



Megiddo Message

1915-1984

The Abib Message

—At Three Score and Ten—

March, 1985

At Three Score and Ten—

Why Not Yet?

FOR SEVENTY years now the Message has been proclaiming the imminent return of Christ. For seventy years it has been saying, "The Bridegroom is coming. Prepare to meet him."

Now, after seventy years of unfulfillment, how do we feel? Are we disappointed?

NO.

Are we discouraged?

NO.

Are we wondering if our fathers and mothers in the faith were mistaken in expecting Christ in our time?

NO.

Maybe the Lord has changed His plans?

NO.

Maybe we should modify our position to something like, "It seems likely that Christ may come in our time?"

Again the answer is NO, *a thousand times NO!*

Our position has not changed, and it will not. At three score and ten we take precisely the same stand that was taken by our predecessors in the faith. We repeat it today as emphatically as ever they said it: "*The Lord is coming soon—prepare to meet Him.*" What looks to us like a seventy year delay only means that the great Day is seventy years nearer!

But the inevitable "Why?" remains. Why not yet? Why hasn't Christ come? If our faith is well founded and our confidence sure, why hasn't He come? Why not yet?

First, *Christ has not yet come because God's time has not yet expired.*

When the time is right, Christ *will* come. "When the fulness of time had come" God sent Christ the first time (Gal. 4:4). And can we not trust Him to act in such a timely manner again? But in the meantime, He being from eternity to eternity and we being creatures of a moment, so to speak, can't we allow that His conception of time may be very different from our own? What is a period of seventy years on His time-scale, He to whom a thousand years "are but as yesterday when it is past, and as a watch in the night"?

Second, *Christ has not yet come because God's mercy surpasses anything we might have imagined.*

The door of opportunity is still open. This means that He is still waiting for a few members of His eternal family to complete their work. And should we not be grateful? Who among us would have had a chance if Christ had come when our forebears expected Him?

Yes, thank God for the seeming delay!

Were those who were preaching the imminent return of Christ 70 and more years ago wrong in doing it? No, they were not wrong. If they had not felt and preached its imminence when they did, they would not have been moved to get ready for it.

God knows our need. He knows the complacency that naturally plagues us, and our human tendency to put off—and might this not be one reason He allowed the Day to be expected in advance? Had the full length of time been known a century ago, isn't it possible that those of that generation, being human like ourselves, might not have been impelled to go ahead and accomplish the work *they* were called to do, to prepare *themselves* for the coming of the Lord?

Furthermore, had the generations before us taken lightly so great a promise as that of the Second Advent of Christ and put "far away" the Day of the Lord, had they not felt the urgency of this truth, would they not have been showing disrespect to the Author of the plan? Can't we believe that God means us to take Him seriously *whenever* He speaks—even though we are not told all the details we might like to know? And if, on the basis of limited knowledge, we make a misjudgment, will God condemn us for this? Were any people ever condemned for serving Him *too early* or preparing *too soon* for what He predicted?

No, the fact that the great Day of the Lord has tarried longer than we anticipated means only that it is that much nearer now. Prophecy upon prophecy has been fulfilled, telling us that these are the "times and seasons" of the end of the age. It has not yet come, but it *IS* coming.

So may the consuming question with us be, What can I do to increase my chances of being accepted when the great Day comes? For lo, it *will* come.

"And every man that hath this hope in him purifieth himself, even as he [Christ] is pure" (I John 3:3). MM

At Three Score and Ten

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 of all things, all men, and all life.

We believe

—in the Bible as containing the genuine revelation of God and His purposes for men, and as being our only source of divine knowledge today.

We believe

—in Christ the Son of God and our Perfect Example, who was born of a Virgin, ministered among men, was crucified, resurrected, and taken to heaven, and who shall shortly return to be king of the whole earth.

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 all mankind as providing the nucleus from which a superior, God-honoring people shall be chosen to receive the blessings of immortal life.

We believe

—in ourselves as capable of fulfilling the demands and disciplines given us in the law of God, thus perfecting that high quality of character which God has promised to reward with life everlasting in His heavenly Kingdom on earth.

We believe

—in the promise of God, that a new age is coming—is near—when the earth will 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

NAS—New American Standard

RSV—Revised Standard Version

TLB—The Living Bible

TEV—Today's English Version

JB—The Jerusalem Bible, Reader's Edition

Phillips—The New Testament in Modern English

Berkeley—The Modern Language New Testament

Weymouth—The New Testament in Modern Speech

Moffatt—The Bible, A New Translation

Williams—The New Testament, A Translation in the Language of the People

Rotherham—The Emphasized Old Testament

The use of selected references from various versions of the Bible does not necessarily imply publisher endorsement of the versions in their entirety.

As the *Message* reaches its seventieth anniversary with this Abib issue, it seems appropriate that we look back and see from whence we have come.

At the same time we look ahead, for the message of the *Message* is ever forward-looking, securely founded in the unerring Word of the Lord. Seventy years have only made our hope shine with greater brilliance, in a world that becomes more and more a world without hope and without God.

What should be our attitude as we watch the continual deteriorating of the world picture?

This question was asked and answered in the *Megiddo Message* for March, 1981, and the answer is just as appropriate today. We quote:

"What about the mighty convulsings in the world today? It seems that God is serving notice on us that time is running out. If ever there was a generation which could momentarily expect the appearance of the King, it is our own. Events in the world today are building toward the great climax of human history when 'the Lord himself shall descend from heaven with a shout,' and the Lord's prayer will be fulfilled.

"These words are not simply interesting speculations; they are facts which should challenge the way we live. The massive evidence that the Lord's coming may be soon ought to be a dynamic force in our lives. For this is the blessed hope. And how else can we look for it?"

The **MEGIDDO MESSAGE** is a religious magazine devoted to the cause of Christ, and published for the dissemination of Bible truth alone. Official organ of the Megiddo Church. L. T. Nichols, Founder; Kenneth E. Flowerday, President and Editor.

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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.

Remembering the Things That Are Behind

A Message for the New Year

TO THE CHURCH at Philippi the great Apostle Paul once wrote: "Forgetting what lies behind, and straining forward to what lies ahead, I press on toward the goal for the prize of the upward call of God in Christ Jesus" (Phil. 3:13-14). The Weymouth Bible has Paul write, "forgetting everything which is past."

Paul knew that one of the secrets of effective living was to be able to forget. This is true of all of us. There are many things in our past which will shackle us and hinder our growth unless we can be delivered from the memory of them. As has been well said, "it is possible to strangle each other with knotted memories." That can happen between friends, it can happen in families, we can even do it to ourselves. If we attempt to carry the load of all our yesterdays into the New Year, it will be so cluttered with regrets for our past mistakes and failures, that there will be no place for radiant hope or expectancy.

It was a realization of this that prompted Paul to write: "This one thing I do, forgetting those things which are behind, and reaching forth unto those things which are before, I press toward the mark for the prize of the high calling of God in Christ Jesus." Here we see a profound significance to the gospel of forgiveness and the new beginning made possible for us through God's mercy and long-suffering. There is an old saying, "It is little good you'll do watering last year's crop." But too often we have done just that, carrying along old hurt feelings and grudges that long ago should have been forgotten.

But for the moment let us concern ourselves with the plan of remembering the things which are behind. To know what and how to forget is important, but at best it is only a half truth. The other half of life is remembering. There are things we ought never to forget. Let us paraphrase Paul's words to read,

"Remembering the things which are behind, I press toward the mark for the prize of the high calling of God in Christ Jesus."

Remembering is an essential feature in the Christian life. At the Last Supper Jesus promised His followers the help of the Holy Spirit in remembering what He had said during His ministry. His words were, "He (the Holy Spirit) shall teach you all things, and bring all things to your remembrance, whatsoever I have said unto you" (John 14:26). A man named Jowett once wrote: "I suppose that one of the most urgent needs of the common life is the sanctification of the memory. If the memory were to be really hallowed it would forget many things which it now remembers, and it would certainly remember many things it now forgets."

Let us at this time of beginning again think together about remembering the things that are behind.

It is of prime importance that we remember our most pleasant hours. Too often we remember the unpleasant and carry in our hearts the bitter memories, the unpleasant hours. We remember the bitter, harsh words spoken and forget the kind words, the times others showed a Christian spirit and offered a helping hand. In all of our lives there have been and will be glowing hours that deserve to be treasured, not only for their own sake but as an inspiration to the renewal of life for the days to come. How much better is such remembering!

A world traveler could remember of seeing the midnight sun at Hammerfest, Norway; the awe-inspiring sight of the Rock of Gibraltar guarding the entrance to the blue Mediterranean; the grandeur of the Alps; a sunset over the Sahara Desert from its highest pyramid; the Grand Canyon in Arizona; the geyser "old Faithful" spouting forth in Yellowstone National Park; or the snow-covered peak of famed Mt. Shasta; the Blue Ridge Mountains from the highest point on Sky Line

Drive. And God sanctions such remembering. The Psalmist declares: "The heavens declare the glory of God; and the firmament showeth his handiwork"; surely God would not want us to view the wonders of nature without being impressed or remembering what we saw.

Speaking through Isaiah the Almighty said: "Remember the former things of old: for I am God, and there is none else; I am God, and there is none like me, declaring the end from the beginning, and from ancient times the things that are not yet done, saying, My counsel shall stand, and I will do all my pleasure" (Isa. 46:9-10).

In Exodus 16:33 we are told that Moses commanded Aaron to take a jar and put an omer of manna in it for the generation to come. It was to be a sacred token of remembrance. It was to be a kind of memorial reminding the present generation of the momentous past. Every church and home should have such memorials, recalling to those who might forget what their past in its finest hours was like. In our past are many fine and precious hours that we cannot forget without impoverishing all our tomorrows. Such is the sanctification of memory.

Let Us Remember Our Spiritual Heritage.

In the Epistle to the Hebrews we are commanded, "Remember your former leaders—it was they who brought you the word of God. Bear in mind how they ended their lives, and imitate their faith" (Heb. 13:7, *Weymouth*). The historian Salust tells that Roman mothers trained their children in the presence of busts and statues of their ancestors. We ought to live every day in the memory of our brave forefathers in the faith, bear in mind how they patterned their lives, and imitate their faith. We as a people should especially remember the character and work of our spiritual father, our noble founder, Rev. L. T. Nichols.

The Lord was enjoining us to remember our spiritual ancestors when He moved upon Isaiah to record, "Hearken to me, ye that follow after righteousness, ye that seek the Lord: look unto the rock whence ye are hewn, and to the hole of the pit whence ye are digged. Look unto Abraham your father, and unto Sarah that bare you: . . ." (Isa. 51:1-2).

It has been said that one of the prime reasons why the Christian religion does not sell more readily to people in general is because the church has no samples to show. Jesus was stressing the value of good examples when He said, "Let your light so shine before men that they may see your good works." It is the importance of the factor of a good example that makes the remem-

bering of our spiritual forebears so important. It is said that the secret of England's magnificent stand against the Nazi tyranny in December 1940, when she stood alone against Hitler, was something from the unconscious. Feeling that Drake, Raleigh, Cromwell, and all the rest were looking down at them, they were obliged to look worthy in the eyes of their ancestors. If this was their "finest hour," as Churchill put it, remember always the part that remembering played in it, and the part that remembering the things which are behind can play with us in our Christian life.

Above all we should remember our heavenly Father and all His goodness to us. We should be prepared to say with the Psalmist: "I will call to mind the deeds of the Lord; yea, I will remember thy wonders of old." Again, "Bless the Lord, O my soul, and forget not all his benefits." And yet again the words of Jeremiah, "This I recall to my mind, therefore have I hope. It is of the Lord's mercies that we are not consumed, because his compassions fail not. They are new every morning: great is thy faithfulness" (Lam. 3:21-23).

No remembering of the things which are behind could be more fruitful than the remembering of our own evil ways, and your doings which have not been good (Ezek. 36:31)—if, that is, we remember for the purpose of correcting them. The effort needed for such remembering is the most healthful mental exercise the man or woman determined to grow into holiness can engage in. It is most natural for us to want to forget—or at least minimize—our failures and amplify our virtues. Unmindful that our good qualities will take care of themselves, we are very diligent to remember and parade them when our shortcomings are mentioned. But not so with our sins—oh no! But let us always remember that "the eyes of the Lord are in every place, beholding the evil and the good." We cannot hide from Him.

We should remember the times when we were selfish and pursued our own interests to the detriment of our brother. We should remember the times when we failed to say "no" to an evil impulse seeking to lead us once more into sin.

We should remember the times when in place of seeking first God's kingdom and the righteousness which will fit us for it, we put second things first, giving the fleeting present precedence over the eternal future.

We should remember the times when we thought too highly of ourselves, when we tried to exalt ourselves at the expense of another, forgetting that "pride goeth before destruction, and a haughty spirit before a fall"; the times when we were satisfied with less than our

(Continued on page 25)

The Abib *Message*

WHEN the *Megiddo Message* made its debut in April, 1915, no one who saw it would have guessed that it would still be in publication seventy years later!

But our thoughts are not God's, as this fact very well proves.

The *Message* began as a "weekly" consisting of four pages 8½" x 11". Principle features were "Extracts from Sunday's Sermon," "Local News," "Weather Report" and occasionally a bit of poetry. Local News reported missionary departures and returns, numbers of books sold, accounts of visitors entertained, and church programs.

In 1917, the "weekly" was abandoned in favor of a double-sized biweekly, and by 1919 the contents had diversified to include "Echoes Of Home Work," "Gleanings From The Mission Field," "Items From Our Mail Bag," and quite frequently Bible "Questions" answered.

In 1961, the biweekly was discontinued in favor of a 24-page monthly.

Through the years the appearance of the *Message* has changed with the advances in printing methods. But the *message* of the *Message* remains the same, rooted firmly in the unchanging Word of God.

The pages that follow contain a widely varied assortment highlighting the *Message's* Abib and New Year features through seventy years. As you read the excerpts, notice the repeated and consistent emphasis on the imminence of Christ's second coming and our personal responsibility to get ready for it. Read, and thank God that you are among those today who are "looking for that blessed hope, and the glorious appearing of . . . our Saviour Jesus Christ."

For—*Maranatha!*—He IS coming!

1915-1924

"Earth's Future King, and the True Anniversary of His Birth"

The world has groaned under ages of misrule; selfishness and worldly ambition have created suffering for the many. The legislation of centuries has utterly failed to arrest the progress of evil. "Truly the world is in a bad state; it is afflicted with a loathsome disease; it is oppressed with a terrible nightmare;" it needs to be rebuilt from the very foundation; and while knowledge and intelligence are on the increase in many branches of learning, true character is dwarfing with the advance of years. Flimsiness and frivolity are the order of the day. The Word of God is held in light esteem, and faith in its glorious promises almost vanished from the earth. The riches of the world are being hoarded away in the coffers of the few, until during two years of our present war, with the groans of the wounded and dying filling the air and the suffering and starving crying out for bread, the millionaires of the United States have more than doubled, and the multimillionaires more than trebled their millions, as the official figures testify.

Truly the world needs a strong man to right its wrongs, and that coming Man is Jesus Christ, the Lion of the tribe of Judah, coming conquering and to conquer.

The hope of the world is Christ's coming; for it is His return to earth that will cause His kingdom to be established.

April, 1918

LOCAL NEWS

Standing at the portals of the opening year, God's New Year, we behold a world at war—the nations of the earth in deadly conflict, each taxing man's ingenuity and inventive powers to the utmost in order to devise methods and instruments of destruction more deadly than anything previously conceived of.

While the conditions are sad and lamentable, above the din and commotion sounds the comforting, peace creating words of Him whose birth we at this time celebrate—"Let not your heart be troubled: ye believe in God believe also in me. . . . And if I go and prepare a place for you I will come again and receive you unto myself." —John 14:1, 3. "I will come again!" May these words of wonderful import reverberate through our minds as we enter on a New Year, and may we realize that their fulfillment will bring the earth into the condition depicted in the 72nd Psalm and the blessed state of which the angels sang, when there will be "Glory to God in the highest, and on earth peace, good will toward men."

April, 1918



First issue
of the "Message"

WHY I BELIEVE IN A FUTURE LIFE

Extract of sermon by Rev. Maud Hembree

What would you and I give in that wondrous day when Christ appears the second time, bringing salvation for the redeemed ones, to be worthy of standing before Him and singing that new song, "Thou hast made us unto our God kings and priests, and we shall reign on the earth"? This is something we can grasp, something real and tangible, to reign on the earth when all war, bloodshed, pain, sorrow and death are in the past. What a wonderful future is offered the children of men, if—oh, if—we make ourselves worthy!

I think I never so fully realized as I do this morning the truthfulness of the statement of Paul in I Cor. 3: 19-20 that the wisdom of this world is foolishness with God. Oh, when you once learn this lesson, that the wisdom of this world, the thoughts of man, are vain, you will cease to glory in man, either in yourself or any other man.

March 24, 1918

THINK of the misery and suffering there is in the world, and the poor crying for even the necessities of life in every city in our land, and then think of the millions of dollars spent every year in the pseudo Christmas day, for jumping jacks, hobby-horses, airguns, dolls, and a thousand other things of no real value or lasting worth! Do you think Christ feels honored on such an occasion, when such folly is carried on in His name, and a worse than waste of money is the result? No. In the day of His glorious coming He will say to all such, "I never knew you; depart from me, ye that work iniquity."

April, 1918



THERE was more spent for tobacco last year than would be required to feed every man; more than would buy all the wheat, oats and barley. There was more spent for liquor than would keep up every government on earth. Do you think this state of affairs will ever be changed by common preaching? I tell you nay. This task will only be done by Christ when He comes.

March 29, 1922

ALMOST six thousand years of human existence on this planet have passed away since the early morning of the day of salvation the Almighty God began to put laborers into His garden, His spiritual vineyard, that He might take out a number who, faithfully laboring to overcome all evil, would be worthy to rule the world in righteousness. During this time countless armies of the dead have passed into the silent dust, and of all earth's millions only one has gained the victory over death and the grave, only one who could truly say, "I am he that liveth, and was dead, and behold I am alive forevermore" (Rev. 1:18). That One is Jesus, our coming King, who will truly come the second time to rule the world in righteousness.

April 24, 1918

"The Birth of Christ"

It would seem that we would love to live so that we would be happy; to so conduct ourselves that we could look back with a glad reminiscence over the year that is past. And this is the standard we must reach if we ever join in that year of all years. A glad New Year is coming when the saying, "Peace on earth, good will to men" will be fulfilled.

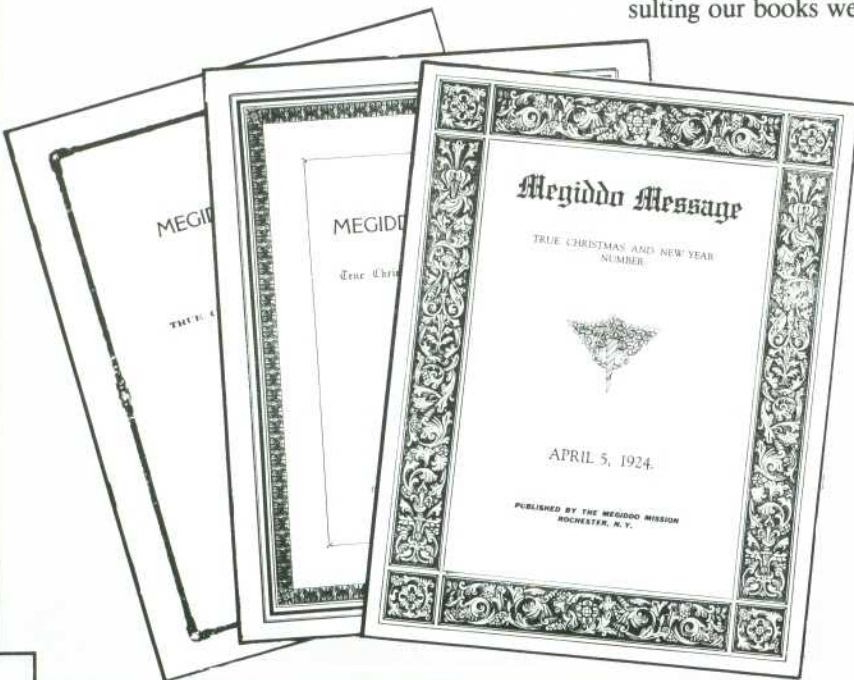
March 29, 1922

TO OUR co-workers, friends and readers, both near and far away, we extend wishes true and sincere for a Happy Christmas and New Year.

Through the favor and blessings of an Almighty Hand our efforts to carry the light of truth, as proclaimed in the Bible, to a benighted world have, during the past year, met with singular success. And as we recount the cities visited by our missionaries and the distances traveled by railroad, automobile and yacht, we feel thankful for immunity from disaster and accident. In consulting our books we find that from the 1st of Abib, 1916 (April

2d.), to Abib 1st, 1917, which occurs this year Mar. 23d, the principal cities and towns visited and the number of the Megiddo publications left in each city are as follows: Youngstown, Oh., 3,045; Birmingham, Al., 2,437; two trips to Cleveland, Oh., 15,258; Asbury Park, N.J., 6,845; Johnstown, Pa., 2,203; Pittsburgh, Pa., 14,902; Nashville, Tn., 1,296; and Lynchburg, Va., 1,200.

The three trips taken by the young men of the mission, familiarly known as the "Megiddo Progressives," in their yacht, the "Megiddo," resulted in the splendid total of 13,496 books being left in homes of which a great number were inaccessible to any other of our mission workers. The first journey made



1915-1924

was via Erie Canal and Oswego River to Oswego, 4,827; the second to Cayuga Lake, when they visited the towns and villages on its east shore to Ithaca and left in this section 4,682; the third and last trip of the season was to territory between Montezuma and Syracuse, where the 3,987 books brought the total to 13,496. An automobile mission trip to the Adirondacks, 978; sent to Colorado Springs, 100; to Portland, Or., and Utica, 3,401; automobile day trips to territory 50 miles from Rochester, 4,521; mail orders, 1,814; short visits of a deaconess to small towns in the district of Utica, 1,095; day trips of an automobile 1,704.

March, 1917

THERE is a text to which I wish to call your attention, John 5:28: "Marvel not at this, for, behold, the hour is coming when all that are in their graves shall hear his voice and shall come forth." I was once talking with a Campbellite minister and he read it this way, and I said, "Do you think there is such a text as that in the Bible?" "Yes," he said. I said, "I will give you a \$1,000 if you will find such a text as that in the Bible." He jumped for his Bible; but I said, "Wait a moment; let me read it to you right. It is not 'their graves,' but it is 'the graves'." I turned it up and made him read it. He thought he had me fast, but I had him fast; and when he read it he found I was right. Turn to John and read for yourselves. You say He will raise all that are in "their graves"; but since only covenant-makers will stand before the Judgment, you see this cannot be right.

Well, I have taken the Word of the Lord and stood by it, and that is why I stand where I am today. We have the Bible on our side, but the world don't believe it. What an evidence that the Bible is true!

—L. T. Nichols, published March 24, 1918

AS WE enter on a new year with its perplexities and trials all unknown, may our faith be increased, our determination strengthened to do God's will, that should Christ return before its close we may be found as He Himself admonished us to be, "Watching."

April, 1918

DO you want to be lost; or do you want to live in the soon coming kingdom of God through a gladsome eternity? If you do, then read, understand and keep the sayings of this Book, the blessed Word of the Lord (Rev.1:3). "Let your loins be girded about, and your lights burning; and ye yourselves like unto men that wait for their Lord, . . . that when he cometh, and knocketh, they may open unto him immediately."

March 29, 1922

RADIO

How wonderful is radio, the medium by which human voices can be distinctly heard for thousands of miles with only electrical waves as a medium, yet it has become so common that people have ceased to wonder at it.

But the greatest wonder is that through the centuries of time this law of nature has been in existence and we are only just now learning something about it.

Did you ever stop to think that the air (as with the radio) may be also a medium of unexpressed thought? Perhaps to one endowed with Holy Spirit power the thought is received as clearly as spoken words are now by means of radio. We know that in the Apostolic Age those having the baptism of the Holy Spirit could read the thoughts of those around them, as did Jesus, Peter, and others.

It is just as likely that our very thoughts are carried upon electric currents and can be received by those who are more enlightened through the power of God as that the spoken word is now transmitted by radio. How necessary, then, that our thoughts become attuned to the Divine mind that they may be harmonious to those possessing the power to receive them. April 15, 1923

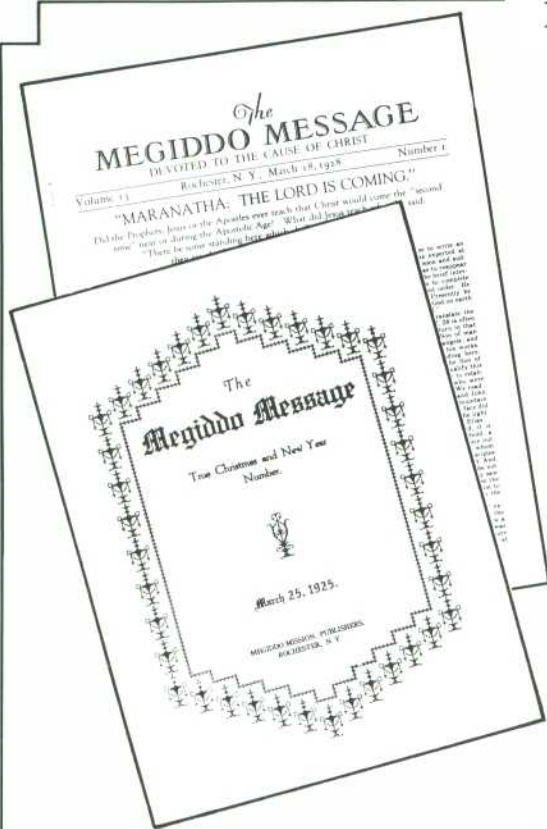
THE dawn of a New Year is breaking, and as we stand on its threshold our minds revert to the past with gratitude and thanksgiving for the manifold blessings with which each day has been crowned.

*"All the year Thy love hath spared us,
Thou indeed our help hath been;
Marvelous the loving kindness
Every day and hour hath seen."*

And as we look prospectively into the New Year, with its unwritten, unsullied page, may every heart be energized and constrained to keep it so; and, as we cross the continent of years, let us see to it that the influences we exert over our fellow men may be always of an ennobling, elevating nature.

This is the time to make resolves, to form ambitions, but it is not enough to merely form an ambition, for there are some ambitions that can never be attained by us no matter how earnestly we may apply ourselves. But one ambition there is which all, if they will, may attain, and that is the ambition to become holy. This calls for a patient continuance in well doing, a daily and hourly overcoming of evil with good. If we step out to obtain that object this New Year, we are sure of achieving results, and we can make this the best year of our lives regardless of external circumstances. March, 1917

1925-1934



YOU meet them at every turn of the road—the people in search of happiness. Some pursue one course and some another and discover sooner or later that they are on the wrong track, as did the man who, after traveling around the world in pursuit of happiness, returned home to find that he had left it there.

It is difficult to realize, and it is something we do not readily admit, that the joy and satisfaction of our life depend very much upon ourselves and the kind of individuals we are rather than upon our circumstances and what happens to us. It is more the kind of disposition we cherish, the will we carry around with us, the attitude of our mind, the desire to be helpful and sunshiny to other lives, that decides whether our lives shall be happy, bright, and hopeful, more than on what we possess and what happens to us. A self-centered life cannot be a happy life; happiness depends largely on contentment, sacrifice, service, on the appreciation of the many blessings of God.

March 29, 1931

From the "MailBag"

"Dear Sister, will it be too much trouble to put this little ad in the MESSAGE? All Megiddo readers are cordially invited to a Christmas program at the home of Brother and Sister S., at New Liberty, Ky., at two o'clock, P.M., March 31, 1930.

March 16, 1930

ABIB CELEBRATION AT MEGIDDO

Christmas at Megiddo! Only those who have a part in it can realize the extent and magnitude of the preparation made for the celebration of this glorious festival. And only those who hear and see can appreciate it all. No previous celebration has equalled the one just past. For weeks beforehand one brother was engaged in scene painting and decorating, while many others did their share in other lines. A large sign across the entire width of the church just above the curtain in front of the rostrum announced to the onlooker, "Unto you is born this day in the city of David a Saviour, which is Christ the Lord." Scripture mottoes outlined with small colored electric lights hung between the windows, and read in order as follows:

"UNTO us a child is born—to us a son is given—the government shall be on his shoulder.

"A king shall reign and prosper, and shall execute judgment and justice in the earth.

"IN his days shall the righteous flourish and abundance of peace so long as the moon endureth.

"JESUS said, I go away—but I will come again and receive you unto myself; that where I am, there ye may be also.

"BEHOLD, I come—and my reward is with me, to give every man according as his work shall be."

Pots of tulips and other early flowers and ferns banked the space in front of the platform. A hanging basket and a window box adorned each window.

With weeks of intensive preparation and rehearsal in the past, Christmas found every one looking eagerly forward to and earnestly hoping for a successful finale.

On Sunday evening, March 30, the three-act drama, "Pilgrims of Light," with a cast of 45 characters, was presented by the men of the Mission to a large audience. The church was packed to its utmost capacity and many were unable to gain an entrance. Rows of chairs were placed in the aisles and extra seats built in specially for the occasion. The fact that a large number stood in the back of the church and in the vestibule during the entire two and one-half hour program and gave undivided attention, testified to the interest manifested.

April 27, 1930

My pulpit is not a castle
Nor a marble hall indeed,
But the highways and the hedges
Is where I sow the seed.

—J.W.L., September 30, 1928

1925-1934

SUMMARY OF THE YEAR'S WORK

Although the Gospel Car did not leave headquarters until the second week in July, the work of the missionaries who make up its crew has been very gratifying. Central New York was chosen as a field of labor and four different stands were made.

As the Car is always accompanied by six workers, a part of the crew was changed each time the missionaries returned home for a few days' rest and spiritual refreshing, so that some who are regularly employed at other work may spend a few weeks of their summer vacation in the missionary field.

Hundreds of homes, stores, offices, shops and garages were visited; personal interviews which often lasted several hours were not infrequent and thousands of publications were left in the hands of the people. That some who received them are getting the fog which darkens the spiritual mind cleared away is evidenced by the words of appreciation which come to us daily with the call of the postman. The spiritual bread has been given to all who would receive it and the water of life continues to flow to them through the columns of the Message. The results are in the hands of Him who said, "Cast thy bread upon the waters, and thou shalt find it after many days."

March 18, 1928

* * *

BIBLE STUDY

FAITH

How many faiths in God's word? One. Eph. 4:5

How does this one faith come? By hearing the word of God. Rom. 10:17

Can we please God without having this one faith? No. Heb. 11:6

Was the door of faith opened to the Gentiles? Yes. Acts 14:27

Were they exhorted to continue in the faith? Yes. Acts 14:22

Was the church established in the faith? Yes. Acts 16:5

Who are to live by faith? The just. Rom. 1:17

Will unbelief make the faith of God of none effect? No. Rom. 3:3

How was faith reckoned to Abraham? For righteousness. Rom. 4:9

How do we obtain peace with God? By being justified by faith. Rom. 5:1

What must our faith not stand in? The wisdom of men.

What must it stand in? The power of God. I Cor. 2:5

What is the power of God? The gospel. Rom. 1:16.

March, 1929

NOTICE CHRISTMAS PROGRAM BROADCAST

On Monday, April 8, from 9 till 10 o'clock P.M., the musical numbers of the Christmas program and an address by Rev. Maud Hembree will be broadcast by station WHEC in Rochester. We hope many of our interested friends will be able to listen in and hear this part of the celebration of our Saviour's birthday.

March 31, 1929

* * *

A RECIPE

Every morning when you wake

Think of things of glory,

And of all your blessings make

A full inventory.

Push the sordid thought away,

Drop reflections tearful,

And you'll find the sunlit way

Up to summits cheerful."

April 27, 1930

* * *

REPORTS of Christmas celebrations have come to us from various points which show that a few here and there are endeavoring to keep the true time and honoring the day with appropriate services. With thankful hearts, some reverently held a simple service by themselves alone, and others entertained brethren and friends, having a program and serving dinner. The little class in Oregon gave quite a lengthy program to a congregation of 68 which assembled at the festively decorated home of Sister Estella Dryden, in Portland, on Sunday evening, March 30.

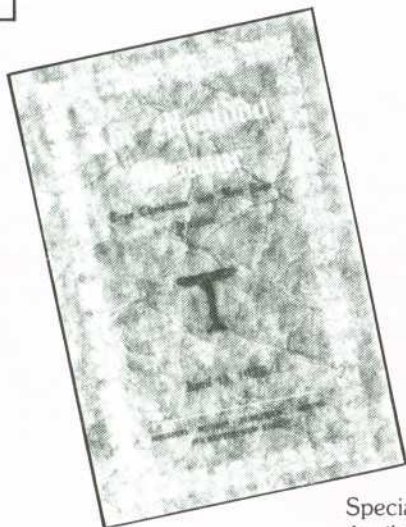
A brother in Cypress Inn, Tenn., served a Christmas dinner to 67 invited guests who had a chance to hear about the true Christmas and the Word of God.

Brother and Sister S. and children, of Sparta, Ky., decorated their home in honor of the occasion and invited in their neighbors and friends, to the number of 18, entertaining them with a program of Bible truths. A friend who has been studying by aid of the MESSAGE gave the Bible evidence on Christmas, and if the people who attended do not give heed to the things they heard they will have wasted the opportunity given them through the zeal and hospitality of Brother and Sister S.

At Brother and Sister R's home in Sedan, Kan., 12 met to honor the birth of the Saviour. Amid decorations of spring blossoms, a fitting program was rendered. In Phoenix, Ariz., 20 met at the home of Brother and Sister J. Dinner was served, and appropriate exercises followed.

April 27, 1930

1925-1934



Special New Year edition,
April 13, 1926
Size 6" x 9", 68 pages

READING THE BIBLE

One of the *Message* family sends along the following sentiments which may strike responsive chords in some hearts:

It is one thing to read the Bible through,
Another thing to read to learn and do.
Some read it as their duty once a week,
But no instruction from the Bible seek,
Some read to bring themselves into repute
By showing others how they can dispute.
While others read because their neighbors do,
To see how long 'twill take to read it through.
Some read it for the wonders that are there,
How David killed a lion and a bear.
While others read it with uncommon care,
Hoping to find some contradictions there.
One reads with father's specs upon his head
And see the things just as his father said.
Some read to prove a pre-adopted creed,
Hence understand but little what they read.
For every passage in the book they bend
To make it suit that all important end.
Some people read as I have often thought,
To teach the Book instead of being taught.
So many people in these latter days
Have read the Bible in so many ways,
That few can tell which system is the best
For every party contradicts the rest.
But read it prayerfully and you will see
Although men contradict, God's words agree.
For what the early Bible prophets wrote,
We find that Christ and His apostles quote.
So trust no creed that trembles to recall
What has been penned by one and verified by all.

September 30, 1928

Another reader sends the following:

A MOMENT PLEASE

My friend, allow me to ask you this question: What are you doing with the valuable time God has loaned you? Every moment from the cradle to the grave is borrowed. What are you doing in return? Think of this while at your daily toil, as well as when you retire to your couch at night, as your soul may be required of you ere the dawn of another day. A kind word here—a kind act there—is only a small portion of your duty. You travel this way but once—yes, get acquainted with your Creator and learn to reverence a just and merciful God, which is your due—don't delay.

September 30, 1928

There are deep things of God.

Push out from shore;

Hast thou found much?

Give thanks and look for more.

Dost fear the generous Giver to offend?

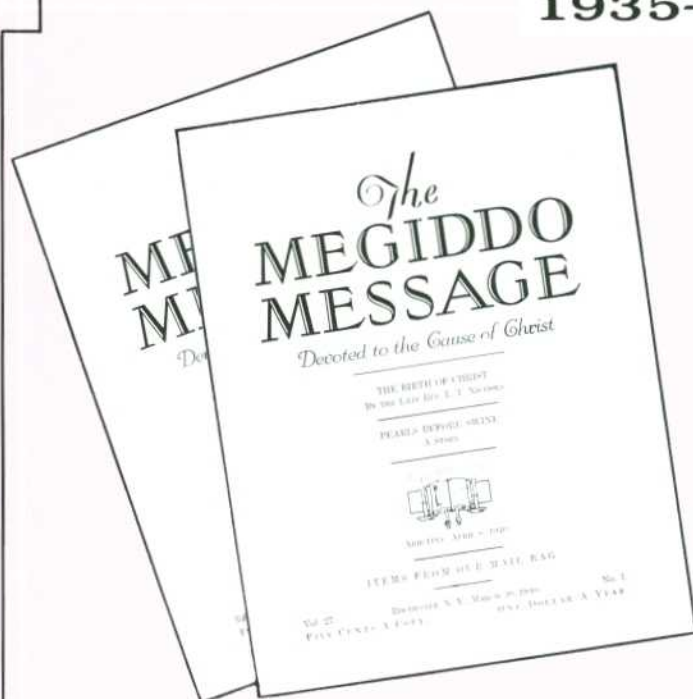
Then know His store of bounty hath no end.

He doth not need to be implored or teased;

The more we take, the better He is pleased.

April 14, 1929





ABIB MEMORIES

ANOTHER Abib First, another True Christmas and New Year, has slipped inexorably into the past, and a good and profitable occasion it was for all the family of Megiddo. At 6 p.m. April 4th the holy day began, and at seven o'clock we gathered in the little white church on the corner, the church which has known no sound but that of Truth within its walls since our founder, the Rev. L. T. Nichols, dedicated it thirty-five years ago. Local and visiting members, neighbors and friends filled the auditorium. There was a selection by the Progressive Band and a Christmas song by the congregation, another by the Life Guards male chorus, a prayer by Brother P. J. Thatcher, following which a religious drama, "The Crisis," occupied our attention for nearly four hours. It contained many profound lessons of courage, faith and endurance, contrasted with the fate of those who for a time make a profession but fail to make a full surrender of their ways to God. The imminence of the Lord's second coming and the meaning of the present crisis were strongly emphasized. April 24, 1943

WHATEVER we long for, yearn for, struggle for, and hold persistently in mind, we tend to become just in proportion to the intensity and persistence of the thought. We think ourselves into inferiority by thinking downward. We ought to think upward; then we would reach the heights where superiority dwells. April 8, 1944

ON WINGS OF FAITH

How strong is your faith? Has it been fortified by daily meditation and practice until it will bear you up under all circumstances? Should all earthly possessions be swept away and you be faced with dire poverty; should friends and loved ones be taken by death; should you lose friendships and associations which you have valued as a part of yourself; should disease fasten upon your system until the Last Enemy stares you in the face and your feet are stumbling upon the dark mountains, can you still rise on wings of faith to the sunlit atmosphere above the storms and say, "God's way is the best way"?

Have you the strong-winged faith of the great Apostle who suffered the loss of all things for Christ and yet exclaimed, "These light afflictions. . . Who shall separate us from the love of Christ? shall tribulation, or distress, or persecution, or famine, or nakedness, or peril, or sword? . . . Nay, in all these things we are more than conquerors through him that loved us."

Let us so fortify our power and strengthen our faith that though our earthly foundations may crumble before the winds of adversity, we can still say as the little bird on the slender twig when the storm arises to shake it off,

"All right," says the bird, "Shake me off. I've still got wings!"

March 4, 1939

I come to Thee, dear Lord, and pray
That Thou wilt guide me day by day.
Guide my thought, and guide my tongue;
Guide my footsteps as I run
This race of life, which soon must end,
This earthly life is brief, indeed;
And when I see my brother's need,
I pray that I may have the power
To sow the seed, which in this hour
Shall lead him to have faith in Thee. March 18, 1939

INTRODUCING THE "KEEP" FAMILY

KEEP thyself pure.
KEEP yourselves from idols.
KEEP thy tongue from evil and thy lips from speaking guile.
KEEP thy heart with all diligence; for out of it are the issues of life.
KEEP me as the apple of the eye; hide me under the shadow of thy wings.
KEEP yourselves in the love of God, looking for the mercy of the Lord Jesus Christ unto eternal life.

March 19, 1938

A PRECIOUS GIFT

Since we celebrated last New Year's Day we have received the most precious gift that mortals can imagine. It is a diadem of 365 jewels, all different in appearance but all of equal value and that so great that not the entire world and all that it contains could buy a single one of them. Alexander, breathing his last, might have offered the world he conquered for one of them, but it would have availed him nothing. To us they have been given freely.

Three hundred and sixty-five glittering days set in the golden crown of a year—this is the gift. Because they were given so freely yet so unostentatiously, it may be that we did not fully recognize the value of these gifts. Because of the magic inherent in them, a magic whose potency no wizard ever approximated, it may be that we did not receive the value from them that we might have.

The magic lies in this: they must be used, and not misused, if the inherent beauty of them is made manifest. They can not be hoarded. Each morning one is given and if no use is made of it, it turns to dust. If one is used selfishly or wickedly, the sacred fire which is its life departs and only a dull stone remains. If all of them have been misused, what we receive when the old year dies is a crown of brass set with common pebbles. Not all, however, do this. Many cherish these jewels and develop their inherent beauty so that they receive the diadem beyond all price.

Our crown for the past year is now made up; we have it all complete whether of jewels or of pebbles. A year hence—if another year be granted us—we will be able to know if we have realized the possibilities of this year. It is our decision, whether we will turn these days into jewels that we may keep forever, or whether we allow them to turn to common stone or vanish into dust.

March 24, 1935

*"Sing unto the Lord a new song,
And his praise from the end of the earth."*

*The star that made bright
Old Bethlehem's plain
Is shedding its light
This Christmas again.*

*May its shining rays
Light your heart with good cheer
And reflect happy days
For the coming year.*

March 27, 1943

WATCH THE CONNECTIONS

My neighbor, who is also a sister in the faith, having defective hearing, finds it necessary to wear an ear phone. One day recently she came in for a few minutes and during the conversation spoke of her phone being out of order. She would catch a few words, then the sound would be interrupted, then a few more words, followed by more silence. She thought there was a broken wire in the connecting cord.

At once we both thought of the spiritual lesson to be derived from it. If the connection between us and our God is broken we will certainly fail to get the fullness of His loving words in counsel, command, reproof, and warning. We may hear and take heed to certain things which happen to be agreeable to us, but if not hearing distinctly and heeding all He says, we will become badly confused and as a result our work will likewise show confusion. Our connection will be severed and a broken law stands between us and the Eternal. You remember James—who, we think, has written one of the most if not the most practical book in the New Testament—says, "Whosoever shall keep the whole law and yet offend in one point is guilty of all." That one broken wire severs the connection.

March 19, 1938

WATCHWORDS AND COMMENTS

No. 20. Proverbs 3:35: "The wise shall inherit glory but shame shall be the promotion of fools."

This verse plainly points out to us the destiny of modern man. The wise are promised life everlasting through obedience, and the wicked, everlasting destruction. Both rewards are everlasting, but what a contrast! In verse 16 we read, "Length of days is in her right hand; and in her left hand riches and honor." Daniel says "many that sleep in the dust of the earth shall awake, some to everlasting life, and some to shame and everlasting contempt." Which of these wages, brethren, are we working for? Our fruits will reveal it "in the Day when one shall judge the secrets of men . . . according to the gospel."

In Matthew 7:24 Jesus is illustrating: "Therefore whoever heareth these sayings of mine, and doeth them, I will liken him unto a wise man which built his house upon a rock; and the rain descended, and the floods came and the winds blew and beat upon that house; and it fell not: for it was founded upon a rock"—the Rock of divine Truth. But the foolish man builds his house, or hope on the sand. All is well until the final great storm overtakes him and dashes against his unfounded structure in all its fury. Then great will be the fall of it.

April 21, 1935

1945-1954

THE NEW YEAR

ON the busy changing scenes of the passing year the hand of Time is gently drawing the curtain, and as we review the many and great blessings which its gradual unfolding brought to our lives, we cannot but ascribe thanksgiving to Him whose faithfulness and directing care we have been able to trace.

Living as we are in the most momentous of all times, when prophecy is being fulfilled at a most rapid rate and the world is approaching with velocity the condition in which centuries ago the God of Heaven foretold it would be found in the last days, just prior to the second coming of our Lord from Heaven, we feel profoundly grateful for the wonderful knowledge which enables us not only to celebrate the true anniversary of Christ's birth, but to know the "times and seasons" spoken of by the Apostle Paul, which knowledge is the key to the world's problems and perplexities of which the wisest, most eminent rulers and statesmen have not the slightest conception.

Thus as we celebrate the new year and anniversary of the birth of Jesus, the certainty of the nearness of His second advent looms up as of far greater import than ever before. And as we step out into a new year—the circumstances thereof which may befall each individual being known only to the Almighty Father—may we do so cheerfully, hopefully, prayerfully; remembering the Divine promise and solemn warning as recorded in II Chronicles 15:2, "The Lord is with you, while ye be with him; and if ye seek him, he will be found of you; but if ye forsake him, he will forsake you."

We are standing on the threshold, we are in the open door,
We are treading on a border land we have never trod before;
Another year is opening, and another year is gone;
We've passed the darkness of the night, we're in the early morn.

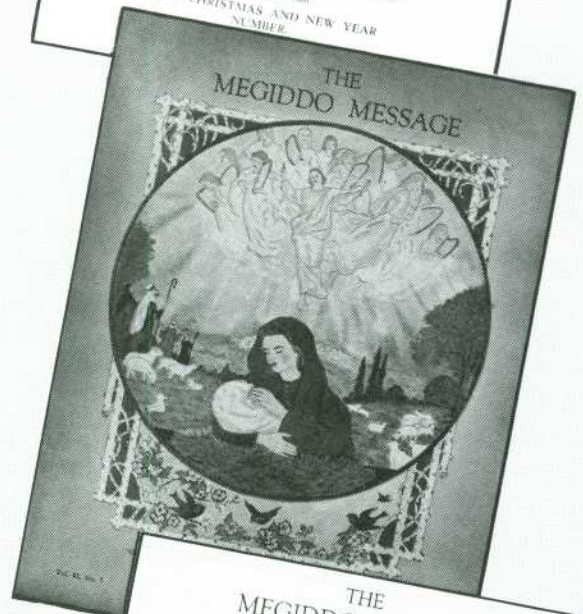
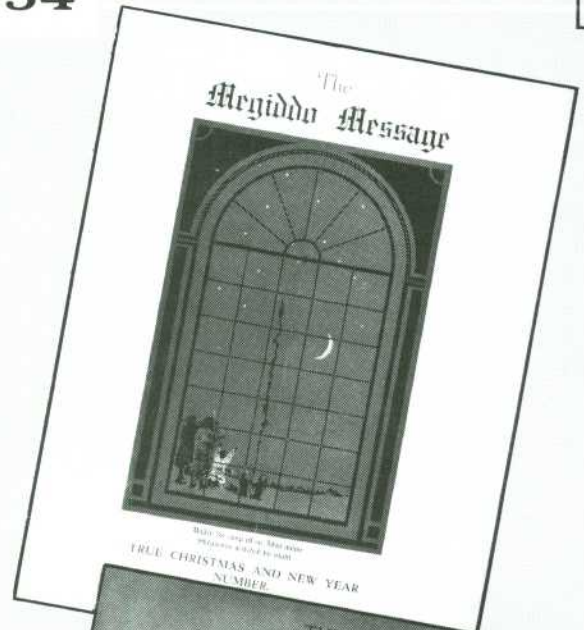
Then hasten to fresh labor, to thresh, and reap, and sow;
Then bid the new year welcome and let the old year go.
So, gather all your vigor, press forward in the fight,
And let this be your motto: "For God and for the Right!"

March 8, 1947

FORWARD

Before another Abib moon wavers in the western sky there are certain to be changes. There will be vacant chairs, for Time is relentless. There will also be new faces, for the work must go on. The fields are white already to harvest—yet the laborers are few; "and he that reapeth receiveth wages, and gathereth fruit unto life eternal." But whatever may be in store, for us who have begun the march to a better Country there is but one direction—forward! Forward with greater speed, greater zeal, greater earnestness and determination, for Maranatha—our Lord is coming!

April 16, 1949





SIN IS PERSONIFIED AND TERMED A MASTER

An Essay by M.L.B. in Girls' Bible Class

In Genesis 4:7 we read, "If thou doest well, shalt thou not be accepted? and if thou doest not well, sin lieth at the door. And unto thee shall be his desire, and thou shalt rule over him." If we do not well our feet are swift to run to mischief lying at our door (Prov. 6:18). Mischief is always ready to receive us. He is always ready to cross the threshold to come unto us; but we must reject him, for he transgresses the laws of God. If we let sin rule us, he will be our master (John 8:34).

If we yield ourselves as servants to obey this master, his servants we shall be; but death will be our reward. On the other hand, if we yield ourselves as servants to obedience we shall have righteousness. God has given us a good chance to flee from this cruel master of sin and be the servants of righteousness, if we will obey from the heart that form of doctrine which has been delivered to us. Sin pays wages but righteousness gives a gift (Rom. 6:14-23).

This master, sin, also has pleasures to give. But for how long will these pleasures last which he has to offer? Only for a tiny space of time, just for a season (Heb. 11:25).

Sin is also very deceitful. He will harden our hearts if we let him come near us (Heb. 3:13). In the coming Judgment Day the servants of this dreadful master will be revealed and they shall be cast to the left (II Thess. 2:3).

April 16, 1949

"OLD SOLDIERS NEVER DIE"

Never?

"The boast of heraldry, the pomp of power,
And all that beauty, all that wealth e'er gave
Awaits alike the inevitable hour:

The paths of glory lead but to the grave."

An Alexander the Great conquered the world and performed daring and heroic deeds. A Hannibal for many years baffled the genius of the greatest generals of Rome, and for nearly a score of years defeated her mighty legions. A Napoleon arose from a humble career to be one of the greatest generals of earth. Today a MacArthur can write the glory of his martial deeds upon the shield of earthly fame. Time would fail to tell of a Washington, a Grant, a Lee, a Sherman, a Sheridan, a Wellington, and a host of others who have won glory on the battlefield. But where are they now?

The supreme ambition of earth's noblest souls is to bequeath the oncoming generations a wealth of valiant deeds. But only they who have achieved the pinnacle of God's fame and glory have inscribed there a name which shall live—with them—through the ages of eternity.

May 12, 1951

O New Year, teach us faith!

The road of life is hard;

When our feet bleed, and scourging winds us scathe,
Point thou to Him whose visage was more marred
Than any man's; who saith,

"Make straight paths for your feet," and to the oppress,
"Come ye to Me, and I will give you rest." March 15, 1952

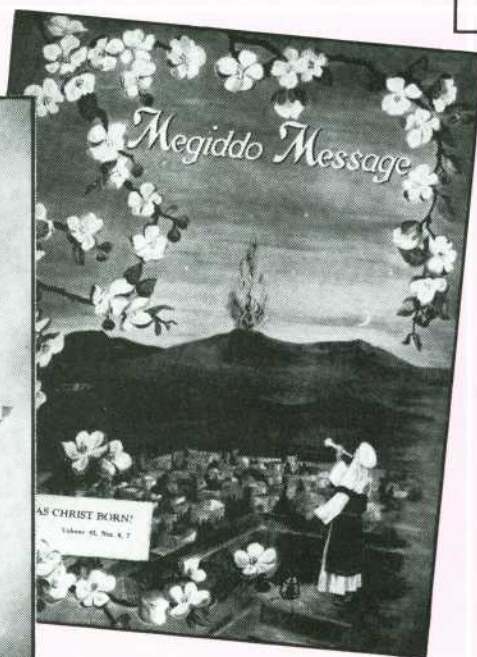
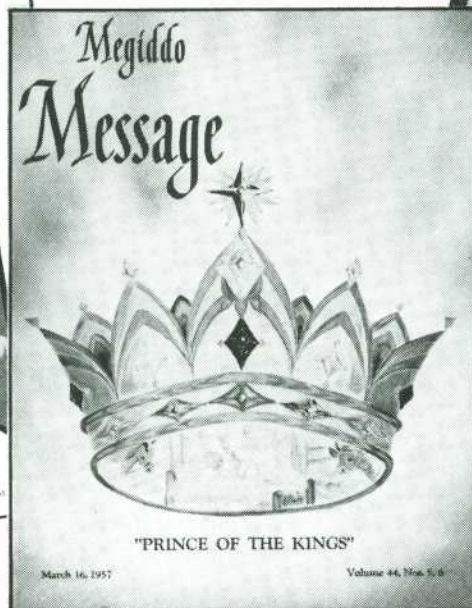
HOW young He was, how short His time on earth!

A pulse-beat through the centuries, a breath
Between the starlit hour of His birth
And that strange darkened hour of His death.
Yet had those years not gone their swift sure way,
Had their significance been lost to men,
There would be darkness in the land today,
No faith would lift, no heart could hope again.

Thank God, thank God for those years' precious store!
Thank God for sparing Him to you, to me,
Thank God for all that came before,
The plan of power and glory yet to be.
The strife-filled years for Him, that gave us rest;
The clamorous years, that we might know the white
High silences of peace within the breast.
For thirty-three brief years that His feet trod
The earthly roads for us, we thank Thee, God.

April 16, 1949

1955-1964



WHEN CHRIST WAS BORN

The crowning fulfillment of prophecy in the Bible lies in the multiplied predictions not merely of a future event, but of a future person. And that Person is predicted in His character and work with a wealth of detail and an accuracy of description that is unequalled in literature. Canan Hague says: "Centuries before Christ was born, His birth and career, His sufferings and glory, were all described in outline and detail in the Old Testament. Christ is the only person ever born into this world whose ancestry, birth-time, forerunner, birth-place, birth manner, infancy, manhood, teaching, character, career, preaching, reception, rejection, death, burial, resurrection, ascension, were all written in the most marvelous manner centuries before He was born.

"Who could draw a picture of a man not born yet? Surely God could, and God alone. Nobody knew 500 years ago that Shakespeare was going to be born; or 250 years ago that Napoleon was to be born; or 200 years ago that Queen Victoria was to be born. Yet here in the Bible we have the most striking and unmistakable likeness of a Man portrayed, not by one, but by twenty or twenty-five artists, none of whom had ever seen the Man they were painting. Beginning with faint touches in the books of Moses, Christ's whole career is described, the pictures becoming more and more precise as the time of fulfillment draws near." April 1, 1961

LET us spend this coming year, or whatever part of it may be allotted to us, in day-tight compartments, with each moment lived well. Let us shut our doors on today, all the yesterdays closed away from us, and all our tomorrows left in the hands of a loving Father who doeth all things well, then, paradoxically enough, by doing this, we will actually be living in tomorrow, living for that greater Tomorrow, world without end in God's Kingdom.

Each day has its own duty, its own smile, its own tear, its own heartthrob. If only it be lived in for eternity, life will be fuller and richer in everything; and the clusters of blessedness hanging from the bough of each day would proclaim life's every season to have wrought well, and to deserve well what lies before.

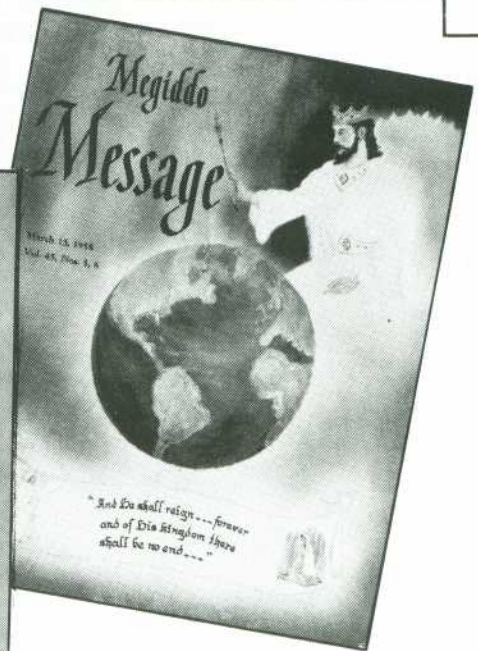
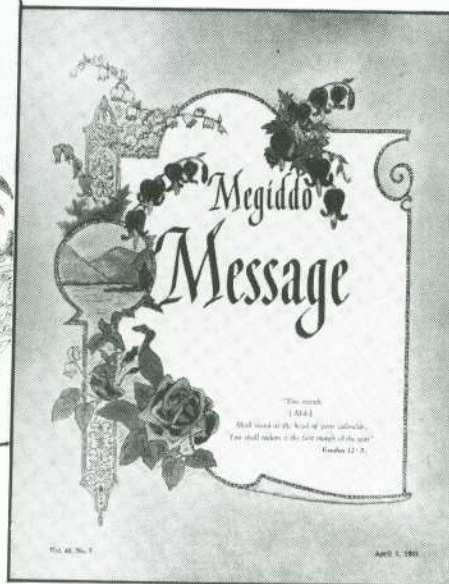
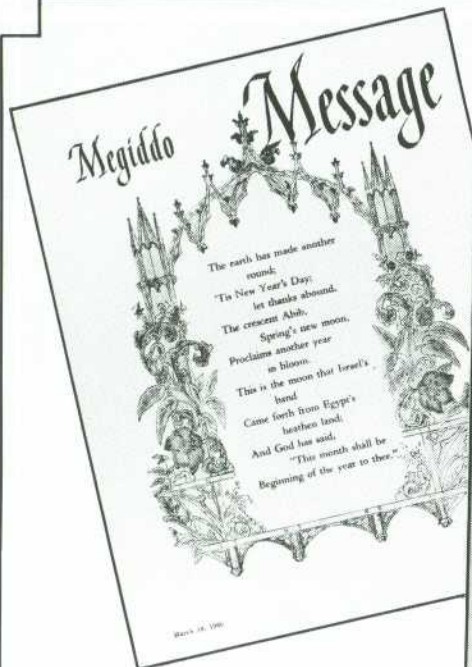
Give your *today* a chance. Give it only its own work to do, and the close of your day of salvation will find you rejoicing over the beauty and faithfulness that smiles up to you as you hear "Well done" from the lips of the Great Judge, and the eternal Morrow will meet you with kisses of tenderness, and you will enjoy the felicities of bliss through eternity.

April 1, 1961

EACH day is like a furrow lying before us; our thoughts, desires, and actions are the seed that each minute we drop into it, without seeming to perceive it. Each day presents a new furrow, and so on to the end of life we go, sowing, sowing. And all we have sown springs up, grows, and bears fruit.

March 16, 1957

1955-1964



THE MUSTARD SEED OF FAITH

Jesus likened the Kingdom of Heaven to a grain of mustard. In that tiny grain lies surprising energy. Well does the oriental farmer understand the latent power within those little grains. One seed allowed to grow becomes a mighty tree.

Jesus was aware of this tremendous energy when He used a grain of mustard seed as an illustration of the power of faith. The disciples had been unable to heal a lunatic. They could not understand why Jesus had been able to do so when they had failed. Jesus, reminding them of their unbelief, said, "If ye had faith as a grain of mustard seed, ye shall say unto this mountain, Remove hence to yonder place; and it shall remove; and nothing shall be impossible unto you."

Jesus' life stands as an eternal testimony that He so nourished His faith as to have it a thorough furnisher in every situation. So ample was His supply of faith that in the desperate and lonely hours of Gethsemane He could remain steadfast and unmovable.

What of our faith? Does our little mustard seed of faith still remain dormant, or is it filling our hearts, enabling us to remove the ugly mountains of sin?

The promise of "nothing shall be impossible unto you" is not to be had by simply asking for it. Such is not God's plan for us. His requisite has been and always will be a perfect, spotless character. Nothing else will suffice. God is seeking only those who will develop real moral strength through discipline.

December 10, 1960

THE LIFE THAT COUNTS

The life that counts must seek God's light;
Must shun the wrong and love the right;
Must stand for truth, by day, by night,
This is the life that counts.

The life that counts must hopeful be,
In darkest gloom, make melody;
Must wait the dawn, on bended knee.
This is the life that counts.

The life that counts must helpful be;
The cares and needs of others see;
Must seek the slaves of sin to free;
This is the life that counts.

The life that counts is linked with God
And never shuns the cross, the rod,
But walks with joy where Jesus trod;
This is the life that counts.

February 2, 1963

JESUS came to change society, not merely to flavor it. His way was not to be broad nor His gate wide. He gave Christianity a character when He lived it and taught it among men. He wished to draw all men unto Himself, not to be compromised by all men and finally lost among them.

March 16, 1963

1955-1964

RELIGION IN ACTION

"Act on the Word," wrote James to his brethren, "not merely listen to it."

Are we his brethren? Then that message was written to us. Do we vocally bless the message as it is told to us on Sunday, and fail to meet the tests of week-day services?

Remember this lesson of the Scottish woman who said to her pastor, "That was a grand sermon you preached last Sunday at the kirk."

Testing her memory, he asked, "And what was the text?"

"Ah, pastor," she replied, "I do not know the text or the words. But I went home and took the false bottom out of my peck measure."

Let us likewise *act* on the Word.

August 20, 1960

"TIME and tide wait for no man," runs an old adage. And how true! How many golden minutes have slipped through our fingers in the past year, without enriching our lives or those of others!

If thou lovest life, save time, for that is the stuff life is made of."

We see behind us the old year setting; before us is the dawning of the new. It is thus each year of life comes to us—for each is a clean white page. We are artists whose duty it is to put something beautiful on the pages one by one. Or we are historians and must give to the page some record of work or duty or victory to enshrine and carry along.

March 19, 1960

Your Questions Answered

"Please explain Isa. 65:20 and 22. Why should a tree be used for the length of man's days?"

Verse 20 reveals the normal life span during the Millennium. "There shall be no more thence an infant of days, nor an old man that hath not filled his days: for the child shall die an hundred years old; but the sinner being an hundred years old shall be accursed." There will be no dying in infancy. The "child," that is the person who dies young, will live to at least one hundred years old. One of the newer versions translates the remainder of the verse, "anyone dying under a hundred years old must be accursed of God." Perverse human beings will not be permitted to live on in sin to an old age. As with Dathan and Abiram in the wilderness, retribution will be swift and certain.

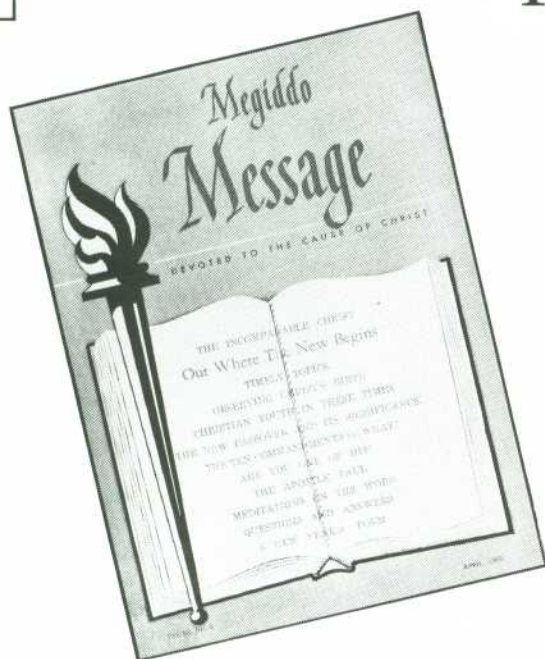
"As the days of a tree are the days of my people" is a symbol of a long life.

January 19, 1963

IT takes great strength to bring your life up square with your accepted thoughts and hold it there, resisting the inertia that drags back to the old habit's track. It is so easy to drift back, to sink; it is so hard to live abreast of what you think.

April 2, 1960





“WHAT was the Star of Bethlehem that guided the wise men to the child Jesus?”

In a pamphlet entitled “The Star of Bethlehem,” by the Adler Planetarium and Astronomical Museum, Chicago, the author explores a number of possibilities, or various phenomena that might possibly have appeared in the physical heavens about the time that the “wise men from the east” made their journey. And here are some of the explanations of the Star which the astronomers offer: a brilliant meteor or fireball, a comet, a nova or new star, or some unusual groupings of the planets.

Can we imagine a literal star, comet or grouping of planets identifying specifically one dwelling where the Christ child lay?

Star, in Scriptural language, as well as in our common speech, often refers to an individual of prominence, or, to quote a definition of “star”: “Metaphorically, used of an *illustrious prince*.” “*Metaphorically of illustrious persons*.”

Familiar history indeed is Paul’s experience on the Damascus road, when “he saw on the way, a light from heaven, above the brightness of the sun.” That light was Jesus, glorified, made immortal.

Likewise, the “star” some thirty three years prior had been another immortal being sent to guide the wise men to the dwelling “where the young child was.”

As the angels had announced His birth, so an angel guided the wise men.

April 1965

RECIPE FOR A HAPPY NEW YEAR

Take twelve fine full-grown months—see that these are thoroughly free from old memories of bitterness, rancor, hate and jealousy. Cleanse them completely from every clinging spite; pick off all specks of pettiness and littleness—in short, see that these months are freed from all the past. Have them as fresh and clean as when they first came from the great storehouse of time. Cut these months into thirty or thirty-one equal parts. This batch will keep for just one year. Do not attempt to make up the whole batch at one time (so many people spoil the entire lot this way). But prepare one day at a time as follows:

Into each day put twelve parts of faith, eleven of patience, ten of courage, nine of work (some people omit this ingredient and spoil the flavor of the rest), eight parts of hope, seven of fidelity, six of long-suffering, five of kindness, four of rest (leaving this out is like leaving the oil out of the salad—don’t do it), three parts of prayer, two of meditation, and one well-selected resolution. Then put in about a teaspoonful of right spirits, a dash of seasoning salt, a pinch of contentment, a sprinkling of ease, and a heaping cupful of good cheer. Cook thoroughly in a fervent heat, garnish with a few smiles and a sprig of joy, then serve with quietness, unselfishness, and humility, and a happy year is a certainty!

April, 1968

FACING THE NEW YEAR

We pledge ourselves

To follow through the coming year

The light which God gives us:

The light of Truth, wherever it may lead;

The light of Freedom, revealing

new opportunities for
individual development and
service to others;

The light of Faith, opening new
visions of the better world to be;

The light of Love, daily binding
brother to brother and
man to God in ever closer
bonds of friendship and affection.

Guided by this light

We shall go forward to the work
of another year
with steadfastness and
confidence.

—Selected.

March, 1974

OUT WHERE THE NEW BEGINS

A full page newspaper advertisement by a national business magazine displays the headline: "*Out where the new begins.*" Beneath is the story of a successful merchandiser of heavy machinery who joined a new company to sell a new metal fabricating machine, and in so doing introduced a new approach to the problem of successful marketing.

The story is incidental, but the headline has appeal because we know, as every spiritually transformed person must know, that out where *the new begins* is not Pittsburgh, Detroit, Lima, or Moline, but where a man meets God. Into this realm of radical spiritual newness each of us has been or can be brought. Paul states unconditionally, "If anyone is in union with Christ, he is a new being; the old state of things has passed away; there is a new state of things" (II Cor. 5:17, Goodspeed).

Once again we find ourselves at the place where a new year begins, and we have the best of reasons for making this the beginning of a new and higher level of effort at Christian living. Whatever we may have done in the past we should be concerned with bettering our effort for the year to come. Synonymous with the Christian living is the term growth, forever forbidding stagnation. The Christian cannot stand still. He cannot continue to live on the record of his past. Without determined advancement he finds himself going backward—and time is short.

The practical James was making a timely observation when he said: "Whereas ye know not what shall be on the morrow. For what is your life? It is even a vapor which appeareth for a little time, and then vanisheth away."

Each new day gives us new opportunities for spiritual improvement. In this way we are given an opportunity to begin anew, to live through new experiences which we never met before, new testings that never tested our mettle before. Each new day gives us new opportunities to speak the kind word, to show the Christian attitude, to exhibit the right example which will encourage and alert another. Each moment provides the opportunity for the fresh start, to live better than ever we have lived before.

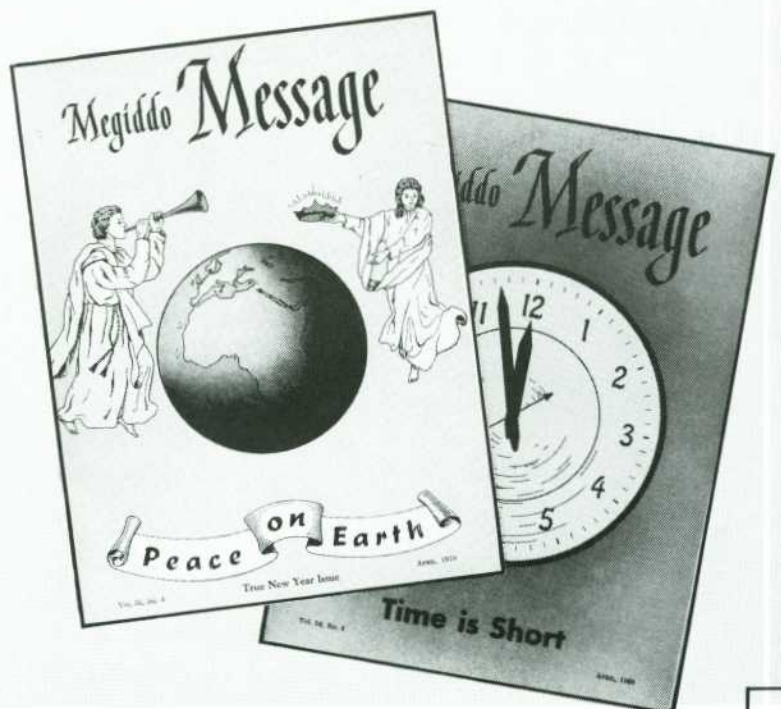
April 1965

TIMELY TOPICS

Today's newspaper headlines tell of a world in trouble. Whether you live on the west coast or the east, in the north or the south, the headlines tell the same story. They tell of war in far-off Vietnam; of political strife within our own country; of race riots in numerous locations; of labor strikes here and there; of government investigations of corruption within its own ranks; of automobile accidents that in the year just past claimed more than 52,000 lives in our nation alone, and other startling events too numerous to mention.

Pessimists view the current headlines as terrifying, seeing at the end of the present world situation the total destruction of mankind through his inability to control the weapons he has devised. Others see in the future the spread of Communism until it eventually envelops the entire world, with the majority reduced to the status of slaves to Communist dictators. But Bible students regard the headlines of today's news in an entirely different aspect. For them there is a ray of hope. This hope is not in the news headlines of crime and war and bloodshed, but in the Bible prophecy which is being fulfilled by these world events. These headlines portend a greater event soon to come—the return of Jesus, announced by the appearance of Elijah.

April, 1967



1975-1984



TIME TO WATCH

"My coming can be compared with that of a man who went on a trip to another country. He laid out his employees' work for them to do while he was gone, and told the gatekeeper to watch for his return.

"Keep a sharp lookout; for you do not know when I will come, at evening, at midnight, early dawn or late daybreak. Don't let Me find you sleeping. Watch for My return!

This is My message to you and to everyone else" —Mark 13:34-37, *Living Letters*

The clock is ticking off the minutes. Slowly, steadily the time that started to be counted when Adam was called to work in the vineyard is slipping away. Six thousand years are nearly gone. Twenty-five hundred had already passed in Moses' day. With the period of the Judges and the Kings,

the Captivity and the Return, another thousand years sped into eternity. Then there was a brief interval of silence, of some four hundred years, and the first great milestone in time was reached. It was time for the birth of the Messiah.

The Child Jesus grew to manhood; and after a brief three-year ministry marked by turbulence and trouble, He was put to death. Time ticked on, and the third day, as He had planned, God raised Him from the dead. Christ triumphed over the grave. And only forty days later when He had finished speaking "of the things pertaining to the kingdom of God," He was taken up "and a cloud received him out of their [the apostles] sight."

It has been nearly two thousand years since all this happened. And Jesus' words still stand, unfulfilled: "If I go away, I will come again." He *did* go away, and just as surely He *will* come.

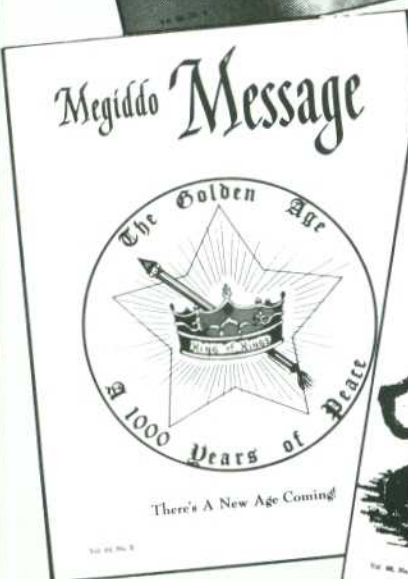
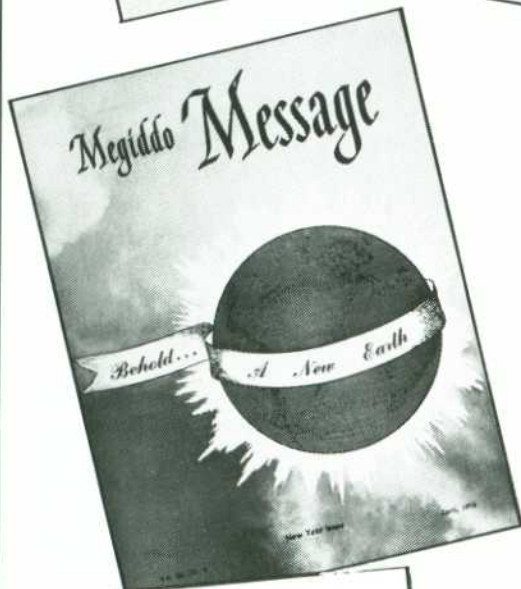
Four thousand years before the birth of Christ, plus approximately two thousand since, means that very little time remains—how much we do not know.

What time is it then?

It is TIME TO WATCH! April, 1975

NEVER must we become so immersed in the things of time that we forget eternity; never must we let our involvement in secular affairs, however necessary, distract us from remembering that there is a God, and that the issues of life and death are in His hands. Shortly He shall send His Son. The Day of the Lord *will* come, in God's own appointed time.

April, 1975



1975-1984

WHEN we must make a decision in some temporal matter, a decision which will affect us for weeks or months or years to come, we weigh the issues carefully. How can we give any less concern to the decisions which are deciding our destiny for all eternity!

How seriously we should consider the little choices of every hour—choices of what we should think about, what we should talk about, what we should read, what we should do, what attitude we should assume. How seriously we need to learn to consider all these, for *all eternity depends upon them*. This is the word we have from the Lord, delivered through His prophet Haggai: "Thus saith the Lord of hosts; Consider your ways" (Hag. 1:5). And just in case we didn't feel the full impact of this message from the Eternal, the Prophet repeats it a second time: "Thus saith the Lord of hosts: Consider your ways" (v. 7). Consider and act wisely. "Consider these things, ye that forget God, lest he rend you, and there be no deliverer" (Ps. 50:22, Septuagint).

April, 1978

THOUGH duty is ever a present thing, it is constructed out of the past and runs endlessly into the future. We thus have the past with its memories, the present with its duties, and the future with its anticipations—one for wisdom, one for action, and one for hope.

April, 1980

HIGH RISK VENTURERS

God doesn't want us to neglect our property, or jeopardize our friendships, or sacrifice a promising lifetime career for a seemingly "risky" decision of faith. Or does He?

It may be that He does. If His promises mean anything to us, they must mean everything—at whatever cost. There is absolutely no risk as to the certainty of God's promises; but there is risk so far as the things of this world are concerned. We may or may not be able to enjoy the so-called "normal" pleasures of life. God must be first. His righteousness must come first. We are *still* called to sacrifice and serve.

Someone has said that the Christian gets the best of two worlds. In a sense this is definitely not true. We cannot be working and planning with our heart set on this world and expect to secure a place in the world to come. But we will find that by concentrating on preparing for the world to come, venturing everything on the Word of the Lord, we shall obtain a hundredfold of blessing in this world. The change of perspective makes half the difference.

Where are the great men and women of faith today who are willing to step out on a high risk venture for God? Shall you be one of them? Shall I? December, 1981

I asked the New Year for some motto sweet,
Some rule of life by which to guide my feet,
I asked and paused; it answered soft and low,
"God's will *to know*."

"Will knowledge then suffice, New Year?" I cried;
But ere the question into silence died
The answer came, "No, this remember too,
God's will *to do*."

Once more I asked, "Is there still more to tell?"
And once again the answer sweetly fell;
"Yes, this one thing all other things above,
God's will *to love*."

April, 1979

SOME Abib will mark the beginning of the most important year ever, the year which will bring the end of all things past and the opening to all things future. Some New Year we will welcome the beginning of the year in which Jesus will return. We may be welcoming that year right now. Never before has there been so much evidence pointing to the end of the age. Never before has there been more to support our confidence that we *are* nearing the end. As one believer has said, "Christians never had more reasons to believe that the coming of Christ could occur any day than they have in the present prophetic crisis in the world."

One of these days, the heavens will open and down the parted skies will come the King with all His retinue of shining angels. Then will follow the Judgment of His servants and the crowning of the saints, the inaugurating of the new government, and the ensuing battle of Armageddon.

There will be worldwide programs of rehabilitation, re-education, restoration, and reconstruction. There will be the glorious Millennium, a thousand years of peace, progress and prosperity while the populace of the Kingdom are developed. Then will follow the final Judgment and the dawn of Eternity. All this is forecast in the Word of God—it is enough to overwhelm the human mind!

Incredible as it all may seem, it will surely come to pass, and *right here in our world!* The ground on which we now stand will be under the jurisdiction of the new Kingdom; so will the land that is now under the dominion of every other government on earth today, whether China or Egypt or Germany or Spain. "All the ends of the earth shall see the salvation of our God."

April, 1978



SOON, very soon, we shall be seeing visible demonstrations right among us of the power of our great God. His Son shall return with power to remake these mortal bodies of ours and fashion them like unto His glorious body. This He is able to do—if we have done on our part now.

This is the God of Daniel. This is the God of Moses. And do we not rejoice to say that “this God is our God, forever and ever.” Is He not able also to deliver us, to save for time and eternity? He is able to do for us what no one else can. He has promised us more than eye has seen, or ear has heard, or the heart of man has imagined. Yes, *our God is able*.

March, 1982

FOREWARNED, READY?

What are our thoughts on the second coming of Christ? Is it an event that may someday occur but not now? Or is it a certainty that is constantly on our minds and a part of our very being?

We are aware, of course, that only God knows the day and hour, but Jesus foretold certain events that would precede His second appearing. He said, among other things, that His coming would be in a time such as it was in the days of Noah. What did the people think before the flood? What were they doing? We do not know a lot of particulars, but we do know they scoffed and ridiculed Noah. Are they not doing much the same today? In Noah’s time they went right on living in their own routine, worldly ways, giving no thought to the impending end of their world. Are not people today doing the same?

But what of us? Are *our* ways pleasing to God Almighty? In Matthew 24:42 Jesus tells us, “Watch therefore: for ye know not what hour your Lord doth come.”

If ever the words of the ancient prophet were true, they are true today. “The great day of the Lord is near, it is near and hasteth greatly.”

Let us take inventory of our lives. Are we ready for the coming of the Lord? We are *not* ready if we have sin in our lives. We are not ready if our hearts go after the interests of this world.

Are you ready? Only you can answer, for you have been forewarned.

January, 1981

HAVE YOU MISLAID THE BLESSED HOPE?

The “Blessed hope,” even the “glorious appearing of . . . our Saviour Jesus Christ” (Tit. 2:13) shouts for attention from nearly every page of the New Testament. The one thing we cannot do with it is dismiss it. An average of one verse in every twenty-five proclaims it. And it is the promise which closes the book of Revelation: “Even so come, Lord Jesus.”

How dear is this hope to *our* hearts? Does our whole life pattern revolve around its glorious expectation? Have we the certainty of faith that gripped the hearts of those disciples of the first century who saw Him go away and heard the reassuring words of the angels: “This same Jesus . . . shall so come in like manner as ye have seen him go into heaven”? Are we looking, longing, living for that Day?

March, 1981

Remembering the Things That Are Behind

(Continued from page 5)

best, or deceived ourselves into thinking we were better than we were. We should remember with shame and remorse the times when we put self first, and God second.

We should recall the times when our minds were so taken up with the things of here and now that we forgot God. Our mind is like a treasury which can hold just so much. If we have given too much space to self, let us resolve that from this time forth we will be filled with the fruit of the Spirit which "is in all goodness and righteousness and truth; proving what is acceptable unto the Lord" (Eph. 5:9-10).

We should remember the many times that—judging by our actions—we were not worthy of God's mercy, and yet out of His unfailing goodness He granted us another new day.

We can all look back on glowing experiences, such times as we want never to forget. We remember the days when we played the man, shouldered our cross and did our duty.

As we look over the year that is past let us remember our greatest victories for God and righteousness and be encouraged to live even more victoriously in the year ahead. Let us remember the times when we stanch the stream of guilty thought, replacing it with a holy thought. Let us recall the times when we were easily entreated, giving up our own viewpoint in place of holding to it, when we thought surely we were right.

We could remember with profit the times when we had the moral strength to speak a word for God, shifting the conversation when we realized the things being conversed upon were such as could not be spoken to His glory.

With justified satisfaction we could remember the times when we had the strength to display a glow of spirituality on some fitting occasion, showing the right spirit, speaking the encouraging word to one who needed encouragement.

And remembering still further back into the past we should recall the time of our inception into the Christian life, when first the divine precepts and promises became a vital, activating force in our life and we decided to make an all-out effort to do God's will. For many years we may have felt our life was not what it should be, and may have been aware that such a course could not succeed, yet we were sitting on the fence, so to speak, our attitude being "some of God,

and some of self." Then suddenly we realized that such vain dissembling was getting us nowhere in the divine life and made the decision to begin in dead earnest to transform our life.

Such a day should mean more, much more to us than the day of our physical birth; and we should ever remember it, constantly asking ourselves the challenging questions, Where do I stand today? have I shown maximum growth and progress for the years of opportunity that have come and gone? or have I lost my first love, have I grown weary in well doing?

What shall we say of the Lord's Supper? It is really a ceremony of remembrance. The fellowship of the Lord's Supper is an act of memory. It is not as if Christ and His holy life are wholly in yesterday—for He is alive, and as the living Christ His influence is here with us now—but what He did is rooted in history. It took place on a specific day in the past. Memory is related to an event for us in history. And this we call to mind in the Communion.

It has been said that mankind requires oftener to be reminded than improved. And such are the elements of the Supper—the bread and the wine—tokens for remembering what they symbolize in the historic faith of the church: "that the Lord Jesus, on the night when he was betrayed, took bread, and when he had given thanks, he broke it, and said, 'This is my body which is broken for you; do this in remembrance of me.'"

The fellowship of the Lord's supper, then, should be a living remembrance in which Christ comes to us in all His saving and transforming power. We recall Him to mind in the Communion, and thus He becomes a living presence.

We remember His perfect obedience and sacrifice and are shamed into repentance for our disobedience and selfish ease. We remember how He learned obedience by the things which He suffered, and we are empowered to profit by our adversities and disappointments. We remember that we do not live by bread alone but also by truth and love and the Holy Word.

During the coming year let us remember the things that are behind, insofar as they are worth remembering, all the while looking ahead to the fulfillment of God's great and precious promises, whereby we can be made partakers of the divine nature, and live eternally in the "everlasting kingdom of our Lord and Saviour, Jesus Christ."

MM

It matters not for thee to know
What this New Year may yet bestow;
'Tis thine to do and live, and be
What God and duty ask of thee.

This I Affirm

I believe that God is supreme Creator.
I resolve that I will acknowledge Him in all my ways and commit my life to His service.

I believe that the eyes of the Lord are in every place beholding the evil and the good.
I resolve to live constantly as in His presence.

I believe that God has a plan, and that worthy mortals can be part of that plan.
I resolve that I will be more aware of my obligation as a potential participant in that plan.

I believe that fellowship with God's people is an essential part of true faith.
I resolve to do my part in building that fellowship, by taking every opportunity to be supportive, helpful, encouraging and kind.

I believe that faith, to be strong, must be fed and nurtured.
I resolve to read what will build up my faith, to apply my mind to thinking about faith-building evidence.

I believe in the duty of every Christian to strengthen and encourage others in the faith.
I resolve whatever the circumstances that I will always be a radiant and encouraging person.

I believe that a critical, fault-finding spirit is not Christlike.
I resolve never to find unnecessary fault.

I believe that Christians should not hold grudges.
I resolve to forgive others as I want God to forgive me. I will not hold any grudge or feeling against anyone, however much I feel I have been wronged.

I believe that Christians must maintain a flawless standard of honesty before the brotherhood and before the world.

I resolve that I will be absolutely honest. I will not misrepresent, distort, color, or exaggerate the truth by anything I say or do.

I believe that Christians should be primarily concerned with upholding the principles of Christ in their lives.

I resolve that I will not say or do anything that might bring dishonor to the cause of Christ.

I believe that Christians should be more concerned with making themselves right in the sight of God than in condemning others.

I resolve that I will always judge myself with rigor and others with leniency.

I believe that God's truth can transform lives just as effectively today as it could in ages past.

I resolve to show that God's truth is transforming my life, that I am indeed crucifying my old nature and nurturing the new.

I believe that my life, my time, and my talents are a sacred trust from God.

I resolve that I will make wise use of all that God has entrusted to me.

I believe that God is working today just as He worked in ages past.

I resolve that I will support His work openly and wholeheartedly in any way that I can.

I believe that Christians should talk like Christians.

I resolve never to betray my high calling by any unkind, unnecessary or unbecoming words.

I believe that Christians should be Christlike, that they should be men and women of prayer.

I resolve that I will follow the example of Christ, that my life will be a life of prayer, a life that is guided, disciplined, and motivated by my dedication to God.

I believe that "now is the accepted time, now is the day of salvation."

I resolve to fulfill my obligations to God now, today, while time is granted me. I have no claim upon tomorrow unless I use today.

I believe that God will judge and reward each of His servants according to what they have done.

I resolve to live my life as under the scrutiny of God, so that I may have a good account to render of my life and may someday experience the supreme pleasure of receiving His "Well done."

This I Affirm

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I resolve that I will acknowledge Him in all my ways and commit my life to His service.

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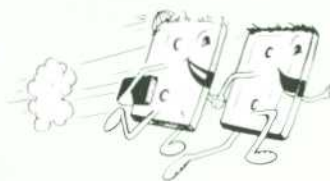
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