



Megiddo Message

Let Liberty Ring!

Let Liberty ring louder with the years, . . . And echo with the seasons; let her break . . . The tyrant's harshness, the oppressor's spears; . . . Bring ripened recompenses that shall make . . . Supreme amends for sorrow's long arrears; . . . Drop holy benison on hearts that ache; . . . Put clearer radiance into human eyes, . . . And set the glad earth singing to the skies.

Clean nature coins pure statutes. Let us cleanse . . . The hearts that beat within us; let us mow . . . Clear to the roots our falseness and pretence, . . . Tread down our rank ambitions, overthrow . . . Our braggart moods of puffed self-consequence, . . . Plough up our hideous thistles which do grow . . . Faster than maize in May time, and strike dead . . . The base infections our low greeds have bred.

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

- Strengthen your faith in the Bible
- Answer perplexing religious questions
- Give you courage for these uncertain times
- Help you live above the world's moral corruption
- Reveal to you how to develop a character acceptable to God.
- Bring peace and stability to your life

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Editorially Speaking . . .

Freedom Is . . .

FREEDOM! It is a concept only, and one to which we are often inclined to give more lip service than allegiance, more heat than light, more license than legality.

Freedom is a word of many meanings. To some, freedom is an invitation to be creative—to paint, to sing, to carve, to write, to build, according to the heart's desire. Freedom is the right to be yourself, to make mistakes and to correct them; to fail and try over again.

To the slave, freedom means release from servitude to cruel overlords and a right to call his soul his own.

To the lawless, freedom means the right to disobey the law.

To the oppressed, freedom means the right to speak one's mind.

But to the Christian, freedom has a significance deeper and far more wonderful than any of the foregoing. Freedom lies not in a man's having his own ideas of right and wrong but in being a prisoner of the Lord. There are no literal chains to loose, though the inner man may be heavily shackled with pride, hatred, sensitiveness and evil imaginations. But these spiritual shackles are what Paul counsels us to break: "Casting down imaginations, and every high thing that exalteth itself against the knowledge of God, and bringing into captivity every thought to the obedience of Christ" (II Cor. 10: 4, 5).

It is said that the late Judge George B. Wickersham used to give up smoking every Lent, because he thought it was his duty to prove to himself that for forty days of the year he was stronger than a thin sheet of paper wrapped around a few shreds of tobacco. He recognized the value of the exercise of self-control. However, this kind of self-denial is not enough for God's free man. Not once a year but every moment of every day, 365 days of the year must be exercised the self-denial that is pleasing to God. We cannot let our physical desires get the best of us. Christian living is a life of self-discipline and moral conditioning.

In this "let-yourself-go" generation, natural instinct urges us to have what we want by doing what we want to do, when and where we want to do it. Many have the mistaken idea that rash, undisciplined behavior means fullness of life. But only the life that is wholly consecrated to God is a truly full life.

What we need today is a recovery of faith in liberty within law, and this is God's freedom. Without loyalty to God there can be no inner freedom. The timely words of Paul come to us: "Live like free men, only do not make your freedom a pretext for misconduct; live like servants of God."

The law of God, learned and lived, is the open door to new liberties. The law of God is the ladder to unparalleled opportunities to freedom. Let's use it! ●●

The River and Trees of Eden

PRAYER

Our loving Father, once again we come to Thee in prayer and supplication acknowledging Thy goodness and our unworthiness of that goodness. Help us, Father, to be actually aware that Thy mercy will not always prevail; a day of reckoning is coming, a day of judgment, a day when the righteous and wicked shall be separated and only the pure in heart remain.

We rejoice that we are still on agreeable terms with Thee. May we work untiringly to keep our friendship in good repair, doing the things that are well pleasing in Thy sight, obeying from the heart that form of doctrine that has been delivered to us. May we spend each day all enwrapped in the things of Thy choosing, all absorbed in gaining for ourselves that boon of endless life.

Dear Father, we rejoice to know that a Day will come when the river of Thy divine knowledge, and Thy new and better plan for the earth and mankind, shall expand until it will fill the entire earth. This phenomenon was foreshadowed in the allegory of Creation, when the river of Eden was said to divide into four heads, watering the whole earth.

Father, we express our gratitude for the river of knowledge contained in Thy Word, the Bible, which even now flows in Thy garden, to the members of Thy true Church. We realize how sorely we need this source of nourishment, as we journey through this dry and thirsty land where no water of life is. But especially do we thank Thee for pre-informing us of a day when this river will spread to the ends of the earth, greatly enriching its inhabitants.

Grant us the wisdom to absorb the water from this river which now flows freely through Thy garden, that we may develop into trees of righteousness, worthy of gracing the banks of Thy greater river when it waters the entire earth.

Grant, Father, that our expectancy may be kept alive and growing. May it not be a dead issue with us, a hope to be brought out and dusted off when all else seems to have failed, but may we believe with all our heart that that great Day is coming and spend each moment in earnest preparation.

Help us to be watchful, to watch our actions to see that they conform perfectly with the Christ-life. May we watch our words that we may speak only the things that please Thee; watch our thoughts, aware that even the thought of foolishness is sin; watch our attitudes, that they are always constructive. In Jesus' name, Amen.

DISCOURSE

MEN HAVE searched long and eagerly for the river of Eden, a river which issues from the garden and parts into four heads, a river on whose banks grows the tree of life. Finding neither river nor tree, many have pronounced the Bible unreliable, wholly unaware of the fact that the error lies in their own misinterpretation of the narrative, not in the Book itself.

We shall set aside the literal construction of the passage and consult the oracles of God to learn of its spiritual significance. Studied from this approach, the subject will add to the holy beauty and power of Scriptural declarations; for it is part of the Word of God, written for our learning.

Water is vital to life. Not long can life be sustained without water. Equally important are the waters of Eden to the sustenance of spiritual life, vigor and health.

When God first called men and women to come out of the "dry and thirsty land" (Ps. 63:1) into the garden of His making, into the scope of His divine plan, to work for eternal life, the river of Eden was already flowing to provide water for their thirsty souls.

What is this river?

The Psalmist tells of a river, "the river of God," which is vastly more significant than any literal river: "Thou visitest the earth, and waterest it: thou greatly enrichest it with the river of God, which is full of water" (Ps. 65:9).

Jesus' conversation with the woman of Samaria reveals some of the properties contained in this water. It is living, life-giving water. When wearied at noonday He sat on the well and asked drink of the Samaritan woman who chanced to come to draw water, she was able to give Him only the literal water from Jacob's well. However, He told her *He* had access to "living water" that would quench her thirst, the same water that flows in Eden. If a man drinks of this water, "it shall be in him a well of water springing up into everlasting life" (John 4:13—15). Enraptured at the prospect of water which could impart everlasting life, the woman exclaimed, "Sir, give me this water, that I thirst not." This spiritual water, the water of the river of God, the water that flows in Eden's river, never disappoints those who thirst after righteousness; for the promise to all such is: "they shall be filled" (Matt. 5:6).

God through the prophet Isaiah invites rich and

poor, high and low, "Come ye to the waters, . . . buy, . . . without money and without price" (Isa. 55:1). This water is abundant and available without price to all who seek.

Other properties of this living water are disclosed to us by the Revelator, who says, "He showed me a pure river of water of life, clear as crystal, proceeding out of the throne of God and of the Lamb" (Rev. 22:1). This river is *pure*; its waters are "clear as crystal"; its source, the "throne of God."

What will this river do for us if we bathe our souls in its living water?

It will cleanse away all filthiness of the flesh. Jesus Himself tells us, "Now ye are clean through the word which I have spoken unto you" (John 15:3). The Word of God applied to our practical, daily life is the water in which we can wash and be clean, as we are commanded (Isa. 1:16, 17). The apostle Paul discusses the perfect purity and cleanliness that will result from liberal use of this spiritual water: "That he might sanctify and cleanse it [His Church] with the washing of water by the word, that he might present it to himself a glorious church, not having spot, or wrinkle, or any such thing; but that it should be holy and without blemish."

This water will heal our every spiritual infirmity. "He sent his word, and healed them, and delivered them from their destructions" (Ps. 107:20). This spiritual water, the words of eternal life, applied daily to our sores of selfishness, envy, sensitiveness, pride and foolishness, will heal them so completely that they shall never once be mentioned to us at the Day of Judgment.

This water is pure; it is "clear as crystal." This fact is deeply significant. Despite the endless amount of man-made creeds which have been formulated through the ages in the name of religion, the river of life has remained free from contamination; it has retained its original crystal purity. Man's tampering with the Word of God has in no measure polluted or corrupted His way of salvation. The river of life flows on forever, unaffected by man's speculations and vain philosophies, his faulty reasonings and false theologies; for it proceeds from the throne of God.

Outside the garden of the Lord flows another river, one of man's creation. The word of the Lord came unto Ezekiel with a special message about this contaminated stream: "Son of man, take up a lamentation for Pharaoh king of Egypt, and say unto him, Thou art like a young lion of the nations, and thou art as a whale in the seas: and thou camest forth with thy rivers, and troubledst the waters with thy feet, and fouledst their rivers" (Ezek. 32:2). This river of spiritual Egypt (the land of darkness) affords no cleansing to the soul, for its waters are fouled by the false doctrines and teachings of men. Death is as certain to those who

partake of this muddy stream as is life to those who drink from the river in Eden.

The Tree of Life

We read in the Genesis allegory that the Lord planted the tree of life in the midst of the garden (Gen. 2:9). This tree of life is closely associated with the river of life. Both offer the eternal wisdom of God, by means of which man may gain eternal life. Eating of this tree now will assure robust spiritual vitality. Vigorous spiritual life, in turn, grants us the right to continue to partake of that tree until we have gained wisdom by which we can perpetuate our existence—gain eternal life.

The Wise Man exhorts, "Take fast hold of instruction; let her not go; keep her; for she is thy life. . . . She is a tree of life to them that lay hold upon her" (Prov. 4:13; 3:18). This understanding, this wondrous knowledge of divine truth, this grand message of the Almighty, if obeyed, will bless us with immortal life.

The tree of life represents the living source of God's wisdom, the Bible. Let us read the prelude to this wisdom of God that becomes a tree of life: "Happy is the man that findeth wisdom, and the man that getteth understanding. For the merchandise of it is better than the merchandise of silver, and the gain thereof than fine gold. She is more precious than rubies: and all the things thou canst desire are not to be compared unto her. Length of days is in her right hand; and in her left hand riches and honour. Her ways are ways of pleasantness, and all her paths are peace. She is a tree of life to them that lay hold upon her: and happy is every one that retaineth her" (Prov. 3:13—18). This wisdom, the wisdom of God, offers happiness, wealth, riches, and more than "all the things thou canst desire." It offers pleasantness, peace—and best of all—length of days: "She is a tree of life to them that lay hold upon her." She is the source of life; all who eat of this tree shall live forever.

The Tree of Good and Evil

Beside the tree of life is another prominent and significant tree in the allegory in Genesis: the tree of good and evil.

One of the grandest provisions of the Almighty in His infinite wisdom and justice is that He has made man a free moral agent, with the privilege and power of choosing his present course in life, thereby determining his future and his destiny. In all ages the Lord has set before men "a blessing and a curse," "life and good, and death and evil" (Deut. 11:26; 30:15). This choice is symbolized in Eden by the tree of wisdom which assures life, and the tree of good and evil which consigns to eternal death.

When the first man who was called out of the masses of humanity entered the garden of Eden and covenanted to serve God, he was thoroughly in-

structed: "Of every tree of the garden thou mayest freely eat: but of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil, thou shalt not eat of it: for in the day that thou eatest thereof thou shalt surely die" (Gen. 2:16, 17). Through all succeeding ages the command has remained firm and the judgment pending. The tree of the knowledge of good and evil is ever-present, its fruit attractive and continually available; however, it is *strictly forbidden* to all who would escape eternal death: "Thou shalt not eat of it: for in the day that thou eatest thereof thou shalt surely die."

If at any time during our probation day we defy the rules of the garden and venture forth to partake of this mixed tree, we become persons of divided loyalties, men "who are half and half" (Ps. 119:113, Moffatt), the "sinner that goeth on the earth two ways." We attempt to serve both "God and mammon" (Luke 16:13) trying to be "partakers of the Lord's table, and of the table of devils" (I Cor. 10:21). This renders us subject to the death penalty unless we reform. Therefore we should constantly beware of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil.

Trees of Righteousness

In a former article in this series, we studied the plants which thrive in the Lord's spiritual garden or vineyard, plants which represent His people. Let us now examine carefully one kind of these plants: trees.

Divine phraseology employs two similes in reference to trees. In one sense, as we have seen, men and women till the garden and partake of its fruitage, good or bad, as their will or desire dictates. In another sense, they are themselves the trees of the garden, either good or bad.

Those who shun to partake of the forbidden fruit become "trees of righteousness, the planting of the Lord" (Isa. 61:3). They compose the good trees of the allegory which are "pleasant to the sight, and good for food" (Gen. 2:9).

This same metaphor occurs repeatedly in the Book. The future rejoicing of all the faithful is expressed in such figurative language: "All the trees of the field shall clap their hands. . . . Break forth into singing, ye mountains, O forest, and every tree therein" (Isa. 55:12; 44:23). Trees singing and clapping their hands demonstrate a figurative, not a literal use of the term.

Again we read of these spiritual trees: "The trees of the Lord are full of sap; . . . The righteous shall flourish like the palm tree: he shall grow like a cedar in Lebanon" (Ps. 104:16; 92:12).

The Psalmist gives a detailed description of the good man who abides close by Eden's river in the garden of God, comparing such a man to a vigorous, growing, fruit-bearing tree: "Blessed is the man that walketh not in the counsel of the ungodly, nor standeth in the way of sinners, nor sitteth in

the seat of the scornful. But his delight is in the law of the Lord; and in his law doth he meditate day and night. And he shall be like a tree planted by the rivers of water, that bringeth forth his fruit in his season; his leaf also shall not wither; and whatsoever he doeth shall prosper" (Ps. 1:1—3). The man who finds his delight in the Eternal's law, who shuns the counsel of the ungodly and avoids the sinners' way, is likened to a tree growing luxuriantly by the rivers of the spiritual water of God's wisdom.

Similarly we read in Jeremiah 17: "Blessed is the man that trusteth in the Lord, and whose hope the Lord is. For he shall be as a tree planted by the waters, and that spreadeth out her roots by the river, and shall not see when heat cometh, but her leaf shall be green; and shall not be careful in the year of drought, neither shall cease from yielding fruit" (vs. 7, 8). This is the one characteristic of trees of righteousness which sets them apart from all other trees: they never cease from yielding fruit. In season and out of season, through stormy blast or scorching sun, they go on constantly bearing fruits unrivaled either in quality or quantity. And from where do they draw their vital nourishment? From the river of God, the life-giving waters of wisdom by which they are planted.

The Day of Recompense

No power in heaven or earth save the hope of eternal life is strong enough to impel men and women to become trees of righteousness, growing and bearing perfect fruit in the garden of God. No other power is sufficient to impel men and women to shun the tree of good and evil and partake exclusively of the tree of wisdom. This hope is stated in the allegory and is confirmed by every inspired writer.

For ages man's supreme desire has been to secure for himself happiness and peace, life, riches, and honor; yet his desire goes unfulfilled. But at the tree of life there is hope. This tree of divine wisdom provides the means which the God of Heaven assures us will satisfy our every aspiration.

The same tree of life which belongs to the garden of Eden is found also in "the midst of the paradise of God," His eternal, established kingdom. Said Jesus Himself, "To him that overcometh will I give to eat of the tree of life, which is in the midst of the paradise of God. . . . Blessed are they that do his commandments, that they may have right to the tree of life, and may enter in through the gates into the city" (Rev. 2:7; 22:14).

The Revelator also saw in vision the tree of life growing on the banks of the river that was pure as crystal: "In the midst of the street of it, and on either side of the river, was there the tree of life, which bare twelve manner of fruits, and yielded her fruit every month: and the leaves of the tree were for the healing of the nations" (Rev. 22:2).

The leaves of this tree of life shall be health and healing, both spiritual and physical, to all mankind.

When Christ returns to inspect the fruit of His trees and pronounces the faithful "trees of righteousness," this promise shall be realized. They shall be permitted to remain in the garden, the "paradise of delights," and partake of the tree of life for evermore.

Not so the unfaithful; for when the Day of Reckoning discloses their imperfect fruit, the Judge will order their destruction. Then shall the ax be laid at the root of every unrighteous tree (Matt. 3:10).

This impending fate of all evildoers is a stern reminder that the seeming sweet fruitage of the forbidden tree has the bitterest of aftertastes. All who hanker after sin today and whose taste remains depraved shall pay the price tomorrow.

An Expanding River

After Christ has dealt with the laborers in the garden, eliminating the false and elevating the true, He will proceed with the work of world transformation. His ultimate worldwide kingdom of peace and goodwill cannot be realized simply by a perfect garden or Church. Universal righteousness must be achieved. Eden's waters must spread.

We should recall that the garden of the Lord is His vineyard, His field of labor, His people, His Church. Though the river of God is even at present "full of water" (Ps. 65:9), it does not reach beyond the limits of the garden. The world at large remains a "dry and thirsty land" (Ps. 63:1), destitute of the water of life. The time is future when the river shall part into four heads and cover the entire earth with its life-giving waters. In fact, not until the Millennial reign of Christ and the saints will the river of Genesis fill the earth.

The prophet Ezekiel foresaw in vision the course and expansion of this marvelous river of God. He envisioned God's people, His true Church as a glorious temple, the center of an ideal theocracy. And "out from under the threshold of the house" issued the river "eastward," at first only a small stream. As it traveled on it began to spread, measuring ankle deep. "Again he measured a thousand, and brought me through the waters; the waters were to the knees. Again he measured a thousand and brought me through the waters; the waters were to the loins. Afterward he measured a thousand; and it was a river that I could not pass over: for the waters were risen, waters to swim in, a river that could not be passed over" (Ezek. 47:1—5). This prophetic picture of the time after Christ has returned illustrates the knowledge of God's law and plan spreading to all peoples on the face of the earth until it shall be said, They shall all "know me, from the least to the greatest" (Heb. 8:11).

Isaiah describes this same time, when the river of Eden has parted into four heads that cover the

earth, also using the figure of a river: "When the poor and needy seek water, and there is none, and their tongue faileth for thirst, I the Lord will hear them, I the God of Israel will not forsake them. I will open rivers in high places, and fountains in the midst of the valleys: I will make the wilderness a pool of water, and the dry land springs of water. . . . That they may see, and know, and consider, and understand together, that the hand of the Lord hath done this, and the Holy One of Israel hath created it" (Isa. 41:17, 18, 20).

As a result of this enlarged river, trees of righteousness shall flourish abundantly. Growth and development among the populace of the Kingdom shall be as rapid as that of the "willows by the water courses." The prophet Isaiah pictures both the present dry condition of the world, when water is given to "him that is thirsty," to him that is in the garden of the Lord; also the future condition, when all shall be watered copiously: "For I will pour water upon him that is thirsty, and floods upon the dry ground: I will pour my spirit upon thy seed, and my blessing upon thine offspring: and they shall spring up as among the grass, as willows by the water courses" (Isa. 44:3, 4). This is the river, "the streams whereof shall make glad the city of God, the holy place of the tabernacle of the most High" (Ps. 46:4), for in its waters shall be life and health and healing and eternal salvation to all who will drink from the wells of life.

At the dawn of eternity, which will follow the Millennial Age and a brief period of readjustment, this planet shall be fully glorified and filled with a race of happy, immortal beings. The river of life will continue to flow, every inhabitant upon the face of earth partaking of the tree of life and drinking of pleasures for evermore (Ps. 36:8). Everlasting pleasure! Everlasting joy! Everlasting life! What an age to live for! What a time to live in! ●●

On Being Reliable

That single word—reliability—implies a whole array of qualities never found in abundance: loyalty, integrity, discretion and good taste, with more than a little imagination and tact. The best intentions not backed by these adjuncts are sometimes more likely to injure those we would help than even indifference.

To be able to command confidence is a rare privilege, for many men and women whose position in the world appears to be in every way desirable, nevertheless are never called upon for advice or help. They may be very desirable from a social point of view, but they lack the more sterling qualities needed in times of crises. To be truly reliable is one of the highest pinnacles to which we may aspire. ●●



Our Sacred Pledge



INDEPENDENCE Day again draws our minds to the colonists' long struggle for freedom. The story of England's intolerable and despotic rule is familiar history to all. How arguments and petitions to the Mother Country for redress were ignored; how wrongs heaped upon wrongs until the rebellious colonists could no longer endure the weight of grievance and united to declare their desire for freedom and independence—we have heard the story many times.

Under such strain was drafted the first solemn declaration of the nation's independence. It demolished in one document the lawfulness of any government founded on conquest, declaring that all men were by natural right, free.

On July 4, 1776, there assembled in the old hall of the Liberty Bell, fifty-six men who, actuated by their ardent desire for liberty, signed the Declaration of Independence. They knew not whether it meant life or death for them, but confident that the Declaration would stand, they solemnly pledged for its support their lives, their fortunes, and their sacred honor.

This important event we review with serious thought. Its value to us, however, is not the men or the event itself but the sentiment for which those men and that event stand—the ideals that survive and from which we benefit today.

To the patriots the Declaration gave strength and courage. It gave them a definite, noble purpose; a name and object commensurate with the cost. Once its principles were established, they would be free from tyranny. Wherever it was read it impressed and enthused, inspiring men to peril in the name of liberty—their lives, their fortunes, and their sacred honor.

But was it because they *pledged* to stake all upon that declaration of inalienable rights that history throws a halo of glory about the spirit of '76? Oh no. Tyrants were shaken on their thrones, fainting freedom revived and the political ethics of the world reformed because they *remembered* and *kept alive* that pledge. They were *loyal* to that pledge, otherwise the Declaration would have been a worthless scrap of paper and its supporters would have died slaves.

The memory of the critical period and the day when they pledged to sacrifice all for freedom they kept ever before them. It helped to sustain them through many tragic events—times of perplexity, internal strife, provincial pride, jealousy, suspicion, and war.

Many victories, however, did not establish their rights as free men. Not until the victorious close of the Revolution was that Declaration made a fact. Only then had they triumphed over the enemy and gained their right to life, liberty, and the pursuit of happiness—*because they had fulfilled their pledge.*

There are brief crises in which the drift of individuals as well as national history is determined, critical moments on which great decisions hang; days which, like a mountain in a plain, lift themselves above the dead-sea level of common days into everlasting eminence.

There are such times in the life of every aspiring Christian, when he recognizes his servitude to sin, error and self, renounces his former life of ignorance, and declares himself, with the help of God, spiritually free. The noble principles of God's holy Word impress him and inspire in him a holy zeal to burst the bands of sin, misery and death. The eternal principles of justice, righteousness, mercy and truth cause divine enthusiasm to overflow within his being. The glorious promises of God ring in his heart like the bells of liberty—he is free.

Such was our experience when the doors of our house of spiritual bondage were flung open and we caught our first glimpse of the light of God's divine truth; when the voice of God called to us, "Know ye not, that to whom ye yield yourselves servants to obey, his servants ye are to whom ye obey, whether of sin unto death, or of obedience unto righteousness?" (Rom. 6:16).

But we who responded to the call, we who solemnly subscribed to the principles of God's law, we who covenanted to serve our God unto the end—like the colonists, we pledged our all, our lives, our fortunes, and our sacred honor. Shall we forget that pledge?

The command of Moses to Israel re-echoes to us: "Remember this day, in which ye came out from Egypt, out of the house of bondage; for by strength of hand the Lord brought you out from this place. . . . Remember when thou camest forth out of . . . Egypt all the days of thy life."

Have we forgotten the day of our deliverance? Does the same gratitude and zeal move us now as then? Or can God say of us as of the Ephesian Church: "I know thy works, and thy labour, and thy patience, . . . [thou] hast borne, and hast patience, and for my name's sake hast laboured, and hast not fainted. Nevertheless I have somewhat against thee, because thou hast left thy first love"

(Rev. 2:2—4), or as translated in the Weymouth Bible, "I have somewhat against thee—you no longer love me as you did at first"?

The colonists were actuated and sustained through many trying periods by the temporal benefits they would receive when the Declaration was established. Should courage, faith and endurance fail us when we are engaged in the highest, noblest possible endeavor—the cause of God's liberty and truth?

Our own virtue and courage must be renewed and fortified continually against the hour of temptation. Our Saviour said, "It is written." He had vowed a vow unto God and He deferred not to pay it. He remembered His sacred pledge.

We have record of two persons who, having heard the law of liberty, were inspired by its promises and covenanted to serve God to the end. They pledged their all—their lives, fortunes, and their sacred honor. But when they came to fulfilling their pledge, they reserved a part of their fortune. "Ananias with his wife Sapphira sold a possession and kept back a part of the price . . . and brought a certain part and laid it at the apostles' feet. But Peter said, Ananias, why hath Satan filled thine heart to lie to the Holy Spirit, and to keep back part of the price of the land? Whiles it remained, was it not thine own? and after it was sold, was it not in thine own power? why hast thou conceived this thing in thine heart? thou hast not lied unto men, but unto God. And Ananias hearing these words fell down, and expired." His wife met a like fate (Acts 5). What a lesson for us, that we make no reservations in the payment of our promise! What an example to those who forget their sacred pledge! Great fear fell on those who witnessed this. Shall we review this incident with less serious thought?

In the same record we read of more inspiring examples. Jesus, refusing honor, station, wealth, when tempted to bow to earth's high ones, chose death on the cross rather than deny His calling and betray His cause, faithful to His sacred pledge. The apostle Paul counted all things—not part, but *all* things—but loss for the cause of Christ, his hope of eternal salvation, and at the close of his career could say, "I have finished my course."

When the supreme sacrifice or suffering would daunt us, and the effort seems to outweigh the prize, let the memory of the sages who toiled and bled in the defense of truth and freedom inspire us that we may prove ourselves not unworthy of the glorious eternal freedom which will be theirs. As Moses said to Israel, "Remember the day when ye came out of Egypt," think of the day when first the promises of God rang in your heart. Let memory bring back the day and say, "This was a great moment. God's call was for volunteers, for men of faith in His Word, patience in service, of charity and of vision. I volunteered to give myself. Shall I forget my sacred pledge?" ●●

Timely Topics

THE LAST few weeks have witnessed an unprecedented amount of violence and demonstrations protesting violence. Four students killed at Kent State University in Ohio; six men killed while rioting in Augusta, Georgia; two young men killed and nine wounded at Jackson State College, Mississippi. Robert H. Finch, Secretary of Health, Education and Welfare, warned, "Violence will overwhelm us all unless reason and sanity reassert themselves. The killing has to stop. Action and reaction, protest and counter protest are running out of control." The killing of a human being should

Violence— On Campus and Off

never be taken lightly; it is a serious thing. Whether the deaths of these people were justified we cannot affirm or deny without more evidence than is currently available; opinion varies from "They had it coming to them" to "Entirely unjustified."

Recent events underscore the fact that man without divine guidance is totally unable to govern himself. Young people going to college in America today have infinitely more freedoms and advantages than any people on this planet have ever enjoyed. If students behind the Iron Curtain should revolt, we might be able to sympathize with them. But American students rioting, throwing stones, hurling molotov cocktails, burning buildings, desecrating the American flag (the symbol of their liberty) is not only unjustified, it is criminal. Perhaps a sinister conspiracy, such as Communism, has brainwashed these immature minds. They have become willing tools in fomenting revolt and anarchy in this country, all under the pretense of a just and high-sounding cause.

That there are many wrongs in this world which need righting no one will deny. But one does not burn down his home because the roof leaks. If being drafted and forced to serve in Viet Nam is their main concern, our government makes provision for conscientious objectors. They may serve in hospitals or in work of national importance for two years in lieu of military service.

If the killing of American soldiers is their chief concern, why are they not conducting a vigorous campaign to stop the killing of thousands of people on our highways, caused largely by hot-rodding young drivers?

If racial inequity is their interest, why are they not working every available moment in a peaceable manner to correct injustice?

MEGIDDO MESSAGE

If their aim is to help the poor, why do they not spend their time helping the poor, not just demonstrating and destroying property and increasing the burden on the poor?

If they are anxious over the pollution of our environment, why are they such large contributors to the litter of beer cans, pop bottles, boxes, wrappers, cigarette butts, etc. along our streets, parks and streams? Why do they pollute the atmosphere by smoking? Why do they pollute their bodies with drugs? They accuse their elders and the establishment of being hypocritical. But isn't this merely a case of "the pot calling the kettle black"?

We should hasten to define the term "they." "They" are the vocative, violent and vengeful minority. "They" refers to the small number of students causing the trouble on campus today, who are abetted by immature, immoral and traitorous members of the faculty and subversive organizations. By far the large majority are innocent. But when the innocent majority assemble with their militant colleagues and trouble develops, they must take the consequences.

What is the cause of all this unrest and turmoil in the world, especially among the young? Causes are many, and we certainly do not have a simple solution to all these complex problems. But we might list a few of the causes:

- 1) A lack of respect for authority—parental, political and ecclesiastical
- 2) Parental permissiveness
- 3) The absence of religious instruction and the discrediting of belief in a Supreme Being to whom mankind is answerable for his conduct.
- 4) The extremes to which the principle of free speech has been carried, to include the most radical, vulgar, immoral and traitorous utterances of men of much influence but no scruple
- 5) The replacement of the wisdom of Solomon with the muddled thinking of Dr. Spock

Is it necessary, wise, or prudent to demonstrate against authority? Is it morally right for the minority to force their way on the majority? Should a Christian participate in a demonstration against authority, even man's authority?

The answer is, No. Paul is specific in Romans 13: "Let every person render obedience to the governing authorities, for there is no authority except from God and those in charge are divinely constituted, so that the rebel against the authority is resisting God's appointment. But such resisters will draw sentence on themselves.

"For magistrates are no dread to the person who does right; but to the wrongdoer. You do not want to fear the authority, do you? Do right, and you will earn its approval; for it is God's agency for your welfare. But if you do wrong, then be alarmed; for it does not carry the sword without reason; it is God's agent to bring deserved punishment on the evildoer. It behooves us, therefore, to

be submissive not merely because of punishment, but also for conscience' sake" (vs. 1—6, Berkeley).

Jesus said, "Render therefore unto Cæsar the things which are Cæsar's; and unto God the things that are God's" (Matt. 22:21). Christians can take great comfort from the happenings in the world today, realizing that this time of trouble and perplexity was prophesied centuries ago. We can truly lift up our heads, knowing that our redemption draweth nigh. Soon Jesus will return to earth as King, ushering in a millennial reign of peace.

But even this glorious age must be preceded by the elimination of the near-savage element so prominent in the news today. No demonstrations against divine authority will be permitted in that age. Everyone will not agree with the rulers, but such will not be allowed to manifest their evil designs. And that is the only way a peaceful, happy, healthy world can exist. ●●

Two Pebbles

I saw two pebbles on the beach
When the ebbing tide was low;
The one was dark and weather-stained,
And one was white as snow.

The one was rough and crude of form,
The one was smooth and round.
I took the white one, but I left
The other on the ground.

I saw a miner in his hut
And harked as he discussed
About a pebble that I watched
Him grinding into dust.

I wondered what of usefulness
Such common stones could hold
And after while he showed to me
Some shining specks of gold.

So I have found that in the world
As men and pebbles go,
It is not always wise to judge
By what our eyes may show.

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The Kingdom of God

A Kingdom: factual—Biblical—coming—SOON!

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What Is Christian Separation?

SEPARATION was one of God's unequivocal commands to His people Israel, and yet one of Israel's outstanding transgressions of God's law down through the ages was that of mixing with other nations. Little by little Israel adopted heathen ways and became joined to idols, thus alienating themselves from the true God.

We who are striving to be part of the spiritual Israel of God are in just such danger of falling on this stumblingblock as the Israelites of old. Living in this irresponsible, immoral, and perverse generation in which almost anything goes, has its peculiar danger. Where there are no set standards of conduct and little or no discipline, and when almost anything is accepted by this permissive society around us, our sense of right and wrong can easily become perverted.

But God's command of separation still holds: "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).

One of man's inherent weaknesses is that of bowing to conformity. In speech, in dress, in attitude, in demeanor, in aspect we seek to identify ourselves with the mass mind. To be different takes courage, and courage is something we often lack. But we should remember that the world has degenerated to its present state of surpassing wickedness largely through conformity. Mankind, instead of daring to be different and holding to a fixed standard, have taken the way of least resistance and walked hand in hand with the world down the broad way that leads to destruction.

What about us? Will we dare to be different? Will we come out from the wickedness of the world by which we are surrounded and become a separate and peculiar people, set aside for God? or will we, too, fall victim to conformity, bowing to our own naturally evil ways and desires?

"Be not conformed to this world; but be ye transformed by the renewing of your mind, that ye may prove what is that good, and acceptable, and perfect will of God" (Rom. 12:2). Here is God's command to us. If we conform to this world, we are doomed to destruction. If we come out of the world entirely and become a separate and sanctified people, we are on the road to life.

If we will not forsake the world with all of its pride, sin and folly, we cannot expect to have any part in the New Order that God is going to set up here on earth in the very near future. We will

never be made a part of that new world if we are still clinging to the old, foolish ways of the world. John's words are definite: "Love not the world, neither the things that are in the world. If any man love the world, the love of the Father is not in him. For all that is in the world, the lust of the flesh, and the lust of the eyes, and the pride of life, is not of the Father, but is of the world. And the world passeth away, and the lust thereof: but he that doeth the will of God abideth for ever" (I John 2:15—17). "Love not the world"—that includes our own naturally evil hearts and ways, for all that is evil is of the world. Separation from the world, then, means a drastic transformation of our tastes and desires, a change so complete that none of the cravings of the former self will be in evidence.

To accomplish this monumental task, we will have to arm ourselves with the mind of Christ, and every time the tempter rears his ugly head be prepared to say with resolution, "It is written." This means waging a mighty and unrelenting struggle against our natural evil tendencies, but how much more noble and glorious it is to fight and live, than to give up with the cowards in disgraceful defeat, to sink back to the weak and beggarly elements of the world where there is nothing but death and corruption.

It has been very wisely stated that "the path of the world seems pleasant enough, if you don't stop to think where you are going." The prudent man will consider the end of the matter. "Oh, that they were wise, that they understood this, that they would consider their latter end" (Deut. 32:29). Will we be so foolish as to try to hold on to a world doomed to destruction when God has offered us release? Or will we be wise enough to relinquish our hold on this decadent, dying world and set our affections on things above?

The stinging words, "Ye adulterers and adulteresses, know ye not that the friendship of the world is enmity with God" (Jas. 4:4) should strike us with such force that we will fling every evil thing far away out of our lives, our thoughts and our affections. With this warning from God ringing in our ears do we dare hold to any feeling of love for a wicked world? Do we think we can divide our interest between God and His cause to include one fleshly interest? If we do not place our Christian responsibility above everything else, we will show ourselves to be unworthy of Jesus.

Separation, set apart for God, to absorb His interests and dedicate ourselves to fulfilling His will—this is Christian separation and the key to an endless life. ●●

It is a miserable hospitality to open your doors and shut your countenance.

MEGIDDO MESSAGE

UNDERSTANDING THE BIBLE

"Study to shew thyself approved unto God."

The Kingdom of God

WE HAVE studied the Kingdom of God in prophecy. We have projected the Christ who shall be its king, His divine right to that position, and the time when He shall come to take that Kingdom—the second advent. Throughout we have observed the Kingdom to be a physical reality, though yet future, having the same essentials as any other kingdom: rulership, populace, territory, and laws.

About 3000 years ago, God combined these essentials into an earthly government under His direction, a government which, though falling far short of its ideals, was called "the kingdom of the Lord in the hand of David" (II Chron. 13:8). Its rulers were appointed by God, advised by God, directed by God, and disciplined by God as they sought His help and blessing. When the people forgot Him, He raised up prophets to warn; and when they still refused to repent, He brought judgment against them, swearing by an oath to His servant David, "that of the fruit of his loins, according to the flesh, he would raise up Christ to sit on his throne" (Acts 2:30). We will follow our outline of study:

V. The Kingdom of God in Israel

- A. God's Early Interest In Men
- B. God Delivers a Nation
- C. A Nation Becomes a Kingdom
- D. The Kingdom Divided

The Kingdom of God in Israel was an earthly domain under heavenly guidance.

V. THE KINGDOM OF GOD IN ISRAEL

A. God's Early Interest In Men

God's first move in choosing a people for Himself was to choose a man to be the head of the race, later called the "father of the faithful." He called Abraham, then known as Abram, who lived with his father Terah in Ur of the Chaldees, a town in Mesopotamia, north and east of Palestine. According to recent archaeological discoveries, Ur was a highly civilized and prosperous city.

We read God's call to Abram in Gen. 12:1, 2: "Get thee out of thy country, and from thy kindred, and from thy father's house, unto a land that I will shew thee: And I will make of thee a great nation,

and I will bless thee, and make thy name great; and thou shalt be a blessing." Abram obeyed the call of God and left his father's house and settled in the land of Canaan, an area which is now northern Israel.

Hebrew names were significant. God directed that Abram, meaning "father of high ones," should be changed to Abraham, "for a father of many nations have I made thee" (Gen. 17:5). The meaning of Abraham is "Father of a great multitude." Abraham's wife also had part in the plan. God said: "I will bless her, and give thee a son also of her: yea, I will bless her, and she shall be a mother of nations; kings of people shall be of her" (Gen. 17:16) indicating her motherhood of Abraham's kingly seed, Isaac.

1. **Isaac, child of promise.** This child of promise was Isaac, born to Abraham when he was 100 years old. God had directed that he should be named Isaac, and of him He said: "I will establish my covenant with him for an everlasting covenant, and with his seed after him" (Gen. 17:19). Jacob, one of two sons of Isaac, was the father of twelve sons, who with their families went down into Egypt to escape a famine in the land of Canaan and became the nucleus of God's people.

Jacob, like his grandfather Abraham, had his name changed by the Almighty. "Thy name shall not be called any more Jacob, but Israel shall be thy name: and he called his name Israel" (Gen. 35:10). At the same time God renewed His covenant with the descendants of Abraham, saying "a nation . . . and kings shall come out of thy loins; and the land which I gave Abraham and Isaac [by promise], to thee I will give it, and to thy seed after thee will I give the land" (Gen. 32:28; 35:11, 12). This is the first appearance of the name Israel.

2. **The sojourn in Egypt.** The story of Joseph and how he became a ruler in the land of the Pharaohs and subsequently saved his family from the famine in Canaan is well known to all. It is evident from the Scriptures that the hand of God was directing the affairs of His chosen family. At the onset of the journey into Egypt, the reassuring words of God came to Jacob in a vision: "I am God, the God of thy father: fear not to go down into Egypt; for I will there make of thee a great nation: I will go down with thee into Egypt; and I will also surely bring thee up again" (Gen. 46:3, 4). Seventy souls (Gen. 46:27) went down into Egypt and they "grew, and multiplied exceedingly."

BC	1040	1000	960	920	880	840								
	Samuel	Gad		JERO-BOAM	NADAB	BAASHA	ELAH	ZIMRI	OMRI	AHAB	AHAZIAH	JEHORAM	Jehu	
		Nathan		Ahijah						Elijah				
	SAUL	DAVID	SOLOMON	Iddo		Jehu				Elisha				
										Micaiah				
				REHO-BOAM	ABIJAH	ASA				JEHOS-HAPHAT		JEHORAM	AHAZIAH	ATHALIAH
					Shemaiah					Eliezer				
						Azariah				Jahaziel				
						Hanani								

The accompanying chart shows the time relationship between the kings and prophets of God's ancient nation. The nation began during the eleventh century as one united kingdom; but in 922 B. C. the ten tribes led by Jeroboam seceded to form the Northern Kingdom of Israel (shown on the upper line), leaving Solomon's son Rehoboam with only Judah and Benjamin to form the Kingdom of Judah.

Vertical dotted lines mark the time divisions, to show probable relations between kings and prophets. All dates are only approximate.

Many years passed and Israel grew and became a great nation as God had foretold. They were slaves to the Egyptians and their masters dealt harshly with them. But God remembered them and raised up a deliverer to bring them back to their homeland as He had promised.

When God called Moses to lead the children of Israel back to Canaan he was tending sheep for his father-in-law in the Midian desert. God's call from the burning bush was direct: "I am the God of thy father, the God of Abraham, the God of Isaac, and the God of Jacob. . . . I have surely seen the affliction of my people which are in Egypt, . . . and I am come down to deliver them out of the hand of the Egyptians, . . . and I will send thee unto Pharaoh, that thou mayest bring forth my people

2. The journey to the Promised Land. God performed many signs and wonders for the Israelites, first to convince Moses that he was truly called of God, then to convince Pharaoh that he should let the people go, and later to show to the people His might, power and authority. God was directing the affairs of His people, and they left Egypt at the appointed time. It was a day never to be forgotten. "And Moses said unto the people, Remember this day, in which ye came out from Egypt, out of the house of bondage; for by strength of hand the Lord brought you out from this place" (Ex. 13:3).

Throughout the journey to Canaan they were never allowed to forget that God was leading them. "And the Lord went before them by day in a pillar of a cloud, to lead them the way; and by night in a pillar of fire, to give them light; to go by day and night: He took not away the pillar of the cloud by day, nor the pillar of fire by night, from before the people" (Ex. 13:21, 22). Nor were they to forget after they had reached the Promised Land: "And thou shalt remember all the way which the Lord thy God led thee these forty years in the wilderness, to humble thee, and to prove thee, to know what was in thine heart, whether thou wouldest keep his commandments, or no" (Deut. 8:2).

God sustained them forty years in the wilderness to transform this multitude of slaves into a civil-

KINGS AND PROPHETS

800			760			720			680			640			
Jehu	Jehoahaz	Jehoash	Jeroboam II	Zachariah	Shallum	Menaheem	Pekahiah	Pekah	Hoshea	End of Northern Kingdom					
				Hosea											
			Jonah		Amos										
					Oded										
Joash		Azariah	Uzziah		Jotham		Ahaz	Hezekiah		Manasseh			Amon	Josiah	
Joel					Isaiah										
Zechariah					Micah								Huldah		
												Nahum			

ized nation. He gave them His laws and commanded that they were to be obeyed. Often He reminded them that they were the people of God—if they obeyed His laws. “Now therefore, if ye will obey my voice indeed, and keep my covenant, then ye shall be a peculiar treasure unto me above all people” (Ex. 19:5; see also Deut. 6:1, 3; 7:6).

3. **The Promised Land.** Moses brought the children of Israel to the borders of Canaan but because of his own disobedience (Num. 20:7—13) was forbidden to enter the land himself. God chose Joshua to succeed Moses (Num. 27:18—23) and the task of dividing and settling the land fell to him. God was still directing. "And Joshua said, Hereby ye shall know that the living God is among you, and that he will without fail drive out [the inhabitants of the land] from before you" (Josh. 3:10).

After the death of Joshua God raised up judges who delivered them from the hands of their oppressors. God had forbidden them to mix with the nations surrounding them or to worship other gods. But when they forgot the command of the Lord and worshiped other gods, God would allow them to be oppressed by their enemies to remind them that they were still His people. When they repented and turned again to the true God, He raised up a deliverer for them. Some of the best known of these deliverers, or judges, were **Deborah, Gideon, Jephthah and Samuel.**

C. A Nation Becomes A Kingdom

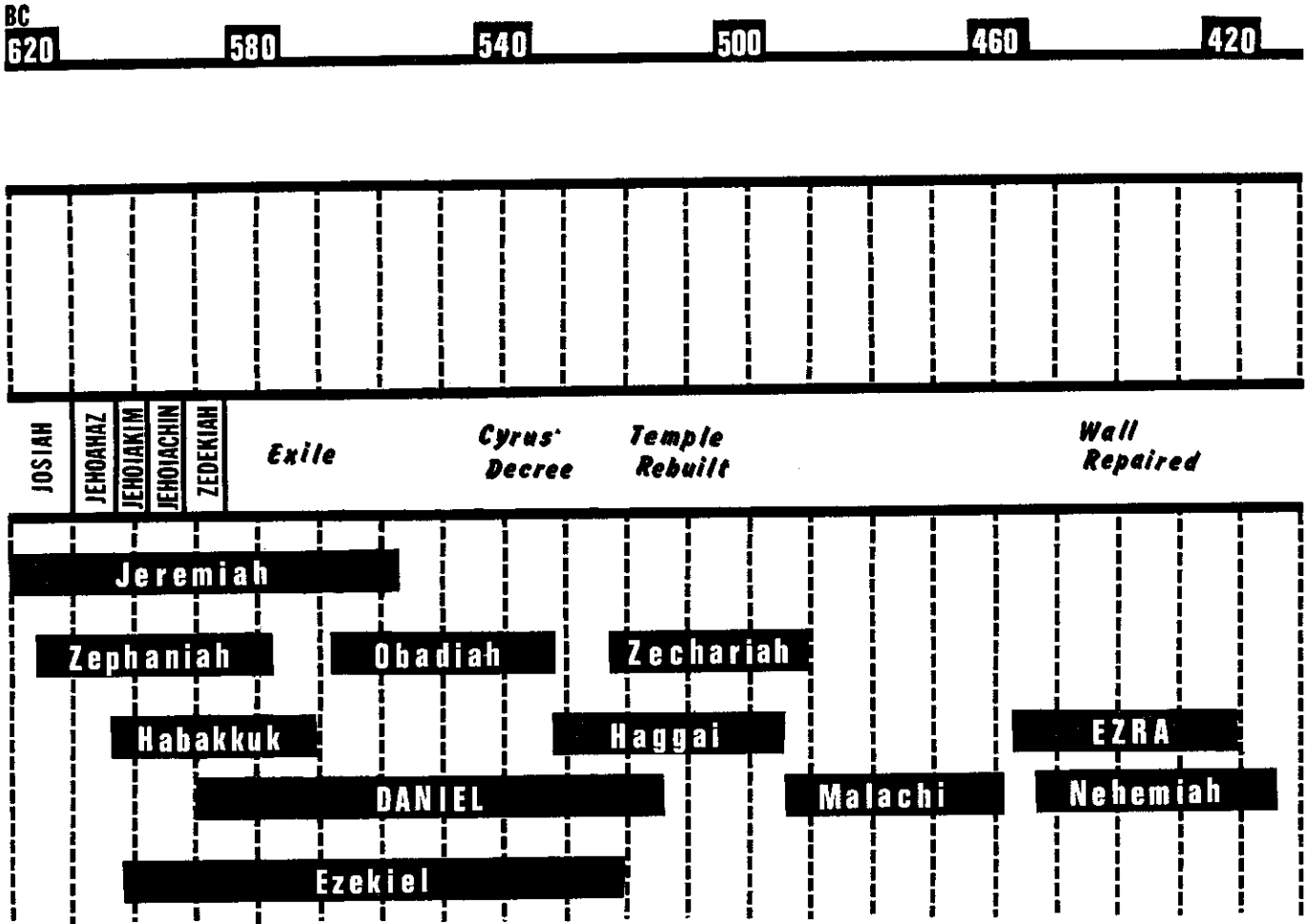
Until they had settled in the Promised Land, God's people Israel had no king but God. Israel was a **theocracy**, meaning that the Eternal was supreme head of the nation. Other nations around them were **aristocracies**, governed by the best of the people; or **oligarchies**, governed by a few of the people; or **democracies**, governed by the people as a whole. But Israel was God's own nation, a theocracy.

1. Israel desires a king. Without the strong leadership of Moses or Joshua the children of Israel began to mix more and more with the nations around them. And the more they mixed with the nations, the more they wanted to be like them. Other nations had other gods—why couldn't they? Other nations worshiped idols to make worship easier—why couldn't they? Other nations had lower standards—why did they have to be different? Other nations had a king—why couldn't they?

Samuel was a prophet and judge in Israel when the elders of Israel came to him with the demand: "Make us a king to judge us like all the nations" (I Sam. 8:6). Samuel was not pleased with their request, but he prayed to God for judgment and the Lord answered him: "Hearken unto their voice, and make them a king."

2. Saul, the first king of Israel. Saul, the son of Kish, of the tribe of Benjamin, set out to look

CHART OF THE KINGS AND PROPHETS



for a herd of asses and found a kingdom. It was God who had directed Saul to the house of Samuel that he might be made the first king of Israel. The Lord had said to Samuel: "Tomorrow about this time I will send thee a man out of the land of Benjamin, and thou shalt anoint him to be captain over my people Israel" (I Sam. 9:16). "And when Samuel saw Saul, the Lord said unto him, Behold the man whom I spake to thee of! this same shall reign over my people" (I Sam. 9:17).

Saul started out as king with every advantage. Not only was he God's choice, but he also had the approval of his people. He looked the part of a king, for "when he stood among the people, he was higher than any of the people from his shoulders and upward" (I Sam. 10:23).

Saul began his reign in a humble frame of mind and "hid himself among the stuff," but in his eagerness to exercise his kingly power he soon forgot his humility and disobeyed the command of God through Samuel. His impatience proved the beginning of his downfall and Samuel reproved him with the words: "Thou hast done foolishly: thou hast not kept the commandment of the Lord thy God,

which he commanded thee: . . . Because thou hast rejected the word of the Lord, he hath also rejected thee from being king. . . . The Lord hath rent the kingdom of Israel from thee this day, and hath given it to a neighbour of thine, that is better than thou" (I Sam. 13:13; 15:23, 28).

To be a messenger you must know the message.

TEST YOURSELF

1. When and where did God start to select a people for Himself?
2. How did God lead the people to the Promised Land?
3. What was the theocracy of Israel? Who was its first king? How was he chosen?
4. Study the chart. When did the kingdom divide? Who were its prophets? When did the Northern Kingdom end? the Southern?

Reprints of these studies are available upon request.

THE INTERVAL BETWEEN

Provocative and timely to all of us, these words by J. Edgar Hoover, director of the Federal Bureau of Investigation since 1924, should awaken us to our duty as Americans, and our superlative duty as Christians. Are we facing up to the challenge that confronts us? Let us be alerted—"In the last days perilous times shall come"—and take heed, earnest heed.

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TIME does not lend itself to inventory. No cursory glance, not even a thoughtful and comprehensive survey, can begin to encompass the brilliant color, the diversity of action, the variety of mood, and the magnitude of change lying under the soaring arch of time that covers the five decades just past.

It has been my privilege to witness this kaleidoscopic period from a unique vantage point. Since 1919, as special assistant to the attorney general under instructions to make a study of subversive activities in the United States, through the years as director of the Federal Bureau of Investigation, my work has been in the investigative field. It has been national in scope, and it has afforded a kind of observation post, a behind-the-scenes view of the forces and instrumentalities that induce change and influence manners and morals.

Whether we like it or not, the morals to which we subscribe as a people are vital to our survival as a free nation. The French philosopher Montesquieu spelled out what is essential to the different kinds of government. Fear, he said, is the required ingredient of a despotism. Honor is the key to the monarchy. And what of a republic? "Virtue is necessary in a republic."

Seven years from now we will celebrate the two-hundredth anniversary of the beginnings of our great republic. The five decades to which I have reference make up more than a quarter of the life of this magnificent experiment in self-rule. These same decades encompass changes more accelerated and more extensive, perhaps, than those that occurred in the course of a great many preceding centuries. The physical changes take us from the horse-drawn carriage to manned flight to the moon. And the changes in moral and ethical matters are almost as great. As we prepare to commemorate the bicentennial of the signing of the Declaration of Independence, questions are being raised on all sides about the current revolution in manners, ethics, and morals. Concerned citizens are beginning

to wonder if we may not be in grave danger of rejecting those things that are the source of our national strength.

Are we entering an age that must end in anarchy? Are we rearing a generation almost wholly lacking in self-discipline? Have we almost used up the reservoir of that moral quality that Montesquieu deemed essential to the preservation of a republic? In short, do we deserve our magnificent inheritance? Are we good enough to preserve the great republic to which we have pledged our allegiance? Will we retain the capacity to do our duty as Americans?

What is this duty? Views on this vary. I choose to draw mine from the tenets and principles that shine with glowing intensity from the pages of documents, books, and letters bequeathed us by the Founding Fathers. Their strict sense of duty—arising from a stern moral code—permeated the hearts and minds of the majority of early Americans. Duty was a part of their very being. It was the idea that sparked their actions.

Although the following words of a French Dominican friar were not written until many years after the Declaration of Independence was proclaimed to the world, almost every American who helped bring the republic into being would have subscribed to the thought: "Duty is the grandest of ideas, because it implies the idea of God, of the soul, of liberty, of responsibility, of immortality." God, the soul, liberty, responsibility, immortality—these intangibles formed the focus of American existence. And they coalesced and meshed in one short word—duty. Americans accepted without question the immense spiritual responsibility inherent in such a concept of duty, for they were a God-fearing people. That in itself turned them toward action marked by selflessness and courage, for, as Burke indicated, "he who fears God fears nothing else." And, like Burke, they held the fear of God to be the "only sort of fear which generates true courage."

Fear of God and faith in God as the keys to American freedom were freely acknowledged by Americans and observed by visitors. The first American president voiced this in the simple words: "It is impossible to govern the world without God," and a visitor to these shores from South America noted: "Go to New England, and visit the domestic firesides, if you would see the secret of American independence. . . . Religion has made them what they are."

How did Europe view us? The German poet

Heine expressed the meaning America held for his continent: "If all Europe were to become a prison, America would still present a loop-hole of escape; and, God be praised! that loop-hole is larger than the dungeon itself."

For centuries the world saw America as a haven, a refuge, a hope for the poor and downtrodden. And the world saw Americans themselves as unique—a people who had broken from a tyrannical government and projected a declaration that held danger for the world's rulers in its startling new credo that all men are created equal and are endowed with certain unalienable rights.

The Founding Fathers—those men of extraordinary wisdom and magnificent faith—drew up a spiritual contract with posterity. They built a new nation on a pledge and a daring belief that succeeding generations of Americans would uphold that pledge. And they gave us a blueprint for preserving the republic they had launched—if Americans of the future had the pride, self-discipline, will, understanding, and courage to accept the challenges inherent in the word "American."

Always that word has had spiritual meaning for the rest of the world, whether or not it is acknowledged, because from the outset our form of government has been a living challenge as no other, before or since. A former ambassador from the Far East, leaving these shores after many years, expressed his farewell in *This Week* magazine in simple, moving words. He spoke of its wealth and affluence. Then he concluded with these words.

But underlying everything else is the fact that America began as a God-loving, God-fearing, God-worshiping people knowing that there is a spark of the Divine in each one of us. It is this respect for the dignity of the human spirit which makes America invincible. May it always endure. . . . May God keep you always—and may you always keep God.

Nations have souls. The spirit of grace and beauty that Greece bequeathed to the world still lingers. The lamp of law and justice that lighted the Rome of Trajan and Hadrian may sometimes flicker low, but it has not been extinguished. And what of the spiritual light that is the heart and soul of America? Will this generation permit it to wane to the point at which we, in effect, dispense with this quality upon which our nation's strength is founded?

The answer is to be found within ourselves. The words of an English clergyman born nearly two centuries ago point to the vital issue: "There is a time to be born, and a time to die, says Solomon, and it is the memento of the truly wise man; but there is an interval between these two times of infinite importance." It is what we do that counts. We need to face the realities of the

present with forthrightness, ascertain what needs to be done, and develop the fortitude to do it.

What are the realities?

We are witnessing irrational violence stemming from a widespread promotion of the doctrine of civil disobedience. We are experiencing lawlessness unexampled in our nation's history, and a growing percentage of vicious crimes being committed by the very young. We are recording instance after instance in which, by reason of technicalities, unrepentant felons are being loosed to prey once more upon the public. We are watching society's safeguards sink lower and lower each time an unjust and irresponsible shout of "Police brutality!" is raised. And we seem to be developing a peculiar attitude toward criminal activities. The current myopic stance condones constant expansion of the rights of the criminal, including shorter and shorter periods of imprisonment, together with an overweening reluctance to condemn criminal behavior. In Alice in Wonderland fashion, we are focusing tender concern on the criminal while ignoring the cries of his victims. We seem to have forgotten the Justinian definition of justice—that it is "the constant desire and effort to render to every man his due."

We are witnessing an era of permissiveness in which vacillating pedagogues and parents too often abdicate their decision-making roles, thus forcing their responsibilities to fall upon immature students and children. These young people are growing to adulthood in a culture that has changed drastically in recent decades. Undiluted filth stains great segments of our literary output while the seals of vulgarity, unrestrained sex, violence, and brutality are stamped upon much of the material purveyed by our entertainment media. We are witnessing a denial of formerly accepted values. Too many parents preach one thing and practice another while their children, revolted by hypocrisy, reject all values.

Thousands of young people, unable to face life as it is and lacking the courage to strive to improve it, seek to destroy everything. Some commit suicide. Some simply withdraw into a shadowland of drugs, suffering the subsequent degradation of soul and mind and body. Many adopt the cynical, nihilistic, and anarchistic philosophy constantly being promoted by the totalitarians in their efforts to destroy individual freedom. Indeed we are witnessing an age in which cunning representatives of an international totalitarian conspiracy are given the broadest opportunities to subvert the minds of our young people before knowledge and experience enables them to form sound standards of judgment.

These are some of the difficult realities with which we must contend as we approach the bicentennial of the birth of the republic. We have to decide what kind of world we want—one of liberty or one of license. Our forefathers sacrificed without

thought of self to give us, in Jefferson's words, "what is most valuable to man, his right of self-government." We are among the fortunate of the world to have been given that right—as well as the opportunity to show by our deeds the value we place upon it. But that precious right cannot long be maintained in the absence of the individual citizen's acceptance of his obligations.

I speak of the "individual citizen," not the "ordinary citizen." In view of the proud challenge issued by the Founding Fathers almost two hundred years ago, no citizen of the United States is ordinary. What each man is and does is important in a democratic republic. Alexis de Tocqueville, after viewing the raw, young republic, noted this and wrote with great perception: "Thus not only does democracy make every man forget his ancestors, but it hides his descendants and separates his contemporaries from him; it throws him back forever upon himself alone and threatens in the end to confine him entirely within the solitude of his own heart."

The "solitude of his own heart" must be fearful indeed for the man who is without faith. For the believing man, that dependence upon self offers a constant challenge that demands the best he has to give—and de Tocqueville noted that, too. In a statement before the French Senate on his return to France after his visit to the United States in 1831, the great French observer reportedly said:

During my journey throughout America I sought for the secret of the genius and the greatness of America; I sought for her genius and greatness and growth and glory in her rich soils, in her rich mines, her great forests, her fallow fields, her ample rivers and noble harbors, but I did not discover it there. I further sought for the reason for her growth and her glory and her genius and her greatness, and I found it in her matchless Constitution; I found it in her schools, churches and homes, ablaze with righteousness. It was there in her Constitution, in her homes, in her schools, in her churches, that I found the true secret of the source of America's genius and greatness.

I have given this statement as it was quoted by Senator Henry F. Ashurst in his farewell speech to the Senate of the United States in 1940. He concluded with these words of his own: "So it is, fellow Senators. America is great because she is good. When America is no longer good, she will no longer be great."

My days are filled with evidence of crime, corruption, betrayal, and subversion. Often during the past quarter of our nation's history it would have been easy to become doubtful and pessimistic—and never more so than in the present decade. Yet, when the strains and tensions become almost un-

bearable, I am blessed with a recurring memory from the past. Crossing the continent by rail many years ago, I had the privilege of riding on the open platform at the end of a long passenger train. There, as we passed through sleeping prairies, high mountains, and lonely reaches of desert lighted by low-hanging stars, the glory and grandeur of God's handiwork became as manifest to me as I'm sure it was to those superlative sailors of space whose midnight message from the distant moon reminded us once again that we are not alone.

I believe in the great challenge of America. I believe that if the children of America were taught to understand the meaning of that challenge as fully in its spiritual sense as in its material, we would regain that ordered discipline stemming from a sense of personal responsibility that once marked our national behavior.

How far we have strayed from the once universally accepted image of Americans became very visible recently in a foreign columnist's reference to the impression made in Britain by the Apollo 11 moon flight. The behavior of the astronauts, said the columnist, "showed that they were not men of stature only in space, but were of equal and superlative quality in the ordinary business of life. To a people fed with endless stories of American vulgarities and violence, these men recalled another America of sober dignity, responsibility and dedication to duty."

Whether we like it or not, we are born to a challenge. By virtue simply of being American we are "keepers of the flame." It is our continuing and inescapable obligation to prove that man is, indeed, capable of self-rule. In the brief interval between birth and death that God grants all of us, let us do our duty as Americans. ●●

CONTROL

Like the string of a violin in a drawer
His life lay useless
Till it found itself
In the hands of the Eternal.

Then submitting to the fitting
Into a special groove,
Stretching to new stresses,
Bending to the will of the bow,
It gave forth music
Under the straining
Of the One who played.

Under Thy hand, O Lord,
Teach us to blend with others,
Striking together the chords
Scored by Thee.

Peter's Treasure



I'm Thinking

IN THE STATE of Idaho grows a very peculiar sort of tree. This species of the acacia tree is classed as one of the wonders of plant life. It grows to a height of about eight feet. When fully grown, it closes its leaves together in coils each day at sunset, and curls its twigs to the

The Anger Tree

shape of pigtails. When the tree has settled itself for its night's sleep, it is said that if touched it will flutter as if agitated or impatient at being disturbed.

The oftener the foliage is molested the more violent will become the shaking of the branches. And finally, it is alleged, if the shaking is continued, the tree will emit a nauseating odor sufficient to induce a headache in the person disturbing the tree.

In Idaho, it is called the "anger tree." The tree was first discovered by men who, making camp for the night, placed one end of a canvas covering over one of the sensitive bushes, using it for a support. Immediately the tree began to jerk its branches sharply. The motion continued with increasing "nervousness" until at last came the sickening odor that drove the tired campers to a more friendly location.

Anger is not a wholesome thing either for children or for a tree. The agitation of the little tree is not a moral fault, but when a big person or a little one gets angry and shakes himself to pieces, it is a great evil.

One of the things the Bible tells us to do is to "put away anger." "But now ye also put off all these; anger, wrath, malice, blasphemy, filthy communication out of your mouth." Also, "Cease from anger, and forsake wrath." I think both children and older people can learn a good lesson from the little "anger tree."

When you are tempted to be angry because things do not go your way, or because you feel mistreated or injured, remember the anger tree. ●●

The sting of a reproach is the truth of it.

IT WAS ONE of those hot, sultry August days, and young Peter was strolling lazily across a large green meadow. He was just not about to move too quickly for anyone. In his hand he carried a big stick, which he poked at this and that as he dallied along. Soon he came to a fine, cool spot under the familiar old elm tree. As he prepared himself for a nice long rest, he sighted a clump of dirt. "Maybe some dog has been digging here," he told himself and he began to dig with his big stick.

The shadows grew longer and longer, and Peter thought he must have been digging quite awhile when suddenly he thought he heard metal under one of his strokes. This was an *exciting* hole! What could be buried here? He began to dig with more energy now, and his big stick made the dirt fly. Peter just had to find out what was buried there. Like all young boys of six, he had an almost insatiable curiosity.

At last he thought he could feel something. He had both hands and arms into the dirt by now, up to his elbows, and his knees—you couldn't see them at all. He was so excited! What would he find? A buried treasure?

He grabbed the metal with both hands, straightened his back and tugged and tugged and tugged until finally it came to the surface. And of all things—it was a gun—a toy pistol! His heart leaped with excitement.

But there was more in the hole. He dug up another gun—and another—and another! Four, five, a dozen or more. How many could there be? The more he dug, the more he found, but they all looked very much alike.

How did they get there? He would take them home, polish them up, and give them to all his friends. Now they could have exciting war games. He had found a treasure for sure! A treasure of excitement! But still, he thought, he would like to know the story behind the buried toy pistols.

He was carrying all he could balance on his arms of his new-found treasure and going toward his home when he saw his widow neighbor, Mrs. Jefferson, out picking corn in the field in back of her house.

"Look, Mrs. Jefferson," Peter called to her. "I found all these guns buried up in the meadow under the big old elm tree. It's sure a treasure, isn't it?" he exclaimed, squinting his freckled face in the strong sunlight as he looked up at her.

Years rolled by in the mind of old Mrs. Jefferson, and she remembered the days when she wasn't crippled up with arthritis and her hair wasn't

gray. For when she last saw those guns, she was not bent with age.

"Oh, my dear young lad," she spoke so softly that Peter stepped closer to her. "I wonder, could you take a moment? I would like to tell you a story. I would like to tell you a story—about those guns."

Peter's excitement cooled down, as he wondered what she was going to tell him. How could old Mrs. Jefferson know anything about toy pistols? His nose wrinkled up, as it sometimes did when he was real puzzled.

"Why, yes, you can tell me a story, but first let me lay the guns here in the cornfield. Can I help you carry in the corn?" The corn smelled so good! Peter secretly wished she would give him some to take home, as she sometimes did.

Mrs. Jefferson asked Peter to put the corn on her kitchen table, then told him to help himself to a large red apple from the bowl that was nearby. And then she began her story.

"You see, Peter," she began, "once I was young like your mother. I had a little boy, too. He is a fine young veterinarian now, but once he was little, like you. He loved to play in the meadow. His father and I did everything we could think of for Patrick. Well, we bought him many toys, among them a whole lot of toy guns."

Peter's ears opened wide at the word "guns."

"One day when he was ten years old his grandfather read a story to him right here in this room." Peter thought he saw a tear fall on old Mrs. Jefferson's cheek. But he pretended not to notice.

"Go on, Mrs. Jefferson," Peter encouraged. He wanted to hear more.

"Well," Mrs. Jefferson swallowed and began again. "Well, Patrick even at ten years was a deep-thinking boy. The story his grandfather read him was about the danger of playing with guns. He tried to warn him that it could lead him into violence and a lot of trouble later. He explained the danger of playing war-and-killing games. His grandfather wanted to instill this high moral principle in the mind of my son. The story he read is called, 'God Watches Over His Lambs.' I think I have it here on my bookshelf yet. Maybe you would like to take it home and read it for yourself, Peter. Anyway, Patrick must have been impressed, because the next morning he got up very early and took all his guns up into the back meadow and buried them. I never knew just where. But I know now. You see, Peter, those guns once belonged to Patrick. But he didn't want any other little boy to learn violence and play that kind of games, that is why he buried them instead of giving them away."

Peter had finished his apple and was studying the kind face of Mrs. Jefferson. He knew Mr. Jefferson, her son. He was a big, fine man. "Yes, Mrs. Jefferson, I would like to read that story." He choked a little as he spoke. "But—I must run

along now. Mother will be waiting for me. Thank you for the apple."

He took the book and started for his home, but before he could get out the door, Mrs. Jefferson handed him a sackful of the freshly picked corn to take home with him. "Thank you, Mrs. Jefferson," he said and started to run. It seemed that he had forgotten about the guns. They were still out in the cornfield. Mrs. Jefferson smiled as she watched the boy skip joyfully down the lane in the direction of his home.

The next morning Mrs. Jefferson was up bright and early working in her garden. She could see a familiar head moving in the meadow over toward the big elm. It was a boy with a shovel in his hands. It was little Peter, of course. She looked in the edge of the cornfield, where he had laid the guns the day before, and they were gone. He was going back to bury them—forever, she hoped. She just shuddered at the thought of the child playing with them.

Truly, Peter had found a treasure, a treasure he would always keep, Mrs. Jefferson hoped. For his was a treasure full of hope—in this day of violence. ● ●

The Grumble Family

There's a family nobody likes to meet,
They live, it is said, on Complaining Street,
In the city of Never-Are-Satisfied,
The river of Discontent beside.
They growl at that and they growl at this.
Whatever comes there is something amiss;
And whether their station be high or humble,
They are always known by the name of Grumble.

The weather is always too hot or too cold.
Summer and winter alike they scold;
Nothing goes right with the folks you meet
Down on the gloomy Complaining Street.
They growl at the rain and they growl at the sun.
In fact, their growling is never done.
And if everything pleased them, there isn't a doubt
They'd growl that they'd nothing to grumble
about.

And the worst thing is that if any one stays
Among them too long he will learn their ways,
And before he dreams of terrible jumble
He's adopted into the family of Grumble.
So it is wisest to keep our feet
From wandering into Complaining Street;
And never to growl, whatever you do,
Lest we be mistaken for Grumblers, too.

LETTERS

Real Work

It is written that we shall be rewarded according to our works, but all the work that we in this part of the world seem able to do is to look to ourselves, and this is quite a job. It appears to be such a selfish way of life, although my wife and I invite people to our house for Bible discussions, but usually they come just that once. When we talk to people they ask, "Where do you go to worship?" When we say that we have no magnificent building, they become suspicious, not knowing that God dwells not in temples made by hands.

However, God's Word of truth is a comfort to us, and we are really thankful for the privilege of being called and are endeavoring to make that calling and election sure. Paul tells us in Romans 8:33 that it is God that justifieth, and again in the 30th verse, "whom he justified, them he also glorified." We know that the whole thing rests on "conditions," these being that we lay aside every weight and the sin which doth so easily beset us and become perfect even as Jesus is perfect.

Many signs point to the nearness of the coming of Elijah, but for real encouragement I often read Dr. James Moffatt's translation of II Peter 3. The whole of the chapter is excellent, but a few verses are really outstanding, such as verses 3 and 4: "To begin with, you know that mockers will come with their mockeries in the last days, men who by their own passions, asking, 'Where is His promised advent? Since the day our fathers fell asleep, things remain exactly as they were from the beginning of creation.'" As I say, the whole chapter is well worth reading over and over, taking great care that we are not carried away by the error of the lawless and so lose our footing. The ultimate of these verses relies on "patience," "waiting," and above all "watching."

Finally let us take heed in case our hearts get overpowered by dissipation and worldly anxieties and so that Day catches us suddenly like a trap.

Swansea, South Wales

W. C. S.

Helpful

I enjoy more than words can say to read your literature.

I think it is wonderful and I know it does help me to better understand the path I should follow.

Rock Hill, S. C.

P. E. B.

Help in Sickness

We have been having much sickness in our family. This is when the healing, soothing Word of God often acts like medicine—at least it does for me. As mortals, we cannot expect to be physically fit all our lives. But we are given the chance to attain to this wonderful condition if we now strive to be spiritually healthy.

Immortality is wonderfully inspiring to contemplate—no more pain, sickness, or depression, no more sorrow or tears,

and no more old age or death, "For this corruptible must put on incorruption, and this mortal must put on immortality." Oh! this is certainly something to work for!

Swansea, South Wales

R. B.

Let God Beat the Time

Oh where does the time go? But if we let God beat the time of our life now, it will not be lost time but improved time. Each day, each hour, each minute will make us progress in our way to His kingdom where none of the frailties of mortal limitation will be remembered.

I thank God for all His mercies.

Roseville, Ca.

L. W.

From Darkness to Light

I have searched many years for truth. For I lived in darkness; but I knew that if I kept on trying, the light would come. And the light did come to me, and now I am emerging from darkness into the light.

Thank God for the spiritual uplift. I shall not cease to go forward to victory and joy. For the way is clear before me now, in the books of truth you so kindly sent me. I never did believe the Holy Spirit, Jesus and God were one. Those who told me they believed it didn't understand it themselves, so how could they convince me?

In darkness we are blind and when we leave darkness and enter the light, we see truth; for no one can bury it under a bushel—it will rise again.

Dayton, Ohio

M. A. H.

Trusting

There is an unrest of violent demonstrations and criminalities in our area and around, but I am not afraid, for the Epistle to the Ephesians says: "Put on the whole armor of God. . . . Let truth be the belt which holds all together, let righteousness be your breastplate, and let the gospel of peace be as shoes on your feet; let faith be your shield against the attacks of your enemies, let salvation be your helmet, and let your sword be the spirit, the Word of God."

Help me carry on the Lord's work here and I will keep on.

LaUnion, Philippines

M. D. L.

Astonished

We must thank you for your most astonishing booklets that we are reading. They are most enlightening and revealing that it is so hard to lay them down. One just wants to keep reading and comparing them with the Bible.

Howell, Michigan

A. O.

Looking Ahead

Just think, someday there will be no pain, no sickness, no sorrow, no partings, no death. And so much is waiting for us if we are pure. Against all others the gate will be closed. Bitter tears, deep anguish of heart, earnest pleadings or money will in no wise alter the decision of the Judge, but to only one class shall tickets be granted for admission. They are the blessed ones; they have kept God's commandments.

The work can be done and must be done, or we shall never see the King in all His glory.

It is a full-time job indeed to obey that blessed commandment to come out from the world in everything. Not in some things, not in most things, but in all things. But this commandment, like the rest, must be done.

Sylvan Beach, N. Y.

C. S.

MEGIDDO MESSAGE

Words to WALK By

May we have the courage to discover what is true, and the fortitude to practice what is good.

There is no success without honor; no happiness without a clear conscience; no use in living at all, if only for one's self.

Enthusiasm is the genius of sincerity, and truth accomplishes no victories without it.

Most powerful is he who has himself in his own power.

To live in the heart of God is not to die.

Perseverance always wins in the long run—usually in a walk.

The great thing in this world is not so much where we stand, but in what direction we are moving.

You always have time enough to be courteous.

The church is a workshop for wide-awake Christians, not a dormitory for sleeping ones.

Who Wrote the Bible?

Bad men or devils would not have written the Bible for it condemns them and their work. Good men or angels could not have written it, for in saying that it was from God when it was their own invention, they would have been guilty of a falsehood and could not have been good. The only remaining Being who could have written it is God.

Booklets to aid your Bible Study

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JULY, 1970

Meditations

On the Word

"Therefore if any man be in Christ, he is a new creature: old things are passed away; behold, all things are become new" (II Corinthians 5:17).

Well, what is wrong with that? It implies, of course, a change; but don't we all like changes? All progress, we know, is continual change, and the true Church of Christ, being a superlatively progressive organization, has never been a champion of the *status quo*. Human nature—character—needs to be changed, and it must be. Existing political and economic conditions need to be changed, and they will be. Yes, it is a change, a radical change, but, strange to say, it is not popular with a novelty-loving world. Or, perhaps it is not so strange. History testifies that every notable change for the better has been won by the efforts of an inspired and energetic few, the apathetic masses being dragged reluctantly, suspiciously, along the rugged road of progress. So with the change upon which we meditate today; it is too revolutionary, too demanding, too laborious to be attractive. The ends are desirable, perhaps, but not the means. Only a chosen few will yoke desire with action.

In the psychology of advertising, the successive reactions to a successful advertisement are listed as attention, interest, self-interest, desire to possess, and finally, action to acquire. The process of conversion is identical in its psychology. The commodity offered is eternal life and happiness. Unless there is interest, self-interest, and an overpowering desire to possess this better life, the necessary action will not be forthcoming. In fact, one might truthfully say that a man's character is a faithful mirror of his desires, at least of the ones which are permitted to dominate. Somewhere along the line there must exist or be awakened a dissatisfaction with the old way of life, for one will not voluntarily forsake a satisfaction.

The old creature, the "old man," must go. He should go, anyway, for he is no good. His description may be found in Mark 7:21, 22; Romans 1; Gal. 5:19—21; Col. 3:5, 8, 9, and elsewhere. In spite of these portrayals, it is not easy to recognize him for what he is, looking through our own untrained eyes. St. Paul, viewing his natural self with clear vision, said, "For I know that in me (that is, in my flesh) dwelleth no good thing" (Rom. 7:18). Once we have humbled ourselves to make the same admission, there is hope; progress begins at this point.

Even after the die is cast and we have committed ourselves to the task of making this momentous change, we need not expect an easy road to victory. Habit is powerful, and the old nature dies slowly. "Knowing this, that our old man is crucified with him, that the body of sin might be destroyed," saith the apostle (Rom. 6:6). Crucified—a slow, lingering death. Completely changed tastes are absolutely essential, but that, too, is easier said than done. It takes time, so much time that we have none to spare. We cannot afford to postpone action until our tastes are changed; there are many things distasteful to the old nature which must be done because the law of God says so, because the prize depends upon it; we can learn to like it as we go along. "No man," said Jesus, "having drunk old wine straightway desireth new, for, he saith, The old is better" (Luke 5:39). Flesh and spirit are contrary to each other; and in the grimly serious business of crucifying the flesh we shall often be reminded of Paul's warning, "Ye cannot do the things that ye would."

The deluded followers of emotional religions often testify that at the moment of "conversion" the old life and its appetites dropped away, never to return. Frankly, we don't believe it. No such experience is recorded in sacred history, nor have we ever seen such a thing ourselves. Certainly no conversion was ever more dramatic or convincing than St. Paul's, and no man's surrender more complete; yet his letters reveal a mighty inward struggle against his nature, a warfare which began on the Damascus road and continued to the triumphant end of his career. It is quite possible that certain bad habits and desires might be inhibited and suppressed, even permanently, by an overpowering and continuing interest in another direction; but the complete remaking of a character is quite another thing. It takes time. The amount of time it requires depends upon the degree of our interest and the intensity of our effort, but we will need every day of our probation to take the fort and hold it against the assaults which are sure to come. With each victory comes added strength for the next battle; as Job puts it (17:9), "He that hath clean hands shall be stronger and stronger."

Old things pass away, but only by our own efforts. Our part of the contract can be fulfilled only by us—no substitution. "If iniquity be in thine hand"—trust in the atoning blood of Jesus? No;—"put it far away" (Job 11:14). It is well to remember that as far away as we can cast our evil ways, we are never safe from them—from ourselves. Our free moral agency enables us to go out and pick them up whenever we so desire. This change is reversible, and with the vast majority of those who have begun the work, it has been reversed. When Saul was chosen to be king over Israel, his heart was touched, "God gave him another heart," and he became "another man."

(I Sam. 10:6, 9). Not instantaneously, of course, but gradually, as he rose to his responsibilities. But unfortunately he would not and did not continue in that state of newness. The devil in him was only bound, not killed; and before long he slipped back into his old ways, and worse, and his subsequent life was one long tragedy of willfulness and its disastrous consequences.

His namesake, the apostle from Tarsus, knew how easily he could lose himself, even after an illustrious career in the Gospel. "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. 9:27).

"Behold, all things are become new." The way of Christ is not all negative, not all "Thou shalt not." A picture of the "new man" is found in Gal. 5:22, 23. His fruits are "love, joy, peace, longsuffering, gentleness, goodness, faith, meekness, temperance." In Col. 3:11—15 we read a still more detailed description of his virtues. Only such a man will be fit to dwell in the "new heavens and new earth" so beautifully portrayed by the Revelator in Chapter 21:3, 4. The old man would be out of place, even miserable, in such surroundings. Truly the "new wine" is better, regardless of what men may say at the first taste.

"And he that sat on the throne said, Behold, I make all things new. And he said unto me, Write: for these words are true and faithful." ●●

QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS

"I have read your booklet, *The Coming of Jesus and Elijah*, and must say that all your explanations are not right. First of all, Elijah will never come in person, not because he could not but because one prophet Elijah cannot enlighten the whole world with the message of the soon-coming Saviour."

You say Elijah will never come in person. But God's Word says he will. You say he could never do the work. God's Word says that he will. "Behold, I will send you Elijah the prophet [not many men, but one—*Elijah the prophet*] before the coming of the great and dreadful day of the Lord: And he shall turn the hearts of the fathers to the children, and the heart of the children to their fathers, lest I come and smite the earth with a curse" (Mal. 4: 5, 6). And Jesus confirmed the words of Malachi when some of the disciples questioned Him about the coming of Elijah. He said, "Elias truly shall first come, and restore all things" (Matt. 17:11).

Neither Malachi nor Jesus says anything of an Elijah class, but only of "Elijah the prophet." However, that does not say that he will not have helpers. We are told in Zech. 14:9 that "the Lord shall be

king over all the earth; in that day shall there be one Lord, and his name one." But we are told in other places of Scripture that He will have faithful and chosen helpers to help Him rule. "To him that overcometh will I grant to sit with me in my throne, even as I also overcame, and am set down with my Father in his throne."

If Elias is coming to "restore all things," as Jesus said, the Lord will certainly give His messenger sufficient power to accomplish the task He has laid out for him.

"Matthew tells us Joseph and Mary took Jesus and went into Egypt. Luke says they went to Nazareth. This has puzzled me and my husband for many years. Can you explain?"

The different Gospel writers looked upon different aspects of Jesus' life as being more important. Matthew seems to tell us of Jesus' early life more completely than any other Gospel. Luke places more emphasis on His birth, but completely omits the part about the flight into Egypt. He seems to resume the account of His life at the return from Egypt, when they came back to live in Nazareth. (You will note that Mark and John do not even record Jesus' birth, and nothing of His early life). There is no contradiction, just that one writer tells one event and another tells something else.

"Another thing, God will not force anybody to do His will. This has to be voluntary and with love."

Such was the plan Jesus followed at His first coming, when He came anointed to "preach the gospel to the poor; . . . to heal the brokenhearted, to preach deliverance to the captives, and recovering of sight to the blind, to set at liberty them that are bruised, to preach the acceptable year of the Lord" (Luke 4:18). He came calling men to repentance, teaching and preaching the glad news of the Kingdom of God which He would establish in the future.

But His second arrival will be different. The Revelator fittingly describes His second coming as "the Lion of the tribe of Judah." He shall ride forth, "conquering and to conquer" until "all kings shall fall down before him: all nations shall serve him" (Rev. 6:2; Ps. 72:11). When He proclaims Himself Christ the King, all who will not submit to His rule will be destroyed. "And it shall come to pass, that in all the land, saith the Lord, two parts therein shall be cut off and die; but the third shall be left therein" (Zech. 13:8). Those who resist Him will be forcefully subdued, before the remainder will bow before Him in love and peace.

Isaiah tells us of the plan: "Let favor be shewed to the wicked, yet will he not learn righteousness: in the land of uprightness will he deal unjustly, and

will not behold the majesty of the Lord. . . . For when thy judgments are in the earth, the inhabitants of the world will learn righteousness" (Isa. 26:9, 10). Only the judgments of God will cause men and women to learn righteousness.

"From your study of the Scriptures, do you think the Jews will hold their own in Palestine?"

We are unable to see that the modern State of Israel is a subject of prophecy. It is the spiritual Israel, the Jews indeed (Rom. 2:28, 29), to whom the land of Palestine is promised as the headquarters of the future Kingdom of God (Matt. 5:35; Zech. 2:12). Modern Israel will no doubt resist the coming King as stoutly as will the Arabs. Both are counted Gentiles in the sight of God (Col. 3:11).

Zechariah 14:4, 5 indicates that natural Jews will be occupying Jerusalem at the time of Christ's Second Advent, and shall be forced by an earthquake to evacuate. When the Mount of Olives cleaves in twain, "ye shall flee, like as ye fled from before the earthquake in the days of Uzziah king of Judah." This will clear the country for spiritual Israel, the rightful heirs of Palestine.

"You also claim that Rev. 7:14 says 'after' the tribulation. But several Greek manuscripts say 'out of' the tribulation. What manuscript do you use?"

The text as it occurs in the Authorized Version reads: "These are they which came out of great tribulation" (Rev. 7:14). The words "out of" as used in this text are translated from the Greek word *ek*, which is a frequently used Greek connective having many definitions, usually "denoting motion from within, or the source, origin or cause" (*Concordant Concordance*). Among its definitions, as given in Liddell and Scott's *Greek-English Lexicon*, is: "To denote change from one place or another, as evil comes from (or after) another." Also, "of position, like outside of, beyond . . . they sat down apart from the company."

When Christ begins His work of re-organization upon earth, His first work will be to warn the world of coming events, of the approach of the Battle of Armageddon. This will be followed by the actual battle, during which time the element who will not surrender to the new Authority will be eliminated. This will be a time of trouble such as had never been known (Dan. 12:1), truly a "great tribulation."

The class who stand before the throne and serve (Rev. 7:15), will have been developed during the thousand-year reign of Christ. A small proportion of these will have lived through the "great tribulation" at the beginning of that period. The greater number, the offspring of the lesser number, will have lived later, hence may be said to have come out "after" or "beyond" the great tribulation or Battle of Armageddon. ●●



There Always Will Be God

*They cannot shell His temple
Nor dynamite His throne;
They cannot bomb His city,
Nor rob Him of His own.*

*They cannot take Him captive,
Nor strike Him deaf and blind,
Nor starve Him to surrender,
Nor make Him change His mind.*

*They cannot cause Him panic,
Nor cut off His supplies;
They cannot take His kingdom,
Nor hurt Him with their lies.*

*Though all the world be shattered,
His truth remains the same,
His righteous laws still potent
And "Father" still His name.*

*Though we face the strife and struggle
And feel their goad and rod,
We know above confusion
There always will be God.*

