

# Megiddo Message

Vol. 77, No. 1  
January, 1990



*Great Peace have they who love Your  
law, and nothing can make them stumble.*

*— Psalm 119:165, NIV.*



# Three Days to Destiny

## YESTERDAY...

Three important days in the Christian's life determine his or her destiny. Someone may ask, "How can YESTERDAY affect one? Did not the apostle Paul say that he forgot those things which are behind?" True. We must sever the associations of YESTERDAY that were not to the glory of God. And we must forget the hurt feelings, the imaginations, the jealousies, the regrets. We must remember only the lessons we learned—must remember so we will not fall there again.

YESTERDAY will profit us according as we profit from each mistake by turning TODAY.

## TODAY...

TODAY is the day of correction, the day in which spiritual improvement must be made.

TODAY is the day in which the greatest amount of work must be done. TODAY is the day to spend pressing up the hill of perfection.

TODAY is the day of opportunity, possibly the last opportunity you or I shall have to conquer that resentful spirit, or that selfish trait that seems to cling so tenaciously.

There is a saying, "Do not put off until TOMORROW what you can do TODAY." And nowhere is this more true than in the Christian walk.

TODAY, while in the strength of manhood

and womanhood, is the day to make those additions so necessary to our salvation.

TODAY we must add the courage to say no to temptation, or to a brother or sister doing or about to do wrong.

TODAY we must have the courage to let our light shine, whether at home or abroad, to speak the word of commendation to one doing right.

TODAY is the day to excel in humility, in cheerfulness, in kindness. It is the time to take a retrospective view of the past—*our* past—to see how much we have grown spiritually and find out why we have not grown more.

TODAY is the day we should look in the mirror of truth and see ourselves as we really are. It is the day of decision in which we should decide definitely to improve our status with all our mind, might, and strength for the rest of the hour granted to us.

## TOMORROW...

Though there is the saying that "TOMORROW never comes," it will come one day soon. And it could find us unprepared, for TOMORROW is the day of retribution when our evil deeds will catch up with us, if not forsaken. TOMORROW our deformities will be brought to light, if not covered with the robe of righteousness.

YESTERDAY'S failures can guide us to a better TODAY, that will bring us to a joyful TOMORROW.



## Megiddo means...

"a place of troops" (Gesenius' Hebrew Lexicon); "a place of God" (Young's Analytical Concordance). Megiddo was and is a town in Palestine, strategically located, and the scene of frequent warfare. In the spiritual parallel, it is a place where soldiers engaged in spiritual warfare gather to renew their strength and courage (II Cor. 10:4-5).

### We believe

—in God, the Creator and Sustainer of the earth, the world, the universes, and all life; in whom we "live, and move, and have our being."

### We believe

—in the Bible as our only source of true knowledge about God and His purposes and plans for His creation and for the salvation of humankind.

### We believe

—in Jesus Christ, the Son of God and our Perfect Example, who was conceived of the Holy Spirit, and born of a Virgin; who ministered among His brethren, was crucified, resurrected, and taken to heaven and seated at the right hand of the Father, crowned with immortal glory, and who shall shortly return to be king of the whole earth.

### We believe

—in the Holy Spirit, the openly manifest power of God, which God bestowed at various times and in various ways to reveal His knowledge to humankind, to support His spokesmen, to confirm His utterances, and to demonstrate of His supreme power and authority.

### We believe

—in life as the gift of God, and in our sacred responsibility to use it for God and His coming Kingdom.

### We believe

—in humankind as providing the raw material from which shall be selected and developed a superior, God-honoring people upon whom God will bestow the blessings of immortal life in His soon-coming Kingdom.

### We believe

—in ourselves as capable of applying in our own lives the precepts and principles taught in the Word of God, in this way perfecting that high quality of moral character which God has promised to recompense with life eternal in His heavenly Kingdom on earth.

### We believe

—in the promise of God, that a new age is coming—is near—when the earth shall be filled with His glory, His people, and His will be done here as it is now done in heaven.

## Bible Quotations

Unidentified quotations are from the King James Version. Other versions are identified as follows:

**NEB**—New English Bible

**NIV**—New International Version

**NASB**—New American Standard Bible

**RSV**—Revised Standard Version

**TLB**—The Living Bible

**JB**—The Jerusalem Bible, Reader's Edition

**Phillips**—The New Testament in Modern English

**Moffatt**—The Bible, A New Translation

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MEGIDDO is a way of believing and living, grounded solidly in the Bible as the reliable Word of our Creator. A total view of life, the world and the universe, it sees all events, men and nations moving together toward one God-ordained climax: the Kingdom of God on earth. This has been the plan of God since the beginning. Christ will return visibly, bodily, as King, and the governments of this world will be joined to form a totally new worldwide government. When the task is complete, our earth shall be numbered among the heavenly, glorified worlds and filled with immortal inhabitants. This is the purpose and goal of all creation.





# Peace, Perfect Peace

**P***peace is mind,  
heart and life  
under the control of  
God. It is a peace  
which none of the  
stresses and strains,  
losses and  
difficulties, ups and  
downs of this life can  
touch—because it is  
founded in God.*

**W**e all know how devastating floods can be. A man told of watching helplessly as floodwaters ripped away his home. He saw his garage float downstream like a matchbox. The force of the flood carried away automobiles, furniture, animals, houses. Nothing, it seemed, could resist the rush of the angry water.

Nothing except the trees. The flood came and went, and took everything—except a row of giant oaks on the riverbank. They stood unmoved.

Why? Why were the trees able to stand? Because they were held firmly in place by a strong root system which the floodwaters could not touch.

We have all felt the force of flood tides in our lives. It may be the daily demands of family, work, business, deadlines, decisions. Add to these the extra stresses and strains caused by personal conflicts, unexpected reverses, injustice, accident, illness, betrayal or family crises, and the dam comes close to breaking.

What can we do? We can't stop the flood. But we *can prepare* for it. Like those giant oaks, we can have deep roots which the forces of wind and water are powerless to touch. We can have peace—*whatever*. Our deep roots will keep us steady and strong.

## ■ *Why Peace?*

Why be concerned about peace? Because it is a divine command. We are to "seek peace," "pray for peace," "follow after the things which make for peace," "make peace," and be "peacemakers," "have peace," "love peace," be "filled with peace," "be at peace," "let the peace of God rule in [our] hearts," and bear the "fruit" of "peace" (Ps. 34:14; Ps. 122:6; Rom. 14:19; James 3:18 & Prov. 16:7; Matt. 5:9; Zech. 8:19; Rom. 15:13; I Thess. 5:13; Col. 3:15; Gal. 5:22).

At first thought, this may seem like an easy order, for peace is simply a state of tranquillity, order, quiet, calm. Keep to yourself and do nothing, and you will be at peace.



But there is a problem with this, for there is no true peace except in the presence of something hostile, something to oppose, or offend, or stir up strife. Real peace is a state of tranquility, order, quiet and calm *in the presence of that which might cause strife, contention, hostility, disturbance, or opposition*. We are reminded of the two artists who were asked to illustrate peace. One drew a calm lake, so serene that its reflecting surface picked up every detail of the surrounding landscape. The second drew a violent storm; and in the midst of the storm a waterfall; and overhanging the waterfall a great tree, swaying in the wind; and in the outermost branch of the tree a nest, upon which sat a small bird, singing heartily through the storm, in the beating wind and rain. Here was a picture of peace.

#### ■ *Whither Peace?*

Peace is not something we have naturally. Being human, we are strongly endowed with an instinct for self-preservation, and this instinct, ungoverned, is far from peace-making. Every command of God strikes directly at some trait that is at the heart of our being, and the command to "seek peace" is no exception. It is part of the remaking, re-creating process He has planned, a process designed to refashion the "old" creature into something "new." If we object to this, if we want to be "ourselves," individualists, just as we are, we may as well forget about having any part in God's new world, for everything in that world must be—*will be*—"new." God does not want us just as we are. If He were looking for human material in its natural state, the world is full of it. But God is selective. He wants, and will have, *only* the best. If we would be part of His eternal plans, we must *prove* ourselves worthy of the honor.

Hence His command to "seek peace," "follow peace," "be at peace." If we would have it, we must *pursue* it. And pursue it we *must*, because the

Bible tells us that *finding peace* is part of *finding life*. "What man is he that desireth life, and loveth many days, that he may see good? Keep thy tongue from evil, and thy lips from speaking guile. Depart from evil, and do good; seek peace, and pursue it" (Ps. 34:12-14). "Seek peace, and pursue it." How? By avoiding every scene of conflict? Or by quietly withdrawing from all activity? Or by never expressing any point of disagreement? Not at all. The Greek word for "pursue" means "to run after, strive for, press hard." And we must *do* it. God will not have in His Kingdom any harsh, irritable troublemakers. He wants—and will have—peace.

Let us return to our illustration of the trees that survived the flood. What are the deep roots that can give us peace? They are the great and powerful stabilizers in our lives, the unchangeable facts beneath our faith. God knew that we would have to face stresses in life, and so He equipped us to withstand them. He provided us with minds that can think, and an abundance of evidence to think upon. He made us able to reason and relate, and take solid hold on the facts about Himself, His existence, His creation, His Word, and His plan of salvation. If our roots are deep, fixed solidly in these nonnegotiables of faith, nothing—literally *nothing*—will be able to upset us, ruffle us or mar our peace. This is what the Psalmist meant when he wrote: "Great peace have they which love thy law: and nothing shall offend them" (Ps. 119:165). Or as it is phrased in the New International Version, "Nothing can make them stumble." Nothing. Is that what it says? It is. The stresses, irritations and anxieties of life will come and go, but we will be undisturbed.

How comes such peace? It has only one source: God. "Great peace have they which *love thy law*."

Here are the roots we need, anchored deep in our love for God and His law. Do we wonder that there is

**T**he secret of peace is the mind under control.

so little peace in the world, when God is forgotten, when multitudes are "without God and without hope"?

Oh, let us strike our roots deeper and yet deeper, get those deeper impressions of heart that will stay with us day and night, and never leave us. In every area of life today is so much pettiness, so much shallowness—shallow thinking, shallow talking, shallow teaching. But there is no need for the flood waters to overwhelm us. Even here and now we can grow deeper and yet deeper roots in God, His power, His presence, and His promises. We *can* have peace.

But let us beware, lest we be too easily satisfied. Superficial faith may seem to bring peace—until the storm strikes. Superficial faith is not enough. To meet and greet our Christian friends with pleasantness is not enough. To have a form of religion which holds us to a set of religious pieties is not enough. To conform to the outward aspects of our religious disciplines and serve with apparent reverence for God is not enough. To confess belief in the faith of the worthies of old is not enough. To have real roots of peace, our faith must be our own, our very own, rooted and grounded in our own inner convictions. We must be able to say with all confidence before God, "I know WHOM I have believed," and "I know WHAT I have believed," and be willing to stake our lives upon it. Our expressions of faith and piety must be more than form, more than pleasantries, more than appearance. Much more, they must have genuine life-changing and heart-changing power



until we become "new" through and through. They must dominate totally every thought and word and deed and feeling within us. Our reverence for God must move us to be in every way possible *like* those we honor—*like* God and *like* Christ—if we expect them ever to honor us with a place in Christ's kingdom.

Such a faith will be rooted deep in genuine spiritual insight. We will go over and over again and again the

will be alert to every evidence around us of His guiding, directing Hand as it works all things together for our good. We will realize what He has done in calling us, instructing us, delivering us from the surrounding darkness and giving us a glimpse into His long-range plans—plans which *can* include us!

When our deep roots are tightly twined around His faithfulness and the surety of His promises, we will find ourselves exclaiming with the apostle

*neighborhood and communities.* As the the circle narrows, our personal responsibility increases. In our neighborhood and community, we can do much either to promote peace or to disturb it. The Bible command is definite, that we should "aim at peace with all" (Heb. 12:14, Moffatt); and, "If it be possible, as much as lieth in you, live peaceably with all men" (Rom. 12:18). Our Christian loyalties make us better in every way—better citizens, better neighbors, better members of our communities—and should make us peaceable. Said Jesus, "It is impossible that offenses will come: but woe unto him through whom they come" (Luke 17:1). If obeying the law of God, we will also respect the laws of our land and live as law-abiding citizens, not interfering with the rights and privileges of others. This is our duty, insofar as it does not conflict with the superior law of God. In the words of the apostle Paul, "Let every soul be subject unto...the powers that be" (Rom. 13:1–2).

But our responsibility for peace-making does not end here. Whatever we may be able to contribute to peace in our neighborhood or community, the next level increases our influence—and our responsibility—*peace in our Christian brotherhood, and peace in our homes.* Here we *must not* be the cause of strife. The command is plain: "Be at peace among yourselves" (I Thess. 5:13).

#### ■ *Promoting Peace*

As brothers and sisters in Christ, we have a common bond of love drawing us together, a common purpose uniting us, a common hope sustaining us, besides a common warfare, a common goal, and a common good. What shame upon us if we allow strifes, discord, jealousies and rivalries to divide us!

Yet, as we observed earlier, peace is not natural. We are all strongly endowed with the instinct to survive, and will fight to the bitter end to preserve our right to recognition, our superi-

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**O**ur expressions of faith and piety must have genuine life-changing and heart-changing power until we become "new" through and through.

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things that God has revealed for our enlightening, the great tenets of our faith, and all the examples that have been left on record for our learning. We will go over and over again and again the things that will prepare us for salvation, until they become a part of our very being, until they literally *live* in us, until they are with us whether we lie down, or rise up, or walk by the way. So fixed will they become in our minds that we will scarcely notice the general disturbance around us, much less be bothered by it. Our one consuming desire will be to know more and more of what God has revealed, His plans, His purposes, Himself, and His true message to humankind. With all our heart we will believe that God is, and long to be one of those He has promised to reward, those who diligently seek Him.

With this new perspective dominating us, we will not be able to live even a moment as though God were not. We will be keenly aware of His presence in a real and personal way; we

Paul, "O the depth of the riches both of the wisdom and knowledge of God! how unsearchable are his judgments, and his ways past finding out!" (Rom. 11:33).

#### ■ *Peace, Peace*

Now let us think about peace at several different levels, and what we as individuals can do about each.

At the top is *world peace*. In this age of almost worldwide unrest, fear and perplexity; with men here and there engaged in open hostilities, everyone longs for peace. But how little can even nations—to say nothing of individuals—do to assure it!

The next level below world peace is *peace in our nation*. We thank God for the security our governments provide, so that we may lead "a quiet and peaceable life in all godliness and honesty" (I Tim. 2:2); but should something happen to upset the peace in our nation, there is very little that we as individuals could do about it.

Next we come to *peace in our*



ority, our position, our will, or even our own private opinion. And we resent anyone who challenges us. We simply have to feel some point of pre-eminence over our brother! How contrary is this to the spirit that "makes for peace," the spirit described by the apostle Peter: "Yea, all of you be subject one to another, and be clothed with humility" (I Pet. 5:5).

As representatives of Christ we must subdue the combative instinct within us, humiliating as it may be. The divine injunction is, "follow after the things which make for peace, and things wherewith one may edify another" (Rom. 14:19). We soon find that the secret of peace lies in giving—giving up, giving in, giving way to another. It may seem, for the moment, that we are losing; but all such loss is in reality gain—we are the richer for it. We lose the questionable pleasure of having our own way, or getting the better of our opponent in an argument; we lose a little in place, or face, or grace, that we thought we had. But for all such losses we are the richer in the sight of God!

"[Following] after the things that make for peace" will stretch our moral muscles. It will mean answering harsh words with gentleness; taking insult, injury or unjust criticism without any feeling of retaliation or revenge; going the *second* mile even when we didn't really feel obligated to go the first; giving better than we receive; doing to others as we would be done by, governed by the law of God. No small order is this command to promote peace.

#### ■ But What If...?

What if our efforts toward peace are unsuccessful?

The first place to look is to ourselves. Have we truly done all in our power toward peace? Have we done all we can to make ourselves *right*—both with God and with our brother? Have we shown by our actions that we have forgiven and forgotten the

past offense? Or is there still some underlying tone of bitterness, some feeling of jealousy, some remnant of superiority that comes through to our brother—and to God—that is a barrier to peace?

Too often we require of our brother what we have not achieved ourselves. Of course we need time to grow; but our brother should be perfect! And so every slip on his part is a serious offense; *our* stumbling is excusable!

Let us look well to ourselves before we condemn our brother. "He shall have judgment without mercy, that hath showed no mercy" (Jas. 2:13). Mighty indeed is the effort we must make *with ourselves* if we would do *all* in our power to promote peace; if we would be always *very* patient, *very* kind.

It is so easy to be fault-finding and petty; so difficult to be humble and understanding. It is so easy to be harsh and critical; so difficult to be patient and forgiving. Many are the lessons we must learn in patience and brotherly kindness and love before we can say we have done all we can to walk in peace with our brother.

But when we have looked honestly to ourselves, when we feel satisfied before God that we have done our part, still our best efforts may not meet with success. What then?

Let us tread carefully, very carefully in this, for each of us must face the judgment of God, and each of us will receive according to what we have done. But it *is* possible to encounter problems beyond our human capability to solve. (This, too, may be a lesson we need.) If there is to be peace between two parties, *both* parties must do their part. If the willingness of one is lacking, there is just that much lacking of peace.

Just as it takes two to make a strife, so it takes two to make peace. Since we have power only to direct ourselves, we alone cannot assure peace. The apostle Paul allowed for this when he wrote (Rom. 12:18), "If it be

**J**ust as it takes two to make a strife, so it takes two to make peace.

possible, as much as lieth in you, live peaceably with all men"—which says, in effect, You must try for peace, you must do your very best, but you won't always succeed.

David was facing this fact when he wrote, "I am for peace: but when I speak, they are for war" (Ps. 120:7).

As followers of Christ we must be prepared for this possibility. And sometimes it is the only answer, because the peace to which we are committed is not "peace at any price." Above our duty to be "at peace" is our solid commitment to be right before God. There may be times when this will cause strife, division, and dissension, and holding to it will require a high level of Christian courage. But if we remember that *God* is our judge and it is *He* to whom we must answer, that in His hands lies our eternal destiny, we will find it easier to take the unpopular side when we are convinced that it is, indeed, the side of God and right.

(Continued on page 10)

**E**very step we take toward being or doing right is a step toward peace, toward God, toward life!



*From the*

# *Winning*

When the Great King descends in His glory,  
With a myriad of angels of light,  
When He comes and our veiled eyes behold Him,  
Transfixed by the joy of that sight . . .

When the heavens are parted asunder,  
And our Lord with His glorious train  
Arrives in His beauty transcendent,  
Forever with us to remain . . .

When we know that our trials are behind us,  
That never again we'll feel pain;  
And our sins, they have all been forgotten,  
Never once to be mentioned again,

When we're called to appear in His presence,  
To receive for the things we have done,  
And He crowns us with glory resplendent,  
And claims us as one of His own . . .

And we know in our hearts that before us  
Lie joys without limit or time,  
That all of Eternity's cycles  
Are ours—oh, what glory sublime!

When we're changed into bodies immortal  
And partake of His nature divine,  
Made like to the angels, undying,  
As the sun in its brilliance to shine . . .

When the angels exult o'er our vict'ry  
And their shouts do the universe rend,  
While the heavenly choruses yonder  
Reply with their rapturous "Amen!" . . .



# Side

When the saints and the seers of the ages  
From the earliest remnant of time  
All share in the splendors celestial,  
All join us in rapture sublime...

When we gather at last by the river  
That flows through the Garden so fair,  
And we look on the face of our Master,  
What joy it will be to be there!

And so we kept on with the battle  
When it seemed almost too much to bear,  
Our eye on the Pattern before us,  
Our heart on the bliss we could share.

But the greatest delight of that gathering  
Will be meeting the ones we have known,  
Who shared in our joys and our struggles,  
And steadied through sunshine and storm;

Oh! the joy and delight beyond measure  
When we meet in that country so fair;  
All free from the bonds that have bound us,  
From sickness, and heartache, and care;

Who helped us in mast'ring our passions,  
Who showed us ourselves as we are,  
Who said, "Press ahead—you can make it  
To the Heavenly Land, 'tis not far!"

When the trials of life are behind us,  
Oh, the peace and the love we shall share;  
Hand in hand we shall stroll by life's river,  
And know what it is to be there!



## Let Us Pray

Our heavenly Father, Lord God of land and earth and sea, Lord of *our* world and *other* worlds throughout the immensity of space, universes which Thou hast filled and art filling with Thy glory, we come before Thee this morning realizing our need of Thee, realizing our finiteness and Thy infinite greatness. We thank Thee for looking upon us lowly creatures of dust, and calling us to rise above our earthiness, above our surroundings, above ourselves. Help us to recognize the high honor in Thy call to us, and now use every opportunity to answer it.

We thank Thee for calling us from the turmoil that surrounds us, and the restless strivings caused by our unholy nature, to Thy exalted peace. We thank Thee that even in the midst of trouble we can have peace. We can have perfect inner peace, even when others are unfair or unkind, if only we learn to stay our minds on Thee, and give our love to Thy law and our hearts to that which is infinite, eternal and unshakable. Even if we must suffer for doing well, we can still have peace, if our hearts are truly set on Thee and the great prize Thou hast set before us.

Help us to do all in our power to promote peace, never allowing anything to disturb our own peace of mind. Help us to realize that when we do not have peace, most often *we* are the disturbers; our old unruly nature is the cause. When we master it, we shall have peace.

Help us, our Father, as we make a supreme effort to rise above ourselves and the things that hold us back, the pride, the jealousies, the unruly passions, the temptations to be less than our best. Whatever our fleshly weakness, help us to confront it honestly in Thy fear, and now set to work in earnestness to correct it.

O Lord, be Thou our surety, our strength, our stay in every time of trouble. In Thee we place our confidence. In Thee we believe. In Thee we can know the joy of salvation, if only we comply with Thy law. Amen.

(Continued from page 7)

### ■ Strife To Be Expected

Many are the examples in Scripture of those who had to choose between doing what they knew to be right and upsetting the peace; or compromising, and maintaining it. Joseph's holding firmly to right was underneath the dissension between himself and his brothers when he was still very young. Years later this same determination to be right put him in trouble with Potiphar's wife; but a small thing was that compared to dishonoring his God!

The decision of Daniel's three companions not to bow down to the golden image of Nebuchadnezzar upset the good favor they had enjoyed from the king and would have cost them their lives, had not God intervened; but in making that decision they did not even consider the king's opinion; their first concern was to obey God. The consequences were not an issue. Their one and only concern was to be right with God.

The prophet Jeremiah could have saved himself an untold amount of grief and suffering had he been willing to compromise, had he put his natural love of peace and goodwill ahead of his commitment to obey God. But he would not do it, and so lived most of his life with his fellow-countrymen and even his own family against him. But what difference did it make—when God was *for* him!

And we would not forget the example of our Lord, He who submitted to death on the cross rather than dishonor His Father. Not once did He preach to preserve peace, or to win the goodwill of His hearers. This was His plain statement: "I do not look to men for honor" (John 5:41, NEB). He came to do the will of His Father, and to deliver the message of His Father. "My doctrine is not mine," He declared, "but his that sent me." If any were offended, that was their loss. "Whosoever shall deny me before men, him will I also deny before my Father which is in heaven. Think not that I am come to send peace on

earth: I came not to send peace, but a sword. For I am come to set a man at variance against his father, and the daughter against her mother, and the daughter in law against her mother in law. And a man's foes shall be they of his own household" (Matt. 10:33-36).

What was He teaching in all this? Was strife to be promoted? Not promoted but *expected*. Well Jesus knew human nature, and well He knew that the gospel He was preaching was not one that would be acclaimed by all. It would bring conflict, dissension, strife and division, for no one likes to think his peers better than himself. Jesus' doctrine was exacting, commanding a set of values and a standard *far* above that to which most were willing to commit themselves. Hence, if one took the stand and professed loyalty, he or she must be prepared for opposition, even from those near and dear.

As in all matters of things heavenly, there would be a price to pay; even the best of the earthly must take second place to the heavenly if the heavenly would be gained. "He that loveth father or mother more than me is not worthy of me; and he that loveth son or daughter more than me is not worthy of me. And he that taketh not his cross, and followeth after me, is not worthy of me" (Matt. 10:37-38).

We today are answering the same call, we are following the same Master, and it is our duty to uphold right, to be loyal to our God, even if others oppose us or are upset by our firmness. Being a friend of everyone is not a criteria for entering the Kingdom, in fact it is decidedly dangerous. Said Jesus, "Woe unto you, when all men shall speak well of you!" (Luke 6:26). On the other hand is the command, "If it be possible, as much as lieth in you, live peaceably with all." We must not do anything to cause offense or make unnecessary contention or stir up strife. And we must be careful that we do not confuse personal preference with principle. If it is merely our



notion, our opinion, our idea that is causing strife, it may be wisdom to silence it. But when the issue is right or wrong, we must not compromise; we cannot force our will on others, but we are accountable for ourselves, and our *first* duty is to be right in the sight of God, the opinions and feelings of others notwithstanding. If the general peace is preserved, praise God! And if it is not, still let us praise God!

### ■ *Peace Within Ourselves*

Now we come to the level of peace where we ourselves have full control: peace *within*. Here is the realm where we are wholly responsible for the peace we either have or lack. Someone once called peace an "inside" job; for if we determine to be at peace in our own heart and mind, nothing, absolutely nothing about or around or above or beside us can disturb that peace. And if we determine *not* to have peace, nothing and no one can bring us peace.

When we come to seeking this real, "inside" peace, we find there are many things "against" us. At first impulse we blame circumstances. If this or that had not happened just at the wrong time; or if this or that situation did not exist; or if we did not have to be with this or that person; and so on and on. But when we look closer, we realize that this or that situation would not have disturbed us if our whole confidence had been in God; and this or that happening would not have upset our peace if we had not been so concerned about it; and nothing that this or that person could have said or done—even the harshest accusation—would have disturbed our peace if we had not been seeking that person's favor, if the approval of God was all that mattered.

Yes, when all is said and done, we are our own disturbers of the peace! It is *my* selfishness, *my* jealousy, *my* bitterness, *my* sensitiveness, *my* ungoverned feelings that cause the trouble.

So long as we cherish and coddle

our old nature; so long as we excuse and justify it; so long as we hold feelings against another and see them as working against us, thwarting us, challenging us, a threat to our security and our right to happiness, there can be no peace within. But when we rise above this unholiness, when we are able to put it under our feet and trust both ourselves and our brother to the care of God; when we are able to see *our* life and *our* abilities as God-given, and all our responsibility as to Him; when we can commit ourselves and others to His keeping—oh! what peace.

This special peace is not a fair-weather variety. It is not a feeling of peace and calm when friends are kind and we are feeling good. This peace is an undisturbed and undisturbable calm at all times and in all situations, when things go well and when everything seems against us; when business is prospering and when it is poor; when friends are warm and good-natured, and when they are cold and unfeeling; when our best efforts are appreciated, and when they are slandered and criticized. Peace is an all-weather fruit.

And it is the fruit of righteousness. It is the result of right thinking, right doing, a mind and heart and life under the control of God. It is a peace which none of the stresses and strains, losses and difficulties, ups and downs of this life can touch—because it is founded in God, by whose power we live and in whom is all our future hope, who has promised to work all things together for our eternal good.

**“W**hen something happens that might be upsetting,” he said, “I just say to myself, ‘What will it matter in eternity?’”

—K. E. Flowerday

### ■ *Peace, Perfect Peace*

What is the source of this peace? It is the mind stayed on God. This is the word of the prophet Isaiah, he who had seen firsthand the glory of God. “Thou wilt keep him in perfect peace, whose mind is stayed on thee: because he trusteth in thee” (Isa. 26:3). The literal rendering of this verse would be “Thou wilt keep him in peace, peace”—it is the superlative form, meaning the greatest possible peace.

Isaiah is saying that one's peace does not depend on circumstances but rather upon the set of one's mind. There will be pressure, care and responsibility; but in the midst of it all we can have peace: “whose mind is stayed on thee, because he trusteth in thee.”

Isaiah had the secret: the mind under control. The only way to keep our mind from darting aimlessly among a thousand things of no importance is to stay, anchor or fix it on something definite: a line of verse, a phrase of Scripture, a lifting thought, a sacred promise, a prayer, a song, a lesson or example—anything that we can use to “tie it down.” It will take effort, but the benefits are tremendous.

Our late pastor, Brother Flowerday, was a champion of this calm, inner peace, and he had his own formula, which we might do well to imitate. “When something happens that might be upsetting,” he said, “I just say to myself, ‘What will it matter in eternity?’”

Isn't that the perspective we need?

(Continued on page 26)



## Did God Deceive Ahab?

*"I cannot understand why God would send a lying spirit to deceive anyone into sin. What if God treated everyone the way He treated Ahab? Read First Kings 22:19-23, and Second Chronicles 18:19-22. Can you explain this to me?"*

God has created all the human race as free moral agents. "Choose ye," has been His policy from the beginning. "Choose for yourselves this day whom you will serve." This same choice was open to Abraham, Moses, Joshua, Saul and David—and Ahab. In fact, we can read where Ahab had many opportunities to choose. And time after time he chose the wrong. Time after time he made himself God's enemy.

But did God in using Ahab's prophets to persuade him to go up to battle at Ramoth-Gilead practice some form of deception? Did He persuade Ahab against Ahab's will?

The story is found in First Kings 22. It involves the two divided kingdoms: Israel to the north, under the leadership of the infamous Ahab; and Judah, the southern portion, under King Jehoshaphat. Syria was a strong foreign power north and east of Israel. Ramoth-Gilead, which lay east of Israel across the Jordan, was the land in question at the time; and all the broad fertile fields of Ramoth-Gilead belonged to Syria. Ahab could not forget that the prosperous land used to belong to Israel. The same jealous eye that coveted Naboth's vineyard coveted Ramoth-Gilead.

At this point Ahab's decision was made: He wanted Ramoth-Gilead and he would have it. He would ask no one's advice; he would go and fight for it himself. He invited Jehoshaphat to join him in the venture, and Jehoshaphat consented. But Jehoshaphat suggested that a few formalities might be in order: Should not the King of Israel inquire of the Lord? Whereupon Ahab gathered four hundred of his "yes-men prophets" (not true prophets of the Lord) around him. No problem. They all said "yes," just as they were supposed to, and the King was flattered.

But Jehoshaphat was not satisfied. "Is there not a prophet of the Lord here whom we can inquire of?" (I Kings 22:7, NIV). Ahab agreed reluctantly, and sent for Micaiah.

The prophecy from the Lord was just what Ahab had expected—no good. The whole enterprise was to be ill-fated—it would even cost Ahab his life. Israel would be left as sheep without a shepherd.

The determined King Ahab had heard enough. But Micaiah said more. His message was a flashback of what had already happened. He related the details of the prophetic vision the Lord had given him. He saw in vision the Lord holding a conference with his "spirits" (or "angels"—see Ps. 104:4; Heb. 1:7). The subject of the conference was to decide upon a plan whereby Ahab would be persuaded to go up to Ramoth-Gilead and be killed. One angel had the acceptable idea—he would go and "be a lying spirit in the mouths of all his [Ahab's] prophets" (I Kings 22:22, NIV). Then Micaiah concluded his message of doom to the wicked king: "So now the Lord has put a lying spirit in the mouths of all these prophets of yours. The Lord has decreed disaster for you" (I Kings 22:23, NIV).

We know that God is just and righteous in all His dealings. He never compels any to sin against their will; for He is "not wanting anyone to perish, but everyone to come to repentance" (II Pet. 3:9, NIV). Constantly He is imploring that we forsake the evil and love the good (Amos 5:14-15). This was the principal message delivered by His prophets: "Wash the evil from your heart and be saved." "If you had responded to my rebuke, I would have poured out my heart to you and made my thoughts known to you." "Rid yourselves of all the offenses you have committed.... Repent! Turn away from all your offenses" (Jer. 4:14; Prov. 1:23; Ezek. 18:31, 30, NIV).

All are free to choose their own course of action. And so was Ahab. The Lord was exceedingly longsuffering to tolerate Ahab's evil devising as long as He did. In the instance of Ahab's going to battle at Ramoth-Gilead, the Lord did nothing to persuade Ahab *until Ahab had already made up his own mind* to do evil. In fact, the whole scheme was of Ahab's devising. God did not originate the sin. He simply permitted it; and in the Hebrew's vocabulary, what God permitted He was said to *do*. Therefore we read that the Lord moved Ahab's prophets to persuade the wicked king to "attack Ramoth Gilead and be victorious," thus con-



firming the king in his wicked plan. And the Lord, knowing through divine foreknowledge what the outcome would be, saw fit to use this permission to advance His plan, i.e., to allow Ahab to be removed from the scene of action.

We must remember that God is supreme in the affairs of men. All things which happen are things which He allows; therefore He may be said to *do* or *cause* what happens because those events fit into His eternal purpose. He is supreme, and when anyone proves to be steadfastly minded against Him, He has the right and the power to see that such a one's opportunity is given to another who may comply more nearly with the will of the Lord. He does this "so that the living may know that the Most High is sovereign over the kingdoms of men and gives them to anyone he wishes and sets over them the lowliest of men" (Dan. 4:17, NIV). "The authorities that exist have been established by God"; therefore, it is within the Lord's rights to depose whom He will, and raise up whom He will, according to His overall purpose (Rom. 13:1-4, NIV).

And who are we to say that this is wrong? In the words of Paul, "Who are you, O man, to talk back to God?" (Rom. 9:20, NIV). Who are you and I to judge God's actions wrong? "All the peoples of the earth are regarded as nothing. He does as he pleases with the powers of heaven and the peoples of the earth. No one can hold back his hand or say to him: What have you done?" (Dan. 4:35, NIV). He is omnipotent, and whole nations before Him are as "a drop in a bucket," even "worthless and less than nothing" unless they voluntarily place themselves under His authority and become worthy of His protection and blessing.

MM

*"By his faith he is speaking to us still"—Heb. 11 : 4, Moffatt.*

## Words for the Living

Excerpts from the sermons, talks and writings  
of Rev. L. T. Nichols (1844-1912).

*Who would not undergo a little discomfort and pain to save their life? When we make up our mind that trials and tribulation are absolutely necessary to save our life for eternity, then we will be glad to endure.*



*Be silent and let God do the speaking. If we are not silent now we will be obliged to be silent in the future.*



*"The saints shall take the kingdom and possess it forever and ever." In view of this wonderful promise, it would seem we would take hold and work as never before to be among these "saints."*



*When we are working for the Master we are really working for ourselves—we will reap the benefit.*



*God has provided us bread to eat and water to drink. The question is, will we partake of it?*



*If we have the Lord for our light and life, we have nothing and no one to fear.*

*To have God for our friend we must obey Him at all times, wait on Him all the day long.*



*The only thing that will make us of any account before the Lord is to know His Word and do it.*



*There are oceans of knowledge of the wonders of God that will be revealed to the faithful, and there will be one long age in which to explore them. Is it not worth aspiring to?*



*Don't be self-deceived. It is easy to think we are pretty good fellows, when we are living in open rebellion to God.*



*If we do not keep the commandments, in the sight of God we are as sounding brass and a tinkling cymbal—nothing.*



*We should be constantly asking ourselves: Am I becoming clothed in the garment of righteousness?*



*To rejoice in the Lord is to rejoice in all He commands us to do.*





*Thy Kingdom come*

*Thy will be done on Earth*

## These Things Shall Be!

- The Coming of Elijah
- The Second Advent of Christ
- The first Judgment
- Armageddon
- The Millennial Reign of Christ
- The Second Judgment
- Eternity

**T**he world outlook is dark. No sane person can deny it. These are times that try men's souls. We are fast approaching a civilization crisis which no nation on earth can escape. Ours is a planet in peril.

Pick up almost any daily newspaper, and the picture is no less than alarming. Peace and prosperity does not bless the lives of all people everywhere, nor is righteousness the ruling standard of the world. Holiness does not beautify the lives of all. Much as we would like to think everyone honest and fair, we cannot. Oppression, cruelty, selfishness, debauchery, lust, deceit, sedition, strife, hatred and murder blot the record of mankind.





as it is in Heaven.

As for the future of our race, mammoth problems loom. Overpopulation, famine, depletion of natural resources, pollution, the threat of nuclear destruction—all cast dark shadows upon the future of the present system.

And this is not all. Underneath are the deeper facets of our civilization crisis: the crisis of conscience, the crisis of truth, the crisis of spirit. A moral and spiritual dilemma has overtaken our world. It shows itself in a deterioration of initiative, a general spirit of ingratitude, and a widespread setting aside of moral and spiritual values. It shows itself in the breakdown of family life and in unhappy, unstable, insecure and disillusioned children. We see it in corruption at the seat of government. We see it in the corruption of the business world. We see it in the leniency of our courts. We see it in our schools, where law enforcement officials must often be stationed in the halls to protect the innocent. Authority is challenged at every level. Might overpowers right, and morality is viewed as a changing commodity subject to individual interpretation. Small wonder that many a serious-minded person is asking, What is it all coming to?

Witness the general breakdown of morality and moral values, the uncontrolled sale and distribution of illicit drugs, the shocking increase in AIDS and social diseases, the total outlawing of censorship in public communications, the circulation of pornography, and proliferation of illicit business, the horrifying brazenness of organized crime; the prevalence of kidnappings, hijackings, assassinations, bombings, muggings, and assaults; the heightened gambling craze; the increase in lying, cheating, stealing and fraud.

Some believe Western civilization is coming “unglued.” In spite of all the comforts and benefits it has brought into our lives, and all its promise of a bright tomorrow, scientific technology seems destined to crumble in the ashes of a society that has abandoned ethical and religious values. Says a noted religious analyst, “Who is to say that the ‘end of all ends’ may not actually be upon us, that tomorrow may not be the very last day, or tonight the last night?”

These are the words of evangelist Billy Graham: “People ask me sometimes, ‘Are we in the last days?’ and I tell them ‘no.’ I don’t think we’re in the last days; I think we’re in the last *minutes* of this dispensation, or maybe in the last seconds, as God counts time. That Day will come *soon*.”

Malcolm Muggeridge, well-known British author of this century, wrote, “Let me boldly and plainly say that it has long seemed to me clear beyond any shadow of doubt that what is still called Western Civilization is in an advanced stage of decomposition, and that another Dark Age will soon be upon us, if, indeed, it has not already begun.”

What would be the natural outcome, were present trends to continue? Some believe it would be a barbarism dwarfing anything ever known.



#### Pessimistic?

Is this view pessimistic? Are we being pessimists to see human problems without human solution? Many will say yes. But shall we be pollyanna and close our eyes to the facts? Suppose we were at the base of a large volcano which was preparing to erupt. Would we be pessimistic if we believed the warnings and fled?

It is not pessimistic to avoid trouble. It is not pessimistic to heed a warning signal before trouble strikes.

It is not pessimistic to obey the admonition to “Flee out of the midst” of modern-day Babylon, as the Lord commanded through His prophet Jeremiah long ago (Jer. 51:6).

On the contrary, it *is* pessimistic to suggest that all things continue as they have. It *is* pessimistic to build our life goals on the present system, which God has decreed is doomed and perishing. It *is* pessimistic to build on the sand when the dark clouds are gathering in the sky and the rumbling of the approaching storm can already be heard.



## The Significance

What is the significance of the present outlook? Simply this: that it was all forecast by God's spokesmen centuries ago!

Do we realize what this means? Who of us would venture to predict what will happen in the year 3850? Yet this is comparable to the apostle Paul's describing in the first century what we see today. The accuracy of his words is no less than astounding. Listen:

"In the last days there are going to be some difficult times. People will be self-centered and grasping; boastful, arrogant and rude; disobedient to their parents, ungrateful, irreligious; heartless and unappeasable; they will be slanderers, profligates, savages and enemies of everything that is good; they will be treacherous and reckless and demented by pride, preferring their own pleasure to God. They will keep up the outward appearance of religion but will have rejected the inner power of it" (II Tim. 3:1-5, Jerusalem Bible).

How could the apostle Paul foreknow all this? The mighty God of heaven revealed it to him.

## God Knows the Future

The future is as visible to God as the past is to us.

**W**hat is the significance of the present civilization crisis?—that it was forecast by God's spokesmen centuries ago!

Listen to this description of our age written by another of God's prophets:

"The good man is perished out of the earth: and there is none upright among men: they all lie in wait for blood; they hunt every man his brother with a net. That they may do evil with both hands earnestly, the prince asketh, and the judge asketh for a reward; and the great man, he uttereth his mischievous desire: so they wrap it up" (Mic. 7:2-3). Do we not see it fulfilled?

But let us not be dismayed at the outlook. The same God and the same prophets who foresaw the present perplexities foresaw also the next chapter in the history of this planet: *divine intervention*. According to the outline given in the Bible, this divine intervention will begin a thousand years of change and progress which will culminate in the finished Kingdom of God upon earth, a planet wholly glorified, under the rulership of earthborn angels and filled with happy immortals whose rich experiences of life will grow ever more glorious with the ongoing cycles of eternity.

How will this be? The Bible has the answer.

## The Kingdom: Promise, Prophecy and Reality

The Kingdom of God is the plan of God for this earth. But our question is, How do we progress from here to there? Our present state is far from the promised ideal. *How* will the kingdom come?

Human conceptions—and misconceptions—of the subject are many. To some, the kingdom of God is an invisible, spiritual influence in the hearts of men. Others think of it as a utopia that will come through natural development and the evolution of society. But current events raise doubt as to the Kingdom coming in any "natural" way. Two great world wars, the unleashing of nuclear power, the unfathomably horrible potential of mod-

ern military weaponry, and the multiple problems that threaten modern civilization make doubtful any prospect of utopia by natural evolution.

Then there are those who count not on any natural development or progress but on the expansion of the Church which, they believe, is even now the Kingdom.

However, before we accept these or any other human speculations about the Kingdom of God, let us go to the Bible to see what it says about God's plan for our future.

## The Kingdom Prophesied

Men of God through the ages have anticipated the coming of the Kingdom of God. The very soul of the patriarchs and the nation of Israel was rooted in the prospect of the rule of God among men. Enoch knew that "the Lord cometh with ten thousands of his saints" (Jude 14-15). Abraham looked forward to that future land which should be his everlasting possession, to that City whose Builder and Maker is God (Gen. 17:8; Heb. 11:10). Job knew that his Redeemer would "stand at the latter day upon the earth" (Job 19:25).

Israel under the rule of the kings, with temple and throne at Jerusalem, served as an object lesson giving clearer definition to the prophecy of the coming eternal Kingdom of God. A handful of Israelites believed and clung to this hope. Even in Babylon the prophet Daniel had visions which unveiled the realities of that kingdom "which shall never be destroyed," which shall "break in pieces and consume" all kingdoms of men and "stand for ever" (Dan. 2:44).

The promise of the angels at Jesus' ascension injected new vitality into the hope of the New Testament Church: "This same Jesus" which is taken away "shall come again" (Acts 1:11). The apostles were captivated by this hope and went everywhere proclaiming the risen Christ, the Messiah, the coming King.



All Bible prophecy focuses upon the coming King and His worldwide Kingdom. It is the purpose of the creation allegory in Genesis. It is the eternal reality of which the temporal theocracy of Israel was type and shadow. David, Isaiah, Daniel, Zechariah all foresaw its vivid, vibrant reality. It was the primary theme of Jesus' ministry and the message of His apostles.

Finally, the writer of Revelation attempted a written portrayal of the new world he was privileged to glimpse in vision. In that portrayal is fullness of ineffable joy. Sorrow, pain, evil, death have vanished. There is joy beyond the possibilities of mortal vocabulary to describe. No gem or precious stone can rival its brightness, nor is there any sun whose light does not pale beside its glory. This kingdom shall endure: "And they shall reign for ever and ever" (Rev. 22:5). It is the Kingdom of God triumphant and eternal at history's end.

And, best of all, it is no fanciful tale. It is all true; it is all divine prophecy sealed by the angel of the King Himself: "These words are true and faithful."

### Prophecy in the Lord's Prayer

Such is to be the Kingdom for which Jesus taught His disciples and all succeeding generations to pray: "Thy Kingdom come. Thy will be done in earth as it is in heaven."

"Thy will be done in earth, as it is in heaven." If the Kingdom has come, as some suggest, then we are witnessing a state of affairs parallel to those existing in heaven. The absurdity of this leads to an obvious fact: The kingdom is yet future.

The Lord's Prayer goes further to tell who shall compose the Kingdom: those who will do God's will as it is done in heaven. Can we say that any such Kingdom exists now where men conduct themselves as the angels of heaven?

Yet, this is what we can expect

on earth when the Kingdom has come. As His will is done in heaven, so it shall be on earth *when the Kingdom comes*.

At once the subject of the Kingdom becomes more than fanciful dreaming of a utopian world. It becomes a summons, a challenge to moral regeneration now.

### Jesus and the Kingdom

Jesus had much to say about the Kingdom. In fact, it was the very heart of His message. The phrase "the kingdom of heaven," or "the kingdom of God" occurs over 100 times in the four books which record His teachings.

During His brief ministry among men, Jesus went throughout all the cities and villages teaching and preaching the glad tidings of the Kingdom, and He commanded His disciples to do likewise. We read in Matthew 4:23: "And Jesus went about all Galilee, teaching in their synagogues, and preaching the gospel of the kingdom." From Luke 8:1 we learn that Jesus "went throughout every city and village, preaching and showing the glad tidings of the kingdom of God." Later He sent the twelve on a like mission: "Then he called his twelve disciples together, and...sent them to preach the kingdom of God..." (Luke 9:1-2).

### The Kingdom for Whom?

Note in Jesus' first recorded sermon the simplicity of His gospel and its direct appeal for nobility of character. Seven times in one discourse He referred to the Kingdom. It was for the poor in spirit, those who recognized their own deficiency and sensed their spiritual need. Again, the Kingdom was for those who were willing to endure persecution for righteousness' sake. No "fair weather" Christians these but men and women hardy enough to maintain righteousness though it involve intense pain and suffering. Again,

**T**he future  
is as visible  
to God as the  
past is to us.

the Kingdom was for those whose action matched their teaching, whose life was equivalent to their profession, whose example paralleled their precept (Matt. 5: 19-20). Alas for the scribe and Pharisee! Alas, for all who might say and do not (Matt 7:21)!

What value must the would-be entrant place upon it, according to Jesus' parable? He must value it as the pearl of great price, as a treasure hid in a field which, to obtain, he will gladly sell every other possession (Matt. 13: 45-46). The call of the Kingdom is not to immediate honor or victory, but to self-denial and discipline. Wealth will get no one into it; indeed, wealth has kept many a man out (Mark 10:17-25). External rectitude is no ticket of admission. The Kingdom belongs, in the final analysis, to those who have stripped themselves of all self-will and all pride and have become the obedient children of God.

(Next Issue: *The Kingdom of God,  
A Real Kingdom*)

**A**ll Bible  
prophecy  
focuses upon  
the coming King and  
His worldwide  
Kingdom.





*In 1902, a topaz stone for the papal crown was engraved with the image of Christ at the Last Supper—at a cost of \$80,000 worth of diamond dust.*

# Engraving the Image of Christ

*by L. T. Nichols, preached in October, 1902*

**T**he time of our Master's coming is drawing near, the greatest, grandest time that ever was. And are we getting ready for it?

I was reading today of Pope Leo. Some of his people have purchased the most glorious topaz stone, and an Italian engraver has been working on it, engraving the picture of Jesus distributing the bread and wine at the Last Supper. It has required \$80,000.00 worth of diamond dust to engrave this picture, besides ten years of hard labor, and it is soon to be presented to Pope Leo, to be placed in his crown.

I thought of the testimony that says we are living stones, and how much greater and more diligent is our work, to engrave the image of Christ on our lives. The difficulty is, we do not like to submit to the engraving process; we do not like to have the rough spots taken off. But this is the only means by which we can have the image of Christ upon us, the only way we can have His character so engraven in us that we and all others—and God Himself—can behold it.

To do this work will cost us time, but the trouble is, we engrave and then scratch it out and spoil it. If they could take such care for something in this world, how we should exercise the utmost care in engraving the spiritual image!

There are to be judges inspecting the engraving on the topaz stone for Pope Leo, and it must pass inspection to see that every line is correct. Just so will our engraving have to pass inspection. Not one mistake will pass. When we realize this, we should not let a day pass that we cannot see that we have accomplished something, that we have become kinder and better. We must see each day something done.

All this world cannot equal the glory we will receive in just a thousand

**We must engrave Christ's moral image upon our hearts now, His acts, His conduct, His feelings**



years; but to think that this glory will roll on and on—oh, we should be so anxious that it would cause us to so work that we could actually see each day some progress, that we could say, “I am really going to get the job done,” so that we all could see some pay ahead. If a brother were building a chimney and he put it up one day and pulled it down the next, it would finally be too late to get the work done. So with us, if we do some good work one day and the next day pull it down, no wonder we get discouraged. The only thing to give us courage is to go to work and see that we have done something for our Master, and then we will have every reason to be encouraged.

Beloved brethren, we *must* do this engraving, if it takes \$80,000.00 worth of diamond dust. Engrave that picture of Christ at the Last Supper. How it struck me! Such careful, minute work; such care and energy and zeal it requires. If not careful, brethren, the time will pass and we will not have our engraving done.

This image of Jesus takes in a great many features, and if we do not engrave it all now, God will never stamp our work with approval.

It is a great consolation to me to realize that we are living right down in the era of the coming of our Lord from heaven! I look around and see those who are getting ready. And the question is: What will be our standing in that day? Where will we be? Will our engraving be ready to pass inspection?

May these words of life make an impression, a deep and lasting impression, that we may be enabled to engrave more carefully. May we realize that His image is His acts, His conduct, His feelings. We have to engrave His moral image upon us now, and that image must be perfect.

May the Lord help us in this work. MM

## “Awake, Awake”

- Awake* to detect our every sin and wrong doing;
  - Awake* to the All-seeing Eye of the great Eternal who knows our every thought, motive and feeling;
  - Awake* to the little time remaining of our day of probation;
  - Awake* and realize the trying tasks we dislike the most are the best probers we could possibly have;
  - Awake* to know it will take untiring effort on our part to cease forever to have confidence in the flesh;
  - Awake* to change completely our tastes and relationships from human to divine standards;
  - Awake* to watch self as we should; to recognize the dangers of our own particular position, to see ourselves as God sees us.
- “*Awake* to righteousness, and sin not” (1 Cor. 15:34).



*Martha*

or

*Mary?*



*Martha in the kitchen, serving with her hands;  
Occupied for Jesus, with her pots and pans.  
Loving Him, yet fevered, burdened to the brim,  
Careful, troubled Martha, occupied for Him.*

*Mary on the footstool, eyes upon her Lord;  
Occupied with Jesus, drinking in His word.  
This one thing was needful, all else strangely dim;  
Loving, resting Mary, occupied with Him.*

*So may we like Mary, choose the better part;  
Resting in His presence, hands and feet and heart;  
Drinking in His wisdom, strengthened by His grace,  
Learning of His wisdom, eyes upon His face.*

*Ready, always ready, spirit, will, and nerve;  
Mary's heart to worship, Martha's hand to serve;  
This the rightful order, as our lamps we trim,  
Occupied with Jesus, occupied for Him.*

—Selected



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# Why

## Did God Make Man the Way He Is?

**W**hy did God fashion so potentially harmful a creature as man?

A question anyone might ask: Why? Man is greedy, selfish, arrogant, hateful; or he is generous, kindly, humble and compassionate. Man is energetic, enterprising, forward-looking; or he is lazy, cynical and shortsighted. Why did God make man the way he is?

The question is pertinent in these days when the news media is crammed with all sorts of heinous crimes. Especially does it concern those not familiar with the plan of God. Why did God do it this way, when so many apparently innocent victims must continually suffer for the sins of others?

The answer depends on the spirit that motivates the question. One might feel almost like criticizing the God who would be so unwise as to set loose upon His fair earth such a creation as man has proved himself to be. Man has too much potential which he has used for inglorious ends; too much brainpower which he has spent devising his own destruction. Why did God fashion so potentially harmful a creature as man?

The words of the apostle Paul seem appropriate: "Who art thou that replest against God? Shall the thing formed say to him that formed it, Why hast thou made me thus?" (Rom. 9:20).

Paul's reply is direct. Who are we to place ourselves on a par with God and criticize His works? Who are we to say what He should or should not have done?

Or one unfamiliar with God's ways might ask in a humble, inquiring spirit why God should have made man the way he is. For our answer we would search deeper into the Word of God, the Book which God has left for man's instruction and guidance.

Man's finite mind falls far short of being able to comprehend the infinite wisdom of God. But we can learn something of His purposes by turning to His Word. The prophet Isaiah, inspired of God, proclaimed:



"Lift up your eyes on high, and behold who hath created these things, that bringeth out their host by number: he calleth them all by names by the greatness of his might, for that he is strong in power; not one faileth. Hast thou not known? hast thou not heard, that the everlasting God, the Lord, the Creator of the ends of the earth, fainteth not, neither is weary? there is no searching of his understanding" (Isa. 40:26, 28).

Isaiah spoke again: "For thus saith the Lord that created the heavens; God himself that formed the earth and made it; he hath established it, he created it not in vain, he formed it to be inhabited" (Isa. 45:18).

These passages of Scripture help us to expand our understanding of the manifold wisdom and power of God. They tell us that He has countless inhabited worlds on high, and that it is all being done *according to His eternal purpose*, that the creation and inhabiting of our earth was according to this same great purpose.

By whom should the earth be inhabited? At present it is filled with a diversity of human creatures, each free to choose his own course in life and glorify himself or his Creator. But the Creator had larger purposes in mind. Early in the history of God's people He inspired Moses to write: "But as truly as I live, all the earth shall be filled with the glory of the Lord" (Num. 14:21). And what is God's glory? God's glory that will fill the earth is His people. Isaiah refers to them as those who are precious in the sight of God (43:4) and "called by [His] name" and "created for [His] glory" (43:7). He says also, speaking for God, "I will place salvation in Zion for Israel my glory" (46:13).

This "Israel" is all who have become indeed His chosen people, Jews inwardly, as defined in Romans 2: 28-29: "For he is not a Jew, which is one outwardly; neither is that circumcision, which is outward in the flesh; but he is a Jew, which is one inwardly;

and circumcision is that of the heart, ...whose praise is not of men, but of God." They are true soldiers of God, precious in His sight, those whom God "hath set apart...for himself" (Ps. 4:3), those who are godly. And seven times in Psalm 37 we are told that these special people, the righteous, shall be the inheritors of the earth.

If God's special interest is only in the righteous, His "precious" ones whom He will glorify, why did God create the multitudes who care nothing about their Creator? Why did He not limit His creation to those whom He foreknew would be godly, those who would ultimately become valuable to Him?

Surely God could have done just that. He could have created all righteous by nature and incapable of sinning. But such was not His plan. God did not purpose to make us like machines, but rather as free moral agents, free to choose our own destiny. God created us with an intelligence capable of learning to discern between good and evil. God created us with a conscience which could be educated to discern between that which He loves and that which He abhors.

At the same time, God established laws of nature by which His creation could be propagated. Such a plan was necessary if He was to have men free to serve Him or reject Him. To all He gives this present life, with opportunity for *more* life extended to everyone who chooses to live by His code of laws. But it was never God's principle to force humankind to obey Him. God's immutable arrangement has always been and still is a matter of choice: "Obey and live, disobey and die." The Bible is God's written revelation of these two choices available to men, and the results of each choice.

Throughout the Scriptures these two ways are frequently referred to, one leading to eternal joy and happiness, and the other to eternal oblivion. God's offer of a blessing, "If ye obey

## *Why* are we free to do as we please?

**1: Because all, including the creating and populating of our earth, is being done *according to His eternal purpose*.**

**2: Because He wants each person to be free to choose his own course in life, and glorify either himself or his Creator.**

**3: Because God created us with a conscience which can be educated to discern between that which He loves and that which He abhors.**

**4: Because He is not only a God of love and mercy, but also a God of judgment and retribution.**

**5: Because He wanted those who are really interested in something beyond this life to prove their desire by meeting His qualifications.**

the commandments of the Lord your God,...and a curse, if ye will not obey" (Deut. 11:27-28), still holds. But, He urges, "choose life, that both thou and thy seed may live."

God has created us capable of sinning, if that is our choice; but He has also given us the means whereby we can raise ourselves from our naturally sinful condition and make ourselves acceptable in the sight of God. God's promise is found in Ezekiel 18:21, "If the wicked will turn from all his sins that he hath committed, and keep all my statutes, and do that which is lawful and right, he shall surely live, he shall not die."

Many people like to think of God as  
(Continued on page 25)





## Part 1

### *Introducing the Great Apostle*

*The following story pictures the closing years and hours of the life of Paul the apostle.*

*As the story opens, the Apostle is not present, but we see the impact of his life on his contemporaries, along with the problems and challenges confronting the new faith Christianity.*

Outside, a late winter storm lashed the countryside. In the glare of the lightning, the Via Appia gleamed black, rain-swept and deserted. In the huddle of buildings which marked the crossroads known as The Three Taverns, only a few faint lights shone murkily through the downpour. It was no night for man or beast to be abroad.

But in this common room of Milo's Tavern, there was warmth and good cheer. A fire crackled on the hearth, and there was the homelike smell of food and wood smoke. Festoons of drying red peppers, flanked by strings of onions and fat sausages hung from the time-blackened beams of the ceiling. In the dim light of the bronze lamps the guests relaxed after a satisfying supper, at peace with the world. It was a cosmopolitan little group of travelers, such as chance might bring together on any night at any wayside inn. Milo, the genial landlord, was bustling about, making sure his guests' comfort.

In the chimney corner, wrapped in a voluminous brown cloak, sat Arbaces, a grizzled sea-captain, bound for Rome after a tour of duty. Opposite him was an army officer, a massive, clean-cut centurion in the livery of the Fifth Legion. His name, he said, was Manlius; he was outward bound, having been transferred to Syria.

At a small table at the left sat a young Roman, introduced as Carbo, a salesman for a pottery firm. According to the host's pleasantry, he had "been everywhere, seen everything, and knows most everything." Carbo, busily padding his expense account, did not deny it.

On the other side of the room, close to a lamp, a richly dressed, middle-aged Greek gentleman was trying—not too successfully—to read. Eventually he gave it up, and drew nearer the fire to join the captain and the centurion. He was Philistus of Alexandria, a building contractor seeking business in the wake of Nero's great fire.

The outside door opened, admitting Curio, a youthful porter carrying an armload of wood.

"Whew! That storm out there!" he interjected. "It's getting worse by the minute. Don't know what will be left of us by night if this keeps up."

"Well, Captain," said Philistus to Arbaces, "you've probably seen a lot of rough weather in your time. Worse storms than this, probably."

The captain laughed, a short, scornful laugh. "This isn't a beginning. Not even a beginning. We have them bigger and better at sea."

Carbo looked up from his tablets.

"What was the worst storm you ever weathered, Captain?"

"The worst storm I ever saw was the one we *didn't* weather."

"This sounds like a shipwreck story."

The captain needed no urging; he arose and took the floor immediately.

"That's what it is, unfortunately. That was two years ago—no, two and a half, to be exact. I was



master of the *Silver Trumpet* then."

"The *Silver Trumpet*?" Philistus broke in. "Why, I used to travel in her, twelve, fifteen years ago. Cleonymus was her captain then."

"Yes, I knew him well; a good sailor."

"I heard she was lost, but I never knew the details. So you were her master! Well! It's a small world!"

"Don't interrupt the man," chided Manlius, pleasantly. "We want the story."

"Well, sir, it was one of those trips where everything went wrong—everything. We got a late start, but the owners wanted to get one more cargo through before winter. One thing after another delayed us. We had a full load of wheat and a big list of passengers, and then at Myra—that's a little seaport in Lydia—we got orders to take on a lot of prisoners and their guards, out of Syria to Rome. It really crowded the old tub, believe me!—276 people on board, besides cargo.

"Well, the bad luck followed us all the way to Crete, and by that time I knew we'd never make it until spring, so we looked for winter quarters. It's no small matter to be responsible for that many people for three months, and I was really worried. We were at Fair Havens, which wasn't too good a harbor and the town was dirty and provisions hard to get, so I wanted to get to Phenice if I could."

The contractor and the salesman were wryly sympathetic; both had been to Fair Havens.

"Anyway, I was talking it over with my officers and Julius, the centurion—maybe you know him, Manlius."

"Julius? There are forty thousand men named Julius in the Roman army. What's his last name?"

"Didianus, as I remember. He was of the 24th Legion—an old-timer."

"Julius Didianus? Why, he's an old comrade of mine—we trained together and served together in Gaul. But go on with the story."

"All right, you asked for it—you got me started. Well, as we were debating the question of moving on, up steps one of the prisoners—a Jew—named Paul. He was a sort of privileged character; Julius had taken a liking to him and he had the run of the ship."

At the mention of the name, the landlord started visibly. Now he spoke.

"Paul, did you say?"

"Yes, what about him?"

"Nothing. I'll tell my story later. Go ahead."

"This Paul, without being asked, stepped up and told us we'd better stay, or we might lose the ship, and our lives too."

"You liked that, I suppose?" was Carbo's dry comment.

"Frankly, I didn't. I thought, Who are you, you dry-land sailor, trying to tell me how to run my ship? But to get ahead of my story, before we were through I was very glad to have his help. *There was a man.*

"Well, we didn't listen to him. When we got a favorable wind we tried to crawl up the coast to Phenice, when with no warning at all it swung round and a roaring northeaster drove us out to sea. I've seen storms and I've seen storms, but never before nor since did I see a storm that lasted for fifteen days without a break."

"Did you know where you were?" asked Philistus.

"No-o-o! After two days we were hopelessly lost, and lucky to be right side up. No sun, no stars, nothing but rain and wind that would blow the hair off your head."

He ran his hand over his bald pate, then stared in pained surprise at the guffaw which arose, and a mocking "So-o-o!" from Carbo.

The speaker continued.

"We were on watch all the time, sleeping when we couldn't help it and eating what we could grab—raw wheat mostly. Nearly everybody was seasick—oh dear, oh dear, what a mess! We had given up hope and were just

working the ship from force of habit. But that man Paul, he was the coolest man on board and the only cheerful one."

Curio leaned on his broom. "Did he say, I told you so?"

"Yes, he did. And he had a right to. But he told us to cheer up, because the God he served had told him that we would all be saved, although the ship would be lost. Somehow that made us feel a lot better. It didn't make sense, coming from a prisoner, but—you know how it is—a drowning man clutches at a straw.

"Well, one night shortly after he told us that, we heard breakers, so we anchored until morning. We were on a strange coast, but there was a sheltered bay just ahead. We almost made it, too, but unfortunately there was a bar we couldn't see, and we couldn't change our minds once we started. We piled up, and the old *Silver Trumpet* went to pieces in less than an hour."

"So this Paul was right about the ship." Milo's tone was that of a man impressed but not at all surprised.

"He was, and he was right about our lives being saved, too. We didn't lose a man. Not one. We were wet and cold and full of salt water, but we were all alive. But the remarkable part of the whole thing was how this Paul came to the top in the emergency. Before it was over he was giving orders to me, and to Julius, and the soldiers; in fact, he was the captain: and I was just as well pleased. I couldn't have done as well. If not for him, I probably wouldn't be alive today."

The tale was ended; the captain sat down. Manlius nodded understandingly.

"Well, you know the old saying—you can't keep a good man down. I've seen it a thousand times—it's the emergencies that separate the men from the boys."

"He was a man, all right. He's got something most men don't have. He's



got judgment; he's got wisdom; he's got leadership. You can't help liking him, and admiring him, and looking up to him. At least I couldn't."

"What was he in for?" Curio asked.

"In?"

"Yes, in prison."

"Oh! why, some religious trouble in Jerusalem—a riot or something, and the leaders of the Jews preferred charges against him. He figured he couldn't get a fair trial there, so he appealed to Caesar."

"He must be a citizen, then," Philistinus observed.

"He is—born free."

"I thought you said he was a Jew," Carbo objected.

"That's right—born a high-caste Jew and a leader among them, but now he's become a leader of the Christians. That's why the Jews turned against him."

The salesman's voice was heavy with cynical scorn.

"Christians! Bah! that little insignificant tribe of fanatics and slaves and laborers. Who ever heard of *them*?"

"I have," the captain shot back. "Paul is no slave. And he is well educated. I don't know too much about his religion; he used to talk it to us a good deal, but it was mostly over my old thick head. But I know a good man when I see one, and he's a good man. He's founded Christian churches all over Asia and Greece, and they are growing. They're even in Rome—a lot of them."

"What gods does he worship?" asked Philistinus.

"He says there is only one God—the same God the Jews claim to believe in, but he's got a different slant. The Jews are pretty good people, too some of them—but they don't know what they want or where they're going. Paul knows. Yes sir, he can tell you all about it. And pretty soon you begin to believe him; it all sounds so reasonable."

"Aw, nonsense!" sneered Carbo. "All religions are alike. Maybe the

gods exist, maybe not. But one thing is sure, the priests exist and they make a good thing out of it. They're all in it for the money—they'll take it from anybody. This Paul—he's probably a good sort of man, as you say—a good salesman. He could probably outsell me. But he's no different from any other priest. Religion is his racket, just like pottery is mine."

Curio picked up the challenge. He thoroughly enjoyed feuding with this "city slicker." "You're sure about that, are you?"

"Why, certainly! I don't believe—"

"You don't believe in nothin', do you?"

"Not very much—nothing but what I see, and not all of that. I've been around, and I've learned to be on my guard."

"Well, my young friend," said the captain, "if you'd seen what I have you'd *have* to believe some things."

"What do you mean, Captain?" Philistinus asked.

"Well, to get back to the wreck of the *Silver Trumpet*—when we got ashore we found we were on Malta. I'd been there, of course, but on the other side of the island. The natives helped us ashore and built a big fire to dry us out. Paul was picking up sticks to help, when a deadly viper bit him on the hand. The people all expected to see him turn black in the face and fall down dead, but he just shook the snake off into the fire and went on about his business, as though it was one of Milo's pet mosquitoes."

"So, my skeptical friend, what would you have said to that?"

"Garter snake, probably." Carbo was unruffled; he too was enjoying this.

"No such thing." The captain was annoyed. "I know a viper when I see one. We had them by the hundreds where I was born and raised. Then the next day we went to call on the governor of the island—matter of courtesy and business, you know—and Paul went along, naturally. The gov-

ernor's father was very sick—at the point of death. Paul went in to him and prayed and laid his hands on him, and the old gentleman got up and walked, as well as ever. *That* was 'eye-see,' not hearsay. What about it, Mister Salesman?"

"Probably he was just ready to get better. It has happened lots of times."

"All that winter they were bringing sick people to Paul from all over the island, and he never failed to heal them."

"Mass hysteria!"

"You think so?"

"Certainly. There are lots of clever fakers in the world. It's a very interesting story, but it will take more than a sailor's yarn to convince me."

There was a minor uproar. Furious at the salesman's persistent "needling," Arbaces leaped to his feet and turned on the young man.

"Are you calling me a liar, young man?" he roared.

A table and a couple of chairs overturned with a crash as Carbo backed away, still cool, collected, highly pleased with the success of his sarcasm.

"Not at all, Captain, not at all. If I've offended you, I apologize." He extended his hand, which the sailor ignored. "It's just one of those things I'd have to see to believe."

"Would you believe if you saw?" Milo put in.

"Well...that depends....Say, this is quite a storm we're having tonight, isn't it?...Outside—I mean."

*(Continued Next Issue)*

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**Oh! let us watch, and fight, and pray  
The battle ne'er give o'er,  
Renew it boldly day by day  
And help Divine implore.**

**Oh! brethren, let us each one live  
To please our God on high  
So we can dwell forevermore  
In Kingdom now so nigh!**



## Why?

(Continued from page 21)

only a God of mercy; but His mercy is conditional and selective. It is boundless, but it is "from everlasting to everlasting upon them that fear him,...to such as keep his covenant, and to those that remember his commandments, to do them" (Ps. 103:17-18). God's Word makes crystal clear the fact that He is not only a God of love and mercy, but also a God of judgment and retribution (Rom. 11:22). The day is coming when "the wicked shall be cut off from the earth, and the transgressors shall be rooted out of it" (Prov. 2:22), when He "will early destroy all the wicked of the land; that I may cut off all wicked doers from the city of the Lord" (Ps. 101:8). But those that are "willing and obedient" shall "eat the good of the land" (Isa. 1:19-20).

Why did God make man the way he did? So that those who are really interested in something beyond this life might have full and free opportunity to seek—and find—that better, even *eternal* life. The promise is, "Ye shall seek me, and find me, when ye shall search for me with all your heart" (Jer. 29:13).

Such seeking and searching reveals what we must do to prepare for that better life. It also separates one from another. It reveals the separation between those who say to God, "Depart from us; for we desire not the knowledge of thy ways. What is the Almighty, that we should serve him? and what profit should we have, if we pray unto him?" (Job 21:14-15); and those who answer as did Joshua, "As for me and my house, we will serve the Lord" (Joshua 24:15).

MM

*'Tis wise to flee when tempted—  
A fool is one who'd stay;  
For those who toy with evil  
Soon learn it doesn't pay.*

## A New Day!

**L**ord, you have granted me a new day all spotless and clean. There is so much I can do during this day, so many challenges to meet, so many pitfalls to avoid.

Lord, help me to use this day wisely. Make me loving, but most of all to show my love to Thee by keeping my life pure and clean from sin. Let me be joyful in Thee and Thy Word. Let me be patient, even when the pressures of the day might press me to become impatient. Let me be meek where haughtiness might invite me to stain this clean, new day.

Help me in all to be faithful to Thee. When temptation appears, help me to be diligent, always on the alert so that I may keep my day bright and shiny.

When I retire tonight, help me to look back over my day objectively, see it as it really was, see where I stumbled and soiled my bright, clean day, where I can do better tomorrow.

And Lord, as I turn from each transgression, forgive me, and if it pleases Thee, give me another bright new day tomorrow in which I can do still better. Amen.

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## Peace, Perfect Peace

(Continued from page 11)

What will it matter? If it is an external situation, it will be forgotten far short of eternity. And if it is our own wayward disposition that is causing the disturbance, then we must give battle and win, for it will not be allowed in eternity.

Then we can have peace, peace now, and peace in the future—because “the fruit of righteousness is sown in peace” (Jas. 3:18). And “the work of righteousness shall be peace; and the effect of righteousness quietness and assurance forever” (Isa. 32:17–18).

Every step we take toward being or doing right is a step toward peace, toward God, toward life! We might say that peace is the twin sister of righteousness, where one goes the other will always be found. Step by step, mile after mile down the highway to life, they go hand in hand. They live together, work together, strive together, and shall ultimately arrive together.

We are living in momentous days. Only a step are we from the culmination of the hopes and dreams of all the years. And if only we may be “found of him in peace, without spot and blameless,” how indescribably happy we shall be!

Oh let us try harder to walk in peace, whatever comes. In the words of the song,

*Let us walk to the Kingdom in peace, come along,  
Let us walk to the Kingdom in peace,  
If Jesus Himself be our leader, then,  
We will walk to the Kingdom in peace.*

“And the peace of God, which passeth all understanding, shall keep your hearts and minds through Christ Jesus” (Phil. 4:7). MM

## Letters

### On Being Ready

Patience means using our knowledge of the Bible to control our actions on a busy day. It should apply at all times in all places, to anyone, anywhere. A person could be an invalid, sitting in a rocking chair at home, and still find it hard to keep his or her patience. We shall always need that rule to keep us straight. James tells us about our tongue, “Even so the tongue is a little member, and boasteth great things, behold how great a matter a little fire kindleth!” (James 3:5).

In the Living Bible, Gal. 5:19–22 reads: “When you follow your own wrong inclinations your lives will produce these evil results: impure thoughts, eagerness for lustful pleasure, idolatry, spiritism hatred and fighting, jealousy and anger, constant effort to get the best for yourself, complaints, and criticisms, the feeling that everyone else is wrong except those in your own little group, and there will be wrong doctrine, envy, murder, drunkenness, wild parties, and all that sort of thing. Let me tell you again as I have before, that anyone living that sort of life will not inherit the Kingdom of God...If we’re trying to please God we won’t need to look for honor and popularity, which lead to jealousy and hard feelings.”

All signs point to the soon coming of Elijah. But what a sad day it will be if we aren’t ready.

Colorado

W. P.

### Faith and Works Necessary

As Christian workers in the cause of Christ and the gospel message, we must meet the same standards as did Paul and Titus. We must first discipline ourselves and have the courage to stand up for our convictions in the face of opposition. We would do well to keep the sound advice and exhortation in remembrance which Paul gave to Titus: “In all things showing thyself a pattern of good works: in doctrine showing uncorrupt-

ness, gravity, sincerity, sound speech that cannot be condemned” (Titus 2:7–8).

Faith must be the dominating factor in our lives and in all our thoughts, in which we clearly declare our hope and salvation in Christ Jesus. It is not enough to talk about what a Christian should be, we must show others by our example.

May we ever strive to be living epistles of the Christ life in our daily walk in the narrow way.

The words of the Prophet are sound advice to follow: “I will stand upon my watch and set me upon the tower and will watch to see what he will say unto me and what I shall answer when I am reproved” (Hab. 2:1). How much progress we would make if we always applied this in our lives.

Let us not hesitate as those who put off doing necessary things till another day, for we know only too well that tomorrow may never come for us and all will be lost through delay.

Australia

J. B.

### Keep Pressing On

Our most important work now is to make ourselves over into a new creature by overcoming evil with good. We realize this is no small or easy task, but nevertheless can be accomplished by us through faith and patience.

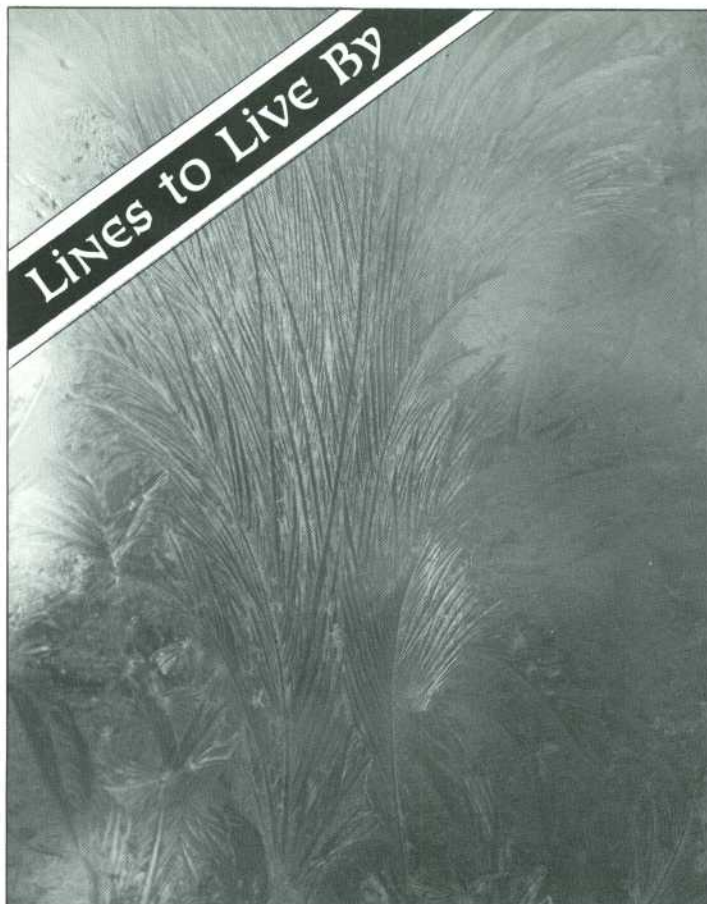
Let us take up our cross of self-denial, daily crucifying the flesh with its affections and lusts. And may we be strong and of a good courage to keep pressing on in the strait and narrow way, that we, God’s building, may be worthy to share in the glories of that magnificent Day which our kind Heavenly Father has promised to give the faithful.

O, let us keep in mind the wonderful reward for such a brief preparation! Help us to strive with all our mind, might and strength to finish our work while we still have time.

Idaho

R. B.





*You gave to someone a bright,  
pleasant smile,  
And you thought no more about it;  
Yet it cheered a soul very near despair  
Who might have been wrecked  
without it.*

Worldly values are a poor investment  
—they never pay what they promise.

*A godly talk does not always imply  
a godly walk.*

A grudge is too heavy a load for  
anyone to carry.

*When you hear an evil report about  
anyone, halve and quarter it, and  
then say nothing about the rest.*

We best glorify God...  
when we grow most like Him;  
when we act most for His glory;  
when a true spirit of sanctity, justice, meekness, patience, runs  
through all our actions;  
when we so live in the world as to belong to God and not to the world;  
when there is no spot, stain, or shadow of evil in our lives;  
when we are so captivated by the sense of the Divine loveliness and  
goodness that we endeavor to be like Him in every particular and  
conform ourselves, as much as possible, to Him.

*A disappointment, a contradiction, a harsh word, an annoyance, a wrong  
received and endured without complaint, is worth more than a long prayer;  
and we do not lose time if we bear it with gentleness and patience.*

Holiness does not consist in doing uncommon things, but in doing com-  
mon things in an uncommon way, with a pure heart.



# *The Things I Seek*

*There are a few things I would pray for, Lord,  
a few small things Your truth alone can give:  
the power to leave unsaid the bitter words,  
the strength to say the kind words,  
and to live each day in fear of God  
and not for praise of man;  
the will to love the good, and evil hate;  
the courage to go on and try again when  
I have failed;  
the patience, Lord, to wait;  
the wisdom to see clearly and to cling to simple  
truth though every prospect dim;  
the faith to make a dream a living thing;  
the loyalty of heart to follow You;  
a gentleness of soul;  
a spirit meek;  
a noble life.*

*These are the things I seek. AMEN.*