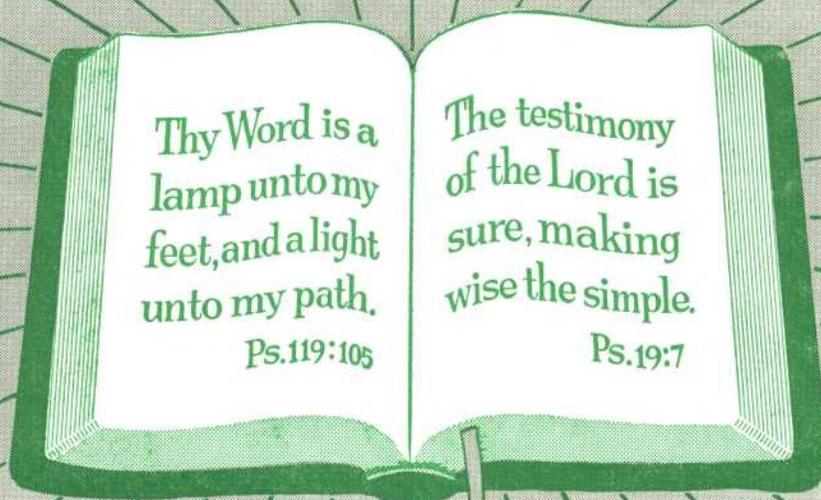


Megiddo Message

DEVOTED TO THE CAUSE OF CHRIST



Thy Word is a
lamp unto my
feet, and a light
unto my path.

Ps. 119:105

The testimony
of the Lord is
sure, making
wise the simple.

Ps. 19:7

The Pre-Existence of Christ--Fact or Fable?
When Christ Returns
Lest We Forget
Understanding the Bible

Megiddo Message

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

The MEGIDDO MESSAGE will

- 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
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Editorially Speaking . . .

It's In Your Hands

NO truth of Scripture is more plainly taught than that God "will render to every man according to his deeds." The majority of religious people would have us rely on merits that are not our own. They are lulled into delusive slumber by the thought that Christ did the work for them. But God's plan of salvation is not founded on such unjust principles. It is what *we* do that will determine whether or not we are worthy of His mercy.

Enoch will stand approved before the coming King because he "walked with God." Noah was ranked among the faithful because he conformed his life to the divine standard and obeyed the divine commands. Samuel will gain the promised glory because he not only preached but practiced the divine admonition that "to obey is better than sacrifice."

All who have a knowledge of God's eternal plan and purpose have an invitation to become part of that plan. What we do with this opportunity is in our own hands; we are free moral agents.

We who have entered the service of our King have vowed a life of faithful service and truehearted allegiance. Although fiercely beset by forces of evil, we must allow no defeat; we must be true to our responsibility.

Yet, it is possible to be defeated in our fight against sin before we start. When the law of God condemns some form of evil, we may immediately say to ourselves that we do not have it in us to overcome that specific evil and be what we would like to be, and so content ourselves with something less than our best. Recall the narrative of the evil report the spies brought back to the Israelites. They reported that the land of Canaan was a country flowing with milk and honey, but that it was impossible to possess it because its inhabitants were too powerful and the city walls too exceeding great to overcome. Nothing that Caleb or Joshua could say would give them assurance that they *could* go up and possess it. We should take the lesson to ourselves. The means for victory is in our own hands.

The present hour is the critical and decisive hour. It is what we do now that will stand for or against us at Judgment Day. Each day is laden with opportunities for building and improving. The power of the Gospel is greater than the work before us if we allow it to influence and work us over into new creatures. Now is the time to yield to that discipline which teaches us to abolish base, worldly passions; which purifies the motives of our conduct, and which fortifies our heart with virtuous principles.

Time is passing by rapidly. Each day brings us nearer the crucial time when we shall have to render our account, when you and I shall be judged for what we have done—our own works and not the works of another. Whether we stand or fall remains with us—our destiny is in our own hands. ●●

The Pre-Existence of Christ

FACT or FABLE?

WE continue our discussion with our correspondent who is a strong believer in the Deity and pre-existence of Christ. We have discussed Christ's words recorded in John 6, where He testified that He came down from heaven, and we found that not He Himself literally descended but the wisdom of God which He personified by His daily life came from heaven.

But our correspondent has further objections.

"The Scriptures seem to leave no possible doubt as to the nature of Jesus' person. Why not accept the Word of God just as it is? Jesus said, 'I came forth from the Father, and am come into the world: again, I leave the world, and go to the Father' (John 16:28)."

Christ did come from the Father, inasmuch as He was the Son of God, born of the Virgin Mary, and conceived by a higher law than we are familiar with. The Father sent Him into the world, but that does not mean that He sent Him down from heaven. We read in John 1:6, "There was a man sent from God, whose name was John." But no one suspects that John came down from heaven. Why then would Christ have to come down from heaven to be sent from the Father?

"In John 8:58, Jesus declared, 'Before Abraham was, am.' Comparing this with Exodus 3:14 and Isaiah 43:10-13, we find that the Greek is identical in the Septuagint. Jehovah, speaking to Moses, said 'I Am,' which most scholars recognize as a name for God. Jesus literally said, 'I am God,' and it is clear that the Jews understood Him to mean just that, for they attempted, as the next verse reveals, to stone Him. Hebrew law on this point states only five cases in which stoning was legal—and bear in mind that the Jews were strict legalists. Those cases were:

- 1) Familiar Spirits (Lev. 20:27)
- 2) Cursing or blasphemy (Lev. 24:10-23)
- 3) False prophets who lead to idolatry (Deut. 13:5-10)
- 4) Stubborn son (Deut. 21:18-21)

5) Adultery and rape (Deut. 22:21-24; Lev. 20:10)

"Now the only legal grounds the Jews had for stoning Christ (and actually they had none) was the second violation—blasphemy. If the Jews had tried to stone Him because of the insult in John 8:44, as some claim, then the Jews would have been condemned by their own law. It is obvious that Christ had just claimed to be God, for the phrase 'I Am (He)' comes from the Greek Ego Eimi, and there is only one Ego Eimi—God. (The Greek Ego Eimi occurs only where Jehovah's Deity and Lordship are reiterated. John knew this when he wrote his Gospel and didn't use these words accidentally in John 8:58.) The facts are clear and self-evident—Christ claimed full Deity when He used the phrase 'I Am.'"

Before answering your proposition, let me ask: Must we judge the meaning of Jesus' words by what the Jews *thought* He said?

Because the Jews thought Jesus was blaspheming and saying that He was equal with God and therefore took action to punish such a misdemeanor according to their law, is no evidence that Jesus was saying He was God. On several recorded occasions the Jews accused Jesus falsely. In fact, it was their admitted purpose to watch him, "that they might find an accusation against him" (Luke 6:7). They accused Jesus of keeping bad company (Matt. 9:11) when He ate with publicans and sinners. They accused Him of gluttony and intemperance (Matt. 11:19). They accused Him of blasphemy on more than one occasion. When He healed the man sick of the palsy (Matt. 9:1-8), He said, "Son, be of good cheer; thy sins be forgiven thee." The Jews immediately interpreted this as blasphemy (v. 3). They accused Him of healing by the power of Beelzebub (Matt. 12:24), and of being possessed with devils Himself (John 7:20). They accused Him of insanity (Mark 3:21) and of treason (John 19:12). But their accusations did nothing to alter the facts: Jesus was not guilty of any of these misdemeanors.

You conclude further that "it is obvious that Christ had just claimed to be God, for the phrase 'I AM' comes from the Greek *ego eimi*, and there is only one 'I Am'—God." You state further that the Greek words for "I am" occur only where Jehovah's Deity and Lordship are reiterated. To the best of our knowledge this statement is groundless—*ego eimi* is simply the first person singular form of the present tense of the verb; the pronoun *ego* is used whenever emphasis on the subject is desired. Similar usage where "I am" does *not* refer to God occurs in several places in Scriptures (see Rom. 7:14; 11:1, 13).

✦ The context of John 8:58 shows clearly that Jesus was not claiming to be God, equal with God, or eternally pre-existent with God. In verses 32 and 33 He is stressing not the value of His own position but of the words of truth which He spoke. It is His truth, He told the Jews, that could set them free, not a God made man.

The Jews replied that they were children of Abraham and as such had no need of freedom. But Jesus pointed out that because they were committing sin, they were in bondage to sin. Only obedience could make them free. If they were truly Abraham's children, they would do "the works of Abraham." They then claimed sanctimoniously to be children of God (no one suggests that they might have pre-existed). Jesus replied by stating His own relation to the Father: "If God were your Father, ye would love me: for I proceeded forth and came from God; . . . Ye are of your father the devil, and the lusts of your father ye will do."

At this the Jews were angered: "Say we not well that thou art a Samaritan and hast a devil?" Jesus replied, again stating His relation to God but not once suggesting that He was God's equal. "I have not a devil; but I honour my Father, and ye do dishonour me." The Jews were stirred: "Art thou greater than our father Abraham, which is dead?" Jesus answered, "Your father Abraham rejoiced to see my day: and he saw it, and was glad." Jesus was not saying that Abraham knew Christ in a pre-existent form. Even the phrasing of the text—"Abraham rejoiced to see my day"—suggests that Abraham's day and "my day," i. e., Christ's day, were two different times, else Jesus should have said, Abraham rejoiced to see Me *in his day*. Several of the newer versions capture the thought of this text more clearly: "Abraham was extremely happy in the prospect of seeing My day" (Berkeley); "Abraham was delighted to know of My day" (Beck); "Abraham rejoiced at the thought of My day" (*The New Testament: A New Translation*). Only by the eye of faith could Abraham see the day of Christ.

The Jews did not comprehend His thought, and so Christ restated it in other words: "Before Abraham was, I am." Note that Jesus says "I *am*," not I *was*. He does not say He was existing before the time of Abraham.

Abraham is still sleeping in death, awaiting the day of Resurrection when he shall be awakened, judged and rewarded with the other faithful. Hebrews 11 enumerates a long list of worthy men and women who "died in faith, not having received the promises, but having seen them afar off." Abraham was among these, and he rejoiced at the prospect, though he knew its realization was reserved for the distant future. Meanwhile, Christ is immortal; He has been glorified, and is in this respect before Abraham, who is still sleeping in death. In the new age, after Abraham has been rewarded with immortality, Christ will still be before him in that He will be filling a superior position.

No, Christ did not claim to be God. He called Himself the Son of God; He was a prophet and a priest, and He is returning to be a King; but He possesses no claim to a position of deity. To claim that Christ was the great I AM simply because He used a personal pronoun and a present tense verb of being when speaking of Himself is unreasonable.

"The apostles plainly called Christ God in many places. Paul in Titus 2:13 refers to the glory of 'our great God and Saviour Jesus Christ' (this is how most modern-day translations read; see, for example, the Revised Standard Version and the New English Bible)."

Let us read this text from the *New English Bible*: "For the grace of God has dawned upon the world with healing for all mankind; and by it we are disciplined to renounce godless ways and worldly desires, and to live a life of temperance, honesty, and godliness in the present age, looking forward to the happy fulfillment of our hope when the splendour of our great God and Saviour Christ Jesus will appear." Notice the wording: "looking forward to the happy fulfillment of our hopes when the *splendour* of our great God and Saviour Christ Jesus appears." It is not the great God and Saviour, as one being, which shall appear. It is the splendour of the great God which will accompany the appearance of Jesus Christ our Saviour. Notice also the suggested translation given in the footnote: "Or, of the great God and our Saviour. . . ." Jesus Christ will come "in the glory of his Father with his angels" (Matt. 16:27). But the great God and our Saviour are clearly two distinct persons.

The *Revised Standard Version* is similar:

“Awaiting our blessed hope, the appearing of the glory of our great God and Saviour Jesus Christ,” and a footnote reads: “Or, of the great God and our Saviour.”

“Peter wrote about the ‘righteousness of our God and Saviour Jesus Christ’ in his Second Epistle, chapter 1, verse 1.”

We will read this text from the *Revised Standard Version*: “Simon Peter, a servant and apostle of Jesus Christ, to those who have obtained a faith of equal standing with ours in the righteousness of our God and Savior Jesus Christ.” This wording could suggest that God and Christ were the same individual. The *Concordant Version* reads: “Simon Peter, a slave and an apostle of Jesus Christ to those who are chancing upon an equally precious faith with us, in the righteousness of our God and the Saviour Jesus Christ.” Here we have two persons: “our God” and “the Saviour Jesus Christ.”

“Paul believed Jesus was God. He speaks about Jesus Christ, who is God over all, blessed for ever’ (Rom. 9:5).”

No doubt this is the thought you wish to extract from the text, but you have misquoted it. Our Common Version reads: “Whose are the fathers, and of whom as concerning the flesh Christ came, who is over all, God blessed for ever.” Paul is speaking about Christ, who was a descendant of “the fathers” (the stock of Israel) as being at that time “over all” (He was then at the Father’s right hand) and “blessed for ever.”

The text reads more understandingly in some of the newer versions. For example, the *New English Bible*: “Theirs are the patriarchs, and from them, in natural descent, sprang the Messiah. May God, supreme above all, be blessed for ever!” No suggestion here that Jesus was God. The *Moffatt Bible* reads: “the Patriarchs are theirs, and theirs too (so far as natural descent goes) is the Christ. (Blessed for evermore be the God who is over all!)” Christ and God are two distinct and different beings.

“John in his First Letter, chapter 5, verse 20, says about Christ, ‘His [God’s] Son Jesus Christ. This is the true God and eternal life.’ ”

You have misapplied this text. It reads in our Common Version, “And we know that the Son of God is come, and hath given us an understanding, that we may know him that is true, and we are in him

that is true, even in his son Jesus Christ. This is the true God, and eternal life.”

The *Concordant Version* of this text is somewhat clearer: “Yet we are aware that the Son of God is arriving, and has given us a comprehension, that we know the True One, and we are in the True One, in His Son, Jesus Christ. This One is the true God and life eonian.” Yes, we are aware that the Son of God is arriving, and He has given us a comprehension of the “True One,” that is, of God Himself. We are in the “True One,” that is, we are in God because we are in His Son, Jesus Christ. That is what Jesus Himself told His apostles: “I am in my Father, and ye in me, and I in you” (John 14:20), but no one would surmise that Jesus and His apostles were one person. Jesus came testifying that His Father was true: “he that sent me is true; and I speak . . . those things which I have heard of him” (John 8:26).

The *New English Bible* translates I John 5:20, as follows: “We know that the Son of God has come and given us understanding to know him who is real; indeed we are in him who is real, since we are in his Son Jesus Christ. This is the true God, this is eternal life.” “This is the true God”—“this” refers to the God who is “real,” not to “his Son Jesus Christ.” The words are essentially the same as those used by Jesus (John 17:3): “And this is life eternal, that they might know thee the only true God, and Jesus Christ whom thou hast sent”—no thought of Jesus and God being one person here.

“If you reject the idea of Christ’s pre-existence, how do you explain the words of Paul in Colossians 2:9, ‘For in him dwelleth all the fulness of the Godhead bodily?’ ”

Were we to accept this verse as teaching that Christ was the bodily form of God, we would be contradicting the words of the author of Hebrews, “For verily he took not on him the nature of angels; but he took on him the seed of Abraham. Wherefore in all things it behoved him to be made like unto his brethren” (Heb. 2:16-17). Christ was not part of the Godhead bodily any more than were His disciples.

The *Interpreter’s Bible* offers an enlightening comment on this text. “Bodily may be taken to mean ‘incarnate’; but it is not so understood by the ancient fathers, and it is probably better to interpret it as meaning ‘genuinely.’ ” And this thought is in harmony with general Bible teaching. Christ did possess the character-likeness of His Father *genuinely*. This passage as rendered in the Phillips *New Testament in Modern English* in-

corporates this thought: "Be careful that nobody spoils your faith through intellectualism or high-sounding nonsense. Such stuff is at best founded on men's ideas of the nature of the world, and disregards Christ! Yet it is in him that God gives a full and complete expression of himself (within the physical limits that he set himself in Christ)." No suggestion of a triune Godhead here! Paul was simply trying to warn his brethren against the vain delusions of the world and turn them to Christ.

Christ the Creator?

"Now we will focus our attention on another phase of Scripture teaching, namely, that Jesus was the creator of all things. John, after stating that Jesus had been with God from the beginning, says, 'All things were made by him, and without him was not anything made that was made' (John 1:3). The antecedent of 'him' is 'the Word.' In other words, the person called the Word is the One who created all things."

Before drawing any conclusions, let us test our reasoning: Do these verses teach that Christ was the creator of all things?

First let us observe that the name of Christ or Jesus or the Messiah does not occur in John 1; verses 1-4. Those who conclude that the "he" is Christ are merely making an assumption based on their definition of the term "logos" that occurs in the original Greek. We have already shown that that term, as defined according to its use at that time, contains no suggestion of Christ or any person. It is "a word spoken, speech, eloquence, doctrine, reason, or the faculty of reasoning; also the spoken word of the Deity"—not the Deity Himself. To use an analogy, the logos is to God what thought is to man. The logos is the oral expression of God, in contrast with the image or visible expression. The logos is the wisdom which the Lord possessed "in the beginning of his way, before his works of old." It was "set up from everlasting, from the beginning, or ever the earth was; when there were no depths, . . . when there were no fountains, . . . before the mountains were settled, before the hills" (Prov. 8:22-25).

Many times God is said to create by His wisdom: "The Lord by wisdom hath founded the earth; by understanding hath he established the heavens" (Prov. 3:19). The Psalmist exclaimed concerning the works of God: "O Lord, how manifold are thy works! in wisdom hast thou made them all" (Ps. 104:24). The prophet Jeremiah stated the same fact: "He hath made the earth by his power, he hath established the world by his wisdom, and

hath stretched out the heavens by his discretion" (Jer. 10:12).

There is nothing in the original language of John 1 to indicate that the Logos represents the personal Jesus. Both the *Emphatic Diaglott* and the *Concordant Version* of the Bible employ the term "it" instead of the antecedent "Him." "All came into being through it, and apart from it not even one thing came into being which has come into being" (*Concordant Version*). "In it was life; and the life was the light of men" (Wilson's *Emphatic Diaglott*).

The Psalmist tells who is the Creator: "By the word of the Lord were the heavens made; and all the host of them by the breath of his mouth. . . . For he spake, and it was done" (Ps. 33:6, 9).

"In verse 10 of John 1 Christ is once again called the Creator: 'He was in the world, and the world was made by him.'"

Surface reading would give this impression, but such a position would contradict the general teaching of the Bible. A footnote in the *Diaglott* explains that the Greek word *ginomai* translated "made" in John 1:10 occurs upwards of seven hundred times in the New Testament, but never in the sense of create; yet in most versions it is translated as though the word were *ktizo*, which means "to create." The word *ginomai* occurs 53 times in John's Gospel, and it signifies, "To be," "to come," "to become," "to come to pass"; also, "to be done or transacted." All things in the Christian dispensation were done by Christ, that is, by His authority, and according to His direction. Also, in the ministry of His apostles, nothing was done without His warrant. See John 15:4-5: "Without me ye can do nothing."

In translating John 1:10, Wilson phrases it thus: "He was in the world, and the world was [enlightened] through Him; and yet the world knew Him not." In place of "the world was made by him," it reads, "the world was [enlightened] through him." No creation is indicated.

According to Young's *Analytical Concordance*, the Greek word translated "world" in John 1:9-10, is *kosmos*, meaning "the order, arrangement" of things, the "human race."

In view of the foregoing, a crude translation of this verse might be as follows: Christ was among the people; and the body of Christ, or the world of believers, the world of His influence, came into being through Him; yet the world of unbelievers, even His own nation, did not know Him.

(Continued on page 22)

Christian

Happiness

CHRISTIAN happiness is unique. Hunted and driven and persecuted, the Psalmist sang often of happiness. "Happy the man whose help is Jacob's God, whose hope lies in the Eternal One his God. . . . Yea, happy is that people, whose God is the Lord" (Ps. 146:5, Moffatt; ch. 144:15). He was describing those farsighted men and women who are investing in future goals. Their minds are spiritually awake to values which are real, for they know that however much happiness they may glean in this present life, it is only counterfeit; it has a time limit. The same man David, King of Israel, described this thought fittingly: "For we are strangers before thee, and sojourners . . . our days on the earth are as a shadow, and there is none abiding" (I Chron. 29:15).

Future happiness that God has promised for the world to come is real, abundant, magnificent and abiding. "What no eye has ever seen, what no ear has ever heard, what never entered the mind of man, God has prepared all that for those who love him" (I Cor. 2:9, Moffatt). And this is no superficial promise of frail, dying man; its promiser and giver is the everlasting God!

Those who seek happiness in the God-appointed way will be sure to find the precious gem in all its beauty; but this attainment requires work: "Behold, happy is the man whom God correcteth: therefore despise not thou the chastening of the Almighty" (Job 5:17). Our Heavenly Father knows better than we that a clean character makes a person happy.

Have we not discovered real and satisfying happiness in gaining some victory over our carnal nature, in ruling ourselves? We resisted an angry feeling; or we were tempted to speak foolishly and held our tongue. Does not such accomplishment give a satisfaction which no self-gratification can equal?

When selfishness, unthankfulness or bitterness enter the mental sphere, they rob their host of all true happiness. True and genuine Christian happiness springs from the roots of the disciplined life. Correction is vital to every child of God.

By nature our life is composed of glad days and
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sad days. We must develop the faith to thank God for both, knowing that sad days with their trials patiently endured to the end are laying up treasures for us in heaven.

Holding the planets in their orbits requires two opposite forces: repelling and propelling. As Christians we should be grateful for both, for the repelling forces which drive us from what we must not have, and for impelling forces that lift us above what we naturally are to what we can become. And God supplies both. "My God shall supply all your need" (Phil. 4:19), spoke a valiant and well-informed servant of God, and He has promised no temptation beyond our strength to withstand: "Trust God, he will never let you be tempted beyond what you can stand, but when temptation comes, he will provide the way out of it, so you can bear up under it" (I Cor. 10:13, Moffatt).

A Christian will do well to cultivate a happy disposition as a permanent part of his nature. Every day is different, hence this happiness virtue must be flexible enough to adapt itself to changing conditions.

How often we have sought happiness in some temporal possession or desire only to find the most satisfying happiness was in giving up instead of gaining. As one writer puts it, "This thing called happiness we get by giving, not by grasping." Circumstances are not half so essential to our happiness as most people imagine. Man's happiness is not dependent on what he possesses. The person who obtains this world's riches and honor is not the happiest. A cabin with meager necessities often houses more thankful and happy inmates than a palace. Happiness is a state of mind, not of circumstance.

Happiness is a live, activating force with stimulating power capable of lifting burdens, strengthening the weary, encouraging the fainthearted, cheering the sick, and spreading its radiant beams on young and old. When faith moves mountains, happiness has a share in it.

God has given us this bundle of life to live as we choose. Some people surround themselves with an atmosphere of gloom, others with an atmosphere of gladness. Life comes loaded with opportunities, but we must lift our hand and pluck them.

No happiness can equal that of having God first in our life and affection, for this is the very thing which multiplies our blessings: "Seek ye first the kingdom of God, and his righteousness; and all these things shall be added unto you" (Matt. 6:33).

When the heart is the center of happiness, then its peace and contentment is beyond the reach and influence of all disturbing outside circumstances.

(Continued on page 18)

When CHRIST RETURNS

“I’VE seen loved ones wounded and killed in the last two world wars, and I’ve two sons who stand to be drawn into a possible third world war. You write editorials. You know what’s going on. Can you tell me what to do? Can you give me some hope?” A woman was speaking over the telephone to an editorial writer of *The St. Louis Times*.

Her question expresses the heart burden of many others. Men and women are looking for hope, wondering what to do. Only the Word of God has the answer.

The greatest event of the ages is about to transpire. And the tragedy is that the world is so distracted and filled with fear that men are unable to recognize its approach. Joy seems to have fled, and nations cringe before what seems to be inevitable catastrophe. Truly our Lord’s prophecy is being fulfilled. Nations are in distress, and “men’s hearts failing them for fear, and for looking after those things which are coming on the earth.”

It is claimed that in many of our large cities such as New York, one person in every eighteen or less is now receiving, or has received, psychiatric treatment. Some try to drown their fears in drink and drugs. Drug addiction has increased a thousand per cent in the past five years.

But why are men afraid? The Lord says it is because they are “looking after those things which are coming on the earth: for the powers of heaven shall be shaken” (Luke 21:26). The discovery of that earth-shaking power, the atomic bomb, has startled the world. It has etched itself into human thinking more deeply than anything else in history. Men are bewildered as they contemplate the enormous possibilities of this smashing, shattering, pulverizing, disintegrating force, which is more than one million times greater than the force of gravitation. But even more destructive is the hydrogen bomb.

Little wonder that men are fearful! One writer recently declared that “no terror since the black

death swept medieval Europe in the fourteenth century has equaled the threat which broods over civilization in the twentieth century.” With a sense of impending doom, a feeling that something tremendous is about to happen, men are worried and distressed. How tragic that the ripened fruit of centuries of scientific research is the development of a force which enables the race to commit suicide! Of course, atomic energy could be an untold blessing if rightly utilized, but not in the hands of wicked men.

“Just Fifteen Minutes More, Please,” is the title of the closing chapter of Leland Stowe’s book *While Time Remains*. He says: “Never before has any government gambled two billion dollars upon a chance so illusive and so uncertain. For two billion dollars, we have bought the power to unleash an unprecedented cosmic catastrophe. . . . Why did we, who knew so little, seek to pry earth’s last and mightiest secret from its breast? But now it is done. Measuring the desperateness of our task we may well plead, ‘Just fifteen minutes more, please.’ ” Fifteen minutes more for men to try in vain to solve our world problems; fifteen minutes more for us to seek the way of the Lord; fifteen minutes more to get right with God. Sobering thoughts indeed!

Thinking men and women everywhere are serious as they look ahead. Bertrand Russell, one of the best-known philosophers of our day, painted a dark picture as he said, “Utter and unrelieved gloom awaits us. It is likely that during this present generation, all of our large cities in every part of the world will be wiped out.” Strange and bleak philosophy!

How will things end? Is the future dark and dismal? Or is it radiant with hope?

Where shall we turn for our answer? If we seek an answer from certain scientists, we are astounded at some of their suggestions. Not long ago a lecturer was declaring that the sun and moon and stars, the Milky Way, Andromeda, and Orion, and all we see are the results of an explosion of an atom. He says that the explosion is still going on. In fact, we are in the middle of the explosion. It will go on and on for a few million years; then all will be dark again!

Another lecturer in Chicago declared that seventy million years from now the world will blow up with a terrific explosion. He was very emphatic about it.

It is relieving to turn from these pessimistic predictions to the clear word of the Lord, who created this earth. Every human attempt to solve the world problem has ended in failure. We fought a war to end war, but the world never looked so

near war as it does today. Only a mighty, divine interposition can meet our need. Left to himself, man will destroy himself and the planet, it seems. But God has not left it with man to determine the future of our world.

To rescue man from the perils of his own designing, "The Lord also shall roar out of Zion, and utter his voice from Jerusalem; and the heavens and the earth shall shake" (Joel 3:16)—the heavens and earth, the governmental structure of man's mismanagement, shall be shaken. But along with this prophecy is hope: "the Lord will be the hope of his people, and the strength of the children of Israel." The God of heaven shall intervene. "Our God [Emmanuel, God with us—Matt. 1:23] shall come, and shall not keep silence" (Ps. 50:3).

God created this earth to be inhabited. Said the prophet of God, "Thus saith the Lord that created the heavens; God himself that formed the earth and made it; he hath established it, he created it not in vain, he formed it to be inhabited" (Isa. 45:18). God has planned that this earth shall be "filled with the knowledge of the glory of the Lord," peopled with righteous beings (Heb. 2:14), and he will not allow men to destroy it. What we see today are but omens, telling us that soon, very soon, the kingdoms of this world will become "the kingdoms of our Lord, and of his Christ: and he shall reign for ever and ever" (Rev. 11:15).

Jesus said, "When these things begin to come to pass, then look up, and lift up your heads; for your redemption draweth nigh" (Luke 21:28). "When these things begin to come to pass, *look up*"—why? Because these dark events only signal the approach of the Deliverer—"your redemption draweth nigh."

The appearance of Christ in glory has been the polestar of God's true church in all ages. It was the hope which guided the people of God through all sorts of trials and hardships. The Bible is filled with promises of that coming day. David looked forward to the time when the Kingdom would be "the Lord's" and when Christ would be "the governor among the nations" (Ps. 22:28). Two thousand years earlier, Enoch caught the vision of that day of splendor, when he cried: "Behold, the Lord cometh with ten thousands of his saints," or "ten thousand of his angels," as other versions read.

John from the Isle of Patmos declared, "Behold, he cometh with clouds; and every eye shall see him" (Rev. 1:7). Christ Himself declared that men should "see the Son of man coming in the clouds of heaven with power and great glory" (Matt. 24:30).

The return of our Lord was real to the group of

men whom Jesus led forth to the Mount of Olives. Awe-struck, they watched in wonder as they saw their Lord ascending higher and higher, until at last a cloud received Him out of their sight. But they were still standing, gazing toward heaven. It was a moment too solemn for words. They were straining to catch one last glimpse of their Lord and King. Suddenly the silence was broken. Two angels beside them spoke. They had been sent to bring a word of comfort and confidence to those watching disciples. "Ye men of Galilee, why stand ye gazing up into heaven? this same Jesus, which is taken up from you into heaven, shall so come in like manner as ye have seen him go into heaven" (Acts 1:10-11). Yes, the very One who went away is the One who is coming back again.

Yes, He is coming again—and soon. The world will not be looking for Him, for we read, "As it was in the days of Noe, so shall it be also in the days of the Son of man. . . . Likewise also as it was in the days of Lot; they did eat, they drank, they bought, they sold, they planted, they builded;

(Continued on page 12)

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Be With Us Yet . . .

Lest We Forget

IN Bunyan's *Pilgrim's Progress*, Hopeful is terribly discouraged by Atheist's derision of Hopeful's vision of the Celestial City.

"All illusion," says Atheist scornfully of Hopeful's radiant confidence in the reality of the city. "Nothing is there, really, nothing at all. It is pure wishful thinking."

"Not so," replies sturdy Christian, Hopeful's companion. The City is real enough. "Why," says he, "did we not see it from the top of Mount Clear when we were with the shepherds?"

The temptation to surrender our visions of the highest and best that our faith has seen is ever with us. Sometimes doubt assails our faith-castle with such furious attacks that only by the hardest combat can we fight it off. Not only in hours of hardship or sorrow are we vulnerable. Indeed, God may seem most real during the darkest night. Some of the most difficult times for faith are those in which life knows no threat to its ease and security.

The exiled Jews in Babylon in the sixth century B. C. provide an apt example. Although they were technically prisoners and slaves of the Babylonians, they had done well. Many had prospered. In fact, Babylonian records of subsequent generations include Jewish names among those prominent in the nation's affairs.

Adjustment to Babylonian life was wise and essential. But adjustment soon relaxed into accommodation, and accommodation eventually slid into compromise, and compromise turned into identification. The hazard of being a Jew in Babylon was not persecution, but simply Babylon-itis.

Jewish prophets saw it happening and it alarmed them. One great figure among them wrote a song deploring what he saw. In our Bibles it is called Psalm 137. "If I forget thee O Jerusalem, let my right hand . . . wither! let my tongue cleave to the roof of my mouth if I do not remember you, if I do not set Jerusalem above my highest joy!"

What insight into human nature is reflected in that song! This is precisely what happens to us, just as it happened to the Jew in Babylon. We get enmeshed in the trappings of our ordinary life

and lose sight of Jerusalem, our glorious vision of purpose and goal.

George Adam Smith, a great Old Testament scholar, commented about this incident from Hebrew history: "The shell of Babylon, the gorgeous city that grows by the Euphrates, has indeed sunk into heaps; but Babylon herself is not dead. Babylon never dies."

No she never dies. Like the jungle, if you do not keep fighting her off she will surround you and swallow you. It is imperative that we keep alive the vision of the Celestial City although we live in the Babylon of our everyday world.

It was the loss of this vision which caused the Angel to cry to the church at Sardis, "Wake up, rally what is still left to you, though it is on the very point of death; for I find that nothing you have done is complete in the eyes of my God."

To the Church of Ephesus the Angel said, "You labor to the point of sweat, to the point of exhaustion." But God demands the kind of toil that takes everything of mind and sinew that a man can put into it. "Remember from whence thou art fallen and repent," was the warning. There had been a honeymoon period, but the first flush of enthusiasm was past. The busy toil was there; the gallant persistence was there; the unimpeachable orthodoxy was there. But the love was gone.

Would that message fit us today? Would He say of us, "You no longer love me as you did at first?"

We in these closing moments of salvation's day are not immune to the fatal besetment of forgetting the vision glorious.

Have we forgotten the high calling to which we have been called? Have we forgotten the crown of eternal life which awaits the overcomers? Have we forgotten the riches, the honor, the glory and power which is within our power to obtain? Have we forgotten the length of days filled with every conceivable joy and pleasure which can be ours—even far beyond all we can ask or think? Has the Word become common to us so that it no longer arouses a desire to work with all our mind, might and strength to please our heavenly Father? Do we

long to disrobe ourselves of the responsibility which living the Christian life entails? Does the lax and easy-going indifference of the world dull the keen edge of our enthusiasm to rise above every evil of our lower nature? Are we vastly different in speech, appearance, and deportment?

If we are to be rescued from the impending ruin which threatens every sleepy Christian, we must awake from the deadly lethargy; we must not forget what we are working for. Temptation waits for our unguarded moments, and then it attacks. A moment of passion may seriously cripple a person's self-control. A slackening of will may shatter a noble resolution to have nothing to do with evil. A wave of overconfidence may presage utter ruin. The Christian must never relax his vigilance against temptation.

Nor must he forget that even as he must watch for Jesus Christ, Jesus Christ is watching him. "I have not found your works completed," says the Risen Christ, "before my God." Here two great truths meet us. Christ is looking for something from us. We so often regard Jesus Christ as the one to whom we look for things. We look to Him for His strength, His help, His support, His comfort, His hope. But we must never forget that He is looking for something from us: our love, our loyalty, our service. Christianity must never be thought of as a religion in which we look for everything and give nothing.

In the Christian life there must be a moment of decision, when a man decides to be done with the old way and to begin on the new way; when he decides surgically to excise the old things and to put on the new things; when he makes the complete turn and sets out towards Christ instead of drifting away from Him. Christianity is neither drifting nor procrastination, but decision. Too often we have been guilty of spasmodic Christianity. Too many of us are Christian one day and un-Christian the next. Too many of us are capable of the greatest nobility at one moment, and the greatest lapse into disloyalty the next. Too many of us are capable sometimes of an almost sacrificial kindness, and sometimes of an almost brutal selfishness. The command of the Risen Christ is that consistently and continuously day in and day out we should observe the demands of the Gospel.

Finally, there is the command to watch. There is an old Latin saying that "the gods walk on feet that are wrapped in wool." Their approach is silent and unobserved, until a man finds himself suddenly face to face with eternity. But that cannot happen if every day in life we live in the shadow of eternity, in the presence and company of Christ. He who walks hand in hand with Christ cannot

be taken unawares by the coming of Christ.

A great help in keeping our vision alive is the ability to distinguish between what is principle and what is merely custom. Adjustment to the life of Babylon was not only inevitable for the exiles; it was wise. As one of their prophets, Jeremiah, told them, "You are in for a long stay in Babylon. So settle down and make the most of it."

We are always in danger of confusing principle and custom. Some things are always right or wrong, while others are matters of convention. Times change, but honor is always demanded by the Lord. Language alters, but truth needs always to be upheld.

Another aid to keeping our vision alive is to maintain the practice of our faith in which the vision was given. When we lose contact with the source of our inspiration we see that the "vision splendid" soon fades into the light of common day.

A man was swimming in the ocean one night when he suddenly was filled with panic—he was lost! He had gone out so far that he could no longer hear the waves breaking on the beach. He looked up and discovered that there was no moon—even the stars were obscured by the clouds. There he was alone, alone, perhaps no more than a quarter of a mile from shore, but not knowing which way it was.

We must keep close enough to the shore of our faith to hear the sound of safety if we do not want to be lost. There is no danger in walking too close to our Master. The great danger comes when we forget the glory ahead and the Master by our side and try to see how broad we can make the way, when we try to entertain unholy thoughts and keep up an outward appearance of sincerity.

Adjustment to the world around us is essential. But let us be apprehensive: Is our adjustment relaxing into accommodation, and accommodation gradually sliding into compromise, and compromise stealthily turning into identification?

The problem of the seven churches was the universal problem which still meets us today, the problem of how far, if at all, the Christian may compromise with the world.

The unswerving demand to the earnest life-seeker is, "Come out from among them and be ye separate, and touch not the unclean thing." We must be "without spot or wrinkle, or any such thing," that we may "be holy and without blemish."

Our great Pattern endured the cross for the joy that was set before Him, for the glory awaiting Him. Never for a moment did that vision glorious fade from His sight.

And we would cry from the depths of our hearts. "Father, be with us yet—lest we forget!" ●●

True Beauty--Inside

GOD is not pleased with outward beauty. True beauty must be grown from within. What God truly delights in was manifested the day Jesse's sons stood before Samuel and he heard the warning that "man looketh on the outward appearance, but the Lord looketh on the heart." Religion, real heartfelt religion, as that once delivered to the saints, transforms its possessor; it molds the disposition and determines the expression. No beauty doctor can create a face so winsome as the face of one whose heart is overflowing with love for God.

Perhaps you have read the fable of the young maiden who realized she was ugly and uncouth in looks and manners. Her longing desire was to find some way to become beautiful. At last she heard of a pool of pure crystal water where one could bathe and become beautiful. After a long journey and a diligent search, she at last found the long-sought-for pool; but as she approached it, she was met by a stately figure holding a golden wand in her hand, who said, "You cannot bathe in this pool until you return home, and for two years put away all anger and jealousy, and be kind and patient with all you meet." The maid was taken back by this command, but returning home she set about to follow closely the instructions. At the end of two years she returned to the pool and was again met by the beautiful personage holding in her hand a wand sparkling with diamonds, pearls and emeralds. Addressing the maiden she said, "You cannot yet bathe in that beautiful pool until you return home and for three years more follow strictly the commands that have been given you, together with other virtues contained in a letter which I now place in your hand." This seemed to be a crushing blow to the maiden, but being determined she would bathe in the pool she returned home to work with all her power to carry out the instructions that had been given her. After three years she again returned to the pool but found no one there to greet her. And gazing into its crystal waters she found to her great amazement and delight that she had already become altogether beautiful.

We need not seek to find such a pool, but God has provided a mirror whose glass is as clear as crystal. If we are willing to stand before it day by day, it will reflect our true spiritual make-up; and if we will only follow the instructions given us by the holy men of old, as we gaze upon our like-

ness all ugliness and meanness will disappear. Then the King will greatly desire us in our beauty. ●●

When Christ Returns

(Continued from page 9)

but the same day that Lot went out of Sodom it rained fire and brimstone from heaven, and destroyed them all. Even thus shall it be in the day when the Son of man is revealed" (Luke 17:26-30).

The apostle Peter predicted the scoffing attitude which would prevail in the last days: "There shall come in the last days scoffers, walking after their own lusts, and saying, Where is the promise of his coming? for since the fathers fell asleep, all things continue as they were from the beginning of the creation" (II Pet. 3:3-4). But all things do *not* continue as they were, and those who ridicule and scoff shall ultimately be proven foolish. People back in Noah's day didn't believe a flood was coming. But it came.

They were ridiculing Noah, but he went on preaching and building for 120 years. Every day the sun rose and set as usual, and all things went on apparently the same. But one day the door of the ark had been shut; Noah's work was done. The multitudes were still scoffing; then all at once a storm struck. The heavens burst. They "knew not," said Jesus, "until the flood came, and took them all away." Catastrophe overtook them suddenly, and they were swept away.

And just as unexpectedly will arrive the day of the Lord. That day is right upon us! Soon the government of an eternal kingdom will be upon the shoulders of our Lord and everlasting King. And a recreated earth in sparkling splendor will be His headquarters. All nations shall "serve and obey him"—or perish.

Now is our opportunity to join the side of truth and righteousness, to submit our lives to the molding and directing of Him who planned the universe, before He arises to "shake terribly the earth."●●

"Have you ever received a blessing? Pass it on." Tell the story to the enslaved, of thy marvellous deliverance from darkness to light, that they too may find "the iron gate swinging wide open and so attain the freedom."

UNDERSTANDING THE BIBLE

"Study to shew thyself approved unto God."

The Trinity

SINCE the Emperor Constantine convened the Council of Nicaea in the year of 325 A. D., the non-Biblical subject of the Trinity has been debated. Voluminous literary works bear the name, purporting to explain its mystery. But it remains totally foreign to the thought of any of the Scripture writers.

Nevertheless, it is beloved by its adherents.

A professor of a Theological Seminary writes thus: "Christianity has been from the beginning a Trinitarian religion. Furthermore, if it were to lose its historic trinal character. . . it would be a new religion. It would not be the Christianity of the Apostles and Prophets, of the Christian Fathers, of the Medieval Doctors, of the Protestant Reformers, of the great Anglican Divines, of the Saints and Martyrs and Missionaries of the Holy Catholic Church in all ages. It would not be the faith of the New Testament and of the great central tradition of the Church down to the present hour. The doctrine of the Trinity is the one all-comprehensive Christian doctrine."*

The mere fact that a doctrine has been widely believed over so long a period of time is no guarantee that it is true. We have a reverential desire to know and hold to the Truth of the Scriptures.

If the noble Bereans could search the Scriptures, we who live in the light of the twentieth century should study conscientiously and carefully to learn whether or not these things be "so."

"The mystery of the Trinity," said Pope Leo XIII, "is the substance of the New Testament. It is the greatest of all mysteries, the source and head of all the others."

Can a doctrine be the Truth and a mystery at the same time? Our reason tells us that it cannot. The "mystery of the Trinity" is a creation of the minds of men and is no part of God's Word—the doctrine was admittedly formulated several centuries after the establishment of the Christian Church.

We of the Megiddo Mission Church are well aware that the Trinity is not a controversial subject among the major denominations in this twen-

tieth century. But we are nonetheless aware of the admonition of the Master to "search the Scriptures," and of the exhortation of the Great Apostle to "prove all things" and to "hold fast that which is good."

Adhering to these principles of Scripture, we have, in the three previous sections of our study of the Trinity, been scrutinizing the doctrine of the Trinity in the light of God's Word, comparing man's words on the subject with God's words on the subject. Scriptural proof being lacking, we are compelled to reject the doctrine as being of men and not of God.

In this our final section of our study on the subject of the Trinity, we will follow our outline:

- IV. Proof According to the Scriptures
 - C. The Holy Spirit
 - D. The Trinity in Scripture?
- V. The Trinity Omitted
- VI. Is Everything Triune?

According to theology, "The New Testament teaching upon this subject [the Trinity] is not given in the way of formal statement. The formal statement, however, is legitimately and necessarily deduced from the Scriptures of the New Testament, and these . . . cast a light backward upon the intimations of the Old. . . It is plain that both Christ and the apostles ascribe distinct personality to the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit. And these utterances are such as to admit legitimately of no other conception than that of the unity of these three persons in the ontological oneness of the whole divine nature."†

This is a case of putting the cart before the horse—arriving at a conclusion and then looking backward and trying to prove it!

We have learned from our study thus far that the doctrine of the Trinity is one of tradition and

* Lowry, Charles W., *The Trinity and Christian Devotion*, pp. 51, 52.

† *Unger's Bible Dictionary*, 1967 edition. Moody Press p. 1118.

not of the Bible, that God is One, not three, and that Jesus Christ was the Son of God, a Man (Acts 2:22; I Tim. 2:5), like His brethren (Acts 3:22) who had to learn (Heb. 5:8) as any other man. We will continue with the study of the Holy Spirit.

IV. PROOF ACCORDING TO THE SCRIPTURES

C. The Holy Spirit

The terms "Holy Spirit," "Holy Ghost," "Spirit of God," and "the Spirit," are commonly supposed to refer to a personality separate and distinct from God and His Son Jesus Christ. To the majority of professed Christians this Spirit, more often called the "Holy Ghost," is the third person of the Trinity, a personal being invested with all the attributes of God Himself. Is this true? Is it in accordance with the teachings of the Scriptures? The Bible itself will give us the answers.

What is the Holy Spirit? This question might be better answered by stating what the Holy Spirit is NOT. **The Holy Spirit is not a person. The Holy Spirit forms no part of a Trinity of divine beings.** What then is the Holy Spirit?

1. The Holy Spirit is a power, not a person. Shortly before His ascension Jesus said to His disciples: "And, behold, I send the promise of my Father upon you: but tarry ye in the city of Jerusalem, until ye be endued with power from on high" (Luke 24:29). **They were to receive "Power from on high," not a "person" from above.** The New English renders the phrase, "Stay here in this city until you are armed with the power from above." They were to be "armed," not with lethal weapons, but with the power of God by which they could perform miracles and effectively spread the Gospel. That they did just this is confirmed by the words of Mark: "And they went forth, and preached everywhere, the Lord working with them, [by His power, His Holy Spirit] and confirming the word with signs following" (16:20). **The power to perform miracles through the Holy Spirit was a very important part of God's plan. There is nothing to indicate the apostles were accompanied by another person called "Holy Spirit."**

a. The Holy Spirit personified. In His discourse to His disciples at the Last Supper, Jesus referred to the Holy Spirit as "he" but that is not of itself proof that He was referring to a person. Jesus said, "But the Comforter, which is the Holy Ghost [Spirit], whom the Father will send in my name, he shall teach you all things. . . . (John 14:26). It is from this verse and a few others in the New Testament that Trinitarians draw the conclusion that the Holy Spirit is a person.

Personification is common in the Scriptures. The 'Wise Man calls wisdom "she," and wisdom speaks in the first person, "I" (see Proverbs 8). In like manner we find the Holy Spirit called "He" by Jesus and the apostles.

b. The Holy Spirit had been promised. During the course of Jesus' long talk with His disciples following the Last Supper, He gave them the promise: "Your Advocate, the Holy Spirit whom the Father will send in my name, will teach you everything, and will call to mind all that I have told you" (John 14:26, NEB).

Before this time, they had a small measure of God's power to perform some miracles; but in order to spread the Gospel after their Master was taken away they would need more. The power to be able to answer those who accused them falsely was also a great help in their missionary work.

c. The Holy Spirit was sent as promised. We read from the Acts that on the Day of Pentecost the promised power was given: "And suddenly there came a sound from heaven as of a rushing mighty wind, and it filled all the house where they were sitting. And there appeared unto them cloven tongues like as of fire, and it sat upon each of them. And they were all filled with the Holy Ghost [Spirit], and began to speak with other tongues, as the Spirit gave them utterance" (Acts 2:2-4).

The Holy Spirit came with a sound as of wind—and it "sat upon each of them." It would be unreasonable to think that it was a person who came from heaven and "sat upon each of them" literally! It was God's power that came suddenly upon them and they were able to speak with "other tongues," not unintelligible gibberish such as tongue's speakers today, but other languages that their message might be understood by all. This was very important, for we read that there were men of 17 different nations gathered at Jerusalem at that time. **There is nothing in the narrative to indicate that a person came to impart the power to them. It was God's power, conferred upon them by miraculous means.**

d. Holy Spirit, not Holy "Ghost." Our Common Version of the Bible uses the term "Holy Ghost" quite consistently throughout the New Testament. Many thousands of churchgoers weekly join in the familiar Doxology, ending with the phrase, "Praise Father, Son and Holy Ghost." Newer translations of the Scriptures render it "Holy Spirit," but the "Holy Ghost" is still frequently seen in religious publications.

Many Bible scholars admit that the Greek word *pneuma* should not have been rendered "ghost," since the meaning in the Greek in no way alludes to anything mysterious, but carries the meaning of

wind, breath of air, life, or spirit. Because the word "ghost" is associated with mystery, many cling to the phrase thinking it well describes the mystery of the Holy Spirit. At the time the King James Version was translated, superstition was rife in the land and the translators, believing the Holy Spirit to be an invisible person, called it a "Holy Ghost."

We are confident that the Bible does not teach that the Holy Spirit is a person, nor does it form any part of a Trinity. The Holy Spirit represents the power of God as given to men of His choosing.

D. The Trinity In Scripture?

In a pamphlet entitled "The Trinity, Must We Believe It?" we find many short phrases taken from Scripture verses in support of the Trinitarian viewpoint. We will briefly review some of these points.

1. **Concerning Jesus Christ.** The booklet holds that Jesus Christ was called "God" and that because He was both God and Man, He is part of a triune Godhead. References used as proof follow.

a. **Isaiah 9:6.** Jesus is called "the Mighty God." This appears to be a mistranslation, since newer versions use such phrases as "Father for all time," ["Father of a wide realm," margin], obviously referring to His future kingdom.

b. **Revelation 1:8.** "I am Alpha and Omega." This verse has reference to the Almighty God as is evidenced by the context. It is God who is the First and the Last as He said in Isaiah: "I am he; I am the first, I also am the last" (Isa. 44:6).

c. **John 10:30, 38; 14:7-10.** "I and my Father are one. . . he that hath seen me hath seen the Father." This has been covered previously. Jesus and His Father were one in mind, one in purpose. Because Jesus did always those things that pleased His Father, He became like Him, hence He could say, "He that hath seen me hath seen the Father."

d. **Matthew 18:20.** The booklet sees in this verse Christ being omnipresent—"there am I in the midst of them." Certainly Jesus did not mean to imply that He would be personally with them forever, but His words would be with them. If they were gathered in His name they would be abiding in His words.

e. **Hebrews 13:8.** "Jesus Christ the same yesterday, and today and for ever!" Again, not the literal Christ remains the same throughout generations, but His words are the same today as yesterday and shall be until He comes.

f. **Colossians 1:16.** "For by him were all things created." Certainly this has no reference to the Creation as believed by the majority. Read verses 15-18. The context indicates that it refers to position. Christ is the firstborn from the dead and He

will be the head of all things in the Kingdom.

These texts are but a small sample of those quoted in the booklet, but as stated in the previous lesson we are confident that there is not a single passage in the entire Bible that gives the least countenance to the idea of a plurality of divine persons. The Bible asserts and teaches the absolute oneness of God.

Some of these passages, on surface reading, might make it appear that Jesus is God, but the weight of the entire Scriptures is against it.

V. THE TRINITY OMITTED

If the commonly accepted doctrine of the Trinity is true and as important a church doctrine as it is claimed to be, it would seem that the New Testament writers, being inspired of God, would have stated it clearly so that there could not possibly be any misunderstanding of the subject.

But such is not the case. Any reference to a Trinity of persons in the Godhead has been omitted in many places where it would have been convenient to state it if such a doctrine had been intended.

In the salutations with which many of the New Testament Epistles begin and conclude we find language such as: "Grace to you, and peace, from God our Father and the Lord Jesus Christ"; "Grace, mercy, and peace, from God our Father and Jesus Christ our Lord." **If the Holy Spirit is a distinct personality and one so important, why did the apostles say nothing of the Holy Spirit in invoking spiritual blessings upon the Christians addressed?**

In a number of the closing salutations of the Epistles, the Lord Jesus Christ alone is mentioned, and in only one is mention made of the Holy Spirit. The omission is evidently intentional on the part of the New Testament writers since there are other passages where the names of God, or God the Father and the Lord Jesus Christ are coupled together where it would seem logical that the Holy Spirit should have been mentioned also if there were such a person. Finding no such statements, **we are confident the apostles knew nothing of the "mystery of the Trinity."**

A. The Trinity Excluded by Paul

If God or His Son Jesus Christ intended the doctrine of the Trinity be included in the teachings of Paul, the Great Apostle must have missed the point, for he appears to go out of his way to stress the absolute oneness and unity of God. We find nothing in the language of his Epistles to even imply the existence of a triune God.

1. In the writing to the **Corinthians** in regard to meats offered to idols, Paul says, "We know that an idol is nothing in the world, and that there is **none other God but one**. For though there be that are called gods, whether in heaven or in earth, as there be gods many, and lords, many, but to us **there is but one God, the Father**, of whom are all things, and we in him; and one Lord Jesus Christ, by whom are all things, and we by him" (I Cor. 8:4-6). Paul is explicit: **there is but one God, the Father, not three in one or one in three. He unmistakably asserts the absolute unity of God.**

Had it been his intent to teach the Trinity, this would have been a suitable place to have inserted, as phrased in the doctrine of the Trinity, that "in the unity of the Godhead there be three persons," etc. It is evident Paul knew nothing of the "doctrine of the Trinity"—it had not yet been formulated!

2. In writing to the **Colossians**, Paul says: "Whereof I am made a minister, according to the dispensation of God which is given to me for you, to fulfill [fully to preach] the word of God; even the mystery which hath been hid from ages and from generations, . . . which is Christ in you, the hope of glory" (Col. 1:25-27).

The "mystery" which Paul was sent "fully to preach," was not the "mystery of the Trinity," but "Christ in you, the hope of glory." We find the mystery further explained by Paul as the knowledge that will save us eternally if we will but follow the footsteps of the Master and keep His commandments. "Christ in you, the hope of glory" is not the Man Christ Jesus, but His word, His teachings.

3. In writing to **Timothy** Paul again fails to make mention of any "doctrine of the Trinity" where it would have been apropos. He says, "For there is one God, and one mediator between God and men, the man Christ Jesus" (I Tim. 2:5). (Note Paul is also careful to describe Christ as a **Man**). Again, the assertion of the unity of God seems intentional. Had he known of a Trinity of Gods this would have been an opportune place to mention it.

4. In writing to the **Ephesians**, Paul directs the brethren to give "thanks always for all things unto God, even the Father, in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ" (Eph. 5:20). Why did not Paul direct them to give thanks to the Father, Son and Holy Ghost? **Because when he had named God the Father he had named the giver of all blessings and the one and only divine Person, God. A plurality of divine persons is clearly excluded.**

In his address to the elders of the church at Ephesus, Paul said that he had not shunned to declare unto them "all the counsel of God" (Acts 20:27). In all his writings concerning the nature of the true God, he plainly taught "there is one God," and that "one God, the Father." Not once did he suggest or assert a Trinity. We can be reasonably certain that he did not preach any important truth that he did not write, **AND ANY TRINITY OF THE DIVINE NATURE IS CLEARLY EXCLUDED FROM ALL HIS WRITINGS.**

VI. IS EVERYTHING TRIUNE?

In a further attempt to bolster their position of the triune God, theology points to scientific facts concerning our universe that would make it appear that nearly everything comes in threes! The implication is that it would require a triune God to create so many things in triune form.

Such a conclusion is only conjecture and were it true it would have no bearing on the subject of a Trinity of divine persons.

Theology also makes the claim that "man is a tri-unity: spirit, soul and body. . . man himself, is a triune being, thereby entirely distinct from the animal kingdom."‡

The subject of the nature of man has been covered in detail in previous issues of **The Megiddo Message**. Briefly, **man is not a triune being**; there is absolutely no Scripture proof for this claim. Man does not have a soul, he **IS** a soul. The doctrine of an "immortal soul" has been handed down from generation to generation, but there is no Bible proof for it. On the contrary, the Bible is definite that man is mortal, corruptible, perishable. (See Job 4:17; Psalm 49; Ps. 146:3-4; I Cor. 15:53.)

God is not a triune being. The doctrine of the Trinity is a product of man and is disclaimed by the Bible.

When Peter and John were called before the rulers because of their teachings, they answered: "Whether it be right in the sight of God to hearken unto you more than unto God, judge ye. For we cannot but speak the things which we have seen and heard" (Acts 4:19-20). A careful study of the Bible reveals that there is but **ONE GOD**, and only one. Therefore, we cannot but speak the things contained in the Scriptures.

Reprints of these studies are available upon request.

Brooks, Keith L., *The Trinity. Must We Believe It?*, p.15.

THE SABBATH

WHEN WAS IT GIVEN?
TO WHOM WAS IT GIVEN?
WHY WAS IT GIVEN?
WAS IT TO LAST FOREVER?
IF NOT, WHEN WAS IT TO CEASE?
WHAT LAW ARE WE NOW UNDER?

WHAT SHALL WE DO?

This is the question which concerns us. As we consider the abundant evidence that the Jewish law terminated, and with it the command to observe the Jewish Sabbath, what are our obligations as Christians today?

Because the arrangement for one rest day in seven was a divine pattern for the benefit of man and has been followed through Jewish and Christian history, we set aside one day. But which?

In Romans 14 Paul seems to be making a special point that the particular day we set aside is of no consequence. "One man esteemeth one day above another: another esteemeth every day alike. Let every man be fully persuaded in his own mind. He that regardeth the day, regardeth it unto the Lord" (Rom 14:5-6). Our first and principal obligation is to remember the continual Sabbath of the Lord, the rest from all sin and evil which we must observe daily.

Next to this, our minds and bodies need rest; and the interruption of the week-day schedule to worship and rest is profitable physically, mentally, and spiritually. We need the spiritual uplift and inspiration of devotion.

"Let every soul be subject unto the higher powers. For there is no power but of God: the powers that be are ordained of God" (Rom. 13:1). In keeping with this principle, we observe Sunday. This is the day set aside by our country, and it in no way conflicts with the law of God. Therefore, we observe Sunday as a day of rest and worship.

In Summary

"Sabbath" means "rest." The Sabbath was a God-ordained institution given for a specific time and for a specific purpose.

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When was the Sabbath given?

Soon after the children of Israel left Egypt. The command was first given in connection with the gathering of manna: "Tomorrow is the rest of the holy sabbath unto the Lord" (Ex. 16:23). There is no mention of anyone keeping the Sabbath or being commanded to keep it prior to this time.

To whom was the Sabbath given?

To Israel. "Speak thou also unto the children of Israel, saying, Verily my sabbaths ye shall keep: for it is a sign between me and you throughout your generations" (Ex. 31:13). There is not a single place in the entire Bible where God ever commanded anyone but Israel and those who were with them to keep the Sabbath.

Why was the Sabbath given?

For a memorial of Israel's deliverance from Egyptian bondage. "And remember that thou wast a servant in the land of Egypt, and that the Lord thy God brought thee out thence through a mighty hand and by a stretched out arm: therefore the Lord thy God commanded thee to keep the sabbath day" (Deut. 5:15).

Also, the Sabbath was given for its social benefit: "Six days thou shalt work, but on the seventh day thou shalt rest: in earing time and in harvest thou shalt rest" (Ex. 34:21). "In it thou shalt not do any work, thou nor thy son, nor thy daughter, nor thy manservant, nor thy maidservant, . . . nor any of thy cattle" (Deut. 5: 13-14). God knew that all needed the day of rest, physically and spiritually.

What day of our week is the Sabbath—Saturday or Sunday?

Neither. The Sabbath was determined according to a law given to Israel at that time, and methods of counting time as the Lord directed Moses differ greatly from our present means. Israel's year began with the month Abib, or Nisan, the first day of the month being the first day of the week also. And the number of days in the year not being divisible by seven, the year could not possibly end consistently with the seventh day of the week.* Thus the days of our calendar cannot coincide each year with the calendar given to Moses in the wilderness.

The Sabbath observance was part of the law of Moses. It was the fourth commandment among the Ten, written on the two tables of stone which Moses received in the Mount Sinai. Read Ex. 20 and Deut. 5.

What was the relation between the law of Moses and the other commands throughout the Bible?

The law was added to an already existing law of faith and obedience. "It was added because of transgressions, till the seed should come [Christ] to whom the promise was made" (Gal. 3:19). Or, as translated in the *Twentieth Century New Testament*, "It was a later addition, to make men conscious of their wrong-doings, and intended to last only till the coming of that 'offspring' to whom the promise had been made."

What were the limitations of the law of Moses?

It could not make perfect. "For the law having a shadow of good things to come, and not the very image of the things, can never with those sacrifices, which they offered year by year continually, make the comers thereunto perfect" (Heb. 10:1).

It could not take away sin. "And every priest standeth daily ministering and offering oftentimes the same sacrifices, which can never take away sins" (Heb. 10:11).

It could not give eternal life. Paul makes this point clear in Gal. 3:21: "Is the law then against the promises of God? God forbid: for if there had been a law given which could have given life, verily righteousness should have been by the law." But the law could not make righteous, and it could not give life.

The law from Sinai was a *temporal* law, with *temporal* benefits and *temporal* punishments.

* The lunar month having 29½ days, the Hebrews divided their year into six months with 30 days and six months with 29 days. This makes a total of 354 days in the year—a figure which is not divisible by 7.

What is said in the New Testament about keeping the Sabbath?

Nothing, absolutely nothing!

When did the law of Moses end?

"Christ is the end of the law to every one that believeth" (Rom. 10:4). "The law was our school-master to bring us unto Christ. . . . But after that faith is come, we are no longer under a school-master" (Gal. 3:24-25). The law was to bring us *unto Christ*.

Who changed the Sabbath?

No one. Christ simply abolished it. Paul says He "nailed it to his cross" (Col. 2:14). He "put an end to the law with its decrees" (Eph. 2:15, Knox). For "that which is *done away* was glorious" (II Cor. 3:11).

What is our duty in worshiping today?

"Let every soul be subject unto the higher powers" (Rom. 13:1), if they do not conflict with the higher law of God. And here we find no conflict. Our nation sets aside Sunday as a day for rest and worship, and so do we.

What is the significance of the old Sabbath to us?

It was a "shadow of good things to come." The seventh day was a foreshadowing of the seventh thousand-year day in the plan of God, during which Christ and His saints will rule the earth in peace and righteousness. This is the "rest" that "remaineth . . . to the people of God" (Heb. 4:9).●●

(The End)

Christian Happiness

(Continued from page 7)

Those who share happiness with others find that it doubles in the doing—and the larger half comes back to the sharer.

Happiness in the future depends on our being happy and contented now, for God will give to every faithful one eternal blessings far beyond our mortal comprehension. What ecstatic happiness to live in this surpassingly beautiful new world where sickness, pain and death are no more; where every evil is banished from the land and the happy inmates are surrounded by supreme joy and comfort and endowed with riches, honor and glory for evermore! ●●

Bible A B C's



E is for Elijah.

Elijah was one of God's great prophets. A prophet is one who tells that something is going to happen before it does happen. Elijah did many miracles while he lived here on earth. He stood firmly for God and right against a very wicked man, King Ahab.

The people of Israel had turned against the one true God and were worshiping the pagan god Baal. They were so wicked that God sent no rain or dew for three years. This caused a great famine in the land and food and water became very scarce. Finally, God sent Elijah to King Ahab. Elijah commanded the king to gather together on Mount Carmel the four hundred fifty prophets of Baal and four hundred prophets of the groves. Elijah was going to prove who was the one true God, the God in heaven, or pagan Baal whom the people worshiped.

When the eight hundred and fifty prophets and a large crowd were gathered on Mount Carmel, Elijah asked for two oxen. When they were brought to him, Elijah said to the prophets of Baal, "Choose one for yourselves and

E is for
Elijah

cut it in pieces and lay it on wood, but put no fire under it. I will kill the other ox, lay it on the wood and put no fire under it. Then you call on the name of your god, and I will call on the name of the Lord: and the one who answers by sending fire will be the true God." All the people agreed to this test.

The prophets of Baal did as Elijah told them to do and they called loudly to Baal from morning until noon saying, "O Baal, hear us." But there was no answer. At noon, Elijah mocked them and said, "Shout louder. Perhaps your god is talking to someone, or maybe he is asleep and needs to be awakened." Then the prophets of Baal cut themselves with swords and knives until their blood ran. They shouted louder and louder all

afternoon, but there was no reply, no voice, no action.

At the time of the evening sacrifice, Elijah said to the people, "Come here to me." They all crowded around and watched him repair the altar of the Lord which had been torn down. He took twelve stones, one for each of the twelve tribes of Israel and made the altar. Then he dug a trench all around it. He laid wood upon the altar and cut the ox into pieces and laid the pieces on the wood.

Elijah then commanded the people to fill four jars with water and pour them over the sacrifice. He said, "Do it again," and they did. "Now do it once more," he commanded, and the water ran over the sacrifice and filled the trench around the altar.

Then Elijah prayed to God saying, "O Lord God of Abraham, Isaac, and Israel, prove today that you are the God of Israel and that I am your servant; prove that I have done all this at your command. O Lord, answer me! Answer me so these people will know that you are God and that you have brought them back to their senses."

(Continued on page 24)

Christian Youth in These Times

A Milestone In Jimmy's Life

JIMMY opened the truck window, bracing himself for the long reach into the country mailbox.

Why, this truck could stop on a dime! Jimmy couldn't wait to get behind the wheel himself. He had just taken his driver's test a few days before and—well, today might be the big day. Eagerly he fumbled through the mail, hoping, hoping for the good news that he had passed his driver's test. Sure enough. There was an envelope stamped "Fairplay Courthouse." He slid more comfortably into his seat and looked at the mail more closely. "Oh, no!" It just couldn't be! Jimmy felt his heart beginning to sink. Not today of all days! He tucked the familiar looking envelope under his seat, hoping that his father hadn't noticed.

"Well, open it up, Jimmy!" Dad was anxious. He pointed to the letter from the courthouse. And there it was. A driver's license for 17-year-old Jimmy. Completely intact! This was a big day for a young boy. He could be of more help now with the deliveries on the vegetable farm.

His mother and sister Jill were busy gathering in a wash when the truck pulled in, but when they saw the truck, they both came out to meet them. They wanted to share this big day with Jimmy. Jill's eyes were sparkling with excitement. "Well, Jimmy. Did you pass all right? Did you get your license?" Jill just couldn't wait to hear the good news.

But in all the excitement and happiness Jimmy felt a strange uneasiness within him. He knew that this just couldn't go on much longer for the ugly reminder under his seat told him that things just were not right. Jimmy was a Christian boy and lived in a comfortable farm home with his good Christian parents and younger sister. Somehow Jimmy felt trapped and alone.

How he wished that he could protect them, his womenfolk, from the decaying world around him.

When the excitement was over, Jimmy returned to the truck and took out the unwanted envelope. He slipped up to his room. He placed this package

with the others behind his dresser. His hands began to tremble and he was beginning to feel a little sick. What could he do, a young boy of seventeen? How many other such young boys were faced with this kind of dilemma? Jimmy was a completely innocent boy and apparently someone had sent his name and address in, wanting to torture the young lad. In back of his dresser was a collection of obscene mail. Young Jimmy, embarrassed, just didn't know how to cope with the situation. What if Mother or Jill accidentally came across them in his room? What would they think?

Jimmy buried his face in his favorite chair and tried to think. Would Dad understand and know what to do? His tear-filled eyes caught a glimpse of the motto on the wall. "Did you pray about it?" Prayer. Was that the answer? Right now Jimmy's faith wasn't too strong, but pray he would. He felt he had no where else to turn.

Next day he felt much better. A decision was firmly fixed in his mind.

It was just past lunchtime and his father had left to cultivate the lower field. Mom had gone to Fairplay to do the shopping and Jill was all absorbed in her jelly-making. The kitchen did look a little messy, but everyone encouraged Jill because she did so enjoy helping in the kitchen. Anyway, to Jimmy, it sure smelled good. As a rule he enjoyed teasing his younger sister because she was so business-like stirring the jelly with a big spoon, mess and all.

But today was not an ordinary day. He would get started while he had a chance. He was careful as he gathered all of the literature and put it in a plastic container—"one designed for just such garbage," thought Jimmy. He went out to the fireplace and started a fire. He looked about cautiously as he pulled out the envelopes filled with trash designed to corrupt the minds of the young. Jimmy was careful not to let any of the ripped pieces stray away. All absorbed in his work he failed to hear his father's footsteps behind him.

"Son," his father spoke, putting his hand on the boy's shoulder to comfort him.

"Dad! Oh! Dad!" Jimmy didn't know if he was glad or not.

"Jimmy, let us burn them all but the addresses. We can take them to the post office. Let us get into the truck right away and find out what Mr. Hash, the postmaster, can do for us."

Jimmy hurried to obey his father and he felt relieved that his father seemed to know what steps to take. What a relief and a blessing if this trip to the post office should help!

And it proved quite fruitful. Mr. Hash was more than eager to help them. He gave them forms to fill out and explained that the law had means to help him. He was very pleased that another youth had had the courage to take action. He further promised them that no more deliveries from these addresses were to be delivered to their home. At this both Jimmy and his father rejoiced.

As they came out, Dad handed Jimmy the keys to the pick-up. "Here, Jimmy. You may drive us home. I'm sure you feel much better now."

Taking the keys, Jimmy responded with "Sure, Dad, except it proved a bit embarrassing. I wanted to handle things myself. I didn't want you to know, and especially not Mom or Jill."

"Son, we knew all along. I recognized that envelope yesterday when you tried to hide it in the truck. Many have been coming in your name which you knew nothing of. Only, Son, we wanted you to have the courage to take the firm stand. Your mother and I have done the training up to this point, but in this case we decided to stand by and patiently wait for you to take some action.

"Dad, you said 'we.'" Jimmy was dumbfounded.

"Yes, Son. Your mother and I."

"Oh!" Jimmy choked. "I see." Jimmy turned on the ignition and automatically drove down the familiar country road toward home. He was growing up for sure, and he was learning so many things. But one thing was certain. Jimmy vowed that he would respect and honor his dear parents for the wise overseeing that they had given him. And wasn't his Dad there when he needed him most? And his faith in God had increased, for surely He had been with him all the time.

"Yes," vowed Jimmy. "I will keep myself untarnished though the whole world fall apart around me. I will put my trust in God, the High Guide, for I am promised His guidance if worthy."

Jimmy's father couldn't help but feel that this trial had brought the two of them closer and that the earnest effort in his upbringing was beginning to pay off. Looking at Jimmy, he could see a real spark of life in a dying generation—a life destined for higher things than the average youth of today seeks. How he hoped and prayed that his son would

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always have the courage to stand for the right at all cost. He wanted to be a good father and he knew that many trials were yet ahead for them.

"Jimmy," Father said as he looked at the firm set jaw, so much like his own, "this is one milestone in your life. There will be many more. Try to remember to have the courage, my son, to say 'No' when temptations strike. Your Heavenly Father will be there to help you and, God willing, so will your mother and I."

Jimmy pulled into the shaded drive and before he could park the truck, Jill ran out of the house to greet him. "I'll let you taste my jelly right now if you will take me for a short ride. The jelly is all done—eleven full glasses!"

"I'm sure the jelly will taste good, but how does the kitchen look?" Jimmy gave Dad a wink as Jill hoisted herself up into the truck for her ride.

Upon entering the kitchen, Dad found the blackberry jelly glasses in neat rows. They looked delicious and one could see that much effort had been made to bring the kitchen back into order. Dad was very pleased. "I guess enough has been said about Jill. It seems that she is trying hard, too."●●

Words to WALK By

Talking too much usually follows thinking too little.

The chief trouble with common sense is that it is so uncommon.

Christianity is like a bicycle—when it stops, it falls.

Some people are like wheelbarrows, they have to be pushed.

The wages of sin never go unpaid.

If your faith costs you little, it is worth little.

It's the shallow brook that babbles.

The easy road always goes down.

Christianity does not offer an escape from life—it is life.

God still speaks to those who take time to listen.

If thou wouldst live long, live well.

Almost right is still wrong.

The poorest man is he whose only wealth is money.

The Pre-Existence of Christ

(Continued from page 6)

“John is not alone in asserting that Jesus was the One who carried the work of creation into effect. Paul says, ‘But to us there is but one God, the Father, of whom are all things, and we in him; and one Lord Jesus Christ, by whom are all things, and we by him’ (I Cor. 8:6).”

This text does not teach that Christ pre-existed. It states merely that “to us there is but one God, the Father, of whom are all things, and we in him [for him, margin]; and one Lord Jesus Christ, by whom are all things, and we by him.” Obviously Paul is referring to the new creation, of which he speaks in II Cor. 5:17: “Therefore if any man be in Christ, he is a new creature: old things are passed away; behold, all things are become new.” Some of the modern versions use the term “new creation.” Christ is pre-eminent above all things of this new creation, being the firstborn from the dead unto life eternal (I Cor. 15:23).

“Paul calls Jesus ‘the image of the invisible God, the firstborn of every creature,’ and states that ‘by him were all things created, that are in heaven, and that are in earth, . . . All things were created by him and for him; and he is before all things, and by him all things consist’ (Col. 1:15-17). This is a very clear statement to the effect that Jesus was the One who brought all things into existence.”

You are building upon a false premise because you have not included Paul’s own qualifying term contained in the next verse: “And he [Christ] is the head of the body, the church: who is the beginning, the firstborn from the dead; that in all things he might have the pre-eminence” (v. 18). This verse shows clearly the meaning of Paul’s words in the verses preceding. “He is the head of the body, the church: who is the beginning,” being “the firstborn from the dead.” Of all the human race, only He now possesses immortality: and being the king of the world to come, He will be responsible for all the various aspects of that creation.

In Ephesians 1, Paul refers again to Christ as the head of the new creation: “And hath put all things under his feet, and gave him to be the head over all things to the church, which is his body, the fulness of him that filleth all in all” (vs. 22-23). Christ was not the firstborn of every creature of the natural creation, but He is the firstborn of the

new creation. Jesus applies this same title to Himself in Rev. 3:14, when addressing one of the seven churches in Asia concerning things to come: “These things saith the Amen, the faithful and true witness, the beginning of the creation of God.” He is before all things of the world to come, and this makes His position pre-eminent. In no sense was He existing before the creation of the literal stars or earth.

“The inference in the Bible is that Father and Son were both present at the creation of this world, planning what was to be done. Concerning the creation of man the record says, ‘And God [Elohim, which is plural, meaning “Gods”] said, Let us make man in our image, after our likeness’ (Gen. 1:26.) Even those who oppose the pre-existence are prepared to admit that a plurality of persons is indicated here. The use of the plural pronoun makes it clear that more than one person decided what type of person was to be the crowning work of God’s creation. To say that this was the Father talking with the angels is paltry. Angels do not have the power to create. It would therefore be incorrect to say ‘Let us make.’ If God were talking to the angels, He could have said, ‘I will make man in My image.’ But no, the language used indicates that there had been a dialogue between equals, and the final decision was to make man in their image. Here we have the Father and the Son referred to.”

Your statement that Genesis 1:26 refers to the Father and the Son conversing is pure conjecture. “The inference in the Bible is that the Father and Son were there at the creation of this world planning what was to be done”? No. The Bible does not infer this. If one chooses to believe that Christ pre-existed, he could try to read that belief into Genesis 1:26, but the thought is not there. God said, “Let us make man . . .” but there is nothing in the narrative to indicate that the other person making up the “us” was Christ. That presumption is mere human conjecture.

The Hebrew term *Elohim*, which is the original word translated “let us make” in Gen. 1:26, as stated in your question, is defined in *Gesenius’s Hebrew Lexicon* as, “in a plural sense of gods or deities in general. . . . Not a few interpreters, both ancient and modern, have regarded Elohim as denoting angels—see Ps. 8:5. . . . Hebrews, chapters 1:1-6 and 2:7-9 show plainly that this word sometimes means angels, and the authority of the New Testament decides the matter.”

Certainly there is nothing “paltry” about God talking with the angels or sharing His planning with them. “Are they not all ministering spirits, sent forth to minister for them who shall be heirs

of salvation?" (Heb 1:14). They will be present and share in the consummation of God's plan on this earth (Mark 13:27; Dan. 7:10). It is logical to think that they were present at the beginning of our physical world; and the taking out of the one "new man," as the nucleus of a new creation which shall one day fill the earth with God's glory is now entrusted to the management of angels. They are the "us" of Genesis 1:26. There is not the slightest indication that the "us" refers to God and Christ.

You say that angels do not have power to create. There is absolutely no proof for such a statement. Even mortals, endowed with divine power, were able to restore the dead to life. Jesus created loaves and fishes sufficient to feed a multitude of persons on at least two occasions during his mortal career. If mortals can be granted the ability to do such creating, it seems most certain that immortal angels would have power to create. Such ability will most certainly be part of the joys of the immortals. Even mortals love to create in their simple, limited way. What would immortality be without the joy and satisfaction of creativity! And the promise is: "Eye hath not seen, nor ear heard, neither have entered into the heart of man, the things which God hath prepared for them that love him" (I Cor. 2:9).

"Why does John call Jesus 'the Word'? Word is a proper noun—the name of a person. But why is Jesus referred to as the Word? Simply because He is the channel of communication between the Father and the people of this world."

Jesus is a channel of communication, but not the only channel. Hebrews 1 begins: "God, who at sundry times and in divers manners spake in times past unto the fathers by the prophets, hath in these last days spoken unto us by his Son" (vs. 1-2). There is no evidence that Jesus is the "Word" or *Logos* of John 1.

"John says, 'No man hath seen God at any time; the only begotten Son, which is in the bosom of the Father. He hath declared him' (John 1:18)."

Why did John say Jesus was in the bosom of the Father? Remember, Jesus had ascended to heaven a number of years before these words were written, hence at that time Jesus *was* in heaven.

"A further point is to be noted in the fact that at the age of twelve, Jesus was conscious of the fact that God was His Father. He said, 'Wist ye not that I must be about my Father's business?' (Luke 2:49). The knowledge that God was His Father can only be the result

of His previous association with His Father."

This argument is too weak to consider. Jesus was above the average in intellect, as is witnessed by His being able to confound the doctors of the law at that age. With the training He received from His mother, plus the help of the angels and the Holy Spirit, He could not help but know that God was His Father. ●●

Obituary

LaVerne W. Burrows

Life is a gift from God; it is the gift that is the key to all other gifts. But it is a gift that carries no guarantee of longevity; life is uncertain.

Of this fact we were vividly reminded as we met on June 19 to pay our last respects to a friend and brother, LaVerne W. Burrows. Brother Burrows was a victim of that dread killer, heart disease, succumbing after only a brief illness at the early age of 64 years.

Brother Burrows held a lifelong acquaintance with the Megiddo Mission Church. For many years he took a leading part in the work of the Church, participating actively in the choir, the band and in many religious dramas that were presented from time to time. He contributed generously to all aspects of program work. And being an electrician by trade, he was always ready and willing to give of his services when any need arose.

Brother Burrows was of a very amiable disposition—a trait which he carried through his entire life. He received his formal education at the Megiddo Day School, where he held the record of having been the best behaved scholar in the entire school. He got along well with everyone who knew him or had any business relations with him through his life. He carried this same quality of agreeableness into married life, enjoying thirteen years of unbroken peace and harmony with his wife and family.

Brother Burrows is survived by his wife, Gloria B. Burrows, a ten-year-old son, Walter Burrows, and a nephew, Howard Burrows, all of Rochester.

Rev. K. E. Flowerday conducted funeral services, and interment was in Mount Hope Cemetery, where rest many of our beloved dead, awaiting the great day of Resurrection, when all who sleep in Jesus shall awake. ●●

QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS

"You misquote the Bible by saying on page 5 of your June, 1972 issue, 'Christ's testimony: "I am the Son of God."' Then a little further on you state, 'Indeed, Christ was the Son of God, Jesus repeatedly made this statement.'

"Well, I have studied every recorded word Jesus ever said and I have never seen where He ever said, even one time, what you say He said 'repeatedly.' Please tell me of one passage of Scripture in which Jesus ever said of Himself, 'I am the Son of God.'"

Please read Matthew 27:43. This is the witness of the chief priests: "He trusted in God; let him deliver him now, if he will have him: for he said, I am the Son of God."

Perhaps you will reject this statement on the grounds that it was not a statement written by Jesus Himself. Well, let me remind you that Jesus Himself never wrote a single word; all that we know of Him, His background, His work, is by a second party. And while this is the only case where He actually said "I am the Son of God," yet He repeatedly spoke of God as His Father.

Thank you for correcting us in saying, "Indeed, Christ was the Son of God. Jesus repeatedly made this statement." Our statement should have read, Christ repeatedly affirmed that He was the Son of God by witnessing that God was His Father.

"What is the meaning of these words: 'they shall move out of their holes like worms of the earth?'"

These words occur in Micah 7, where the Prophet is speaking of the time when the Lord shall arise to shake terribly the nations during the great battle of Armageddon. "According to the days of thy coming out of the land of Egypt will I show unto him marvellous things. The nations shall see and be confounded at all their might: they shall lay their hand upon their mouth, their ears shall be deaf. They shall lick the dust like a serpent, they shall move out of their holes like worms of the earth: they shall be afraid of the Lord our God, and shall fear because of thee" (vs. 15-17). Men will be astonished and perplexed when they discover a power has arisen with which they have no power to cope, when they confront a foe that can outwit and outmaneuver them at every turn. It is then that they will begin to realize the worthless-

ness and falsity of all on which they had depended and they will move out of their holes, or their sheltered confidences, like worms of the earth.

Men will then discover that the political structures they once thought invulnerable will be under attack, and their safeguards will prove ineffective. All their ecclesiastical and social structures that have held undisputed sway for centuries shall collapse. Surely they will move out of their holes like earthworms, and shall be quickly destroyed unless they take heed to the laws of God and submit to the new authority on earth.

Bible A B C's

(Continued from page 19)

Then fire came down from heaven and burned up the sacrifice. It even burned up the stones and the dust and lapped up the water in the trench. When the people saw this, they bowed low and said, "The Lord, He is God! The Lord, He is God!"

Do you wonder where the Israelites were able to find water when their land had been suffering from drought for three years? If you look on a map of Palestine, you will see that Mount Carmel is very near the Great Sea. The people could easily bring up the water in barrels from the sea.

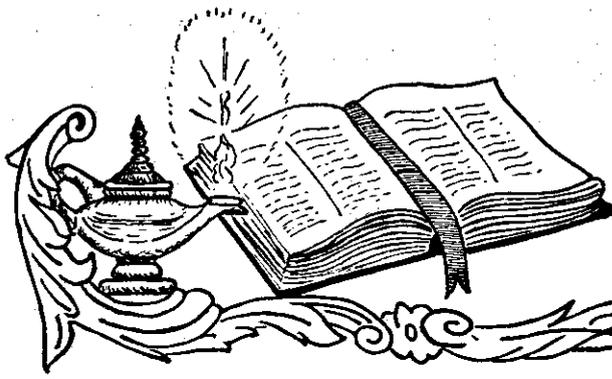
Elijah commanded that all the false prophets be taken down to the brook Kishon and killed. God does not spare people who are rebellious and disobedient to Him, and who will not listen to what He says.

Then Elijah sent his servant to look out over the sea. The servant saw nothing. Seven times Elijah sent him, and the last time the servant saw a small cloud. The cloud grew, and grew, until the whole sky was black. Elijah sent word to Ahab to hurry fast, before the rain stopped him.

The long drought was over; the Lord had answered Elijah's prayer.

Elijah had much courage to stand for the right when so many were against him. He obeyed God and did all God commanded him. God sent His angels to take Elijah to another planet. Elijah never died. He is living today on some other world above us, learning what he is to do when he comes back to earth again, for that is one of God's promises recorded in Malachi 4:5, "Behold, I will send you Elijah the prophet, before the coming of the great and dreadful day of the Lord."

Elijah is coming back to earth again to prepare the people for the return of Christ when He comes to set up His kingdom here on earth. ●●



Meditations

On the Word

PROBABLY more than half this page could be filled with the names and titles given by the inspired writers to the Word, Truth, Gospel or Wisdom of God. All the metaphors and symbolism of a richly poetical language are focused and lavished on this one object. And, when we judge it by what it is and what it does, we must acknowledge that it deserves every word of it, and more. Both external and internal evidence proves it to be what it claims to be—a communication from God to man, expressing His will and His purpose. Space would forbid us to enumerate the fulfilled prophecies which prove it divine. Its exquisite harmony, in spite of the unique method of its composition—more than forty writers over a period of 1500 years—proclaims it something more than the work of man.

To appreciate what this Word *does*, one must acknowledge that there is purpose in Creation; that our planet was not formed in vain, as it might well seem to the superficial observer, but was created to be inhabited by a super-race, the overcomers (Isa. 45:18). These supermen are being taken out of the jungle of humanity over a probationary period of 6000 years, and at the end thereof they will be rewarded with immortality. In the meantime, while the plan of salvation has been silently working itself out, the non-overcomers have been suffering to infest the earth, making their own happiness or misery, mostly the latter, until the final clearance when the last vestige of evil is swept away and the Kingdom of God fully established.

Throughout the operation of the plan, the thing which has enabled the overcomers to be

such is the quick and powerful Word of God. Without the Book of Rules they would have lived and died as the masses, aimlessly and hopelessly. To them it was not just another book, but a “living and active force,” as Professor Goodspeed translates our text. Convinced of its truthfulness and divinity, they acted on what they read.

We have not counted or compared, but it is likely that no idea is more often coupled with the Word than that of *power*. This is fitting, for in this work of overcoming, a tremendous power is needed. Human nature has been millions of years in the making, and by the dawn of history and the beginning of the plan of salvation, our racial habits were fixed. To change them in six thousand years would seem unlikely, while the idea of surmounting the handicaps of heredity and environment and becoming a new creature in the span of a single lifetime would appear nothing short of impossible.

Yet that is exactly what every overcomer does. It used to take longer than it does now. God does not expect the impossible, and takes things into consideration when He parcels out our time. The protopatriarchs were given centuries of probation. They undoubtedly needed it all, and angelic instruction as well, being nearer to the barbarian background and lacking both a long religious tradition and human examples. As the advantages increased and heredity improved, the life span was shortened,

but the work remained unchanged. Even in Apostolic times, when the power of the Holy Spirit was visibly manifested, probation, if well used, could be expected to last as long as life. We in this last hour of the day of salvation are highly complimented by the Eternal in

“For the word of God is quick, and powerful, and sharper than any twoedged sword, piercing even to the dividing asunder of soul and spirit, and of the joints and marrow, and is a discerner of the thoughts and intents of the heart” —Heb. 4:12.

being required to do the same work—some of us—in less than a natural lifetime, shut in as we are by the imminence of the Second Coming. To us, the Word must have far more power and activity than it had with Methuselah, with his 969 years of opportunity.

Other emotions, such as patriotism, unselfishness, or even a false religion, can lead man to modify his behavior to a greater or lesser extent, but only God's law can change an individual to the point of absolute moral perfection. No one ever yet crucified every affection and lust of the flesh for the sake of error. "If any man be in Christ," said Paul, "he is a new creature: old things are passed away; behold, all things are become new" (II Cor. 5:17). Only the gospel, the power of God unto salvation, can accomplish this. Whether the words of an angel to Abraham, an unrecorded sermon of Jesus, a lost letter by an apostle, or the collection which we possess today, it is all part of the Word of God, who spoke "at sundry times and in divers manners" to the fathers (Heb. 1:1).

This text is not the only one in which the Word is termed a sword. In Eph. 6:17 the Apostle lists as the sole weapon of offense in the Christian's armory "the sword of the Spirit, which is the Word of God." We venture to say that the sword of the ancient legionary was used for many and various purposes, even more than the useful bayonet of the modern infantryman. It was probably his hatchet, crowbar, hammer, chisel, brush-hook, carving knife, and what not. In an emergency, he might even eat with it. So the Word is to us a utensil of many uses, but all tending toward one end—perfection. In this passage it is represented both as a lethal weapon and a surgical instrument. It penetrates the very vitals, the "joints and marrow," killing the "old man," the lower nature, and cutting away the wild, ugly growths caused by sin. It is sharp, not a tool to be handled by children, amateurs or fools. It cuts both ways, right and left, ourselves as well as the other fellow. At least it should; if it does not, we are poor swordsmen.

Now let us consider that strange sentence, "... piercing even to the dividing asunder of soul and spirit." Why should the soul and spirit be divided? The original Greek provides the desired light. "Soul"—*psuchee*—in addition to its more familiar definition of "life; a living creature, etc." also signifies the animal or physical nature, as opposed to "spirit"—*pneumatos*—which, while often meaning "the breath of life," is also used for the spiritual element in human nature. It is the old, old conflict between flesh and spirit, between the lower nature and the higher, the warfare which each soldier of God must fight and win. The Word, as

our guide and counsellor, directs our steps and divides the works of the flesh from the fruits of the Spirit (Gal. 5:19-23).

The Bible is by far the most profound work on psychology ever written, for no other book so simply and thoroughly and unsparingly exposes the hidden thoughts, intents and motives of our hearts. It knows us far better than we know ourselves. It is the mirror in which we can see ourselves, if we will, for the purpose of making ourselves over into the image of Him who is creating us. We must resort constantly to this mirror, that we may know our progress, not being the "forgetful hearer" who, according to James (1:23-25), beholds himself in the glass of Truth and goes his way, forgetting what manner of man he was. The victory and the crown are for those who *remember* His commandments to do them. ●●

If We Knew . . .

*If we knew when walking thoughtless
Through the noisy, crowded way,
That some pearl of wondrous whiteness
Close beside our pathway lay,
We would pause where now we hasten;
We would often look around,
Lest our careless feet should trample
Some rare jewel to the ground.*

*If we knew what forms were fainting
For the shade that we should fling;
If we knew what lips were parching
For the water we should bring,
We would haste with eager footsteps;
We would work with willing hands,
Bearing cups of cooling water,
Planting rows of shading palms.*

*If we knew what lives were darkened
By some thoughtless word of ours,
Which had overlain among them
Like the frost among the flowers;
Oh, with what sincere repenting,
With what anguish of regret,
While our eyes were overflowing,
Would we cry—Forgive! Forget!*

*If we knew! alas! and do we
Ever care or seek to know,
Whether bitter herbs or roses
In our neighbors' garden grow?
God forgive us! lest hereafter
Our hearts break to hear Him say,
"Careless child, I never knew you;
From My presence flee away."*

LETTERS

Being Set Free

I just thought I would write you this letter to tell you how much I've enjoyed your informative booklets on different Bible subjects.

At first, I was a little doubtful if I could ever accept what was said in these booklets because the doctrines set forth therein were so different from what I've always believed. But I made up my mind, sat down and got busy checking and examining what was said in the booklets and I have to admit that after reading and checking it all out, it does make sense and it is true.

Of course, I do not or would not say that I understand every single thing that is said but I can say that I do understand much of what is said.

I love the Bible with all of my heart and really appreciate people like all of you who hold to the truth and are able to make a defense for what you believe to be the truth.

I am increasing my studying time and I am asking God to help me to a more accurate understanding of His precious Word, the Bible.

Thank you for holding to the truth and being truth people. By reading the booklets I am being set free from false and paganistic doctrines that are so prevalent in our society today.

May God bless every effort you make in His service.

Southbridge, Mass.

C. R.

Fointing the Way

We hear from many religious leaders around here that the signs of the times point to the not-too-far-away return of Jesus. Most anyone, I am sure, will have to agree that there seem to be troubles on every side; some people are turning to the Word of God, perhaps in a sort of desperation.

I believe your little magazine helps point the way to the leadership of God. I loan them to friends. Some articles are very suitable for devotions for Bible study groups.

Kentville, Nova Scotia, Canada

M. P.

Learning to Be Christians

Proverbs 3, along with Psalm 1, has become one of my favorite inspirational texts. A very appropriate quote is verse 5: "Put all your trust in the Lord, and do not rely on your own understanding." And a little beyond, in chapter 4 and verse 13, the words are even more relevant: "Cling to instruction, and never let it go; observe it well, for it is your life."

How can we compare learning to become a Christian with learning to become a carpenter or a banker, or any tradesman? We are taught lessons, and we must use them. We are given tests, and we must pass them. We must enjoy what we are doing, and we will benefit. How can we realize the burden is light, yet the reward will cost all that we have!

Moyie, British Columbia, Canada

R. F.

August, 1972



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"Once Upon A Time"

Solomon, the third king of Israel and known as the wisest man who ever lived, once said that "A merry heart doeth good like a medicine: but a broken spirit drieth the bones." This homey bit of verse from the Sunshine Magazine illustrates the proverb in an interesting way:

*In the village of Moan, in the valley of Groan,
Miss Carrie A. Burden once lived all alone.
She had driven away all her friends, so they say,
By moaning and groaning and grumbling all day.
But one day she listened to a queer bird awhile:
"You would be loved more if sometimes you'd smile."
She was greatly astonished at what she had heard,
But at length she decided to be like the bird.
So she smiled at the dog, and she smiled at the cat.
And when people snubbed her she just smiled at that.
Soon cheerfulness such a fixed habit became,
She forgot all her grumbling, and most of her pain.
It made a great change; soon back her friends came.
It even led up to her changing her name!
And by changing her name she acquired a new home;
So she no longer lives in the village of Moan,
But as Mrs. D. Lightsome her days are now spent
Diffusing good cheer on the Hill of Content.*