

# Megiddo Message

NEW LIFE IN  
NURTURING  
THAT CHRIST



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# Walk Worthy

The very highest commendation is reserved for those who shall be "accounted worthy to obtain that world, and the resurrection from the dead"

—Luke 20:35–36

**T**he idea of merit is currently out of style in religious circles. Zealous believers prefer to give all credit to Jesus, even suggesting that taking credit for work well done is shameful, that God prefers helpless, languid sinners to diligent, energetic servants.

The teaching of the Scriptures stands out in sharp contrast. God wants quality. He has always required the best. The sacrifices under the law typified His high standard; each sacrifice had to be perfect and without blemish. Whether it was a peace offering, or a continual burnt offering, or an offering for sin, or a whole burnt offering, or a freewill offering, it was to be "without blemish" (Lev. 1:3; 4:3; 5:15; 14:10, 28–31). Just anything was not good enough for God.

Furthermore, God acts toward us as we act toward Him. He conditioned the promises to Abraham upon Abraham's obedience, commanding him plainly, "Walk before me, and be thou perfect" (Gen. 17:1). He said often that *if* His people would repent, *if* they would hear, *if* they would turn, then He would forgive, He would heal, He would bless. "If my people, which are called by my name, shall humble themselves, and pray, and seek my face, and turn from their wicked ways; then will I hear from heaven, and will forgive their sin, and will heal their land" (II Chron. 7:14—see also Ezek. 33:14–16).

The principle never changed. John the Baptist came teaching: "Bring forth therefore fruits worthy of repentance" (Luke 3:8). And Jesus Himself said that the "labourer is worthy of his hire" (Luke 10:7). The very highest commendation is reserved for those who shall be "accounted worthy to obtain that world, and the resurrection from the dead," for these shall be made "equal unto the angels,...neither can they die any more" (Luke 20:35–36). Never is worthiness depreciated or downgraded. It is the standard. Each who would obtain must be "worthy."

The apostle Paul picked up the same thought when he admonished the Ephesian brethren to "walk worthy" of their "vocation"—their high calling in Jesus Christ. Here was the challenge to their supreme effort, to live lives that were worthy representations of the cause—and the One—they professed to be following. Again he wrote that they should "walk worthy of the Lord unto all pleasing, being fruitful in every good work, and increasing in the knowledge of God" (Col. 1:10).

(Continued on page 26)



## Megiddo means ...

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

## We believe ...

- IN GOD, the Creator and sustainer of the earth, the world, the universes, and all life, in whom we "live, and move, and have our being."
- IN THE BIBLE as our only source of true knowledge about God and His purposes and plans for His creation and for the salvation of humankind.
- IN JESUS CHRIST, the Son of God and our Perfect Example, who was conceived of the Holy Spirit and born of a virgin; who ministered among His brethren, was crucified, resurrected, and taken to heaven and seated at the right hand of the Father, crowned with immortal glory, and who shall shortly return to be King of the whole earth.
- IN THE HOLY SPIRIT, the openly manifest power of God, which God bestowed at various times and in various ways to reveal His knowledge to humankind, to support His spokesmen, to confirm His utterances, and to demonstrate His supreme power and authority.
- IN LIFE as the gift of God, and in our sacred responsibility to use it for God and His coming Kingdom.
- IN HUMANKIND as providing the raw material from which shall be selected and developed a superior, God-honoring people upon whom God will bestow the blessings of immortal life in His soon-coming Kingdom.
- IN OURSELVES as capable of applying in our own lives the precepts and principles taught in the Word of God, in this way perfecting that high quality of moral character which God has promised to recompense with life eternal in His heavenly Kingdom on earth.
- IN THE PROMISE OF GOD, that a new age is coming—is near—when the earth shall be filled with His glory, His people, and God's will be done here as it is now done in heaven.

## Soon-coming events ...

### THE HERALD AND THE KING

OUR PLANET will soon witness the greatest events in its history. For centuries God has been silent. But that silence will soon be broken by the arrival of Elijah the prophet, who comes to herald the Second Advent of Jesus Christ. "Behold, I will send you Elijah the prophet before the coming of the great and dreadful day of the Lord: ...lest I come and smite the earth with a curse" (Mal. 4:5-6).

Then shall follow the King of kings and Lord of Lords, to begin His momentous work of transforming our world into the glorious and eternal Kingdom of God.

The Bible pictures all events, all men and all nations moving together toward this one God-ordained climax, when "the kingdoms of this world" will become "the kingdoms of our Lord, and of his Christ" (Rev. 11:15), a kingdom in which all will enjoy the blessings of peace, equity and prosperity. When the task is complete, our earth shall be numbered among the heavenly, glorified worlds and filled with immortal inhabitants, bringing to reality the promise of our Lord in His prayer: "Thy kingdom come. Thy will be done in earth, as it is in heaven."

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**S**o clear away all the foul rank growth of malice and make a soil of humble modesty for the Word which roots itself inwardly with power to save your souls"—James 1:21, Moffatt.

CHRIST  
THAT  
NURTURING  
NEW LIFE IN



**T**he essence of all life is growth. When we cease to grow, we cease to live. The more we grow, the more we live.

The same is true of our new life in Christ. This very special life begins when we are, in the words of James, "begotten by the word of truth" (James 1:18), when we acquire a working knowledge of the plan of God and what we must do to be saved. From that point forward we must grow. As long as we live, we must continue to grow.

When we begin, we are like the seed freshly placed in the soil. We have in ourselves the potential, but more—much more—than this is needed. God has given us also the environment we need in order to grow. A seed falling upon hard pavement is just as "alive" as the seed falling into rich soil, but the one grows into a flourishing plant, the other dies.

What is the right environment for our growth? It is the rich soil of faith, soil filled with nutrients drawn from the Word of God, the water of life.

### **The Beginnings of Growth**

The simple fact that the soil surrounds the seed is not enough. The seed must break through its protective covering and draw from its environment those nutrients it needs to produce growth. In the same way the spiritual seed in our hearts must send out roots deep into the soil of true belief, to draw in the nutrients it needs to produce deep conviction that will, in turn, produce spiritual growth.

We must use our God-given senses to absorb the evidence God has provided to produce faith. We must go over the evidence carefully, evaluating everything we believe, comparing it with the Word of God. For "faith comes by hearing, and hearing

by the word of God" (Rom. 10:17).

The rich soil God has provided has everything we need to produce in us a solid, supporting faith. It makes us able to say:

I am a Christian because I have committed myself to follow Christ as He is revealed to me in the Word of God, the Bible.

I believe the Bible and its teachings because I and those in whom I have confidence have spent considerable time and effort verifying its facts, and I am fully satisfied that it is indeed the Word of God.

I know also that the Bible is true because it teaches one message of salvation from beginning to end, one harmonious Gospel. I know the Bible is true because of the many prophecies upon its pages which have come to pass just as foretold.

Then, too, I know the Bible is true because I know the God who authored it. The Bible reveals the mind of the God who is behind all the magnificent and wonderful creation that surrounds me, the God who gives me life and breath and all my mental and physical powers.

I believe in God because I can see evidence all around me of His handiwork, from the smallest blade of grass to the hundred million stars that dot the Milky Way galaxy. Neither I nor any of my forebears

made the ground that produces the food which I eat to sustain my life. Neither I nor any before me have had any power to make the sun rise, or the seasons come and go, or the rain fall. Neither I nor any of my forebears or colleagues can even fathom the mysteries of life, or growth, to say nothing of *producing* them. Yes, *I believe in God!*

Furthermore, I believe in God because of the message He caused to be written. He gave me a mind so that I could learn to read and understand language, so that I could comprehend His written message. He has not chosen to come down and speak to me in person, but has arranged for me to have the information contained in His Word. What a wonderful provision!

Finally, I believe that I can live the life God demands of me because others before me have done it. Others before me have lived pleasing to God, and if they could, so can I.

Such are the growth inspiring thoughts that we can draw from the rich soil of faith in which we are planted. Feeding on more and more of these thoughts is sure to result in rapid spiritual growth.

What about the times when I feel like running away from my responsibilities? I have made a commit-

#### ***I Believe the Bible...***

- ◆ because I and those in whom I have confidence have spent considerable time and effort verifying its facts, and I am convinced that it is indeed the Word of the God of heaven.
- ◆ because it teaches one message of salvation from beginning to end, one harmonious Gospel.
- ◆ because of the many prophecies upon its pages which came to pass just as foretold.
- ◆ because I know the God who authored it, the God of all creation, the God who gives me life and breath and all my mental and physical powers.





ment which cannot be reversed. Having seen the truth, I can't "unsee" it. Having believed, I cannot "unbelieve" it. Having agreed to serve God, I cannot "un-agree." And there is no reason to want to. The facts have not changed, nor will they. What was a fact when I verified and accepted it is still a fact in my moments of discouragement. Truth is unchanging; facts are fixed; only my fickle feelings have changed. If God was God and the Bible was true and the foundations of my faith solid and sure *yesterday*, they are just as true and solid and sure today.

Someone has said that we should never doubt in the dark what God has taught us in the light. There will be times when our faith will seem

### More "Helps"

What else can we do to help ourselves grow? What can we do to nurture our new life in Christ?

The book of Hebrews gives one suggestion, that we should not forsake meeting together with other believers. "And let us consider one another to provoke unto love and to good works: not forsaking the assembling of ourselves together, as the manner of some is; but exhorting one another: and so much the more, as ye see the day approaching" (Heb. 10:24-25).

The early Christians gathered together as often as possible to worship and praise God, and exhort one another (Col. 3:16-17). Their "togetherness" was a vital part of their lives.

A minister once told of teaching homiletics to seminary students. When the classes had scarcely begun, a young man in the class stood up and said, "Mr. Brown, I want you to be hard on me. I can take it." The minister recalls that if he had told the young man the honest facts, he would surely have discouraged him. He might have said, "Son, if you knew how badly you preach, you'd give up." But he recalls, "I didn't say it, because I knew he had great potential. He was in the process of becoming something, he just hadn't made it yet."

This is how God looks at us. He does not discard us because we are imperfect and immature when we start out. He knows that we must grow, and that growth takes time. He knows His children are not born perfect. They are born with the ability to *grow*, to grow into perfection, bit by bit, breath by breath, step by step.

In the meantime, we must be humble, realizing how many times we fail, how many times we need the mercy of God, and not exalt ourselves above our measure. A candid believer once wrote on the back flyleaf in his Bible this note to himself: "You wouldn't be so shocked at your sins if you didn't have such a high opinion of yourself." Truly, we are not what we ought to be, we are not what we *want* to be. But God does not fault us for this. "God isn't finished with me yet." He is still, we trust, working on our rough stone, fashioning it into something He can use, and if we submit to all parts of the process, when it is done we *will* be perfect and complete.

### Be Patient!

We may have felt like saying, as did the young student, "Be hard on me—tell me everything that's

**A** pupil is not superior to his teacher; but every one, when his training is complete, will reach his teacher's level"—Luke 6:40, NEB.

feebler, our conviction weaker. But nothing about God has changed, nothing about His Word has weakened. The only change is in *us*, and let us set to work at once to draw in a fresh supply of the nutrients that support our faith.

How can we do it? By submerging ourselves in the Word of God, that Word which is profitable "for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness: That the man of God may be perfect, thoroughly furnished unto all good works" (II Tim. 3:16-17).

Refreshing ourselves on the strongholds that undergird our faith will keep us growing stronger even when our "environment" seems against us.

Peter wrote to his brethren to stir up their pure minds (II Pet. 3:1). We, too, need stirring, exhorting, quickening. We need to utilize every resource at hand. We need to act on what we know, and we shall find ourselves impelled to do more and more.

We need also the discipline of personal devotions, taking time to feast on the heavenly realities, to fill our minds with what is good and pure and wholesome and true. We can do this even as we work, or walk, or go about our daily duties. Our whole life is part of our growth into holiness.

### The Time Factor...

Then we need *the right process*. Growth takes time.



wrong with me. I can take it." But God knows better. He knows that a full knowledge immediately would discourage us. We have to grow, and growth takes time. And so He has arranged that we are not even *able* to learn everything all at once. He has arranged that we comprehend little by little. The more we comprehend, the stronger we grow. And the stronger we grow, the more we comprehend. And so on and on; so that as the demands of the Christian life increase, so does our strength increase to meet them.

By taking the small trials in the right spirit, we acquire the strength to bear greater trials. This is what Jeremiah was told when he was feeling his weakness. "If thou hast run with the footmen, and they have wearied thee, then how canst thou contend with horses? and if in the land of peace, wherein thou trustedst, they wearied thee, then how wilt thou do in the swelling of Jordan?" (Jer. 12:5).

The only danger is that we stunt ourselves by closing our minds to what God is trying to teach us, and so fail to obtain the strength we could have had. So let us pray, "Lord, help us that as Thou dost reveal what we are, we may see ourselves as we are in Thy sight."

This is the point Jesus was making when He told His disciples, "The disciple is not above his master; but every one that is perfect shall be as his master" (Luke 6:40). Or as it is phrased in a newer version, "A pupil is not superior to his teacher; but every one, when his training is complete, will reach his teacher's level" (NEB).

Parents do not expect their newborn infant to be able to assume the responsibilities of an adult, to walk, and talk, and instantly know all that they will need for life. But they do expect their child to grow. And if, as the days and weeks and months

pass, they do not see the growth that they know is "normal," they become worried, and wonder what is wrong.

Just so with our growth in the sight of God. God does not expect our new life in Christ to be complete and perfect at the beginning. But He does expect us to grow. In fact, the growth process must be rapid and continuous, if we are to reach full stature. We have no time to remain as we are.

Even our Perfect Pattern, Jesus, had to grow. He had to learn. We read that "Jesus increased in wisdom and stature" (Luke 2:52) and so must we. He grew—He *increased*. And He "learned obedience by the things which he suffered" (Heb. 5:8), just as we must.

#### Counting the Cost...

What did Jesus mean when He told us to "count the cost"?

It is not possible at the beginning of our natural life to know every experience we will encounter. Neither is it possible at the beginning of our Christian life to know every test or trial that lies ahead, every duty we will be called upon to perform, every point of growth we will have to make. But why should we? Who could wish to know his whole life in advance, all his joys and sorrows? God has not so arranged it—for our good.

Why then did Jesus instruct His followers to "count the cost"? He was advising a thorough and serious comparison of values, present with future, to produce a firm conviction that *whatever the cost* the final outcome would be worth it.

Do we fear future storms and winds that might be too much for us to withstand? Such fear is needless. Truly the tiny sapling only two feet high does not have the strength of a full grown tree, but it offers resistance to the wind only in proportion to its size. If the wind is

fierce, it simply bends with it, and when the wind has passed, it is unharmed.

#### The Practical "How-To's" of Growing

Does God's demand for perfection seem unreasonable, impossible, quite above and beyond us? Let us look at it in everyday practice and see how it *can* be done.

Take, for example, the command, "Cease from anger, and forsake wrath" (Ps. 37:8). A situation arises that would spark our fury—but we remember the law of God, that we must not give in to any feelings of anger. We tell ourselves that God is in control, and He will render a just judgment, that *our* duty is to keep ourselves right.

**G**od does not expect the new life in Christ to be complete and perfect. But He does expect it to GROW.

*Nothing else matters.* With these thoughts dominating our mind, our impulse to anger is gone. Have we not, then, conquered it?

Or suppose our besetment is envy. We have been accustomed to observing what others have, that we lack. It happens again. But this time we remember that "envy is the rottenness of the bones" (Prov. 14:30), that God does not want us if we have any envy, that He has given us what He wants us to have and we should be "content." So, when we find out about someone's new





acquisition, or their fine accomplishment, instead of thinking how *much* they have and how *little* we—by comparison—have, and thus feeding our envy, we instead rejoice with them. By sharing their joy we increase theirs and banish the spirit of envy. Together we can praise God, and both of us are happier. Have we not scored a victory on this point?

Or it may be that we have been accustomed to making light or silly remarks, a quick jest, a witty com-

the clerk inadvertently fails to charge us for a small item, or returns too much change. We observe it. If we say nothing, it is a mark against our record. If we speak of it, and show our intent to make it right, we place a credit on our record, and have taken another step toward becoming perfect.

Perhaps we are telling an experience, something of interest that happened. Our first question should be, is it edifying or necessary to tell? If it passes this test, then we

power our will, and we yield. We resolve *never* to do it again.

The next time temptation comes, and we sense the danger immediately and look away, remembering that only “the pure in heart” will ever see God (Matt. 5:8), and that it is far easier to *keep* out the contamination than to *get* it out. In so doing we score another victory; we are one step nearer perfection.

Or it might be the desire to build ourselves up. We tell something we did, something to enhance our self-image, to impress others (if ever so slightly), with how good, or how quick, or how keen, or how capable we are. To all of this the law of God says, No, you must speak only to honor God, for His glory and the edifying of others. Truly God has said, “Them that honor me I will honor” (1 Sam. 2:30). He has no use for those who honor themselves.

The next time the temptation comes, we remain silent. The thought comes to our mind, but we squelch it. *We will not say it.* We have won a victory—we have taken another step toward perfection.

It might be that we are easily offended. Someone slighted us—they didn’t even consider or ask our opinion. Our imperfect peace is all upset. We look at ourselves with shame—we knew better than this! Yet this is how we feel. We resolve to conquer it. Next time we will do better.

The next time is not long in coming, and again it seems that someone says or does something just to put us in our place, or slight or belittle us. If the facts could be known, they may never have thought of such a thing, that is only *our* interpretation. But this time we quickly tell ourselves that our evil imaginations are at work, and we have no right to let them. We determine that we shall *not* be offended,

*(Continued on page 24)*

**A**s we learn we grow. And as we grow we learn. And as the demands of the Christian life increase, so does our strength increase to meet them.

ment. The law of God says “No” to all such, that the very “thought of foolishness is sin” (Prov. 24:9), and if we would be “without sin” we must refrain. Suddenly we find ourselves facing the perfect opportunity. The thought comes into our mind, the witty comment we would like to make, but we remember the Word of God and say a quick “No!” to ourselves. And if it is our duty to speak, we go one step further and interject a spiritual thought to upbuild and edify. Have we not conquered our foolishness?

Or perhaps we have been dishonest in some small way. It is only a small thing, but we know that *all* dishonesty is wrong, that God demands that we be strictly honest. The next temptation comes, and this time we are prepared. We must do *exactly* what we know to be right, like Abraham not taking even a “thread or a shoe latchet” that does not belong to us. Perhaps it happens in the grocery store, that

must be careful of our telling. It may be that we have been accustomed to telling a little more than the facts, adding a bit of color, dressing it up to hold the interest of our listeners. Beware! “In the multitude of words there wanteth not sin” (Prov. 10:19). We realize this is a point of stumbling; we regret our last failure, and resolve *never* to yield to this temptation again.

The next temptation is not long in coming, and what do we do? Do we restrain our tongue and tell it exactly like it is, even though we can think of ways to tell it “bigger and better”? If we do, we have taken another step toward perfection.

Or it might be that we let our eyes linger on sights that are not upbuilding, that are unclean, impure. We know that Jesus would not have allowed Himself to look at such, that we are placing the wrong images in our mind, images we will have to work hard to erase. Yet our desire or instinct seems to over-



# SALVATION

## LIFE'S HIGHEST GOAL

***Salvation is the highest goal in the Christian's life, and the only incentive strong enough to lead a reasoning man or woman to renounce everything of the flesh, to take up his or her daily cross of self-denial and die with Christ to the rudiments of the world.***

To a Christian, one whose pattern and ideal is the Christ of Galilee, salvation with Him is the apex, the pinnacle, the zenith of his ambition. We long to escape the trouble, the disappointments, the pains and aches, the limited life span, the uncertainties, the frustrations and the limitations associated with our mortal existence. We long to be saved for time and eternity, to have our mortal corruptible bodies changed and made like unto the glorious body of Christ our Redeemer and King, who now is seated upon His Father's throne in heaven. And that is the Bible promise. Paul the Apostle, when picturing the reward for right doing, said: "For our conversation is in heaven; from whence also we look for the Saviour, the Lord Jesus Christ: who shall change our vile body, that it may be fashioned like unto his glorious body" (Phil. 3:20-21).

Jesus, in rebuttal of the proposition presented by the Sadducees, who were trying to discredit the idea of a resurrection from the dead and future rewards, said: "Those who are accounted worthy to attain to that age and to the resurrection from the dead...cannot die any more,

because they are equal to angels and are the sons of God, being sons of the resurrection" (Luke 20:35-36, RSV).

### **Must The Good Life Be Its Own Reward?**

It has become popular among theologians to discredit the idea of an eternal salvation, or the hope of eternal rewards to be given at the resurrection of the just. It is their considered opinion that salvation is not life's highest goal, that right living should bring its own rewards in peace of mind and satisfaction as one passes through life, and nothing more can be expected. But Almighty God offers more than that, much more!

Increased service for God, increased interest in the welfare of our brother, a higher standard of moral excellence are sufficiently worthy ambitions to attract anyone who appreciates virtue; however they are not incentives strong enough to impel a man or woman to go the whole way, and perform the entire will of God. Our aim should be to be saved for eternity, to be made equal to the angels never to die. Salvation is the highest goal in the Christian's life, and the only incentive strong enough to lead a reasoning man or



woman to renounce everything of the flesh, to take up his or her daily cross of self-denial and die with Christ to the rudiments of the world, to have no confidence in the flesh or surrender to any of its bewitching desires. It was for the joy set before Jesus that He "endured the cross, despising the shame" (Heb. 12:2) and it is the hope of eternal salvation that will urge you and me on to make a full and complete surrender.

that all discoveries have been made, that science could proceed no further. We admit there is much more to be learned, and that given time science will discover much more. Granted that this is the case, why rule out the possibility of the existence of a superrace of beings in other parts of the limitless universe with powers far surpassing ours?

A rocket that is powerful enough, and accurate enough, to send a satel-

Divine Creator living in complete isolation, or among a society of inferior human beings. The presence of angels on earth is reported frequently throughout the Bible, testifying to their existence. Angels appeared to Abraham, to Lot, to King David, to Daniel who was among the captives in Babylon. One of these angelic visitants is even known to us by name. The angel Gabriel appeared to Daniel, then some five hundred years later appeared to Zacharias, to inform him of the birth of a son, John the Immerser; then again a few months later Gabriel came to inform Mary that Christ was to be born to her.

Christ foretold that He would come in His glory and all His holy angels with Him. And the book of Hebrews, speaking of the rapturous event awaiting worthy Christians when given their reward of immortality at Christ's coming, says: "But ye are come unto mount Sion, and unto the city of the living God, the heavenly Jerusalem, and to an innumerable company of angels" (Heb. 12:22). Angels are real!

## Angels, the Subjects of Salvation

Now these heavenly angels are not ultrafavored beings who began their life as such. They are men and women who once lived as lowly mortal creatures even as we. They were the winners in the struggle against flesh, they became pure and holy like their heavenly Father, and so merited eternal salvation. Let us quote again those words of Jesus 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, neither can they die any more, "and are the children of God, being the children of the resurrection." And Paul's words in Phil. 3:20-21 will also bear repeating: "Our conversation is in heaven,

**H**eavenly angels are not ultra-favored beings who began their life as such. They are men and women who once lived as lowly mortal creatures, like us, who became pure and holy like their heavenly Father, and so merited eternal salvation.

## Shall We Believe the Supernatural?

Many people today are inclined to discredit Jesus' miracles, and the other supernatural phenomena reported in the Bible. It is hard for them to accept the belief in angels, the resurrection of the body, or a future life. But the Bible speaks plainly on each of these matters. We have become a nation of doubters. What we cannot see, and demonstrate, and explain from a scientific point of view, we are apt to discredit, hence we have no patience with the person who believes in the supernatural. But let us not be too certain that we are right in this. The scientific marvels of today, which are the common knowledge of the grade-school pupil, would have seemed supernatural phenomena to the people living one hundred years ago, or even fifty years ago.

Today only the most irresponsible bigot would take the position

lite into orbit is a remarkable device, but we know very well that it did not devise, design and build itself. It is the product of beings intellectually superior to it. Likewise a human being is a remarkable creation, but not the highest creation in the universe. We are the product of a still higher creation. Behind the remarkable phenomenon we call Nature there is a superintelligence which we call God. And the phenomena that seems so remarkable to us is mere routine work to the superrace of people living on the other side of the intellectual curtain.

Hence our only conclusion can be, there is a God by whose infinite powers the universe exists and is maintained, and under His magnanimous influence is a race of supermen and women to whom the Scriptures refer as angels. It is no stretch of our imagination to conceive of the existence of such immortal beings. We cannot conceive of a



from whence also we look for the Saviour, the Lord Jesus Christ, who shall change our vile body, that it may be fashioned like unto his glorious body." And again the words of John in I John 3:2 apply: "Beloved, now are we the sons of God, and it doth not yet appear what we shall be: but we know that, when he shall appear, we shall be like him; for we shall see him as he is." Furthermore, the road to this delightful realization is open to each of us today. We can gain that full salvation for our very own if only we behave ourselves as Christians should.

### **God Has a Family in Heaven as Well as a Family Upon Earth**

Paul spoke sublimely of God's long-range plan of salvation in Eph. 3:14 to the end of the chapter: "For this cause I bow my knees unto the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, of whom the whole family in heaven and earth is named, that he would grant you, according to the riches of his glory, to be strengthened with might by his Spirit in the inner man;...that ye...may be able to comprehend with all saints what is the breadth, and length, and depth, and height, and to know the love of Christ, which passeth knowledge, that ye might be filled with all the fulness of God. Now unto him that is able to do exceeding abundantly above all that we ask or think, according to the power that worketh in us."

A mere glimpse into the glories of such an abundant life should be sufficient to convince us that we want that life. That is the effect the hope of salvation had on the prophets and the holy men of old: Peter said: "That the trial of your faith, being much more precious than of gold that perisheth,...might be found unto praise and honour and glory at the appearing of Jesus

Christ:... receiving the end of your faith, even the salvation of your souls. Of which salvation the prophets have inquired and searched diligently" (I Pet. 1:7-10).

### **Three Steps To Salvation**

But the question naturally poses itself, How shall we come into possession of this glorious salvation? Good things in life do not come to us merely for their taking; there is always a price to pay. And should we picture God, with the greatest of all boons to offer, as so philanthropic as to offer it with no strings of any kind attached? No indeed! Salvation is conditional. "If ye be willing and obedient, ye shall eat the good of the land" (Isa. 1:19). "If iniquity be in thine hand, put it far away, and let not wickedness dwell in thy tabernacles. For then shalt thou lift up thy face without spot; yea, thou shalt be steadfast, and shalt not fear...And thou shalt be secure because there is hope," said the Patriarch Job (Job 11:14-15, 18). And Jesus, in His post-ascension message to the seven churches, and to us, said: "Behold I come quickly, and my reward is with me, to give every man according as his work shall be" (Rev. 22:12).

#### **◆ Step One: Knowledge**

The apostle Paul was familiar with the sports events so popular with the ancient Greeks; the Olympic Games, the foot races, and other types of physical prowess. These were not hit-and-miss affairs; running on the race course was serious business. The runner wanted to win, and to win he had to qualify in a number of different ways. The first of these was to inform himself of the rules of the race. The earnest seeker after salvation must also learn the rules of the race. The apostle Peter gives us one of these rules in the opening paragraph of

his Second Epistle: "Grace and peace be multiplied unto you through the knowledge of God, and of Jesus our Lord, according as his divine power hath given unto us all things that pertain unto life and godliness, through the knowledge of him that hath called us to glory and virtue." And Peter's able colleague, Paul, said the same to Timothy his son in the faith: "Study to show thyself approved unto God, a workman that needeth not to be ashamed, rightly dividing the word of truth,...for from a child thou hast known the holy scriptures, which are able to make thee wise unto salvation" (II Tim. 2:15; 3:15).

Jesus already had taken this position regarding the need for knowledge of the rules of the race during His earthly ministry, and the prophet Isaiah had taken it before Him, in fact Jesus quoted Isaiah: "No man can come to me, except the Father which hath sent me draw him: and I will raise him up at the last day. It is written in the prophets, And they shall be all taught of God. Every man therefore that hath heard, and hath learned of the Father, cometh unto me" (John 6:44-45). Hearing and learning of the Father is a pre-requisite to coming to Jesus or running the race for life. Hence the first step toward salvation is knowledge.

#### **◆ Step Two: Application**

Now let us apply these rules. Jesus said: "If ye know these things, happy are ye if ye do them" (John 13:17). A realization of the fact that we are headed toward salvation should make us happy, and that realization stems only from obeying the words of Jesus. Knowing without doing is like a tree that bears leaves but no fruit. Knowing, makes doing possible; doing brings results, fits one for salvation.



No man ever cherished a greater desire for eternal salvation—after the way was opened up to him—than did the apostle Paul. His enthusiasm was like a burning flame that nothing could quench. Shipwreck him on an island, and he will preach the gospel to the native dwellers; thrust him into the inner prison with his feet in the stocks, and with his companion he will sing praises to God at midnight; let the mob stone him, drag him out of the city for

**S**alvation is life's highest goal, and to attain the perfection of character that assures salvation, life's greatest achievement.

dead, and the very next day he has revived and is on the way to the next site of his evangelistic endeavor; let him be bound, and taken with a horde of common prisoners to Rome to be tried before the brutal Nero, and while held under house arrest awaiting trial, he preaches the Gospel to all who come to him, and writes to his newly organized churches some of his most stirring and gripping Epistles.

This Paul was a one-idea man. He said: "This one thing I do, forgetting those things which are behind, and reaching forth unto those things which are before, I press toward the mark for the prize of the high calling of God in Christ Jesus....Neither count I my life dear unto myself, so that I might finish my course with joy, and the ministry, which I have received of the Lord Jesus" (Phil. 3:13-14; Acts 20:24).

Furthermore, Paul was a realist. Note his attitude toward his own salvation, and his alertness to the possibility of his losing the race: "Know ye not that they which run in a race run all, but one receiveth the prize? So run, that ye may obtain. And every man that striveth for the mastery is temperate in all things. Now they do it to obtain a corruptible crown; but we an incorruptible. I therefore so run, not as uncertainly; so fight I, not as one that beateth the air; but I keep under my body, and bring it into subjection: lest that by any means, when I have preached to others, I myself should be a castaway" (I Cor. 9:24-27). Salvation is life's highest goal, and to attain the perfection of character that assures salvation, life's greatest achievement.

Salvation is a personal matter. Much stress has been laid upon the redemptive work of Christ and its virtue toward our salvation. But it is only a vain delusion to suppose that God will do for us anything that we can do for ourselves. Paul's words in Phil. 2:12 strike home like an arrow to the mark: "Wherefore, my beloved, as ye have always obeyed, not as in my presence only, but now much more in my absence, work out your own salvation with fear and trembling." To work out our own salvation merely means to banish from our lives all malice, all pride, hypocrisy, deceit, lying, anger; to cleanse ourselves from all filthiness of the flesh, perfecting holiness in God's fear (I Pet. 2:1-2; Col. 3:8-10; II Cor. 7:1).

In Matt. 5:8 Jesus said: "Blessed are the pure in heart; for they shall see God." And He was teaching the same truth when He spoke the Parable of the wise and foolish builders: "Therefore whosoever heareth these sayings of mine, and doeth them, I will liken him unto a wise man, which built his house upon a rock:

and the rain descended, and the floods came, and the winds blew, and beat upon that house; and it fell not; for it was founded upon a rock. And every one that heareth these sayings of mine, and doeth them not, shall be likened unto a foolish man, which built his house upon the sand: and the rain descended, and the floods came, and the winds blew, and beat upon that house; and it fell: and great was the fall of it" (Matt. 7:24-27).

## God Wants Quality

God will not perpetuate any unworthy thing. His promise is eternal life, everlasting salvation. Should He let down the bars and accept any substandard material, He would be perpetuating eternally that which is evil. Should He save one person with a little anger in his make up, another with a little jealousy, another with a little pride, another who would tell an occasional lie, the inhabitants of that better world could borrow and trade and swap evil traits, and soon all the evils of the world of today would be represented. God's only safe plan is to demand absolute purity of heart. That is His unalterable demand and He cannot change. "God is not a man that he should lie" (Num. 23:19).

God has His own ideas about whom He chooses to save. When issuing the loving invitation He did not say: All the wealthy may come, or all the poor may come. He did not say that all the people that have had at least three years in college may come, but "Whosoever will may come," but too often we have refused His loving invitation our attitude has been that of a class to whom Jesus spoke in His day, "Ye will not come to me that ye might have life" (John 5:40) Coming to Jesus is not as simple as walking down the aisle of a church or "hitting the sawdust trail." To come to



Jesus is first to hear and learn of the Father, then to do the things the Father wants us to do each moment of each day. God demands character; He is a "God of knowledge, and by him actions are weighed" (I Sam. 2:3). "He that is slow to anger is better than the mighty; and he that ruleth his spirit than he that taketh a city" (Prov. 16:32).

### The Day of Recompense

Recompense comes with the arrival of Christ, the great Paymaster.

When building the transcontinental railroad in the last half of the Nineteenth Century much of the work was done by man power, hence many men were employed. Often the railroads preceded civilization hence there were long stretches where there were no towns or cities; no banks, no post offices. Therefore, the railroads were obliged to send a guarded "pay car" over a section of the road to take care of payroll. The workers were paid in gold. No worker could get his pay until the pay car arrived; no worker expected to get his pay until the pay car went through.

That is the way it is with salvation. Christ is the great Paymaster. No one will get his reward until Christ comes to bring it to him. Jesus spoke in a straightforward manner when He said: "Behold, I come quickly; and my reward is with me, to give every man according as his work shall be" (Rev. 22:12). There are no exceptions; "Behold I come...to give every man according as his work shall be". No one can obtain salvation until Jesus comes to bring it.

One time Jesus was impressing a lesson upon that class of people who always wanted to drive a shrewd bargain, who wanted to be repaid for every effort they made to help their fellowmen. He said: "But when thou makest a feast, call the

poor, the maimed, the lame, the blind: and thou shalt be blessed; for they cannot recompense thee: for thou shalt be recompensed at the resurrection of the just" (Luke 14:13-14). Here is the Day of recompense projected, the time when salvation will be given to all worthy of it—"at the resurrection of the just."

5:4). Not the moment of one's death but when Jesus, the chief Shepherd "shall appear," salvation will be given. And to make assurance doubly sure Peter added: "Wherefore gird up the loins of your mind, be sober, and hope to the end for the grace [or reward] that is to be brought unto you at the revelation of Jesus Christ" (I Pet. 1:13).

**G**od has promised eternal life, everlasting salvation, and He will not perpetuate any unworthy thing.

Peter was with his Lord during His earthly ministry. More than once he heard Him say, I am going away, and I will come again, and he left these words on record for us: "And when the chief Shepherd shall appear, ye shall receive a crown of glory that fadeth not away" (I Pet.

Indeed, salvation is the highest goal in the Christian's life, and once bestowed it will always endure. In the words of the prophet Isaiah (45:17), "Israel shall be saved in the Lord with an everlasting salvation: ye shall not be ashamed nor confounded, world without end." MM

*O Thou who knowest my heart,  
Who knoweth my thoughts before they come into my mind,  
Grant me this day*

*Grace to listen,  
Patience to wait,  
Wisdom to act,  
And strength to continue*

*In the will that centers and the hope that sustains.*

*Recall me from the times when I have been guilty of  
Exchanging truth for half-truth;  
Trading purity for broadmindedness;  
Bartering loyalty for temporal favors;  
Entertaining deceit for earthly gain.*

*When I think of the purity of Christ, my failures  
become more abhorrent. I desire forgiveness. Wilt Thou  
grant me a chance to change, and a new opportunity to  
honor the Perfect One in every word and deed. May I appreciate  
ever more deeply His faultless life, His willing conformity to Thy will,  
His penetrating insight, His unwavering faith.*



# Why Study Prophecy?

Pro  
Heaven's Light Penetrating

**T**he fullest beauty of truth is seen in its forward look. True religion is not static, complacent, or backward looking. It is the Word of God for today and for the future. Taken seriously, it inevitably results in a more careful, more considered, more upright life before God.

In many religious circles, the study of prophecy is neglected—on the assumption that no sure information is available. The fact is, many false, foolish, and heretical statements have been made about Bible prophecy. But these do not condemn the prophecies themselves, only the erroneous thinking of those who interpreted them. The Divine Word still stands.

And we neglect it only to our own peril. Says one Bible scholar, "The study of the prophetic Scriptures is more important today...than at any

time since the days of the Apostles." This statement is true, because never were we nearer the point of fulfillment.

What is prophecy? The word comes from two Greek words — *pro*, meaning "for," or "in front of," or "on behalf of," and *phanai*, which means "to speak." The prophet of God had two responsibilities: 1) to speak out in behalf of God, and 2) to speak beforehand where God had revealed information about the future.

Why should we study prophecy? There are several reasons:

## **1** Because much of the Bible is prophecy.

The Word of God affirms that "All scripture...given by inspiration of God... is profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness" (II Tim. 3:16-

17).

What is the reason? "That the man of God may be perfect, thoroughly furnished unto all good works." All Scripture given by God's inspiration is profitable, and prophecy is unquestionably inspired—we of ourselves have no way to know anything beyond the present moment. For all our knowledge of future events we must depend upon God.

Because prophetic Scripture is a sacred word from God, it is inspired, it is practical, it is profitable. Popular estimates are that at least thirty-three percent of our Bible is prophetic. Some entire books are given to prophecy (Zechariah, Revelation).

What topics stand out in Bible prophecy? The most important are those prophecies pertaining to the destiny of our earth, God's plan of salva-



# prophecy:

*"I the Lord have spoken  
it: it shall come to pass...  
I have purposed it, I will  
also do it"*

— Ezek. 24:14; Isa. 46:11

## Earth's Darkness

tion and the consummation of all that He is doing. Central in this teaching is the Second Advent of Christ. And so prominent is this teaching that it is mentioned in every New Testament book. In fact, the return of Jesus Christ is mentioned more than three hundred times in the New Testament, which means one out of every twenty-five verses deals with this important event. In simplest, plainest

words, Jesus Himself said, "If I go ... I will come again, and receive you unto myself; that where I am, there ye may be also"





(John 14:3). "I will come again." And the angels at the time of His ascension reiterated this important word of prophecy to the watching Disciples: "Ye men of Galilee, why stand ye gazing up into heaven? this same Jesus, which is taken up from you into heaven, shall so come in like manner as ye have seen him go into heaven" (Acts 1:11).

The ascension of Jesus was a bodily, visible, literal ascension. Jesus' return will likewise be bodily, visible, and literal. He "shall so come in like manner." Since this is the unshakable, unmistakable, unchangeable Word of God, we dare not neglect a study of the prophetic Scriptures.

Why study prophecy? Because—

### **3 Jesus believed the prophecies of Scripture.**

Many of the prophecies of the Old Testament are related directly to Jesus. He Himself recognized this fact, as did the Apostles who wrote about Him. After His resurrection, we read that Jesus began at "Moses and all the prophets and expounded unto them in all the Scriptures the things concerning Himself" (Luke 24:44).

Time after time, Jesus referred to the prophetic Scriptures. He lived in an awareness of the surety of prophecy. He was sure that God had a plan, that history was not happenstance but that it was going in one direction.

Many Scriptures were fulfilled in Him. Take, for example, the prophe-

### **4 Prophecy encourages patient waiting.**

We read in James 5:7-8, "Be patient therefore, brethren, unto the coming of the Lord. Behold, the husbandman waiteth for the precious fruit of the earth, and hath long patience for it, until he receive the early and latter rain. Be ye also patient; stablish your hearts: for the coming of the Lord draweth nigh."

Note the emphasis: four times in two verses, patience. Even though the whole world seems in a hurry, James says, "Be patient. Jesus is coming. Nothing else really matters."

But the patient waiting encouraged by James is not idleness. It is like the waiting of the "husbandman who waits for the precious fruit of the earth." Even with modern techniques of farming, the farmer must wait for the maturing of his crop. But he has much work to do while he is waiting. The time must pass, but the time must be used in planting, cultivating, spraying, or his will not be the joy of an abundant harvest.

Likewise the believer must wait, but not in idleness. There is much work to be done in the interim, all the work of maturing a fully developed, Christlike character before the great Day of the Lord arrives.

Then too, we study prophecy because—

### **5 Prophecy encourages earnest watching.**

Prophecy places a limit on the time that is now. It tells us that things will not always continue as they are. A change is coming and we must be ready to meet it.

The thought of some day standing face to face before Jesus puts an urgency on our need to obey Him,

***The future is important right now  
because in the light of prophecy  
today touches eternity.***

### **2 Prophecy answers our questions about life.**

Nothing sheds light on life like God's words about the future. Questions like, Where are the dead? Who will share in the resurrection? What will the future of the earth be like? Who shall reign when the Kingdom is established? Who will appear at the Judgment? Will the nations be judged? What will believers do in the Kingdom? What about the Battle of Armageddon? When will it take place? Where? What about the thousand-year reign of Christ? Who will reign with Him? Who are the 144,000? All these and hundreds of others can be answered by a study of Bible prophecy. *The Bible has the answers.*

cies of His birth. In Matthew 1 alone are five references to points of prophecy fulfilled in Jesus' birth. In later years during His ministry, He repeatedly said that such and such an event happened so that the Scriptures would be fulfilled. *Jesus studied the prophetic Scriptures.*

Jesus assumed, too, that His disciples were familiar with the prophecies. Surely if He were here today He would expect the same from us.

Peter also recognized how much prophecy was written around Jesus. "To him give all the prophets witness, that through his name whosoever believeth in him shall receive remission of sins" (Acts: 10:43).

Still another reason for studying prophecy is—



to be like Him, to be pure as He is pure so that we can face Him unashamed.

The Scriptures warn frequently that the real reason for being *preinformed* (prophecy) is so we can be *prepared* for what is coming. We prepare by applying what we learn. Prophecy is always followed with an impelling "therefore," either spoken or implied. Jesus is coming suddenly, "therefore be ye also ready: for in such an hour as ye think not the Son of man cometh" (Matt. 24:44).

## 6 Prophecy frees us from an earthly perspective.

Our hope is based on two worlds—this world and the next. We are not citizens here, we are "citizens of heaven, and we wait for the Saviour who comes from heaven, the Lord Jesus Christ, who will transform the body that belongs to our low estate till it resembles the body of his Glory, by the same power that enables him to make everything subject to himself" (Phil. 3:20-21, Moffatt). The future is important right now because in the light of prophecy today touches eternity. And *where we will be tomorrow* depends upon *what we do today*. If we live for this world and the present system, which is doomed and perishing, we shall perish with it. But if we use the present to prepare for the great future God has planned, we belong to God and the future, and shall one day, if faithful, be granted a part in the coming new order.

## 7 Prophecy inspires dedicated work.

Jesus said on one occasion, "My Father worketh hitherto, and I work" (John 5:17). The apostle Paul

## Happy to Be Old!

*A 93-year-old member who lives in rural Iowa wrote recently that she was "happy to be old." One of our sisters in Rochester was curious about the statement and wrote her to ask why she had said this. Here is her reply:*

This afternoon I got your letter, and before I opened it tears ran down my cheeks. Does that sound happy? It is—I am always so glad to hear from my church family, and have been, as far back as I can remember. We always need something to push us a little more forward.

I have been trying to think about why old age is interesting. I guess I'm just glad to be here, and enjoy trying to be better and better every day. The longer we live the longer we want to be alive and learn more about our heavenly Father. I keep wondering, Am I doing things that are not pleasing to God, or not doing things that I should be doing?

I don't ever want to die—I have said that lots of times. I have been told that all people die and they bury them in the ground, but I say, I don't want to die.

Years ago we were living on a farm south of here when I first heard the real truth of God's Word. The preacher was at our place for supper, then went to my husband's sister's place. I went along to hear him speak. That evening when we started home, my sister-in-law handed me a magazine, as I had always questioned the preachers' talks. This magazine was the *Megiddo Message*, and it started me reading and studying my Bible.

I really can't do much now as it's hard for me to get around, but I am happy still the same. I can get the meals and do the dishes. I have many other things I would like to do, but that doesn't keep me from reading. I haven't been out of the house this winter, but still I feel happy.

Really, I don't know why I feel so happy most of the time, but I think it must be because I know my Bible. Of course, I don't know it as well as some do, but if I didn't know it and obey it I wouldn't have anything to really be happy about. But when I have the Word of God and understand it, what else could I want?

—E. Trachsel

said that we are "his workmanship, created in Christ Jesus unto good works, which God hath before ordained that we should walk in them" (Eph. 2:10). Again He said in parable, "Occupy till I come" (Luke 19:13).

In this last late hour of the day, we should be living in the glow of the "any time now" return of Jesus. We know that the Day is near and imminent. In the words of Paul, we should be pressing on to secure "the prize of the high calling of God in

Christ Jesus" (Phil. 3:14). In the light of prophecy we can wait, and watch, and work.

Prophecy gives our lives perspective and direction. Scripture is not just an interesting book to read. It is the Word of God; it is the story of the world's future, *our* future. Its promises are sure and certain. Let us hear the resounding words of Jesus, "Behold, I come quickly," and respond with the apostle John, "Even so, come, Lord Jesus." MM  
(To be continued)



## "Thy Speech Bewrayeth Thee"

*"And after a while came unto him they that stood by, and said to Peter, Surely thou also art one of them; for thy speech bewrayeth thee"*  
—Matthew 26:73

**be-wray** \bi-'rā\ vt [ME *bewreyen*, fr. *be-* + *wreyen* to accuse, fr. OE *wrēgan*] archaic (13c): DIVULGE, BETRAY (Webster's Dictionary)

**I**t was that fateful night before the crucifixion. Supper had ended, and Jesus and His disciples had gone out to suffer—Jesus to suffer trial, mockings, and finally death; His disciples to suffer fear, loss and the dejection that follows weakness. "All the disciples forsook him, and fled" (Matt. 26:56), we read—all, that is, except Peter. Peter "followed him afar off unto the high priest's palace, and went in, and sat with the servants, to see the end" (v. 58). He watched the proceedings with a mixture of fear and apprehension. But as the chief priests and all the council continued questioning Jesus and seeking witnesses to testify against Him, Peter apparently grew uncomfortable in his near position and removed himself to the outside of the palace. Here a certain damsel questioned him, and he denied that he knew Christ. Again he moved, this time to the porch. Again he was questioned, and again he denied that he even knew Jesus. It was then that another who was standing by said to Peter, "Surely thou also art one of them; for thy speech bewrayeth thee" (v. 73). His Galilean accent had revealed that he was no native to Jerusalem.

Peter's speech bewrayed him in yet another way—it showed his true identity; it told who he really was. And it did not bewray him as a follower of Christ but as one who had forsaken Him. His words confirmed the accusations against him; Peter *had* been one of the Galilean's followers; and by denying his Lord, Peter was in reality accusing himself of disloyalty.

What accused Peter was more *what* he said than the accent in his voice.

Our words are also telltales of what we really are. How can others identify us as belonging to Christ if our careless manner of speech tells otherwise?

We today need to be very careful of the words we use, lest others hear in our conversation a tendency to conform to the careless vernacular of the day. There are many words circulating today which are no part of our formal language and are not becoming to those professing godliness. Jesus said, "How can ye, being evil, speak good things?" He could also have asked, "How can ye being good speak evil things?" The one is as impossible as the other. What we have in our hearts will proceed from our lips.

There is also the temptation to use words to impress our hearers. At all such times, "thy speech bewrayeth thee." By our falsifying words we deny our first loyalty—which should be always to Christ.

It may seem strange, but we can even betray our Master—and also bewray ourselves—by the words we do *not* say. Peter's only recorded words as he waited there by the fire in the high priest's hall were words of denial. He had no word of praise for Jesus at that moment, and none of devotion to Him. So not only the words Peter spoke bewrayed him but also those he left *unspoken*.

At times we know we would do better to keep silent. At other times, usually when it is so much easier to keep silent, it is our duty to speak. If we fail to speak, then we deny our loyalty to Christ. It may be a word that is needed in defense of right; it may be a word supporting the side of truth and equity. It may be a word of encouragement, warning or carefulness. Whatever it is, speak it. To keep silent is to deny Christ.

There is one other sure way to identify those who belong to Christ. "Then they that feared the Lord spake often one to another" of those things pertaining to their eternal salvation (Mal. 3:16). "They shall speak of the glory of thy kingdom, and talk of thy power" (Ps.



145:11). Both in speech and in conduct they will be "holding forth the word of life" (Phil. 2:16).

The way in which we use words is also important. Almost any words can be used to insult, criticize, or belittle, if such is the intent of the heart. It is easy to gossip under a guise of holy concern, to pry into the details of some trivial incident rather than to be constantly seeking the best interests of our brother and being watchful for his spiritual good.

How can we avoid compromising our high standards so that our speech will not bewray us? God's Word gives valuable counsel.

First, we should pray with the Psalmist, "Set a watch, O Lord, before my mouth; keep the door of my lips" (Ps. 141:3). Then we should think about what we plan to say; if it is of questionable value, it is better to say nothing.

Second, remember that "out of the abundance of the heart the mouth speaketh" (Matt. 12:34). We must keep our mind on higher values; watch that our attitudes are kept under careful control and strict surveillance at all times. Purity of heart promotes purity of speech. A pure mind cannot be behind an impure tongue.

Finally, keep the mouth and heart busy praising and thanking God. Make this vow: "I will bless the Lord at all times: his praise shall continually be in my mouth" (Ps. 34:1). A person who is constantly dwelling with a feeling of praise to God will find that he has no time for words which bewray his love.

The Bible shows clearly that our speech is an indication of our nature. "If any man among you seem to be religious, and bridleth not his tongue, but deceiveth his own heart, this man's religion is vain" (James 1:26).

Our speech can accuse us, as it

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

## Words for the Living

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

*It is a narrow way, but it opens up into a grand future. To think we are not willing to endure some little restrictions now that we might be delivered from the bondage of corruption into the glorious liberty of the children of God!*



*There is a Day soon coming when Christ will return; and will He count you worthy of your high calling?*



*It is easy to see others' faults, but we must look to ourselves; we are not wrapped up enough in Divine things.*



*We must be happy under correction. If we are not happy, the old man is in control.*



*We have indisputable evidence that God has spoken. Let us listen and take heed.*

*Every one shall receive according to his works—according to his words, his actions.*



*We cannot use light, frivolous words but must be sober, speak to the glory of God.*



*If we get angry we are not obeying the law of God's house, and are not most holy. If we allow any wrath now, God's wrath will come upon us in the future.*



*We must be tried to prove us. How would we know we were worthy if we were not tried?*



*It is easy to waste time in worthless chit-chat; but God says, "Go from the presence of a foolish man, when thou perceivest not in him the lips of knowledge." This is a command.*

did Peter, of not living close enough to our Lord. Right speech avoids the creating of serious problems: "Whoso keepeth his mouth and his tongue keepeth his soul from troubles" (Prov. 21:23).

Wholesome and disciplined speech reinforces a Christian dedication and identifies us as a follower of

Christ. Careless speech betrays us.

What does our speech do for us? "...He that will love life, and see good days, let him refrain his tongue from evil, and his lips that they speak no guile" (1 Pet. 3:10).

Be careful, lest it be said of any of us: "Thy speech bewrayeth thee."

MM



# God's Spiritual Creation

## "Let There Be Light"

*"And God made two great lights; the greater light to rule the day, and the lesser light to rule the night."*

Continuing into the grand allegory of Genesis, we come to another outstanding symbol: light.

The subject of light is so broad and its associations so numerous that it is difficult to discuss. Scientists even today, with all their wealth of knowledge, still do not fully understand the properties or components of light.

In the Genesis allegory, the creation of light is stated simply: "God saw the light, that it was good; and God divided the light from the darkness. And God called the light Day, and the darkness he called Night" (Gen. 1:4-5). Following this was the creation of grass: "And God said, Let the earth bring forth grass" (v. 11). Then we read further on, "And God made two great lights; the greater light to rule the day, and the lesser light to rule the night: he made the stars also" (v. 16). This latter verse has been often applied to the creation of the sun and moon — which results in a major complication for any literal interpretation of the passage: If the grass was created before the sun and moon, how did it grow in their absence?

Again, as with the heavens and earth, let us not be bound by literalism.



Genesis as an allegory has far more to teach us than any literal application can suggest.

In much literature, both secular and Biblical, light is used to represent truth, goodness, mental enlightenment, and those in whom these qualities dwell. Contrariwise, darkness is often used to suggest evil, mischief, disaster, harm, and the agents of these. Jesus used light in this sense when He said, "If therefore the light that is in thee be darkness, how great is that darkness!" (Matt. 6:23). Both light and darkness in this passage are symbolic. Paul spoke of the "rulers of the darkness of this world" (Eph. 6:12), using darkness as a figure for unenlightenment.

Before considering the allegory of Genesis, let us look at the uses of light in Scripture.

### God the Source of Light

"And God said, Let there be light: and there was light." God gave command, and light came into existence. This is true, whether of natural or spiritual light. But in the context of Genesis 1 we want to consider its allegorical meaning.

Were we to trace the flickering light of human erudition to its origin we should arrive at the mind of mortal man. But when we seek to discover the vastly superior source of light as unfolded on the pages of Scripture, we are transported to the mind of the Infinite, the mind of God. The Bible reveals that "God is light, and in him is no darkness at all"; in fact, God is "the Father of lights" (I John 1:5; James 1:17).

God, the sole Creator and Sustainer of the Universe, is the source of all light, physical and spiritual. At some unknown time in the remote past He brought physical light to this planet. But this could not be the light of which Genesis speaks, for physical light sustained life on earth

long prior to 6000 years ago. Just one simple evidence of this fact is the existence of common coal, an organic compound formed from the remains of living trees, shrubs, and plants that scientists tell us flourished in a moist climate between 250 and 400 million years ago. What is a mere 6000 years beside these figures? These living plants did not grow in darkness while God delayed the creation of literal light!

When God said, "Let there be light," as we read in the Genesis allegory, He was saying in reality, "Let my saving knowledge enlighten men." The apostle Paul showed that he understood the Genesis allegory and the creation of light as referring to the light of Divine knowledge when he wrote of it to his Corinthian brethren: "For God, who commanded the light to shine out of darkness, hath shined in our hearts, to give the light of the knowledge of the glory of God in the face of Jesus Christ" (II Cor. 4:6). Here is the light that God *commanded* to shine, the "light of the glorious gospel of Christ" (II Cor 4:4).

### Light, Divine Knowledge

The term "light" as used in the Bible often refers to Divine enlightenment. For example, we read in Isa. 8:20, "To the law and to the testimony: if they speak not according to this word, it is because there is no light in them," that is, no light of Divine knowledge.

Why is light so suitable a simile for the knowledge of God? As all mortal life depends upon light, just so does spiritual life depend upon the light of Divine knowledge. The symbol is also appropriate because God is the only source of light, both natural and spiritual.

The apostle Peter also described Divine enlightenment as light, in fact, "marvelous light" emanating from "him who hath called you out of darkness" (I Pet. 2:9).

### For Us: the Lesser Light

God is the source of light, but we do not have any direct contact with God. Therefore, He must use other means to make Himself known to us. This is the function of the greater light and the lesser light. "And God made two great lights; the greater light to rule the day, and the lesser light to rule the night" (Gen. 1:16).

Picture God as the great source of light (the light of Divine knowledge). From that source emanates the wisdom that was received by His prophets and apostles and those

**C**hrist was  
called the light  
because He  
personified the  
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completely in  
His own life.

whom He specifically informed. From the light that they received, the knowledge of God has come to us, in the form of the written Word. This is the lesser light, "to rule the night," the night of spiritual darkness, the time prior to the arising of the great "Sun of righteousness" (Isa. 60:1-2; Rom. 13:12; Mal. 4:2).

Peter pictured the lesser light as the written Word of prophecy shining as a "light...in a dark place, until the day dawn" (II Pet. 1:19).

Several passages of Scripture picture God's knowledge as light. For example, the Psalmist: "Thy word is a lamp unto my feet, and a light unto my path" (Ps. 119:105). Again, "For these commands are a lamp, this teaching is a light, and the corrections of discipline are the way to life" (Prov. 6:23, NIV).



## God's Spiritual Creation

The figure of the light shining in a dark place signifies the presence of Divine wisdom in a dark world of sin and iniquity. Though spiritual darkness ("the night") persists, the light is available to all who seek it. But its rule is temporary, it is needed only until the arrival of the Greater Light.

### The Greater Light

What is the greater light? It is Jesus Christ, the Sun of righteousness, who shall soon arrive to dispense His

**When Christ returns in power and glory to take command of the earth and reign "from sea to sea," this Greater Light will enlighten all who live.**

healing beams worldwide and shine with effulgence in God's eternal Day.

Christ was called the light even at His first coming, because He personified the wisdom of God so completely in His own life. "The light shineth in darkness; and the darkness comprehended it not....That was the true Light, which lighteth every man that cometh into the world" (John 1:5, 9). Truly it could be said after Christ came that "The people that walked in darkness have seen a great light" (Isa. 9:2). But when Christ returns in power and glory to take command of the earth and reign "from sea to sea," this Greater Light will enlighten all mankind. In that Day, everyone who lives, every mortal being, those dwelling in the "land of the shadow of death," shall feel the healing rays of this Greater Light.

### Functions of the Lesser Light

The lesser light, though small, has great power. Without it, life is meaningless; with it, the enlightened have the foresight and vision to prepare for life in God's eternal Day. The lesser light expands their horizons into an eternity filled with supreme delight.

*The light of God's Word imparts knowledge.* "The entrance of thy words giveth light; it giveth understanding unto the simple" (Ps. 119:130).

*The light of God's Word reveals our unrefined, evil nature.* "Every one that doeth evil hateth the light, neither cometh to the light, lest his deeds should be reproved. But he that doeth truth cometh to the light, that his deeds may be made manifest, that they are wrought in God" (John 3:20-21). Light exposes evil. Therefore, all who seek for purity will seek its revealing rays.

*The light of God's Word affords prophetic insight; it reveals the times and seasons of the Lord's return.* "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... But ye, brethren, are not in darkness, that that day should overtake you as a thief" (I Thess. 5:1-4). Light creates expectancy of the Second Advent, and expectancy stimulates preparation.

*The light of God's Word leads to holiness now, and to exceeding joy in eternity.* "O send out thy light and thy truth: let them lead me; let them bring me unto thy holy hill, and to thy tabernacles. Then will I go unto the altar of God, unto God my exceeding joy: yea, upon the harp will I praise thee, O God my God" (Ps. 43:3-4).

*The light of God transforms men and women from children of darkness to children of light.* Said Paul to his informed brethren: "But ye,

brethren, are not in darkness, that that day should overtake you as a thief. Ye are all the children of light, and the children of the day: we are not of the night, nor of darkness" (I Thess. 5:4-5). All are by nature children of darkness, unenlightened by the knowledge of God, walking in the light of their own fire (Isa. 50:11). Only the light of God can change them into children of light.

### Light-Bearers and Light-Stands

The light of God is such that it becomes the duty of each person upon whom it falls to transmit it and to become themselves miniature sources of light. Throughout the teachings of Jesus, this vital principle runs: that light and light-stands are one. Said Jesus in His first sermon, "Ye are the light of the world....Neither do men light a candle, and put it under a bushel, but on a candlestick; and it giveth light unto all that are in the house. Let your light so shine before men, that they may see your good works, and glorify your Father which is in heaven" (Matt. 5:14-16).

God depends on His enlightened ones to spread His light. Therefore the role of the individual light-receiver is to be a light-bearer. And each light-bearer must remember that the light is transmitted by the quality and uprightness of his or her daily life. When our good works are not apparent to others, then our light is not shining.

Jesus was the world's greatest light, not because of the greatness of His natural endowments or of His being the Son of God but because of the great quantity of light He absorbed and radiated in His daily life. Only He could say: "I am come a light into the world, that whosoever believeth on me should not abide in darkness....Yet a little while is the light with you. Walk while ye have the light" (John 12:46, 35).



We find elsewhere that every believer must walk in the light (I John 1:6-7); must speak according to the light (Isa. 8:20); must love his brother to avoid being in darkness (I John 2:9-11). Identification as lights in the world involves not only our personal walk with God but our relationship with others. Brotherly love must be manifest, and this virtue matures only in the deep, fertile Christian soil of the good and honest heart. There are words of encouragement to be spoken, burdens to be lifted, doubts to be dissolved, reproofs to be administered, all of which express love for one's brother and make one's own light shine brighter.

Another obligation of the light-bearer is alertness. "Ye are all the children of light, and the children of the day: we are not of the night, nor of darkness. Therefore let us not sleep, as do others; but let us watch and be sober" (I Thess. 5:5-6).

This appeal to "the children of light" is a strong allusion to the need for dividing light from darkness, clearly spelled out in the Genesis allegory; "And God divided the light from the darkness" (Gen. 1:4). In this brief statement is embraced an eternal principle of Divine law: that light and darkness must be divided, their cleavage sharp and definite; there can be no affiliation, no mixing of the two. Right is right, and wrong is never right.

Paul elaborated this same truth when he said, "Though you were once all darkness, now as Christians you are light. Live like men who are at home in daylight, for where light is, there all goodness springs up, all justice and truth. Try to find out what would please the Lord; take no part in the barren deeds of darkness, but show them up for what they are" (Eph. 5:8-11, NEB).

While the assignment of separating light from darkness is difficult, as any who have attempted absolute

severance from darkness can testify, yet the recompense is abundant. "Wherefore come out from among them, and be ye separate, saith the Lord, and touch not the unclean thing; and I will receive you, and will be a Father unto you, and ye shall be my sons and daughters, saith the Lord Almighty" (II Cor. 6:17-18). The "Father of lights" condescends to become our Father as we become "children of light."

For nearly 6000 years a stricken world has looked longingly for the end of the night. Generation after generation has groped and stumbled in darkness. Now "the night is far spent, the day is at hand" (Rom. 13:12). Christ, "greater light" of Genesis, is about to arise to dispel the darkness. Patriarchs, prophets, apostles have described this "greater light" in golden words of promise, suggesting the glory which shall accompany the dawn of God's eternal Day.

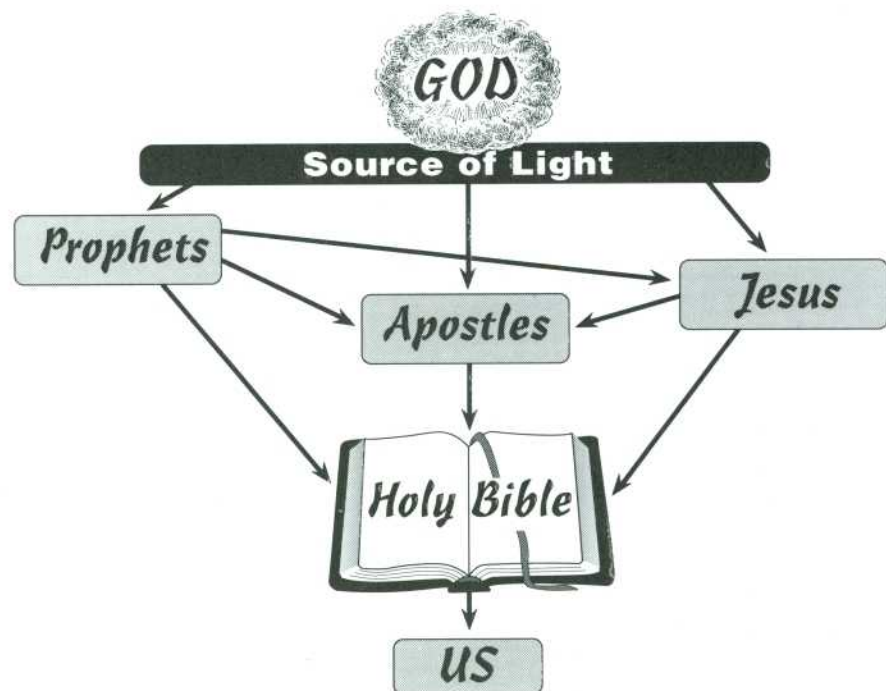
The greater light is beautifully described by the prophet Isaiah: "The people that walked in darkness have seen a great light: they that dwell in

the land of the shadow of death, upon them hath the light shined....For unto us a child is born, unto us a son is given: and the government shall be upon his shoulder:...Of the increase of his government and peace there shall be no end" (9:2, 6-7). This "child" shall be the Greater Light that comes to rule the Day.

Speaking prophetically, King David described the glories of that same Day. "He that ruleth over men must be just, ruling in the fear of God. And he shall be as the light of the morning, when the sun riseth, even a morning without clouds" (II Sam. 23:3-4). Praise God, there is to dawn a day without a cloud! When the Greater Light of Genesis appears in the political heavens, it shall roll back every cloud of disease, of poverty, every dark corner of man's inhumanity to man.

Malachi identifies the greater light as the Sun of righteousness. "Behold, the day cometh, that shall burn as an oven; and all the proud, yea, and all that do wickedly, shall

*(Continued next page)*





## God's Spiritual Creation

be stubble: and the day that cometh shall burn them up, saith the Lord of hosts, that it shall leave them neither root nor branch. But unto you that fear my name shall the Sun of righteousness arise with healing in his wings" (Mal. 4:1-2). When this mighty Sovereign of the morning arises in the new heavens, His healing beams shall penetrate earth's remotest bounds. There shall be spiritual healing until all shall know the Lord, from the least to the greatest (Jer. 31:34); and physical healing until the inhabitant shall not say, "I am sick" (Isa. 33:24). Other blessings to be dispensed in the coming Day are described by the prophet Isaiah in these words: "Behold my servant [Christ and His associates, the greater light—Daniel 7:27],...I the Lord have called thee in righteousness, and will hold thine hand, and will keep thee, and give thee for a covenant of the people, for a light of the Gentiles; to open the blind eyes, to bring out the prisoners from the prison, and them that sit in darkness out of the prison house....And I will bring the blind by a way that they knew not; I will lead them in paths that they have not known: I will make darkness light before them, and crooked things straight. These things will I do unto them, and not forsake them" (Isa. 42:1, 6-7, 16).

The coming Day will offer universal emancipation from the prison house of darkness. Now only a few can be constrained to leave it; but when Christ the Sun of righteousness shines in the new heavens, "many people and strong nations" shall say, "Come ye, and let us walk in the light of the Lord" (Isa. 2:5).

Perhaps nowhere in Scripture are the splendors of the new Day seen in such full display as in Isaiah 60. There

we see God's great Luminary burst upon the earth and flood the world with glory, dispelling forever the darkness of the ages. Beautiful and inspiring is the poet's paraphrase:

*Awake, arise, thy light is come;  
The nations, that before outshone thee,  
Now at thy feet lie dark and dumb—  
The glory of the Lord is on thee!  
Arise!—the Gentiles to thy ray  
From every nook of earth shall cluster;  
And kings and princes haste to pay.  
Their homage to thy rising luster.*

*No more shall discord haunt thy ways,  
Nor ruin waste thy cheerless nation;  
And thou shalt name thy walls, Salvation.  
The sun no more shall make thee bright,  
Nor moon shall lend her luster to thee;  
But God Himself shall be thy Light,  
And flash eternal glory through thee.*

*Thy sun shall never more go down;  
A ray from Heav'n itself descended  
Shall light thy everlasting crown—  
Thy days of mourning all are ended.  
My own elect, and righteous Land!  
The Branch, forever green and vernal,  
Which I have planted with this hand—  
Live thou shalt in Life Eternal.*

(Next: The Man Made In God's Image)



(Continued from page 8)

that all proper honor comes from God and that we are working to please *Him* first, last and only. And so, instead of feeling offended, we offer a prayer to God, with an earnest petition to help us see ourselves as we are, and to give our brother or sister the strength or courage they need to grow also. The benefit is doubled—we are not offended, and God seems nearer, to help us and fight our battles with us.

This is the "how-to" of growing, the everyday process which, repeated over and over and over again,

will result in our reaching the full moral stature of Jesus Christ.

### Grow, Grow, Grow...

The Christian growth is nothing more or less than ceasing to do evil and learning to do well (Isa. 1:16); recognizing where we are wrong and learning to refrain from that wrong and *do right*.

The creative God made us for creative growth, and we must be growing. As soon as we stop growing, we die.

God grant us the strength to grow and keep growing, to nurture that new life in Christ until it is perfect and complete and mature in every good work, and we are ready

to be presented faultless before the presence of His glory with exceeding joy.

MM

### Obituary

Charles W. Ross

On March 16 we paid our last respects to Charles W. Ross, who fell asleep in death at the age of seventy-seven. Mr. Ross grew up in an orphanage in Ohio, and spent most of his mature life with our Rochester Congregation. During his active years he was an interior decorator by trade. He participated in the Church music organizations, was a gifted singer, and took many parts in church dramas.

He has no surviving relatives.





## God Tested Abraham

**“Why was Abraham tempted to place his son on an altar (Gen. 22:6)? The Bible teaches human sacrifice is wrong and certain other Scriptures that God does not tempt.”**

You are correct that the Bible condemns human sacrifice, and that it also states clearly that God does not tempt anyone. “Let no man say when he is tempted, I am tempted of God: for God cannot be tempted with evil, neither tempteth he any man: But every man is tempted, when he is drawn away of his own lust, and enticed” (James 1:13–14). The King James Version is perhaps the only translation that uses the word “tempted.” The Jerusalem Bible reads, “God put Abraham to the test.” The Revised English Bible reads the same. The Revised Standard Version reads, “God tested Abraham.” The Septuagint reads that “God tried Abraham.”

God does test those He is working with, to prove them, to develop them. Abraham being chosen as “the father of the faithful” was more than happenstance. He was tested severely and scored very high by God’s standards, hence was awarded the title on the basis of his merits.

There are several factors in the account of Abraham’s offering Isaac which we should observe. First of all, Abraham was not “tempted to place his son on an altar,” as you phrase it. God told Abraham to do it. He said clearly, “Take now thy son, thine only son Isaac, whom thou lovest, and get thee into the land of Moriah; and offer him there for a burnt offering upon one of the mountains which I will tell thee of” (Gen. 22:2).

Next, Abraham obeyed immediately. “Abraham rose up early in the morning, and saddled his ass, and took two of his young men with him, and Isaac his son,...and rose up, and went unto the place of which

God had told him” (v. 3). There is no indication that he delayed at all in his obedience.

We cannot fully appreciate the magnitude of this test. We who can read the end of the story know how it came out, that God’s angel intervened at the critical moment and stayed Abraham’s hand, and also had ready a suitable lamb for the sacrifice (Gen. 22:12–13). But these facts were unknown to Abraham until they happened.

God was indeed testing Abraham’s faith. Isaac was a child of promise, the means of the fulfillment of God’s Word: that “I will make of thee a great nation, and I will bless thee, and make thy name great; and thou shalt be a blessing...And in thee shall all families of the earth be blessed” (Gen. 12:2–3). Without Isaac, how could these promises be fulfilled?

Two statements in the narrative show Abraham’s supreme confidence in God: (1), When he said to his young men, “Abide ye here with the ass; and I and the lad will go yonder and worship, and come again to you.” Notice that “I and the lad...[will] come again to you.” Abraham was confident that somehow God would send deliverance; and (2), When Isaac said to his father, “Behold the fire and the wood: but where is the lamb for a burnt offering? And Abraham said, My son, God will provide himself a lamb for a burnt offering” (Gen. 22:7–8). Abraham was putting all his trust in God, even when he could not see one step ahead.

We read of this in Heb. 11:19, that Abraham obeyed, “Accounting that God was able to raise him up, even from the dead; from whence also he received him in a figure.” This required great faith, for Abraham had not heard, so far as we know, of anyone being raised from the dead. But he believed that God could do it—indeed that He *would*. Somehow—he knew not how—God would be true to His Word.



Abraham's faith teaches us that we can depend on God, that whatever God requires of us we can know it is for our best eternal interest.

### ◆ Was Noah Perfect?

**"Why does the Bible call Noah perfect when he got drunk? Read Genesis 6:9 and 9:21."**

God does not require that one be morally perfect during his or her entire lifetime, but only requires that one reach perfection through growth. The life God requires is a growth. Christ is the only one of our race who never sinned after knowing the law, of whom it could be said that He was "sinless" (Heb. 7:26). We must "grow up into him [Christ]" (Eph. 4:15), and a growth does not happen all at once. It probably could be said of all God's faithful servants that they did not reach the "perfect" standard until the very end of their life. And there is no sin from which one cannot be forgiven. Drunkenness may seem to us a very repulsive and "unnecessary" sin, but we do not always know the conditions under which another person lived.

Why do we read in Genesis 6:9 that "Noah was a just man and perfect in his generations" and then of his sin in Genesis, chapter 9? There is no reason to believe that every verse in a narrative is in chronological order.

In fact, Genesis 6:9-10 sounds like an after-the-fact summary statement on Noah's entire life, in which is mentioned his high attainment, also his sons. The verse is translated in other versions: "Noah was 'a just man; and being perfect in the tenor of his life, Noah pleased God'" (Septuagint); "Noah was an upright man, blameless among the men of his day; Noah lived close to God" (Moffatt); "Noah alone among his contemporaries was a pious and exceedingly good man" (AAT); "Noah, the man who was accepted as faultless in such a generation, the close friend of God" (Knox). Apparently Noah's character was outstanding, but we know that he did not live a perfect life without one slip. God does not require this; He requires only that we confess and forsake our sins, and then He will forgive (Prov. 28:13). In fact, He promises to wipe out the sins we turn from so completely that "none of his sins that he hath committed shall be mentioned unto him; he hath done that which is lawful and right, he shall surely live" (Ezek. 33:14-16).

The record of Noah's life was written many years after Noah lived; so it would not be hard for the chronicler, writing by inspiration, to interject a general summary statement on the life of Noah even before the rest of the story had been told.

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## Walk Worthy

*(Continued from page 2)*

To the Thessalonians he wrote the same: "That ye would walk worthy of God, who hath called you unto his kingdom and glory" (I Thess. 2:12). No mean accomplishment this, but a call to the most intense and highest aspiring of which human beings are capable. Paul's reason was the same at another time: "That ye may be counted worthy of the kingdom of God, for which ye also suffer" (II Thess. 1:5). Indeed, this was the whole purpose: "That our God would count you worthy of this calling, and fulfil all the good plea-

sure of his goodness, and the work of faith with power" (II Thess. 1:11). Imagine being counted worthy by God Almighty!

In His post-ascension message, Jesus Himself confirmed this high aspiration. The few faithful brethren in Sardis were commended and given this high privilege to which they could look forward: "They shall walk with me in white: for they are worthy" (Rev. 3:4).

What does it mean to "walk worthy"? Worthiness is a quality of life, the meeting of a standard set by God Himself. Worthiness sets a value on our conduct; it assumes a standard we must meet. And if we do not, we are not "worthy" of the blessing promised.

Being worthy establishes a level

of suitable conduct. Either an act is "worthy" of Christ and His approval or it is not.

God has called us to the very highest and best. He has offered more than eye has seen or ear heard or the heart of man can imagine (I Cor. 2:9). In return He has asked our all—all our devotion, all our interest, all our love, all our talent, all our affection. "Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy mind, and with all thy strength" (Mark. 12:30).

Anything less is not worthy of Him.

Anything less will not qualify us for the full reward He has reserved for those who truly love Him. MM



*Look not at your trouble, however great. Look from it, look off it, look beyond it, to the Deliverer whose power is over it, whose loving, wise, and tender spirit is ever able to do you good by it.*

*May the Lord lead you day by day in the right way, and keep your mind stayed on Him, whatever befalls. In this way you will be able to keep your head above the billows.*

**Y**ou are the only one who knows the intensity of your desire to use your time to good advantage. You can realize the greatest benefit from your opportunities if you think systematically about the future and evaluate the opportunities that lie ahead.

### **Just for Today**

*Lord, for tomorrow and its needs,  
I do not pray;  
Keep me from stain of sin  
Just for today.*

*Let me both diligently work  
And duly pray;  
Let me be kind in word and deed  
Just for today.*

*Let me be slow to do my will—  
Prompt to obey;  
Help me to sacrifice myself  
Just for today.*

*Let me no wrong or idle word  
Unthinking say;  
Set thou a seal upon my lips  
Just for today.*

*So, for tomorrow and its needs  
I do not pray;  
But keep me, guide me, hold me, Lord,  
Just for today.*



*An author is known by his writings, a fool by his multitude of words, and all men by their companions.  
“Evil company corrupts good morals.”*

**I**n the degree to which we avoid a critical, objective appraisal of our own behavior we rob our faith of its power to remake our lives.

*If you aren't being a Christian in the place where you are, it's quite certain that you won't be a Christian where you are not.*

### **Beware the Little Foxes**

**T**he Song of Solomon (2:15) warns of little foxes that spoil the vineyard and ruin the tender grapes. Is the vineyard of the Lord planted in your heart being destroyed by little foxes? Were you too rushed to begin your day with prayer yesterday, too busy to read the Bible today? Do you forget now and then to thank God for His blessings, or to smile at your spouse? All of these are very small foxes, but if they go unchecked they can wreak havoc in your relationship with God and with those close to you.

If we are faithful in little things, God blesses us with wider spheres of service, and enables us to face life's great crises better prepared for the great opportunities.



## The Divine Majesty

*The Lord our God is clothed with might,  
The winds obey His will;  
He speaks, and in His heavenly height  
The rolling storm stands still.*

*Revel, ye waves, and o'er the land  
With threatening aspect roar;  
The Lord uplifts His awful hand  
And chains you to the shore.*

*Ye winds of night, your force combine;  
Without His high behest,  
Ye shall not, in the mountain pine,  
Disturb the sparrow's nest.*

*His voice sublime is heard afar;  
In distant peals it dies;  
He yokes the whirlwind to His car  
And sweeps the howling skies.*

*Ye sons of earth, in reverence bend;  
Ye nations, wait His nod;  
And bid the choral song ascend  
To celebrate our God.*