study on the flyleaf of your Bible as tabled below: serial number, title, first text, code letters, and total number of texts used. Then turn to the first text and write in the margin alongside it the second text with code letters and so on in chain reference fashion to the end.)

2. SW  
2 Tim 3:16  
29 Je'-sus answered and said unto them, Ye do err, / not knowing the scriptures, nor the power of God.  
30 For in the resurrection they neither marry, nor are given in marriage, but are as the angels of God in heaven.  
31 But as touching the resurrection of the dead, have ye not read that which was spoken unto you by

# MARK YOUR BIBLE

Conducted by Bernard Pinghe



## BAPTISM

Dr. H. M. S. Richards of the Voice of Prophecy radio broadcast recently related a parable of a cave and the sun. One day the cave heard the sun say, "Come up into the light. Come up and see the sunshine." The cave ventured out and was amazed to see light everywhere. In turn the sun accepted an invitation from the cave, "Now show me the darkness, for I have never seen the darkness," said the

sun. But as the cave looked around there was no darkness at all, for the sun was there.

The darkness around Christian doctrines disappears when the Bible is examined carefully. For it is indeed "A lamp unto my feet, and a light unto my path" (Psalm 119:105).

### 1. What was Christ's command to His disciples concerning baptism?

Matthew 28:19. "Go ye therefore, and teach all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost" (2 B Hebrews 10:22).

"We should not doubt, then, that baptism is of divine origin and was not devised and invented by men. . . . Baptism is no human plaything, but insti-

No.	Title	First Text	Code	No. of Texts
22	Baptism	Matthew 28:19	B	11



tuted by God Himself." Martin Luther, *Catechetical Writings*, Vol. 1, pp. 158, 159.

**2. In the life of a sinful person what does baptism signify?**

Hebrews 10:22. "Let us draw near with a true heart in full assurance of faith, having our hearts sprinkled from an evil conscience, and our bodies washed with pure water." (3 B Colossians 2:12.)

"He must believe that by the blood of Christ his sins may be washed away. In other words, he must grasp by faith the assurance that thus he may end his life of sin, and begin a new and sinless life." F. D. Nichol in *Baptism*, pp. 1, 2.

**3. What witness does one bear when he is baptized?**

Colossians 2:12. "Buried with him [Christ] in baptism, wherein also ye are risen with him through the faith of the operation of God, who hath raised him from the dead." (4 B Mark 16:16.)

"The Christian participates sacramentally and by faith in Christ's dying and rising again; but he should walk in that newness of life which is ostensibly his assured possession." Reinhold Niebuhr, *Faith and History*, p. 240.

**4. How important and necessary is belief before baptism?**

Mark 16:16. "He that believeth and is baptized shall be saved; but he that believeth not shall be damned." (5 B Acts 2:38.)

"Without faith, baptism avails nothing, although it is in itself a divine, inestimable treasure." Martin Luther, *Ibid.*, Vol. 1, p. 163.

**5. What degree of emphasis is placed on repentance before baptism?**

Acts 2:38. "Repent, and be baptized every one of you in the name of Jesus Christ for the remission of sins." (6 B Romans 6:13.)

The acknowledgement of sin is necessary before baptism. The Duke of Osuna visited a convict galley. From each prisoner he asked the question, "For what crime are you here?" All included an excuse with their reply; all except one. He said, "My Lord, I am justly here. . . . I deserve what now I suffer." The Duke was surprised and immediately pardoned him.

**6. Beside forsaking sin what positive way of life is expected after baptism?**

Romans 6:13. "Neither yield ye your members as instruments of unrighteousness unto sin: but yield yourselves unto God as those that are alive from the dead." (7 B Matthew 28:19, 20.)

The Christian life is not confined to a rigid code of don'ts. The life must be made fragrant with that which God expects us to do. While withdrawing from evil, positive characteristics must be cultivated to prevent a falling back to evil again. Read Galatians 5:22, 23.

**7. To what extent should one be taught before following the sacred rite?**

Matthew 28:19, 20. "Go ye therefore . . . baptizing them . . . teaching them to observe all things whatsoever I have commanded you." (8 B John 8:31.)

The reference to observing Christ's instructions indicates that the individuals involved would be at an age when they could understand. R. E. White observes "Such giants as Gregory Nazianzen, Basil, Chrysostom, Ambrose, and Augustine were not baptized until they reached manhood, although they had Christian mothers." *The Expository Times*, L1, 1949-50, p. 110.

**8. Before baptism how necessary are the steps that have been discussed thus far?**

John 8:31. "If ye continue in my word, then are ye my disciples indeed." (9 B Matthew 3:16.)

Learning, believing, repenting, and forsaking are obviously steps that only a person of understanding age can take. This, therefore, eliminates baptism of those below pre-understanding age. "It is necessary to go to the third century to find incontestable evidence of the existence of paedobaptism [child baptism]. Remarkably enough, the first attestation is hostile to the practice, which is opposed as an innovation without justification." Th. Preiss, *La Vie en Christ* (1951), p. 133.

**9. What mode of baptism is suggested in the baptism of Jesus?**

Matthew 3:16. "And Jesus, when He was baptized, went up straightway out of the water." (10 B Acts 8:38, 39.)

"It is needless to add that baptism was (unless in exceptional cases) administered by immersion, the convert being plunged beneath the surface of the water." W. J. Conybeare and J. S. Howson, *The Life and Epistles of St. Paul*, (1953), p. 345.

**10. What record is found that immersion was the consistent method in early New Testament times?**

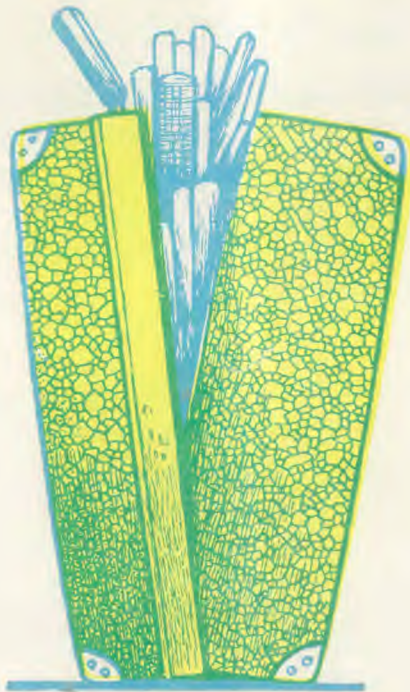
Acts 8:38, 39. "And they went down both into the water, both Philip and the eunuch, and he baptized him. And when they were come up out of the water . . ." (11 B Acts 22:16.)

**11. What is the appeal of the Scriptures to all those who know and understand the requirement of baptism?**

Acts 22:16. "And now why tarriest thou? Arise, and be baptized, and wash away thy sins, calling on the name of the Lord." (B //)

"Many attempt to spiritualize away the rite entirely. The genius of Christianity demands that its converts follow exactly in the path of its founder Christ . . . only as they do so are they Christians." F. D. Nichol, in *Bible Truth Series*, No. 40, p. 8.





## Excess Baggage

**P**EOPLE who travel on trains and planes sometimes pack their bags too full. But they are not the only ones. Ask your overweight friend his opinion, and he will tell you he'd give anything to get rid of his "excess baggage." A ship at sea in a raging storm will heave excess baggage overboard. Too much cargo in the hold makes it impossible for the vessel to ride the swelling waves. Excess baggage must go, or the ship will sink.

In the storms of life we frequently go down because we are loaded with care and trouble. By this I mean we carry some weight that drags us down and consumes our strength. This weight we must lay aside if we are to ride the mountainous waves we encounter on the sea of life.

For just a moment stop and think. Do you carry excess baggage around with you? Perhaps it's a grudge against somebody who has done you a great wrong, and you want to get even. But wait a minute. If that "somebody" has a conscience, he is getting enough punishment for his misdeed. Your silence only adds to his punishment. Don't add to your own faults by carrying malice in your heart. Get the thing off your chest as soon as you can, and forget it. A grudge is too heavy a load for any man

to carry. It will only depress your mind and weary your body.

Another load that people carry is a bad conscience. Those who cheat in business will suffer the floggings of self-reproach. A hundred rupees or a thousand rupees may seem a lot of money, but is isn't worth much in comparison with a peaceful mind. You will do yourself immeasurable harm by carrying the weight of guilt around with you. Get rid of the load. Meet your honest debts and go free.

There are other weights. Perhaps you are burdened to speak a word of apology to someone you have offended. It may be your wife, your husband, your children, your neighbours, your boss, or an employee whom you have offended. The three hardest words to say are "I am sorry." Get the confession off your chest right away, and see how good you feel.

Laying aside every weight that rests unnecessarily upon your mind is not only good philosophy but good religion. When you have made things right with your fellow men make things right with God. Your merciful Father will be pleased to lift the load from your heart. Most important of all, He will give you strength to live above the mistakes you may have made in the past.

—D. A. Delafield