



Megiddo Message

DEVOTED TO THE CAUSE OF CHRIST

The Man of Genesis Receives Dominion

HYMN OF UNITY

TIMELY TOPICS

UNDERSTANDING THE BIBLE

CHRISTIAN YOUTH IN THESE TIMES

MEASURING UP

I'M THINKING

MEDITATIONS ON THE WORD

QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS

TRUSTING HIM

Megiddo Message

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A religious magazine, devoted to the cause of Christ and published for the dissemination of Bible truth alone. The MEGIDDO MESSAGE will

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- Answer perplexing religious questions
- Give you courage for these uncertain times
- Help you live above the world's moral corruption
- Reveal to you how to develop a character acceptable to God.
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Editorially Speaking...

After Four Weeks--What?

DURING THE past four weeks we have been especially blessed. The Abib season, when we remember our Saviour's birth and life and His tremendous moral and spiritual accomplishments, is a time of vital renewing and fresh beginning. We recall His childhood, His youth, His ministry. We solemnize again the New Passover and renew our covenant to surrender our own lives to the will of the Father as completely as did Christ during those last agonizing hours in the garden of Gethsemane. And then on the fifteenth of Abib we triumph with Him in the joy of the Resurrection. With such a hope before us how can we do less than make the coming year the better—indeed *the best* year of our lives!

But already the Abib moon is waning and passing into history. And the question confronts us: Did we get off to a good start? How much did we accomplish in these first four weeks? How many of our new year resolutions (think positively!) have we kept? Surely it is not too soon to make a careful and thorough examination of our progress.

Could we visualize a farmer going to the greatest of care in preparing a seedbed, searching diligently to obtain the best seed, planting the bed, and then showing no interest in it during the first four weeks of its germination and growth? From the very day he planted those tiny seeds until the final crop was harvested the diligent farmer would be caring for that field. He would keep a vigilant eye out for pests. He would fence in well its borders from roaming animals. He would guard it from the fowls of the air. As the seed germinated he would watch carefully for disease. And before the first weed appeared, he would be hard at work, turning over the soil to prevent their growth. His watchful eye over that field would be intense and continuous unto the end of the harvest.

Can we as Christians show less concern for our harvest in life—even eternal life—than a farmer shows for his crop? No, never! Our enthusiasm for gaining eternity must far surpass the most energetic earthly enterprise ever undertaken by man if we would hope for success.

Let us each now make a thorough investigation to determine if we have made some real progress in overcoming some besetment during the past four weeks. Are we more patient? more considerate? more kind? more humble? Just how do we accept a word of warning? Are we more ready to hear, less ready to speak? How about our conversation?

If our progress has been slow, let us thank God for continued opportunity. But let us remind ourselves that the mercy of the Lord is not from everlasting to everlasting upon those who dillydally. If we fail to redeem our allotted time, we shall have to suffer for our negligence.

Whether we ran fast or only fair during the first month of the year, let us determine right now that the next month shall be better—*the best!* ●●

The Man of Genesis

Receives Dominion

PRAYER

O Lord, our Lord, how excellent is Thy Name in all the earth! who hast set Thy glory above the heavens.

Thou art eternal and changeless, who through ever-changing scenes of joy and pain, effort and rest, ledest Thy people to a nobler destiny than they ever of themselves could conceive; grant that, having our minds steadfastly set upon Thy commandments, and being continually directed by Thy voice speaking to us in the events of the passing hour, we may meet with courage whatever the coming days may bring of evil or of good, being afraid of nothing man or the world may do or threaten, and fearful only of falling below a worthiness of those things which Thou hast prepared for us as set forth in Thy holy Word.

When we consider Thy heavens, the work of Thy fingers, the moon and the stars which Thou hast ordained, may we be led to exclaim with the Psalmist: "What is man, that thou art mindful of him? and the son of man that thou visitest him?" What am I, that I should merit Thy notice, or be afforded a chance to qualify to be a part of the one new man to be given dominion in that glorious Day when Thy Son will reign as King of the entire earth?

We know from Thy Word that it is Thy purpose to create one new man in righteousness and true holiness, and to ultimately give him dominion over the earth and everything upon it.

We pray Thee to hasten the day when these glorious events foretold in Thy Word will begin to take shape, and we pray for the wisdom to engage wholeheartedly in this work of reforming ourselves, that we may be a part of this one new man to be given dominion.

We realize how desperately this sin-cursed earth needs Thee to take a hand. Men are doing evil with both hands earnestly. Immorality and all forms of social evils are on the increase; men and nations are fighting each other; evils of all kinds are flourishing. Man has failed in his attempts to create an acceptable social order for himself; only the return of Thy Son to earth can bring order out of existing chaos.

We pray Thee to give us strength to continue steadfast to the end, that a place of honor may be ours in Thy coming Kingdom, for which we humbly pray. Amen.

DISCOURSE

WE HAVE already discussed the man of Genesis who is made in the image of God and the process by which he is being formed into that perfect image.

Let us review:

All men are mortal by nature, corruptible, subject to sin and death. The natural man is not in the image of God. He is neither mentally nor morally nor physically like God.

But God offers a plan whereby men and women may be fashioned into the likeness of Himself. This plan includes a three-step program of rigorous development.

FIRST, we must become *mentally like God* by learning of God, His plan, His purposes, His promises and what we must do to obtain eternal salvation. "Study to show thyself approved unto God" (II Tim. 2:15). "Search the Scriptures: for in them ye think ye have eternal life" (John 5:39). "Let this mind be in you, which was also in Christ Jesus" (Phil. 2:5).

SECOND, we must apply that knowledge to transform our lives until we are *morally like God*. This is a prodigious undertaking, but not beyond human capability. This fact is supported by divine promise: "There hath no temptation taken you but such as is common to man: but God is faithful, who will not suffer you to be tempted above that ye are able; but will with the temptation also make a way to escape, that ye may be able to bear it" (I Cor. 10:13).

Being made into the moral image of God is a process of development, being "created in righteousness and true holiness" (Eph. 4:22-24). It is to conform ourselves to His image so completely that under any and every circumstance we will spontaneously think as He would have us think and act as He would have us act. It is the fulfilling of the divine command: "But as he which hath called you is holy, so be ye holy in all manner of conversation; because it is written, Be ye holy; for I am holy" (I Pet. 1:15, 16).

But when mortals have done all that they can do to attain to the moral image of God, they still are mortal—not divine—in nature. They are still subject to sickness, pain and finally death. Before they can be fully in the image of God they must receive

a third transformation which is beyond human power to perform:

THIRD, they must be made *physically like God*.

A just and perfect Noah, a righteous Zacharias and Elisabeth, a faithful Abraham, a far-sighted Moses, and all the faithful of past ages are now asleep in death, silent in the tomb. They attained the mental and moral image of God, but dead men are certainly not physically in God's image. A mighty power must be unleashed if they are to break the bands of death and be transformed into the likeness of God to die no more.

And this power will come from God, it is His un-failing promise: "I will ransom them from the power of the grave; I will redeem them from death: O death, I will be thy plagues; O grave, I will be thy destruction" (Hos. 13:14).

The Resurrection is a vital phase of God's spiritual creation, for though a man be ever so perfect, apart from the intervention of divine power he would perish forever, even as the vilest wretch.

The Resurrection was the hope of all God's people through ages, their hope in life and their stay at death. Job said, "Oh that my words were now written! oh that they were printed in a book! that they were graven with an iron pen and lead in the rock for ever! For I know that my Redeemer liveth, and that he shall stand at the latter day upon the earth: and though after my skin worms destroy this body, yet in my flesh shall I see God: whom I shall see for myself, and mine eyes shall behold, and not another; though my reins be consumed within me" (Job 19:23—27).

The angel assured Daniel, "Many of them that sleep in the dust of the earth shall awake." Furthermore, he knew that he himself would share in the Resurrection, for he had attained the mental and moral likeness of God. The angel assured him, "But go thou thy way till the end be: for thou shalt rest, and stand in thy lot at the end of the days" (Dan. 12:2, 13).

Is it any wonder that the early Christians, with such a rich background of Scriptural affirmation and the risen Christ as veritable proof of the power of God, marked the entrance to their tombs with the symbolic anchor of hope—hope that beyond the brief sleep of death they should rise to life again?

As a witness of the resurrection of Christ, the apostle Paul should be a recognized authority on the subject of life, death and future life. Let us consult his Resurrection sermon in First Corinthians 15: "Now if Christ be preached that he rose from the dead, how say some among you that there is no resurrection of the dead? But if there be no resurrection of the dead, then is Christ not risen: and if Christ be not risen then is our preaching vain, and your faith is also vain. . . . Ye are yet in your sins. Then they also which are fallen asleep in Christ are perished.

"If in this life only we have hope in Christ, we

are of all men most miserable. But now is Christ risen from the dead, and become the firstfruits of them that slept. . . . But every man in his own order: Christ the firstfruits; afterward they that are Christ's at his coming" (I Cor. 15:12—23).

What is the purpose of the Resurrection? "For we must all appear before the judgment seat of Christ; that every one may receive the things done in his body, according to that he hath done, whether it be good or bad" (II Cor. 5:10).

Christ, the Head of this figurative man, the Church, was made in the image of God *mentally* and *morally* during His earthly career by doing always those things which pleased His heavenly Father, and *physically* at the Father's right hand after He ascended to heaven. He "only hath immortality" (I Tim. 6:16); He only is the "firstborn of every creature," and is in the image of God (Col. 1:15). But at His return, all who have followed His example, conforming their lives completely to the divine standard, shall be judged righteous and rewarded with life and immortality and the physical likeness of God.

Then shall be fulfilled the words of Gen. 1:26: "And God said, Let us make man in our image, after our likeness" and the next phase of the plan shall follow:

"LET THEM HAVE DOMINION"

It is this yearning desire for immortality and dominion that impels the Church through a long and arduous probationary period to fashion a character so far superior to that of the natural man that not a flaw or blemish is discernible to God's all-penetrating eye (Eph. 5:27).

The promise of future dominion as introduced in Genesis is repeated and amplified numerous times throughout the Scriptures. In one of Jesus' parables which depicts the final Day of Reckoning, the Judge is represented as saying to a loyal steward, "Well done, thou good and faithful servant: thou hast been faithful over a few things, I will make thee ruler over many things" (Matt. 25:21). Herein lies the recompense for fidelity to God now: It assures future rulership.

Now who or what will this one perfect, composite man have dominion over? In the allegory of the creation, the promise reads: "And God said, Let us make man in our image, after our likeness: and let them have dominion over the fish of the sea, and over the fowl of the air, and over the cattle, and over all the earth, and over every creeping thing that creepeth upon the earth" (Gen. 1:26).

The Psalmist paraphrases this promise in the following manner: "What is man, that thou art mindful of him? and the son of man, that thou visitest him? . . . Thou madest him to have dominion over the works of thy hands; thou hast put all things under his feet: all sheep and oxen, yea, and the beasts of the field; the fowl of the air, and

the fish of the sea, and whatsoever passeth through the paths of the seas" (Ps. 8:4, 6—8).

Our higher instinct would move us to rebel at the prospect of having dominion over literal sheep, oxen, and the beasts of the fields; the birds of the air and the fish of the seas. We would dismiss the idea as too inappropriate ever to have emanated from a God who is the Source of all wisdom and knowledge.

Artists have conceived this to signify that the wild beasts of the animal kingdom—the lion, the bear, the wolf—shall in the future become as docile as to submit to the leading of a little child. Again, that Utopian state is represented by a beautiful garden in which a happy child is caressing the king of beasts, now grown meek and mild as a lamb.

But better things are in store for the saints of God than educating lions, or charming snakes, or taming wolves, or exercising supremacy over weasels and woodchucks. How could reasoning men and women be compelled to live the higher life of self-sacrifice with no stronger incentive than a future dominion over the animal creation?

A nobler, and far superior incentive than this is provided. Since the man of Genesis 1:26 is representative, the beasts are likewise symbolic.

In the Bible people are called such animals as their nature suggests, whether good or bad; and indeed, no more expressive means of describing human nature could have been employed. Because of his intellect and powers of reason, man is a step above the beast. But when he abuses his powers of mind and his powers of will to restrain irregular passions, he sinks to the level of the beast—and often below. It is common parlance to refer to the stubborn person as mulish; the filthy and sensual as swinelike; the brawny, muscular man is said to be an ox.

We find the same usages in Scripture. Men and women of gentle, yielding disposition are likened to sheep. Others who imitate the craft and subtlety of serpents are designated as serpents. A brief survey of Biblical use of animal terms will help us define those in Genesis.

Beasts: Speaking of the opposition of wicked men which he encountered Paul wrote, "... after the manner of men I have fought with beasts at Ephesus" (I Cor. 15:32). In Jude 10 workers of evil are compared to brute beasts: "But these speak evil of those things which they know not: but what they know naturally, as brute beasts, in those things they corrupt themselves."

Foxes: Jesus said of the sly and crafty Herod, "Go ye, and tell that fox, ..." (Luke 13:32). The false prophets of Israel were like "foxes in the deserts" (Ezek. 13:4, 6).

Wolves: Jesus warned against "false prophets, which come to you in sheep's clothing, but inwardly they are ravening wolves" (Matt. 7:15)—fierce, destructive, yet cloaking their malicious intentions

with a hypocritical, friendly manner. Paul prophesied of "grievous wolves" who would make havoc of the Lord's true flock until the apostasy should be complete (Acts 20:29, 30).

Lions: The Psalmist was among "lions," "even the sons of men, whose teeth are spears and arrows, and their tongue a sharp sword" (Ps. 57:4).

Serpents: John the Baptist rightly pronounced the scribes and Pharisees, the religious professors of his day, as "serpents," a "generation of vipers" (Matt. 3:7). In the same manner Jesus addressed them: "Ye serpents, ye generation of vipers," and condemned them to the judgment of God (Matt. 23:33).

Dogs: "Dogs have compassed me: the assembly of the wicked have inclosed me" (Ps. 22:16). Spurious teachers are compared to "dumb dogs, they cannot bark; sleeping, lying down, loving to slumber, ... greedy dogs" (Isa. 53:10, 11). Within the gold-paved-street City of God no dogs shall be found, no workers of evil; all are "without" (Rev. 22:15).

Fish: Jesus called the apostles to be "fishers of men" (Matt. 4:19).

Sheep: Jesus addressed His humble followers as His sheep: "My sheep hear my voice, and I know them, and they follow me: and I give unto them eternal life; and they shall never perish, neither shall any man pluck them out of my hand" (John 10:27, 28). Jesus spoke of Himself as "the good shepherd, and [I] know my sheep, and am known of mine" (John 10:44).

Jesus' parable in Matthew 25 pictures the separation of the sheep and the goats, or the faithful and unfaithful servants. "And he shall set the sheep on his right hand, but the goats on the left" (Matt. 25:33).

Flocks: "Ye my flock, the flock of my pasture, are men, and I am your God, saith the Lord God" (Ezek. 34:31). God's flocks are His people.

Dominion—A Bible Promise

When the man of Genesis is created in the mental, moral and physical image of God, he is ready for worldwide dominion over "fish," "fowl," "cattle" and "creeping things"—all figurative. However, many evil beasts which roam the earth today—men and women possessed of the baser animal instincts—would never come into subjection to Christ and the saints. Such must be eliminated at the onset, as we read in Ezek. 34:25, "I . . . will cause the evil beasts to cease out of the land."

The destruction of the evil beasts is accomplished by means of the Battle of Armageddon. The beasts which remain will be tamed, brought into subjection to divine law, and lose their beastly characteristics, as we read in Hosea 2:18: "And in that day will I make a covenant for them with the beasts of the field, and with the fowls of heaven, and with the creeping things of the ground: and I

will break the bow and the sword and the battle out of the earth, and will make them to lie down safely." So rigidly will the law be enforced that no open manifestation of evil will be permitted. Wrangling between individuals and nations, the moral depredation which is the curse of this present age, will belong to the forgotten past.

A beautiful figurative description of the future dominion of Christ and the saints over the nations of earth is found in Isaiah 11:4—9:

"With righteousness shall he judge the poor, and reprove with equity for the meek of the earth: and he shall smite the earth with the rod of his mouth, and with the breath of his lips shall he slay the wicked.

"And righteousness shall be the girdle of his loins, and faithfulness the girdle of his reins. The wolf also shall dwell with the lamb, and the leopard shall lie down with the kid; and the calf and the young lion and the fatling together; and a little child shall lead them. And the cow and the bear shall feed; their young ones shall lie down together: and the lion shall eat straw like the ox. And the sucking child shall play on the hole of the asp, and the weaned child shall put his hand on the cockatrice' den.

"They shall not hurt nor destroy in all my holy mountain: for the earth shall be full of the knowledge of the Lord, as the waters cover the sea."

All the inhabitants of the Kingdom, whether formerly known as wolves, lions or bears, shall be so transformed in nature as to live peaceably, happily, holily, brother with brother.

"And a little child [Christ and His Church] shall lead them," young in the immortal life, yet full grown in the Christian graces and made physically in the image of God—the man of Genesis 1:26.

What immeasurable exaltation is set before us poor creatures of clay! What loftiness of position to aspire to! What heights of supremacy to waken and stir every noble impulse within the believer's breast! By virtue of a righteous life we can ascend from the dust of mortality to scale the heights of power, glory, might, and dominion in a world without end. The promise is as old as the plan of God, as certain as His very existence.

Thoughts such as these had overwhelmed the mind of David when, musing upon his own speckworthlessness, he was led to exclaim, "When I consider thy heavens, the work of thy fingers, the moon and the stars, which thou hast ordained; what is man, that thou art mindful of him? and the son of man, that thou visitest him?" What is man but a mass of corruption! Yet the singer of Israel knew of man's potentials—even to becoming a part of the multitudinous man made in the image of God—and answered his own query. Speaking in the past tense of things yet future, he said,

"Thou . . . hast crowned him with glory and honour. Thou madest him to have dominion over the

works of thy hands; thou hast put all things under his feet: all sheep and oxen, yea, and the beasts of the field; the fowl of the air, and the fish of the sea, and whatsoever passeth through the paths of the seas." In reverential awe he concluded, "O Lord, our Lord, how excellent is thy name in all the earth!" (Ps. 8:3—9). How excellent indeed is such a Creator who will look upon man in his lowly estate and condescend to share with him the dominion of the universe!

Hebrews 2 repeats this same text and sustains the hope that "all things" shall one day be put in subjection under the feet of the man made in God's image. Indeed it is this very promise that has enabled the faithful of the ages to hold a straight course amid devious desires, to put all things of a carnal, earthly, sensual nature under their feet, exercising absolute self-mastery, that in the eternity to come they might rule the world in righteousness.

Power to Banish Sin

This one man to whom dominion will be given shall have the power to banish sin and all sinners from the earth. The words of Isaiah the prophet are forthright: "For the nation and kingdom that will not serve thee shall perish; yea, those nations shall be utterly wasted" (Isa. 60:12). And again, "Behold, the day of the Lord cometh, cruel both with wrath and fierce anger, to lay the land desolate: and he shall destroy the sinners thereof out of it" (Isa. 13:9).

The Revelator, speaking of the heavenly city that shall one day be established on the earth, said, "And they shall bring the glory and honour of the nations into it. And there shall in no wise enter into it anything that defileth, neither whatsoever worketh abomination, or maketh a lie: but they which are written in the Lamb's book of life" (Rev. 21:26, 27). Sin will be banished to the point foreshadowed by the prophet Zephaniah: "The Lord, . . . the king of Israel, even the Lord, is in the midst of thee: thou shalt not see evil any more" (Zeph. 3:15).

"Though a sinner do evil a hundred times, and his days be prolonged, yet surely I know that it shall be well with them that fear God, which fear before him: but it shall not be well with the wicked, neither shall he prolong his days, which are as a shadow; because he feareth not before God" (Eccl. 8:12, 13). Sin and all sinners shall be banished forever.

Dominion Over Other Men

Furthermore, this one man is promised dominion over other men. There is no feature that appeals more strongly to human beings than personal power over others. The love of money is deeply embedded in the make-up of many people, but often the power that money brings is of more appeal than the actual pride of possession.

God sanctions this desire for power over others when it is properly developed, controlled and rightly executed. In fact it is among the choicest of the promises held out to overcomers: "And he that overcometh, and keepeth my works unto the end, to him will I give power over the nations: and he shall rule them with a rod of iron. . . . To him that overcometh will I grant to sit with me in my throne, even as I also overcame, and am set down with my Father in his throne. . . . He that overcometh shall inherit all things: and I will be his God, and he shall be my son" (Rev. 2:26; 3:21; 21:7).

But this power will be granted only to those fully made in the image of God. They will be worthy of the honor because they have first learned to have power over themselves. God will never deviate from His eternal principle: "He that ruleth over men must be just, ruling in the fear of God" (II Sam. 23:3).

The composite man made in God's image shall be elevated to position, as prophetically described by Hannah: "The Lord kills, and He causes life; He brings down to the grave, and He makes alive. The Lord impoverishes, and He makes rich; He demotes, and He promotes. He lifts the poor out of the dust and raises the beggar from the dump to have him seated with the leaders, to have him obtain a seat of honor; for the earth's pillars are the Lord's; He set the world upon them. . . . The Lord judges the earth from end to end; He supplies the king with power; He enhances the might of His anointed" (I Sam. 2:6—10, Berkeley).

The promise of dominion is repeated in Psalm 132: "The Lord hath sworn in truth unto David; he will not turn from it; Of the fruit of thy body will I set upon thy throne. If thy children will keep my covenant and my testimony that I shall teach them, their children shall also sit upon thy throne for evermore. For the Lord hath chosen Zion; he hath desired it for his habitation" (vs. 11—13). Christ and His saints, the spiritual seed of David, the man made in God's image, shall "sit upon thy throne for evermore."

Dominion Over the Elements

A revealing glimpse into the dominion over physical elements is demonstrated by our Master when a great storm arose on the sea of Galilee and it seemed the boat was in danger of capsizing. In haste the disciples awoke their sleeping Master saying, "Master, carest thou not that we perish? And he arose, and rebuked the wind, and said unto the sea, Peace, be still. And the wind ceased and there was a great calm" (Mark 4:38). Jesus had this power, and the saints shall possess even greater power when all things are put under their control.

Even in the times of the prophets, such power was manifest. For example, when Elijah prayed that it should not rain, "it rained not on the earth by the space of three years and six months" (James

5:17). And again he prayed, and the rain fell in torrents (I Kings 18:45). Also in the time of Saul, Samuel the prophet said, "Now therefore stand and see this great thing, which the Lord will do before your eyes. Is it not wheat harvest to day? I will call unto the Lord, and he shall send thunder and rain; that ye may perceive and see that your wickedness is great. . . . So Samuel called unto the Lord; and the Lord sent thunder and rain that day" (I Sam. 12:16—18).

Dominion Over Disease

The man made in God's image is promised dominion over disease. Jesus healed the sick, cleansed the lepers, opened blind eyes and made the lame to walk. But all the people He healed were comparatively few in number. In the coming age, all sickness shall be abolished forever. "There shall in no wise enter into it anything that defileth" (Rev. 21:27), and disease is certainly defiling. The prophet Isaiah says of that day, "Then the eyes of the blind shall be opened, and the ears of the deaf shall be unstopped. Then shall the lame man leap as an hart, and the tongue of the dumb sing. . . . And the inhabitant shall not say, I am sick" (Isa. 35:5, 6; 33:24).

Dominion Over Accidents

The man made in God's image shall have power over the elements which cause accidents. There shall be nothing to "hurt nor destroy in all my holy mountain" (Isa. 11:9), neither shall there be any to molest or make afraid (Mic. 4:4).

Psalm 91 gives a beautiful picture of that time: "I will say of the Lord, He is my refuge and my

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fortress: my God; in him will I trust. Surely he shall deliver thee from the snare of the fowler, and from the noisome pestilence. He shall cover thee with his feathers, and under his wings shalt thou trust: his truth shall be thy shield and buckler.

"Thou shalt not be afraid for the terror by night; nor for the arrow that flieth by day; nor for the pestilence that walketh in darkness; nor for the destruction that wasteth at noonday. A thousand shall fall at thy side, and ten thousand at thy right hand; but it shall not come nigh thee. Only with thine eyes shalt thou behold and see the reward of the wicked. Because thou hast made the Lord, which is my refuge, even the most High thy habitation; there shall no evil befall thee, neither shall any plague come nigh thy dwelling. For he shall give his angels charge over thee, to keep thee in all thy ways. They shall bear thee up in their hands, lest thou dash thy foot against a stone." This will remove all possibility of accident.

Dominion Over Death

The man made in God's image will have dominion over mortality. Though it be the last enemy to survive in the new era, death shall be destroyed (I Cor. 15:26; Rev. 20:14).

"I will ransom them from the power of the grave; I will redeem them from death: O death, I will be thy plagues; O grave, I will be thy destruction" (Hos. 13:14). And the apostle Paul repeated the promise: "So when this corruptible shall have put on incorruption, and this mortal shall have put on immortality, then shall be brought to pass the saying that is written, Death is swallowed up in victory. O death, where is thy sting? O grave, where is thy victory?" (I Cor. 15:54, 55).

Jesus' own words of promise are: "The children of this world marry, and are given in marriage; but they which shall be accounted worthy to obtain that world, and the resurrection from the dead, neither marry nor are given in marriage: neither can they die any more: for they are equal unto the angels" (Luke 20:34-36).

Paul tells us further: "We are citizens of Heaven; our outlook goes beyond this world to the hopeful expectation of the savior who will come from Heaven, the Lord Jesus Christ. He will change these wretched bodies of ours so that they resemble his own glorious body, by that power of his which makes him the master of everything that is" (Phil. 3:20, 21, Phillips).

Scope of Dominion

The scope of the dominion of this one new man will be as broad as the world. Daniel 7:27 reveals: "And the kingdom and dominion, and the greatness of the kingdom under the whole heaven, shall be given to the people of the saints of the most High, whose kingdom is an everlasting kingdom,

and all dominions shall serve and obey him." His dominion shall be *under the whole heaven*. Zechariah speaks further of its extent: "And his dominion shall be from sea even to sea, and from the river even to the ends of the earth" (Zech. 9:10).

The first phase of this dominion will be exercised during the thousand-year reign of Christ and the saints over the mortal nations of earth, but it certainly will not end there. Man's old, outmoded systems of government will have given way to the new and better government of the man made in God's image, and during a thousand years of peace the nations of earth will be taught the new and better way. Then, at the end of the Millennium, all who are judged righteous shall receive eternal life and form the populace of the eternal Kingdom, which will be an "everlasting kingdom, and all dominions shall serve and obey him"—the one new composite man, eternal, all powerful, all glorious, made in God's image. ●●

Abib Echoes

A thousand sounds, and each a joyous sound
went ringing round,
And with the setting of the sun did everyone
Give welcome to the New Year newly born.
'Twas Abib First, God's own appointed day,
A day of love and hope and peace and holy joy
To warm and cheer and stimulate our hears.

AS THE SUN dropped beneath a clouded horizon on the evening of April 6, New Year greetings echoed everywhere within the Megiddo Community in Rochester, N. Y. Visiting friends and readers from Canada, Ohio, and various parts of New York and New Jersey had gathered to celebrate with us, for this was the beginning of another year as God taught the ancient Hebrews to measure time. It was also the day which we set aside to honor our Saviour and King, Jesus Christ.

With prayer, praise and presentation, the members of the Megiddo Church were prepared to mark the event. The subject of the main feature of the program was the main issue of the life of each of us: "The Choice," a religious drama depicting scenes from the ministry of Christ. It was *the choice* as Jesus presented it, *the choice* as it affected the lives of His hearers—disciples, Jews, people of authority, and common laborers. Multitudes heard. Many listened. Some, like Nicodemus, caught the message. Some, like Zachaeus, felt its impact. Others, like Joseph of Arimathea, were convinced. Still others, like the rich young ruler, were overwhelmed. To all the problem was that of decision: Would it be worth the price?—a solemn thought for each of us to carry into the New Year.

(Continued on page 17)

Who is like unto Thee, who teachest knowledge
 And createst the fruit of the lips?
 Thy purposes are deep, exalted; Thy years have no end.
 For all time shall the glory of Thy majesty be Thine,
 And Thine alone;
 For Thou wilt not yield of Thy praise unto other gods.

Glory and honor proceed from Thee,
 Thy Unity is declared by Thee.
 Thou wast not counselled when Thou madest all things;
 From thine own depths Thou didst conceive Thy works.

We have not discerned a portion of Thy ways.
 But lo! We have learned from Thy works.
 Thou art the God who unaided didst create;
 Thou wast not compelled and hadst no need of help.
 Thou wast before all; naught could exist apart from Thee.

No God, save Thee, is known; none beside Thee
 Hath ever arisen or existed, or been heard or seen;
 Nor after Thee shall there be.
 First and last and eternal is the God of Israel.

Blessed art Thou, O one and only God,
 Who is like unto Thee?

There is no knowledge like Thy knowledge,
 No greatness like Thy greatness,
 For Thy purposes are very deep.
 There is no majesty like Thy majesty,
 No holiness like Thy holiness,
 No nearness like nearness to Thee;
 No righteousness like Thy righteousness,
 No salvation like Thy salvation;
 No strength like Thy strength,
 No mercy like Thy mercy,
 No grace like Thy graciousness.

There is no divinity like Thy divinity,
 And naught full of wonders like Thy glorious Name.
 Of all Thy creatures, none can compare with Thee.
 Their thoughts are not Thy thoughts,
 For there is no Creator beside Thee.

Finer than the finest substance,
 Mightiest of the mighty,
 Highest is He of the high, and most impenetrable;
 He is loftier than the loftiest,
 Greater than the greatest;
 Unsearchable above all else,
 No wit or wisdom can bring aught to compare with Him.
 Human thoughts and reflections weary themselves
 To estimate Him,
 To delimit Him,
 To delineate Him,
 To reveal Him.

Sole Creator, Living, Omnipotent, and All-wise!
 Lo, Thou livest and endurest to all eternity! ••

Forgotten Riches

A number of years ago a wealthy Englishman grew sick and died. When the day came for the reading of his will and the distribution of the fortune he had left, his favorite daughter was bitterly disappointed. The father had designated in the will that she was to receive "My Bible and all that it contains." Knowing that her father was a devoted student of the Bible and that this Book was near and dear to his heart, she hid it away in an old trunk and went on living as before.

As time passed, adversity seemed to dog her steps. Ill health and difficulty reduced her to poverty. Broken in health and spirit, in desperation she sought a solution to her problems. After trying every other means available to her, she turned to her father's Bible seeking the answer to her problems. You can imagine her surprise as she leafed through that long-forgotten Book to find that between many of the pages of the Bible her father had secreted large Bank of England Notes. This daughter had been wealthy all the time and had been unaware of her good fortune because she had failed to investigate her heritage: "My Bible and all that it contains."

Our heavenly Father has left us a great treasure in the pages of this wonderful Book. You may not be able to find bank notes between the pages of the Bible, but you can find peace, joy, hope, faith, and the promise of eternal life by reading and applying what this Book contains. Priceless treasures! Forgotten riches! What greater treasure can a man hope for?

Millions are worrying and grieving their lives away because they have not learned to place their confidence in the "Good old Book" and the God who is behind it. Too many things to do, too many places to go, too many problems to solve, have robbed mankind of the time needed to let God speak to their heart and mind through the pages of His written Word.

Shall we unite in a renewed search for its hidden treasures, that we may experience its eternal blessings? ••

Timely Topics

IS THE WORLD coming to an end?

Certainly not, for the earth "abideth forever." But those who take time for a second look at Bible prophecies find that they read like current events. Take, for instance, just one prophecy, the one in Daniel 12:4 about the increase of knowledge in the last days: "But thou, O Daniel, shut up the words, and seal the book, even to the time of the end: many shall run to and fro, and knowledge shall be increased." The implication is that the last days of human history will be a time of greatly increased general information and scientific knowledge and unprecedented change. And knowledge *has* increased. This fact is verified to us daily by the press and news media.

The Age of Change

In many areas of knowledge and activity, the change in the past fifty years—even in the past fifteen years in some fields—has been as great as in all previous human history. And the rate of change is accelerating.

Nations are changing; society is changing; moral values are changing—and this change is definitely *not* for the better. And the strain on the individual unable to change is all but unendurable.

We could cite changes taking place in the great nations of earth. For centuries, even through the first half of this century, the world was still dominated by the powers of colonialism. But since 1950 the picture has been transformed, almost beyond credibility. Colonialism is gone. The French, Belgian, and Dutch empires have disappeared; even the British Empire is all but gone.

And there are other changes. We have grown accustomed to scientific marvels, with all the changes they bring. A submarine that can travel under the polar ice cap without surfacing or refueling; missiles and bombs with explosive potential beyond our comprehension; a man all the way to the moon and back safely. We feel like saying, What next?

Now all of a sudden scientists are worrying about our limited supplies of natural resources we have always regarded as practically inexhaustible—oil, coal, natural gas. In the near future, they say, all this will be gone.

In the past the human population has been small enough that we could regard the atmosphere and the oceans and even the soil as limitless reservoirs which we can pollute at will or draw from at will. However, the situation has changed. Los Angeles has run out of pure air. Lake Erie has run out of

pure water. The problem facing mankind is fast becoming overwhelming.

And computers—every one knows that we live in an age of computers. How far will they go in displacing human hands? Experts now say that in the near future not only clerical and production jobs but also many professional services such as those of engineers, accountants, lawyers, bankers, and architects will be computerized. Life is changing, and the implications are startling.

The Bible says knowledge will be increased. Can we believe it? There are more than 33 million adults in America alone taking advanced school-work. They feel they have to do it to keep up. We quote from a researcher and educational consultant for the World Council of Churches, Theodore Gill:

"We all obtain information and our lives are changed by numerous pervasive forces that have an effect on mankind today. I am talking about publications and about politics and about families and neighborhoods, about unions and gangs, about television and beer halls, about race and nations and uncontrolled violence, about movies and their stars and records and pop groups, public relations and galloping vulgarity.

"All this is going on always; all of it is everywhere, all of it is molding us and making us what we will be; and all of it is called education."

The center of life for most people today is not the church but education. And the great mass of information today helps to create our great problems. It is complex, and frustrating to many people, pulling them away from God.

But it is all in fulfillment of that wonderful prophecy made centuries ago: "Knowledge shall be increased." It is one of the most authentic indications of the end of this age and the imminence of the return of Christ.

How shall it affect us? Shall we allow the bombardment with extraneous information to involve us in a world that is destined to fall, or shall we rather let the fact strengthen our faith and gird us for greater spiritual endeavor?

These days when everyone is clamoring for our attention, let us not forget to give God an ear—He is saying some very important things! ●●

We tell Thee of our care
Of the sure burden pressing day by day,
And in the light and pity of Thy face,
The burden melts away.
We breathe our secret wish
The importunate longing which no man may
see,
We ask it humbly, or, more restful still,
We leave it all to Thee.

—Selected.

MEGIDDO MESSAGE

UNDERSTANDING THE BIBLE

"Study to shew thyself approved unto God."

The Kingdom of God

THE EARTH purified, beautified, glorified, under the eternal dominion of Christ and His saints; a realm where everyone will dwell in peace and unmolested safety, happy and content, enjoying the vigor and vitality of immortal life; a realm where all shall worship and acclaim the Christ as King of kings and Lord of lords; where officers and populace shall live and work together, eternally progressing from glory to glory—this is what the Bible calls the Kingdom of God.

A fanciful dream? a visionary ideal? an imaginative wonder? NO! A thousand times NO! The Bible pictures a real, literal, tangible kingdom; a new political and social order, ideal in form and eternal in duration, to be established on this earth. It is the plan and purpose of God Almighty, and by Him it shall most certainly be fulfilled.

The Kingdom of God is the theme of the entire Bible. The prophets foreshadowed it, Jesus described it, and His apostles confirmed it. The Kingdom of God is coming to this earth. And we ourselves can be—or will be—personally involved. Why shouldn't we be interested in studying it!

We will commence our outline of study as follows:

- I. The Kingdom Defined
 - A. The Kingdoms of Men
 - B. The Kingdom of God
- II. Why Study the Kingdom?
 - A. The Means of Our Salvation
 - B. The Focal Point of the Bible
 - C. The Destiny of Our Earth
 - D. The Time of Its Establishment
- III. Christ the King
 - A. Old Testament Foreshadowings
 - B. The Gospels' Presentation
 - C. His Divine Right to Kingship
 - D. His Return to Receive the Kingdom

I. THE KINGDOM DEFINED

Before we commence our study we need to understand our terms. What, in human and in Scriptural terminology, is a kingdom?

A. The Kingdoms of Men

As generally applied to a political government, a kingdom is a major territorial unit under the sover-

eignty of a single person, usually a king or a queen. A kingdom is a **monarchy**, and usually a king has the right to transmit the royal power to his descendants. The kingship is the state, office, and dignity of a king and the power wielded by him.

While the majority of the nations of the world are not under this type of one-man rule, there are still many monarchies. Probably the best known is the United Kingdom, which consists of Great Britain and her territories under the rulership of Queen Elizabeth II. Prominent in the current news is the kingdom of Laos, ruled by a prince; also the country of Jordan, neighbor of Israel, ruled by King Hussein. Belgium and the Netherlands are both monarchies, as are the Scandinavian countries of Norway, Sweden and Denmark; each has a hereditary king or queen.

The United States, by comparison, is a **democracy**, governed by popularly elected representatives.

B. The Kingdom of God

The Kingdom of God is a phrase used frequently throughout the Bible to refer to a physical, literal government of God on earth.

1. In the Old Testament. The actual phrase "kingdom of God" does not appear in the Old Testament, except for one occurrence of the form "kingdom of the Lord" in I Chron. 28:5. However, the term "kingdom" is sometimes used in relation to God. "Thy kingdom is an everlasting kingdom, O Lord" occurs in Ps. 145:11, 13; and "his kingdom" in Ps. 103:19. In I Chron. 17:14 "my kingdom" appears from the lips of "the Lord of Hosts." King David also recognized God's supreme authority when he prayed, "Thine is the kingdom, O Lord, and thou art exalted as head above all" (I Chron. 29:11). The original Hebrew words translated "kingdom" in these texts all have as their primary meaning the idea of "kingship," "sovereignty," or "kingly rule."

2. In the New Testament. By far the most frequent use of the term the "kingdom of God" occurs in the New Testament. It was Jesus' watchword, a comprehensive term for the whole of His teaching. In Matt. 4:23, the commencement of His ministry is described in these words, "And Jesus went about all Galilee, teaching in their synagogues, and preaching the gospel of the kingdom." And somewhat later, the expansion of His activity is described in these terms: "And it came to pass

afterward, that he went throughout every city and village, preaching and shewing the glad tidings of the kingdom of God: and the twelve were with him" (Luke 8:1). When the Twelve were sent forth by themselves, the purpose of their mission, Jesus informed them, was "to preach the kingdom of God, and to heal the sick" (Luke 9:2). The parables, which formed so large and prominent a portion of Jesus' teaching, were delivered to reveal "the mysteries of the kingdom of heaven" (Matt. 13:11).

The terms "the kingdom," "the kingdom of God," and "the kingdom of heaven" occur more than 100 times in the Gospels and are used interchangeably to describe the fully established government of God on earth. It is the earth made new, purified of all sin and sinners, placed under the management of Christ and His saints (Dan. 7:27), and filled with God's people, His glory, "as the waters cover the sea" (Num. 14:21).

II. WHY STUDY THE KINGDOM?

A. It is the means of our salvation.

God has laid out a plan by which we may inherit eternal salvation, and this salvation will consist of eternal life in His glorified, new world—the Kingdom of God on earth.

Jesus expressed the seeking of the Kingdom of God as the all-important quest of life: "But seek ye first the kingdom of God, and his righteousness; and all these things shall be added unto you (Matt. 6:33).

Not until Christ returns to establish His kingdom will we receive our reward. "Unto them that look for him shall he appear the second time without sin unto salvation" (Heb. 9:28). And not until then shall be fulfilled the promise in the Lord's prayer: "Thy kingdom come. Thy will be done in earth, as it is in heaven" (Matt. 6:10).

B. It is the focal point of the Bible.

We should familiarize ourselves with the subject of the Kingdom because the whole Bible focuses on its establishment. It is the end result of God's plan for the salvation of mankind.

1. The Kingdom was the confidence of the patriarchs. Enoch knew that "the Lord comes with His myriads of holy ones—ten thousands of His saints" (Jude 14, Amplified Bible). Abraham anticipated that City "whose builder and maker is God" (Heb. 11:10). Moses prophesied the birth of its King (Deut. 18:15, 18). And David expressed his hope that he should not forever remain in the grave, but that he would one day see the face of the One he served (Ps. 49:15; 17:15).

2. The Kingdom was the expectation of the prophets. Isaiah looked forward to the time when "a king shall reign in righteousness, and princes shall rule in judgment" (32:1). Jeremiah also foresaw this same time, when "a king shall reign and

prosper, and shall execute judgment and justice in the earth. In his days Judah shall be saved, and Israel shall dwell safely" (Jer. 23:5, 6). Ezekiel prophesied of the same time, when "iniquity shall have an end" (Ezek. 21:25b). Daniel, interpreting the dream of King Nebuchadnezzar, revealed that God had given him knowledge of a time yet future, when "the God of heaven [shall] set up a kingdom."

3. The Kingdom was the subject of the minor prophets. (These prophets are minor only in respect to the brevity of their message.) Among them we read from Zechariah of the time when "the Lord shall be king over all the earth," when "his dominion shall be from sea even to sea, and from the river even to the ends of the earth," when "many people and strong nations shall come to seek the Lord of hosts in Jerusalem, and to pray before the Lord" (Zech. 14:9; 9:10; 8:22).

Haggai, in his brief message, did not fail to make mention of the time when the Lord shall come and bring peace to the earth (Hag. 2:7—9). And Zephaniah pictured the time beyond the judgments when the Lord should be King and "thou shalt not see evil any more" (3:15). Obadiah, who left us the shortest message of all the prophets, showed His knowledge of the divine plan in one short, final statement (v. 21): "the kingdom shall be the Lord's."

4. The Kingdom was the theme of the apostles. Jesus spent His ministry preaching it. It was of such supreme importance that He spent His last forty days on earth teaching it (Acts 1:3).

After His ascension, the apostles went everywhere preaching the Kingdom. We read in Acts 8:12 of Philip's preaching "the things concerning the kingdom of God." Paul and Barnabas taught the disciples how they might "through much tribulation enter into the kingdom of God" (Acts 14:22). In Acts 19:8 we read of Paul's spending three months at Ephesus "disputing and persuading the things concerning the kingdom of God." And in Acts 28:31 we learn that Paul spent two years as a prisoner teaching the Kingdom of God.

In Acts the phrase "the kingdom of God" occurs six times, and Paul mentioned the subject occasionally in his Epistles: those who shall not inherit the kingdom of God because of moral unfitness (I Cor. 6:10; Gal. 5:21; Eph. 5:5); those who work "unto the kingdom of God" (Col. 4:11); those who are counted worthy of the Kingdom of God (II Thess. 1:5). However, we cannot fail to notice that the phrase does not occur with the same frequency that Jesus used it in His ministry. There is a possible explanation of this in the fact that Jesus was the master of men and knew that whatever the resistance He aroused His Father would assure the success of His mission.

After the death of Jesus there ensued a period of persecution. Christianity was preached among the nations where, to have spoken of its message

as a Kingdom of God would have unnecessarily provoked hostility and called forth the accusation of treason against the powers that be. Hence, the early Christian messengers capitalized on Christ, His life, death, and resurrection and the "eternal life" which He offered, placing less emphasis on the term "the kingdom of God."

C. It is the destiny of our earth.

We should be acquainted with the subject of the Kingdom of God because it is the destiny of our earth, the purpose of its creation. The prophets, both major and minor, were aware of this fact, as is evidenced by the foregoing testimonies and numerous others. God did not create this earth to be forever inhabited by evil men, nor did He create it to be destroyed and uninhabited. Isaiah, speaking for the Eternal, makes a positive statement about the earth: "He hath established it, he created it not in vain, he formed it to be inhabited" (Isa. 45:18).

King David was likewise informed of God's plan. He made many statements in his Psalms that point to the destiny of this earth. Among them are several in Psalm 37: "For such as be blessed of him shall inherit the earth; and they that be cursed of him shall be cut off. . . . The righteous shall inherit the land, and dwell therein forever. . . . But the transgressors shall be destroyed together: the end of the wicked shall be cut off. . . . Wait on the Lord, and keep his way, and he shall exalt thee to inherit the land."

The words of the angel to Mary before the birth of Jesus also show the eternal purpose of this earth: "And the Lord God shall give unto him the throne of his father David: And he shall reign over the house of Jacob forever; and of his kingdom there shall be no end" (Luke 1:32, 33).

When Jesus began His ministry, He went about teaching the Kingdom that should be established on this earth. He taught His disciples to pray for it to come to earth (Matt. 6:10).

D. We live near the time of its establishment.

The subject of the Kingdom should be of special interest to us because we are living so near to the time of its establishment. We are at a critical point in history; therefore it is imperative that we understand God's plan lest we find ourselves among those whose hearts are failing them for fear because of the things that are coming on the earth (Luke 21:26). If we can learn to recognize the signs that portend the end of this age, we will be able to see the events in the world as fulfillment of prophecies of the last days and will be able to lift up our heads, knowing that our redemption draws nigh (Luke 21:28).

1. We do not know the exact time of the establishment of the Kingdom. Jesus made this fact

plain when He said, "But of that day and that hour knoweth no man, no, not the angels which are in heaven, neither the Son, but the Father. Take ye heed, watch and pray: for ye know not when the time is" (Mark 13:32, 33).

2. But although we are not to know the day nor the hour, we are to recognize the times and seasons. Jesus chided the Pharisees for being able to discern the signs of the weather in the literal heavens but failing to perceive the signs of the times (Matt. 16:2, 3).

Paul also made plain the fact that we are to know the "times and seasons." "But of the times and seasons, brethren, ye have no need that I write unto you. For yourselves know perfectly that the day of the Lord so cometh as a thief in the night" (1 Thess. 5:2). We are to recognize the times, Paul continues, because we are not in darkness (v. 4): "For when they shall say, Peace and safety; then sudden destruction cometh upon them" (v. 3).

The cry for peace and safety was never more apparent than at the present. This seeming paradox has recently become a reality. Our President, as well as the rulers of many other nations, is working desperately for peace during his term of office; yet at the same time he calls for a system of intercepting missiles that might be aimed at our country by hostile nations. Billions are being spent for defense in the interest of safety. Thus the prophetic words of Paul are being fulfilled.

3. We can recognize the perilous times which were forecast for the last days. The passage in II Tim. 3:1-4 is well rendered in our Common Version, but its terms are more understandable in some of the newer translations. "Understand this, that in the last days there will come times of trouble. People will love themselves and money. They'll brag and be proud. They'll blaspheme. They'll disobey parents. They'll be ungrateful and unholy, without love, never forgiving an enemy, slandering. They'll be without control, wild, with no love for what is good. They'll be treacherous, reckless, proud. They'll love pleasure and not God" (Beck translation). "But you must realize that in the last days the times will be full of danger," translates Dr. Phillips. The fulfillment of this prediction is evident everywhere. According to a report in the March 16, 1970 issue of U. S. News and World Report, crimes of violence are rising ten times as fast as the population. In the nine years from 1960 to 1969, our population increased 13%, while crimes of violence were up 131%. Other headlines on the cover of the same issue of this news magazine also point to the perilous times: "Chaos Over School Busing"; "Why the Streets Are Not Safe"; "Student Violence Widens Range."

At this time, when the fulfillment of God's plan is imminent, how can we afford to be ignorant of what He has revealed?

III. CHRIST THE KING

Like every other monarchy, the Kingdom of God shall have one sovereign ruler, and this ruler shall be Jesus Christ. The very title Christ or "Messiah" suggests kingship—its meaning "anointed" takes account of His threefold office of prophet, priest and king. Yet in the Old Testament it is the king to whom the title is generally applied.

A. Old Testament Foreshadowings of Christ the King

Let us note briefly some of the Old Testament predictions. The first which suggests dominion is that of **Jacob** concerning the tribe of Judah: "The sceptre shall not depart from Judah, nor a lawgiver from between his feet, until Shiloh come; and unto him shall the gathering of the people be" (Gen. 49:10). Or as translated in the New Catholic Bible: "The sceptre shall not depart from Judah, nor the staff [sceptre and staff: symbols of power and authority] from between his feet [refers to a ruler's manner of holding his staff of authority in front of himself while seated], until he comes to whom it belongs. To him shall be the obedience of nations."

Royalty and imperial greatness are symbolized by the "Star" in **Balaam's prophecy**: "There shall come a Star out of Jacob, and a Sceptre shall rise out of Israel, and shall smite the corners [the mighty men] of Moab, . . . out of Jacob shall come he that shall have dominion" (Num. 24:17—19).

In Psalm 2 the voice of Jehovah is heard above all the tumult of earth, declaring, "Yet have I set my King upon my holy hill of Zion. I will declare the decree: the Lord hath said unto me, Thou art my Son; this day have I begotten thee. Ask of me, and I shall give thee the heathen for thine inheritance, and the uttermost parts of the earth for thy possession" (vs. 6—8).

Many of the **Psalms** contain special foreshadowings of the Messiah and His kingship. Read especially Psalm 24 of the "King of glory" who is "the Lord strong and mighty, the Lord mighty in battle"; of the majesty and grace of Christ's kingdom in Psalm 45; of its goodness and glory and its universal domain in Psalm 72; of its God-appointed King in Psalm 89; of His uncompromising authority in Psalm 110.

The babe that **Isaiah** foresees born of a virgin is also the "Prince of Peace" (Isa. 9:6, 7), of the increase of whose government and peace there shall be no end. Again the prophet joyfully exclaims, "Thine eyes shall see the King in his beauty: they shall behold the land that is very far off. . . . For the Lord is our judge, the Lord is our lawgiver, the Lord is our King; he will save us" (Isa. 33:17, 22).

The prophet **Jeremiah**, his vision intensified by the surrounding sorrow, catches bright glimpses of his coming Lord: "Behold, the days come, saith

the Lord, that I will perform that good thing which I have promised unto the house of Israel and to the house of Judah. In those days, and at that time, will I cause the Branch of righteousness to grow up unto David; and he shall execute judgment and righteousness in the land" (Jer. 33:14—16).

Ezekiel by prophetic eye sees three great overturnings which will culminate in the dominion of Christ: "I will overturn, overturn, overturn it: and it shall be no more, until he come whose right it is; and I will give it him" (Ezek. 21:27). The first overturning was accomplished by **Shalmaneser** at the siege of Samaria (II Kings 17:6); the second by **Nebuchadnezzar** at the time of the captivity (Jer. 50:17), and the third by the Romans under **Titus** when they destroyed the city of Jerusalem (A. D. 70). "And it shall be no more until he comes whose right it is; and I will give it him"—Christ, the rightful heir.

Daniel sees the rise and progress, the decline and fall of four mighty empires, but beyond all he sees the Son of man inheriting an everlasting kingdom (Dan. 7:13).

Hosea sees the repentant people of Israel in the latter days seeking Jehovah their God, and David (the greater David, Christ) their king: "Afterward shall the children of Israel return, and seek the Lord their God, and David their king; and shall fear the Lord and his goodness in the latter days" (Hos. 3:5).

Micah sees the everlasting Ruler coming out of Bethlehem, destined to be clad in the strength and majesty of Jehovah, who shall "be great unto the ends of the earth" (Mic. 5:2—4).

Zechariah, exulting in the Lord, cries: "Rejoice greatly, O daughter of Zion; shout, O daughter of Jerusalem: behold, thy King cometh unto thee" (Zech. 9:9), and he follows His varied course through gloom to glory until he arrives at the strong conviction that he expresses in glowing words: "The Lord shall be king over all the earth: in that day shall there be one Lord, and his name one" (Zech. 14:9). ••

To be a messenger you must know the message.

TEST YOURSELF

1. What is a kingdom?
2. What is the kingdom of God?
3. List ten Old Testament prophecies of the kingdom.
4. How do we know these prophecies are unfulfilled?
5. What right has Christ to the Kingship?

Reprints of these studies are available upon request.

Christian Youth in These Times

The Rose

THE DYING day lay beautiful in the tender glow of the evening. Gleaming white walls of Jerusalem and the purple hills silhouetted against the crimson sky lent an almost ineffable splendor to the closing of another spring day.

On the slopes ascending eastward from the Kidron Valley and south of the Mount called Olivet was the abode of Ithamar and his household. Surrounded by gardens and trees, the villa spoke to all of its owner's appreciation of beauty. In the garden outside the high stone walls a great variety of bushes, vines and flowers bloomed profusely, interrupted by white gravel walks which wended their way through the gardens like a white ribbon. Tall date palms lifted their swaying arms to the deepening sky, while spreading tamarisks rustled and whispered among themselves.

Inside the walls was a large open area, the courtyard, the center of the family's activity. On one wall long boxes of anemones opened their delicate blossoms. On the opposite side of the yard was the brick oven, used for baking bread; nearby was a small stone grinding mill. Presiding over all the court rose a massive ancient olive tree.

The large house extended perhaps two-thirds of the way across the rear of the yard. The remaining section was a covered patio, in the far end of which was the flight of stairs which lead to the roof top.

Such was the home of the highly respected olive grower Ithamar. Everything about the estate pointed to the refined tastes and ample wealth of the owner. Yes, Providence had dealt kindly with Ithamar. His generosity and goodness had been well repaid, and all he put his hand to seemed to prosper.

All was not peace, however, on the grand estate. Toward the back of the house was a tiny cubicle, very simply but neatly furnished. On a low bed lay a young maiden, her face buried in her arms. The fading sun's long slanted rays reaching through a small high window tinted the wall a rosy shade of gold. The little room was silent, except for now and again a heartbreaking sob, "Oh! God, how long? how long?"

Sorrow. Heartache. Frustration. When would she cease to be thwarted by these demons of misery?

Why should Mara be so utterly mean to her, when she tried so hard to be kind and obedient? She heaved another desperate sob as she recalled the violent and threatening vocal combat she had had with Mara the cook earlier in the afternoon.

The combat might have been avoided—but how? Naamah felt an irresistible inner compulsion to stand behind the King. David was a man of God, the Lord's own anointed, whatever Mara's feelings to the contrary. True, he was not the strong, valiant David she had heard about, when all the people rallied around him and praised him for his might. Indeed, the spring of his life was gone, and he was retiring more and more from his active duties. But the Lord would supply their need in due time; of this Naamah was confident. And King David's brilliant past left a warm afterglow that was illuminating his declining years with a holy light.

However, Mara was not alone in her discontent. Court servants whispered loudly of disturbances in the royal family. Wise men nodded among themselves. Women gossiped. The opinion of many was well-circulated: King David's spoiled son had his eye on the throne.

It was Absalom, yes, Absalom. An ambitious young man, tall, unusually handsome and well favored, with such a winsome personality—no wonder he was a favorite son of his father. But alas! how sadly depraved he was. Naamah had often heard her master and mistress tell of his ungodly ways.

On this particular afternoon, while Naamah and Mara were preparing the evening meal, Mara, being in a more or less agreeable mood, was prattling on to a great extent about Absalom.

"Absalom is very charming, isn't he? It's about time we got a new king."

Naamah's only reply, however, was, "King David is the Lord's anointed."

Mara turned a cold stare upon Naamah as she sneered, "King David? The great and glorious warrior and champion? Ridiculous! He's nothing but a withered up pomegranate. A *king*? We may as well have no king at all!"

Naamah's face colored involuntarily, and a protest wavered on her lips. But she restrained herself.

"Lord's anointed!" mocked Mara, sniffing loudly. "Indeed, he spends most of his time in the temple

or reading the musty books of Moses, and praying to Jehovah, the great God of Israel, whose Almighty hand has helped him into so many messes."

"That is not true," cried Naamah, indignantly. "Our king has sinned only when he has turned away from God. But he always repented and God has forgiven him."

"He needs it," the cook barked. Then she lowered her voice. "Oh! But Absalom is indeed handsome, and so clever, too. He would make a marvelous king! Don't you think so?"

"The son of David is both depraved and disloyal," remarked Naamah without raising her eyes from her work.

"Don't contradict me," snapped Mara.

"But you asked what I thought"—the words were out, and Naamah could not retract them.

"All right! Don't get smart, you—you—" Mara was furious now. The wooden spoon in her hand waved wildly and her bloated face was changing from red to purple to white and back to red again. "I'll teach you that it isn't proper to—"

At that moment a lad of about seven came in bearing an armload of wood. He ducked as an elbow shot up in front of him, and depositing his wood, he drew back quickly, open-mouthed at the scene.

"I shall tell our mistress about this," rasped the angry cook, bringing her fist down with a bang, knocking a big jar of vinegar to the floor where it shattered into a hundred pieces.

Mara pointed a trembling finger at Naamah, who was already picking up the fragments, and yelled hysterically. "Naamah! You stupid, careless child! Now look what you have done!"

The boy stepped from the corner and said respectfully, "I will—I think that—um—the jar rolled off the table when—um—Mara brought her hand down on it." He gulped, turned, and headed for the door, but a guttural "Come back here" arrested his escape. Having recovered her senses, Mara slapped him across the face and growled threateningly, "*That* will teach you to mind your own business, I hope."

The affair ended with Mara having the last word. "I shall wait on table tonight." She had no desire to have the family of Ithamar see Naamah's pale face and red eyes. Naamah, only too glad for the favor, stumbled from the room, sick, dizzy, and exhausted.

She shuddered at the horrible remembrance. Why, she asked herself, did this have to be? Would her happiness always be marred? Was this the portion that God had meant to be hers forever? She strangled a fierce tide of bitterness that welled up within her. No! She could not hate. She could not hold resentment and bitter thoughts about Mara. But Mara sorely tried her.

Her master and mistress—Ithamar, warm, kind and altogether noble; Adah, understanding, gentle

and sincere—could they ever guess what went on behind the kitchen door? A river of shame rushed over her at the thought of them. "Heavenly Father, please forgive me for being ungrateful"—a prayer escaped her lips—"I want to see your hand in the trials that I have to face."

At that moment she heard a gentle knocking at the door. Naamah sat up quickly, wiped her eyes, and pushed her black hair away from her face. "Come in," she called softly. The door opened and the young servant boy, who earlier had come to her rescue, stepped into the room.

"Oh! It's you."

The boy nodded solemnly. "I stuck 'em inside my shirt when nobody was looking. It isn't very much."

Naamah watched in silence, laughing inwardly a little in spite of herself as he produced a squashed barley cake, a piece of cheese, and a few dates.

"Oh! Thank you," she said, but not feeling very hungry at all. "But are you sure you had enough to eat?"

"I wasn't very hungry because I was thinking about you without any supper at all."

She looked at the begrimmed, handled food and thought of the generous heart of the little one who had saved it. "You are very kind, little Benjamin," she said gently as she smiled down at him in the dim light.

He seemed not to hear, but said hesitantly, his eyes big and serious, "She—she's—awful mean, isn't she, Naamah?"

"Truly, little one, Mara isn't as kind as she could be, but then, she doesn't serve and love the true God. That is what makes her unhappy and mean, because no one can be truly happy without Him."

She paused and bit her lip thoughtfully. "Did my mistress inquire about my absence?" she asked.

"Indeed, Naamah, and Mara told her that you were ill tonight. Adah looked at me and I kind of shook my head, so she asked Mara if that was all."

"What did Mara say?"

"She said, 'I don't know what all her ills are,' and she—um—said, 'By the way, Naamah needs a few lessons in obedience, too.' You know, after she was so mean to you, she was in a bad temper an—an she scolded me for leaving the goat's milk out when she did it herself. She shook me by the ears till I thought something would have to break. Then I remembered that you never complain or talk back to her and she's ever so much meaner to you than she is to me and I *am* bad sometimes. So I went like this"—he pressed his lips firmly together—"even though I felt like shouting at her that *she* was the one who did it."

"You were very brave, Benjamin. It's hard to live with a person like her, but we should never, never complain because we have so many good things—a kind master and mistress, good food, and clothing and this beautiful home to live in. Mara

has all of these, but she lacks one thing—the most important—and that is Jehovah.”

“Oh! Naamah,” the little boy cried, impulsively flinging his arms around her. “You are so good. Everyone loves you, but not nearly so much as I do.”

“Please don’t talk that way,” laughed Naamah, and then added more seriously, “But, my little man, you had better run along before she comes after you. Thank you for your kindness to me.” And so saying, she tenderly kissed his hot forehead.

“Goodnight,” he whispered, and stepping into the hall, he disappeared into the shadows.

Benjamin had expressed the attitude of nearly everyone who knew Naamah—the cook, of course, excepted. Up to the time that she was eleven years old, her life had been one bitter experience after another. Very, very dimly she remembered the time when her family had been together and happy. Then, alas, her sweet, gentle mother had died. For several years the family struggled on, her father trying to provide for his motherless family, and Naamah, being the oldest girl, caring for the younger children. Then, like a bloodthirsty monster, disease had swept through the village leaving her alone with a little sister whom she dearly loved.

It was then that Ithamar and his gracious wife Adah kindly offered to take them as servants. But the younger child, although tenderly cared for, being fragile and weak, died within a few months. And Naamah, age 11, was given work as a maid in the kitchen and elsewhere as she proved her worth. A servant, yes; but her charm, her delicate manners, sweet disposition, and unselfishness soon found their way into the hearts of the members of the new family. After a few short, shy conversations, the daughter, Miriam, and Naamah became fast friends. Together they went on walks through the flower and shrub gardens or, when they had more time, in the olive groves and beyond. Miriam often accompanied her to the spring En-rogel for water. Together they learned the things every Palestinian girl should learn to be proficient mistresses of their own homes. And Naamah was very fortunate to have training in the finer arts, which very few girls ever received.

Miriam’s sad death three years after she came to live with them was another crushing blow to Naamah, for she had loved her as a sister. Had she not seen enough death and sorrow? Nevertheless, as one very wise man observed, the canary sings sweeter the longer it has been in a darkened cage. Her darkness, the sickness and death, sorrow and grief, loneliness and care had created in this young girl love, tenderness and compassion, and she could forget herself in her deep feelings for those whom she loved. She had an understanding far beyond her years.

Naamah was changing rapidly from a sweet girl

into a young woman, strong and lithe of body. Her clear skin was tanned to a deep golden brown and her features were marked with strength and beauty of character.

Now, since their only daughter, whom they adored, was taken from them, Ithamar and Adah grew continually more fond of Naamah. Her presence seemed to fill an aching void in their hearts. She comforted them, not so much by words as by her faithful devotion to them and to her duty. Naamah, in turn, loved them as she would her own parents. A stranger, seeing her among the family of Ithamar, would have thought her a daughter—except, perhaps, that Naamah served and waited on them and generally did so in a very reserved and unobtrusive manner.

Life had been a struggle since Naamah could remember. She had found joy in Miriam, and now that too was gone. But Ithamar and Adah were still her friends. And they were good, kind, and God-fearing, and never considered her below their warm love and keen interest. Despite her unpleasant memories, Naamah might now be enjoying a serene and happy life, if it were not for one other person also very much a part of her life: Mara.

Mara was the possessor of a violent, vindictive tongue; and because of her unpleasant habit of finding fault and expecting everyone to conform to her, people in general found it rather trying to get along with her. It may be said, however, that Mara had been satisfied, to her limited capacity, with life as it had been before the coming of Naamah, back in the days when she was absolute, sole and supreme ruler of household affairs. Life for Mara at that time had been all anyone could ask. But with the coming of that intolerably meek little miss Naamah, her peace had come to an abrupt end and hatred and jealousy rankled in her heart.

(Continued next issue)

Abib Echoes

(Continued from page 8)

Programs of the following day commenced with a special morning prayer service which gave to all present a fresh impetus for daily Christian living. Highlighting the children’s afternoon program was a visit to the office of Dr. Manners, where children were being treated for such varied diseases as slam-bang-itis, sloppiness, dawdling, snoopiness, and impoliteness.

A solemn consecration service Tuesday evening presented each of us squarely with the soul-searching question—How much genuine soul growth have we shown? And the day closed with a stirring address by our pastor, pleading with us to train and discipline ourselves to run with fleeting the race for eternal life. ●●

Measuring Up

MAKING AN exact measurement and producing an accurate result is basic to success in any field—spiritual as well as material. But unfortunately, too often we are not sufficiently skilled in the use of the rule, or are just simply disinterested in applying ourselves. Indeed, how could anyone possibly turn out a high quality piece of work if he didn't even know how or what he was measuring up to?

There are facts we need to learn and apply and practice before we can acquire proficiency in any endeavor. A carpenter uses a rule about as much as anybody; but if he didn't know how to measure closer than a quarter of an inch, he would have some poorly fitted results most of the time—and it would soon be evident that he was only a wood butcher.

Men have for ages been inventing ways of measuring and weighing. An ancient means of measuring seems to have been that of comparing objects or distances with their own physical features. For instance, we still call one of our units of measure a *foot*. The *yard* was at one time fixed as the distance from the nose to the thumb of King Henry I of England. And our *mile* comes from the Latin term *mille passuum*—a thousand paces.

In spiritual matters God forbids such human comparisons. He says, "We dare not make ourselves of the number, or compare ourselves with some that commend themselves; but they, measuring themselves by themselves, and comparing themselves, among themselves, are not wise" (II Cor. 10:2). For accurate measurement we need a perfect pattern above and outside ourselves.

In 1791, during the French Revolution, French scientists gave the world its best system for standardizing weights and measurements—the metric system. Very ingeniously they found one unit by which they could measure every kind of object in the world. First they took the distance from the North Pole to the Equator on a line running through Paris. Then they divided this into ten million parts, calling each part a meter. This became their invariable unit. Using the decimal system, so useful and convenient in our coinage, they divided the meter by tens for shorter measurements. Every meter then has ten decimeters, a hundred centimeters, or a thousand millimeters. For longer measurements they multiplied the meter by tens. Ten meters make a decameter, a hundred meters make a hectometer, a thousand meters make a kilometer. To make their terms clearer, whenever they divided they used Latin, and whenever they multiplied, they used Greek. "Millimeter," then, is Latin for "a thousandth of a meter," while

"kilometer" is Greek for a "thousand meters." So simple is the system that anyone who can multiply by ten can learn it in a few minutes.

The United States and Great Britain are almost the only advanced countries not using the more convenient metric system. This points up a weakness in human nature: We just hate to make the effort to change—even when it is for the better. We prefer our old, self-made, though inferior standards of measurement.

Just as there are advantages in a simpler, more scientific method of measuring, and a necessity of learning and practicing these basic skills, so in our spiritual work we must take God's vastly superior method of measurement and learn and practice it in building our eternal temple.

How does God measure us until we all come unto the perfect man, unto the measure of the stature of the fullness of Christ? The procedure is that of comparing ourselves with our perfect pattern—Jesus Christ.

The apostle Paul tactfully outlined this comparison procedure in his letter to the Romans (12:9—21, Moffatt):

*Let your love be a real thing, with a loathing for evil
and bent for what is good.
Put affection into your love for the brotherhood;
Be forward to honour one another.
Never let your zeal flag;
Maintain the spiritual glow;
Serve the Lord;
Let your hope be a joy to you;
Be steadfast in trouble, attend to prayer;
Contribute to needy saints,
Make a practice of hospitality.
Bless those who make a practice of persecuting
you; bless them instead of cursing them.
Rejoice with those who rejoice,
And weep with those who weep.
Keep in harmony with one another;
Instead of being ambitious,
associate with humble folk.
Never be self-conceited.
Never pay back evil for evil to anyone;
Aim to be above reproach in the eyes of all;
Be at peace with all men, if possible,
so far as that depends on you.*

Lord, the newness of this day
Calls me to an untried way:

Let me gladly take the road
Give me strength to bear my load

Thou my guide and helper be—
I will travel through with Thee.



I'm Thinking

IT'S JUST a common, six-cent postage stamp, issued by our government. I'm sure you've used it many times on letters to friends or relatives. But this common postage stamp has a message for us.

The stamp, first of all, has no value except what is given to it by the maker. If it was not for the fact that the stamp is made by the U. S. government, it would have no more value than a little square of paper you might color and cut out. It must have the imprint of the government to make it worth anything. So with our lives. It is only as we bear the divine imprint on our lives that we are of any real value to ourselves and our heavenly Father.

Again, the stamp accomplishes the task assigned it. It does what it is told to do. Here is an important lesson for each of us. Sometimes we are apt to object to our task. We do not want to attempt it at all, or we quit when we are only half done. But when you place a stamp on an envelope, it fulfills its task by carrying the letter all the way to the person and place addressed. We ought to do as well.

Then, too, the stamp does all expected of it. When I buy a stamp and put it on a letter, it belongs to me and I expect it to carry the letter to its destination. And that is just what the stamp does. God, in the same way, has bought us. If we are trying to please Him, we are not our own, we belong to Him. Do we do all He expects of us?

The stamp carries whatever message is entrusted to it. Sometimes it is a message of joy or of love. Sometimes it is a message of sorrow or trial. Sometimes it is just an invitation, or some information. Then again it may be a business letter. Whatever the message is, the stamp carries it. Can Father and Mother trust us to carry their message, or run their errands, that faithfully? Then, too, Christ has entrusted a very special message of how we may do what is right and live forever in His Kingdom on this earth. Are we carrying it to others?

A very good trait of the stamp is that it does not give up when it gets a licking. It sticks still closer. So criticism, trial, temptation and hardship, should

cause us to stick all the closer to our Christian duty. How quickly we become discouraged! How prone we are to give up when the tasks seem a bit hard and results do not appear as quickly as we think they should! Let us learn a lesson from the stamp and stick to our tasks, no matter how difficult they may be.

Did you ever hear of a stamp getting angry and striking at any one? When we place our letters in the post office, the canceling machine hits the stamp right across the face, but the stamp never strikes back. Many of us, if someone should strike us, would at once think it proper to strike back, just a little harder than they struck us, if possible. But what a lot of misery and trouble and bloodshed would be avoided if men and nations would only do as the stamp does.

The stamp is also noted for attending to its own business. And that is the way we should be—so busy doing what we are supposed to be doing that we do not have time to notice other people's business.

Another fine thing about the stamp is that you can tell by its face what it is. This ought to be true of all Christians. We ought to bear the imprint of the Christ-life to such an extent that it will always show on our faces.

The stamp never gets discouraged. If you change your address and someone writes to you at the old address, if it is at all possible that letter will find you. So Christians should persevere in their efforts to do the will of the Master. Don't let anything discourage you. "Let us not be weary in well doing, for in due season we shall reap if we faint not."

A fine thing about the stamp is that it never gives up until it is dead. It keeps trying to do its duty until it finally lands in the Dead Letter Office. So God expects you and me to labor. We ought to keep everlastingly at it until death claims us and we are called to lay down our working tools.

Now I hope that every time you see a stamp it may remind you of some of these truths. Try to keep them in your minds and live as happy and as useful a life as one of our little six-cent stamps does. ●●

The world needs—

- men with more ideas than words
- men with opinions that will change, but convictions that will not
- factories that produce men as good as the merchandise
- old worlds to civilize, not new worlds to conquer
- a religion of action, not of profession only
- men who are more afraid of the wrong than of a crowd

LETTERS

Work—Today

Our Christian work is truly a tremendous undertaking. But God will not forget our work and labor of love in His service. The reward far exceeds any recompense we could receive from puny man. And our work must be today, not tomorrow or some future date. If we do not put on the glorious armor now, we shall surely regret it in the future. In that Day when Jesus arrives to execute judgment, peace and righteousness, we will have no cloak for our sin, no chance to dissemble. Our lives shall then be an open book, and we shall have to answer for our works.

Let us look into our lives carefully, examining our hearts to uncover those things that we have attempted to daub with untempered mortar. Let us be more diligent and set to work with greater determination to conquer those fleshly lusts we have allowed to cling and drag us backward. "Look to yourselves, that we lose not those things which we have wrought, but that we receive a full reward" (II John 8). We must not settle for less!

Northfield, Ohio

P. L.

Enthusiastic!

Tonight I read a part of the book *Enthusiasm Makes the Difference*. There are some very good thoughts in it. One is: "A high degree of combustion in the mind is required to keep enthusiasm hitting strongly on all cylinders." "A man can succeed at almost anything for which he has enthusiasm."

Well, few in this day have as much enthusiasm for any form of religion as they have for a ball game or some other sport. But we have to be among the few who do put God first in our lives and let our light shine through our lives in this dark world, taking up the cross of self-denial, which to the world at large is foolishness.

Palm Harbor, Fla.

Mrs. H. S.

Keep on Running

There can be no deviation from the narrow way. We must run with patience the race and never get winded, especially at this time when we see how short the time is getting. Ours must be a continuous race through the day of our salvation to the day of death or the coming of the Lord. Here is where self comes in. During that time there will be days when our health is bad, when we are low in spirit, when we do not feel like doing anything, let alone running a race. But even then we have to keep right on running.

We can and must grow to the full stature and measure of Christ, whatever the conditions imposed upon us. Being a Christian is a serious matter. With the Lord's help I am trying to practice to perfection the virtues necessary to gain an entrance into the Kingdom. I need to think more and learn to speak at the right time, be even more patient and tolerant and keep right on crucifying the flesh.

South Amboy, N. J.

L. M. K.

Appreciative

The booklets you sent me were very inspiring, interesting, informing, and enlightening. Thank you so much.

Santa Barbara, Ca.

A. A. J.

Careful Watching

We really need to watch our conduct at all times, and strive to clean old self up. We must watch to see that we have patience at all times, for anger can creep up at the least provocation, if we aren't very careful to control ourselves. And jealousy can overtake us unawares if we don't stay right after old self.

We have entered another sacred year, so let us go forward more determined to clean old self and all the sin that creeps in during the year that is coming—this is my prayer.

Kinards, S. C.

H. C.

Studying

We received an issue of the MEGIDDO MESSAGE from you quite some time ago. We compared its teachings with other literature of this kind, and we find it quite interesting. We are studying the Bible and the written Word of God, in an effort to try and find the truth.

Hawkesbury, Ontario, Canada

A. T.

From an Alert Youth

May I bring to your attention that today's public schools are "godless." They say, Think more of your future, for that is where you are spending the rest of your life, and they try to teach according to this, but they don't know the future.

The Bible warns us of the evil of this time: "For there will be a period of time when they will not put up with the healthful teaching, but, in accord with their own desires, they will accumulate teachers for themselves to have their ears tickled; and they will turn their ears away from the truth, whereas they will be turned aside to false stories." The Bible says, also, "You, though, keep your senses in all things, suffer evil, do the work of an evangelizer, fully accomplish your ministry."

Moyie, B. C., Canada

R. F.

Words to WALK By

It is doubtful whether one can be good without being good for something.

Faith is never surprised by success.

It does a man no good to sit up and take notice if he keeps on sitting.

When a Christian rests, he rusts.

No smutty stories are told in the Kingdom—or on the way to the Kingdom.

Don't let sin's sugar-coating tempt you.

A man to work faithfully must believe firmly.

There is no ignorance like ignorance of God; no poverty like poverty of soul.

Some people grow under responsibility—others merely swell.

What a splendid thing it would be if those who lose their tempers could not find them again!

MEGIDDO MESSAGE

Meditations

On the Word

"Whither shall I go from thy Spirit? Or whither shall I flee from thy presence? If I ascend to heaven, thou art there! If I make my bed in Sheol, thou art there! If I take the wings of the morning and dwell in the uttermost parts of the sea, even there thy hand shall lead me, and thy right hand shall hold me" (Ps. 139: 7—10, RSV).

The lesson that our meditation passage teaches, in few words, is that we cannot hide from God. Once we agree to serve Him, from then on a complete record is kept of all that we say, do and think. And whether we live or die, this record reposes safely in His "book of remembrance." "If I ascend to heaven, thou art there!" Quite naturally we should expect to find God in heaven. "If I make my bed in Sheol," the grave, "thou art there!" This is more surprising, but even in death our life's record is known to Him. Christ is said to be "Lord both of the dead and living" (Rom. 14:9). The short period of one's sleep in death does not change his relationship with God any more than a man's identity as a living being would be lost during a night of sound sleep.

The Psalmist is saying that no spot on earth can act as a hide-out from God: the highest mountain, the farthest reaches of the ocean bottom, darkness, opaque walls. Nothing can hide the covenant-maker, or the record of his life, on the day he appears "before the judgment seat of Christ" to receive for "the things done in his body, whether . . . good or bad."

In the symbolic story of Jonah, he attempted to get away from the presence of God by taking passage on a ship going the opposite direction from Nineveh, the place to which he had been ordered to go. But even the deep could not insulate him from God's presence. The disobedient prophet of Bethel forfeited his life because at the invitation of another prophet—an old friend—he partook of food in the place where the Lord had strictly forbidden him to eat or drink.

In the days of the early Church the Christians sold their possessions and had all things common—and this was at a time when the Holy Spirit power was vested in the hands of men. A man and his wife, Ananias and Sapphira by name, thought they could fool God and bring only a part of the money they had received for the land they had just sold, keeping the difference so that just in case the arrangement should not work out well they would

have something to rely on. They paid with their lives.

The Israelite Achan, who at the conquest of Jericho took a wedge of gold and a goodly Babylonish garment, contrary to the Lord's order for the day, and buried them under the floor of his tent, thought he could deceive God; but his plan failed utterly. The wicked King Ahab, at the instigation of his heathen wife, Jezebel, maneuvered the death of his neighbor, Naboth, in order that he might possess a piece of land adjoining the king's estate. No sooner had Ahab taken possession than Elijah pronounced his doom.

And today many feel that God does not exist. He rewards neither evil nor good openly. Men carelessly abandon themselves to ways of evil, saying in their hearts: "God hath forgotten: He hideth his face; He will never see it" (Ps. 10:11). And it behooves us to look well to our own attitudes lest we too forget that the eye of our God is upon us and we can hide nothing from Him.

Our quotation in Psalm 139 closes with a joyful note: "even there thy hand shall lead me, and thy right hand shall hold me." The Eternal's faithful servant has the assurance that the Lord will lead him. The path over which he is being led may be rough and steep, the visibility may not always be good, steps may have to be taken in the dark; but having the assurance that God's rod and staff are always with him he has nothing to fear.

But before one can be led he must willingly consent to being led. God forces no one. "Choose you this day whom ye will serve," is the divine arrangement. God accepts only the willing offering; He promises the "good of the land" to only the "willing and obedient."

Assurances of God's concern for His loyal worshipers are abundant. His hand is upon them for good (Ezra 8:22); He is on their side when wicked men rise up against them (Ps. 124:2); He sets them apart for Himself (Ps. 4:3); they are His "special treasure" (Mal. 3:17, margin); He does not forget their "labor of love" (Heb. 6:10); He is their "shield," their "buckler," their "exceeding great reward." How diligent we should be in fitting ourselves into that favorable position!

God's providence is underscored in a modern translation of Ps. 59:10, "My God in his loving kindness will meet me at every corner." As Christians our lives are full of corners, right angle turns, blind corners, even U-turns. We do not know what is ahead of us, and often it is well that we do not know. But with the assurance that the whole disposing of the Christian's life is of the Lord, we are confident that we shall meet Him and be strengthened by Him at each of these corners. Each day faces us with a petty round of routine events. The affairs of ordinary life chafe and rub. At the beginning of each new day we should pause to acknowledge that at every "corner" we need God's

living presence and wise guidance. It may be the death of a Christian friend, the sudden discovery that a bad heart has partly crippled us for life, a serious financial loss, a call to pull stakes and move to a new and unfriendly location.

Abraham was met by God at two sharply contrasting corners within three days. When to test Abraham's faith and obedience He commanded him to offer his son Isaac as a burnt offering on a mountain in the land of Moriah, he was filled with apprehension. That corner seemed dark, yet he did not hesitate to obey. But when the angel arrested the descending stroke of the hand holding the knife, with the words: "Lay not thine hand upon the lad, neither do thou anything unto him" (Gen. 22:12), that became the brightest corner at which he had ever met God. The sudden reversal of God's orders surprised and delighted him exceedingly.

Every earnest life-seeker has experienced the thrill of coming to the corner where he found himself free from some clinging besetment with which he had battled for many years. Surely God was there to meet him at that corner.

Let us never try to hide from God but open to Him our hearts, accept His loving-kindness, and purify our lives as He is pure. ●●

QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS

"I have just scanned through two of your booklets, and I find you criticizing other people's publications. At one point you say, 'Oh, when will proud man cease to refute God's Word?' I wonder what you are doing when you refer to Christ and Michael as one and the same? Jude 9 says that Michael is the archangel. Certainly Christ is not an angel."

Our reason for saying that the Michael of Daniel 12:1 is Christ is that the text pictures the very work Christ is destined to do at His second coming. "And at that time shall Michael stand up, the great prince which standeth for the children of thy people: and there shall be a time of trouble, such as never was since there was a nation even to that same time: and at that time thy people shall be delivered, every one that shall be found written in the book." The time of trouble such as never was; the deliverance of all whose names are written in the book of life; also the time when, as we read in verse 2, "many of them that sleep in the dust of the earth shall awake, some to everlasting life, and some to shame and everlasting contempt," is described elsewhere in Scripture as a definite accompaniment of Christ's return. See Mal. 4:1, "all the proud, yea, and all that do wickedly, shall be stubble: and the day that cometh shall burn them up, saith the Lord of hosts"—surely a picture

of divine judgment; also John 5:28, 29, and I Thess. 4:13—17, regarding the resurrection of the dead.

Christ's position being that of archangel, it doesn't seem unreasonable that He should be termed Michael.

For proof of your point that Christ and Michael are not the same, you point to Jude 9, to the effect that Michael is the archangel. You then say that Christ is certainly not an angel.

Here we must disagree. Christ will be an archangel. Observe the following: Jesus said in Luke 20:35, 36, "But they which shall be accounted worthy to obtain that world, and the resurrection from the dead . . . are equal unto the angels." If made equal to the angels we *will* be angels, will we not? I John 3:2 reveals that when Christ appears, "we shall be like him . . ." The righteous will be angels, and in that exalted position they will be like Jesus Himself. Hence Jesus will be an angel, and in His position as King of kings and Lord of lords He will truly be an archangel. Both the Hebrew and Greek words for "archangel" mean one "who is like God."

"You also mentioned someone's interpretation, but you failed to mention your imaginations—and you have some of the wildest, suggesting that Enoch and Elijah are still living. The Bible states very plainly in Gen. 5:23: 'And all the days of Enoch were three hundred sixty and five years.' So that was Enoch's entire life."

Your criticism of Enoch's not dying is ill-founded. Hebrews 11:5 reads: "By faith Enoch was translated that he should not see death; and was not found, because God had translated him." Enoch was translated that he "*should not see death*." This is the Word of God; let us believe it.

"You say also, 'Christ's army is composed of his unfaithful servants.' What an army that would be! In Rev. 19:14 it says, 'And the armies which were in heaven followed him upon white horses, clothed in fine linen, white and clean.' Does that sound like unfaithful servants?"

Rev. 19:14 does say that Christ will have an army of angels in heaven, and we believe it. But that doesn't say that He will not also have an army on the earth.

From Rev. 19:15 we learn that Christ will have a "sword," indicative of His army, and that "sword" is pictured as proceeding from His mouth. "And out of his mouth goeth a sharp sword, that with it he should smite the nations." From Ps. 17:13, as phrased in the Authorized Version we learn the constituents of that sword: "Deliver my soul from the wicked, which is thy sword."

But where is there any connection between the wicked as His sword and the fact that this sword emerges from His mouth? Rev. 3:15, 16 provides a connection: "I know thy works, that thou art

neither cold nor hot. So then because thou art lukewarm, and neither cold nor hot, I will spew thee out of my mouth." To His unfaithful servants, those who were neither hot—all alive and enthusiastic in His cause—nor cold—indifferent and not amenable to judgment—He will speak the doleful word, "Depart, I never knew you." He will spew them out of His mouth. And from among these the Lord will conscript His army.

Through Moses the Lord revealed His demand upon these unworthy servants: "Because thou servest not the Lord thy God with joyfulness, and with gladness of heart for the abundance of all things; therefore shalt thou serve thine enemies which the Lord shall send against thee, in hunger, and in thirst, and in nakedness, and in want of all things: and he shall put a yoke of iron upon thy neck, until he have destroyed thee" (Deut. 28:47, 48). The Lord is merciful; He will not allow anyone in His forced service to suffer physical hunger, thirst, or insufficient clothing. But they will be deprived of the blessings which the faithful will be enjoying.

Further description of the Lord's army is found in Joel 2: "Before their face the people shall be much pained; all faces shall gather blackness. They shall run like mighty men; they shall climb the wall like men of war; and they shall march every one on his ways, and they shall not break their ranks. . . . The earth [the people] shall quake before them; the heavens [earth's rulers] shall tremble: the sun and the moon [major political powers] shall be dark, and the stars [lesser powers] shall withdraw their shining; and the Lord shall utter his voice before his army: for his camp is very great: for he is strong that executeth his word: for the day of the Lord is great and very terrible; and who can abide it?" (vs. 6—12).

Isaiah 13 speaks again of the Lord's army: "I have commanded my sanctified ones, I have also called my mighty ones for mine anger, even them that rejoice in my highness. The noise of the multitude in the mountains, like as of a great people; a tumultuous noise of the kingdoms of nations gathered together: the Lord of hosts mustereth the hosts of the battle" (vs. 3—5).

The statement that the Lord will call his "mighty ones" for his anger (judgments), even them that "rejoice" in His highness might raise a question. Why should the Lord's mighty ones for His anger be said to rejoice if they are unfaithful servants?

The Berkeley Version translates these words, "My proudly exultant ones." These unfaithful servants, having never conquered their evil propensities, will get a measure of satisfaction from the fact that, backed by the God of heaven, they now have unlimited power to conquer the nations of earth, for they will be fighting a winning battle.

Indeed, the Lord will have an army, and it will be composed of the worst elements of the unfaith-

ful servants whom He will spew out of His mouth.

"Why are the Jews' efforts to establish themselves as a nation so unsuccessful? and why is the existence of Israel so precarious, so constantly threatened by hostile Arabs, when God has promised Palestine to the Jew? Is the promise null and void?"

No! The promise is gold bonded, like all other Scriptural promises. However, the Jews who now strive for the occupation of Israel overlook the Scriptural fact that the "homeland" is promised to spiritual Jews and not literal. There is a vast difference. The literal Jew claims his title by right of birth; the spiritual Jew, by merit. God respects neither person nor nationality, but character only. Read Acts 10:34, 35.

The segregation between literal and spiritual Jews is sharp. Of the literal Jew, God says, "They are not all Israel, which are of Israel" (Rom. 9:6). "I will make them of the synagogue of Satan, which say they are Jews, and are not . . ." (Rev. 3:9).

Of the spiritual Jew we read, He must be "an Israelite indeed, in whom is no guile, . . . instantly serving God day and night" (John 1:47; Acts 26:7).

To such is the Homeland promised when Christ returns. Read Zech. 2:12. Then, instead of the Jews' position being secure, when the phenomenal earthquake cleaves the Mount of Olives, the literal Jews shall flee before it to the valley of the mountains (Read Zech. 14:4, 5), and the spiritual Jews—the true Israelites, whether Jew or Gentile—remain to claim the inheritance which is rightfully theirs by virtue of a righteous life.

"I find your MEGIDDO MESSAGE informative and can say that I am in agreement with you on many points.

"But one thing concerns me greatly—if nuclear power that we hear so much about these days gets out of hand, wouldn't it result in a total destruction? I think this fact is soft-pedaled by the United States Government, but I think it is nonetheless a fact."

Your point of the possibility of nuclear reaction sometime getting out of hand and resulting in total destruction of everything on earth is certainly within the realm of possibility, and must most certainly be known to the leading physicists within the United States Government. Your postulation that these facts are being purposely soft-pedaled by the Government is undoubtedly true.

Our group do not feel quite as concerned about the possibility of the earth experiencing a nuclear demise as apparently you do. The Biblical forecasts of the work Christ will accomplish at His second coming presuppose people on earth who will receive God's blessing, and with whom Christ can work. It forecasts that one third of these will escape destruction (Zech. 13:8), and that there will be "a few men left" (Isa. 24:6). ●●

Trusting Him

Sometimes our tasks seem difficult
And very hard to bear,
Sometimes they almost seem much more
Than is our rightful share.
But should we walk down any street
And look in any door,
Life's problems most folks have to meet
Would equal ours--and more.
We would not change our lot for theirs
With all things weighed together;
Thus we must see beyond the cloud
And look for fairer weather.
The sun is always shining high
And giving forth its radiant light.
It's but earth's shadow or a cloud
That keeps it from our sight.
When clouds or shadows pass away,
As clouds and shadows will,
We suddenly then realize
The sun is shining still.
And He who keeps the sun and moon
And all the stars in space,
Can also chart a pathway that
Our willing feet can trace.