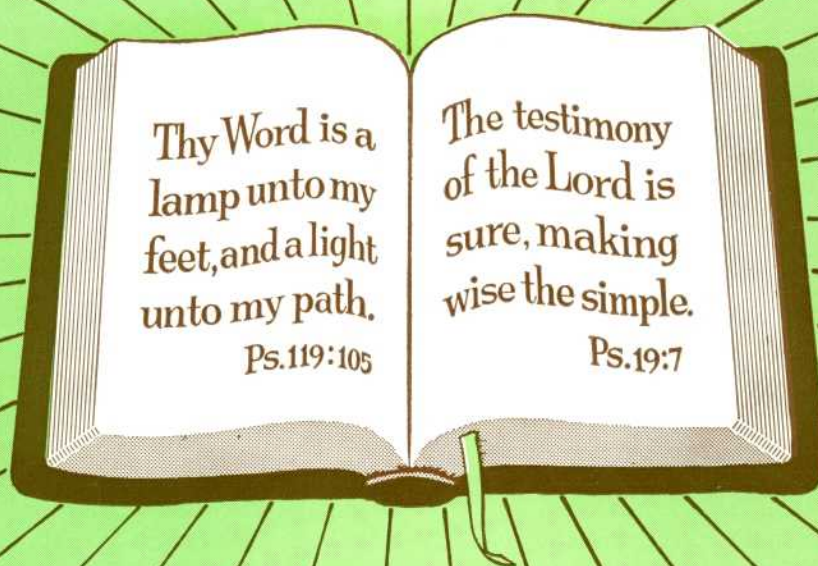


Megiddo Message

DEVOTED TO THE CAUSE OF CHRIST



Holy IS as Holy DOES

The Great Apostasy

Wreck-Creation?

Say "YES!"

Summer Issue

What Is Greatness?

IT is vitally important that we understand the meaning of greatness as God means us to understand it. In our moral ignorance we invariably look for greatness where it is not and seek to attain it in ways that are vain and often downright wrong.

Jesus gave a guideline: "Whosoever will be great among you, let him be your minister" (Matt. 20:20-28). From these words we rightly conclude that there is nothing wrong with the desire to be great, provided we understand the term as Jesus meant it. But what did Jesus mean?

Obviously the meaning of the word varies according to its application.

No one who has honestly observed, however briefly or imperfectly, the smallest portion of God's creation, His universe, or His plan, will ever consent to thinking of himself or any other man or woman as great. The power and might and wisdom and magnificence of God, when comprehended to the fullest extent of mortal possibilities, will bring us to our knees in awe and fill us with such an overwhelming sense of the divine that we exclaim, "Only God is great!"

However successful a person may be in business, in education, in government, in the arts, in science or medicine, if he should think for a moment that he is great, let him look up and remember that without God his life would be nothing.

In 1715, Louis XIV of France died. Louis XIV had called himself "the Great." It was he who made the famous statement, "I am the State!" His court was the most magnificent in all Europe; and his funeral the most spectacular. He had requested that the greatest orator of his time, Bishop Massillon, preach the sermon.

The king's body lay in a golden coffin. To dramatize his greatness, orders had been given that the cathedral should be very dimly lighted and a special candle set above the coffin for all to see. Thousands waited in hushed silence as the great orator rose to speak. His first sentence consisted of four words. Slowly reaching down, Bishop Mas-

silon snuffed out the candle that burned above the coffin, saying, "Only God is great!"

That is the lesson Christ was teaching when He said, "Whosoever will be great among you, let him be your minister." The greatness of God extinguishes the brightest candle of man's earthly glory.

Still God Himself applied the word *great* to men, as when the angel told Zacharias that the son who was to be born should "be great in the sight of the Lord." Christ spoke of those who shall be "great" in His Kingdom.

There are two kinds of greatness to be recognized—the absolute greatness which belongs only to God, and a relative, finite greatness that may be achieved by or bestowed upon those who by obedience and self-sacrifice seek to become as much like God as possible and become His friends. It is this latter kind of greatness that concerns us.

To seek greatness in itself is not wrong. God has given to man a certain instinct that wants to be outstanding. But it is so easy for us, with our Adam-nature, to let our ambitions be misguided and call the wrong things great.

The essence of Jesus' teaching was that true greatness is in character, not in ability or position. We in our human blindness are so inclined to think that superior talents make a man great. To be endowed with unusual abilities in any field of art or industry or statecraft we tend to think of as an evidence of greatness, and the man thus endowed is hailed as a great man. We forget that all endowment comes from God and that He will judge us according to the use we make of it.

Real greatness lies deeper than natural ability, and Jesus drew a sharp line between it and true greatness when he said: "It shall not be so among you. Whosoever will be great among you, let him be your minister." It is that simple and that easy—and that difficult.

Christ knew the way to true greatness. If you want to climb up, He says, go down. ●●

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Megiddo Means

"a place of troops"

—Gesenius' Hebrew Lexicon

"a place of God"

—Young's Analytical Concordance

Geographically, Megiddo was and is a town in Palestine, located at a strategic point, demanding heavy fortification; for Palestine is the age-old gateway between East and West, and the avenue connecting North and South. Supremacy there has long been the envy of aggressive nations, and the prevailing power has guarded it with jealous eye. The famous pass at Megiddo through a solid mountain range is the one means by which this avenue between continents may be traversed.

In the spiritual parallel, it is a place of troops, where soldiers are equipped for spiritual warfare against the forces of evil without and within. "The weapons we wield are not merely human but divinely potent to demolish strongholds; we demolish sophistries and all that rears its proud head against the knowledge of God; we compel every human thought to surrender in obedience to Christ" (II Cor. 10:4-5, NEB).

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Holy IS as Holy DOES

THE sage who gave us the adage, "Pretty is as pretty does," did not have holiness in mind, but the idea is most certainly there. It is impossible to separate holy doctrine from holy deeds, holiness concepts from holy character, holiness principles from victorious, holy living. Holy *is* as holy *does*.

"Holy, holy, holy, is the Lord of hosts: the whole earth is full of his glory." In a transcendent moment of heavenly vision the prophet Isaiah heard these words while he beheld the Lord "sitting upon a throne, high and lifted up." What impetus, what spiritual propulsion this experience must have given the Prophet through days and years to come! It was a glorious glimpse into the holiness of God.

Holiness is a quality we instinctively associate with God and heaven. We think of it as something above and beyond us, a term fraught with meaning and vibrant with the highest activities of life. Holiness speaks to us of saints and angels and glory and life and everlasting bliss. Holiness is all this!

But let us bring the concept down to earth and set it in *our* environment. Holiness is all this and more—for holiness describes God and all that pertains to Him. This means that holiness must also belong to those members of the human family whom God chooses for His own. Immediately holiness is removed from the realm of the heavenly vision and becomes a practical word for everyday application. *We* in our circumstances, in our setting, in our homes, in our offices, on our farms, on our streets, in all our places of activity must be holy. God Himself has set the standard. "You must be holy," He said to Israel and to all who would be His, "for I am holy."

Holiness A Distinction

Holiness is a highly distinguishing quality. Back in the days of the children of Israel, God's holiness was thought of as that which separates Him from all other gods. "Who is like unto thee, O Lord, among the gods? who is like thee, glorious in holiness" (Ex. 15:11).

And when He says, "Be ye holy," He is calling upon His people to be different, to be separate, to be set apart from all other people with their ungodly interests. "Ye shall be holy unto me: for I the Lord am holy, and have severed you from other people, that ye should be mine" (Lev. 20:26).

Just as the holy God is distinct and separate from every idol, so His people must be separate and distinct from God-despising or God-forgetting people who live to please themselves.

This separateness, this distinction, is the basic requirement of the root meaning of the word "holiness": spiritual wholeness, "otherness," separation, difference. And this quality is a direct result of what holiness does—it separates, it distinguishes by its superior quality of character. "Who is like unto thee, glorious in holiness, . . . doing wonders?" Likewise, the holiness of God's people is to be shown by what they do, by how they live, by their superior quality of character. Holy *is* as holy *does*. Thus God could say to Israel, "After the *doings* of the land of Egypt, wherein ye dwelt, shall ye not *do*: and after the doings of the land of Canaan, whither I bring you, shall ye not do. . . . Ye shall *do my judgments*, and keep mine ordinances" (Lev. 18:3-5).

The apostle Peter recognizes this divine arrangement when he says the Lord's people are to be "obedient children, not fashioning yourselves according to the former lusts in your ignorance" but "holy in all manner of conversation," that is, in "all your behavior" (NASB). Holy people are to be distinguished by the moral quality of their deeds.

But before we can claim this divine distinction, before this holiness can be part of us in our environment, something must happen. For by nature we are *not holy*. When God says "Be ye holy," He means for us actually to change, actually to be sanctified, actually to be made over into totally new creatures. This comes about by obedience: "Seeing ye have purified your souls in obeying the truth" (I Pet. 1:22).

What Is Holiness?

What is this divine distinction, this separateness? What is true, practical holiness?

Holiness is not knowledge—Balaam had that. Nor is it great profession—Judas Iscariot had that. Nor is it doing many things—Herod did that. Nor is it zeal for certain matters of religion—the scribes and Pharisees of Jesus' day had that. Nor is it talent and great wisdom and knowledge—Solomon had that. Nor is holiness an outward respectability of conduct and morality—the young ruler had that. Nor is it taking pleasure in hearing the Word of God spoken and read—the Jews in Ezekiel's time had that. Nor is it keeping company with godly people—Gehazi and Demas both did that. Yet none of these were holy! These things alone are not holiness. A man may have any one of them, or all of them, yet never attain that holiness by which he may someday see God.

What, then, is holiness?

Holiness has in it both a negative and a positive aspect. Holiness is separation from all that God calls evil or carnal, and at the same time dedication to all that God calls pure and good. It is moral and ethical perfection. Jesus stated it simply when He said, "Be ye therefore perfect, even as your Father which is in heaven is perfect" (Matt. 5:48). Be total in your commitment. Make no reservations for any self-gratification. If you are holy, you are set aside exclusively for divine service. You are consecrated to Him, to reflect His will and perform His service. Jesus put it this way when addressing His followers: "Let your light so shine before men, that they may see your good works, and glorify your Father which is in heaven" (Matt. 5:16).

Becoming holy means removing from our lives every trait and inclination and tendency and habit that is contrary to the nature of God; for God is perfect holiness. It means transforming heart and mind and life to meet that uncompromising moral perfection of the "high and lofty One that inhabiteth eternity, whose name is Holy" (Isa. 57:15). It means purifying our lives from every trace of sin.

Holiness is more than a lofty quality of God to be extolled. Holiness is something you DO. Holy is as holy *does*.

Why so uncompromising a standard? Why so high a demand? Why such a straitened attitude toward sin? Because this is God's attitude toward it. The standard is His.

God is consistent, and He wants us to be consistent also. If we believe in holiness as it belongs to

Him, we must ourselves be holy. If we bear a Christian name and a Christian knowledge, we must have a Christian character as well, or all is for naught. If we would be saints in the world to come, we must be saints here and now. And perfect holiness is the standard we must meet.

The ancient Prophet expressed it vividly when He spoke of the "Holy One," the God of heaven, who is "of purer eyes than to behold evil, and canst not look on iniquity" (Hab. 1:12-13). Would it be reasonable for such a holy God, who cannot look with tolerance upon any iniquity, to say to us, "Yes, you can sin—just a little bit"?

Holiness—Why?

God is holy. His angels are holy. And if we are ever to dwell with the angels—rather to *be* angels *ourselves*—we must be holy. Holiness is written now on everything in heaven. And when heaven and earth are joined, holiness will be the quality of everyone who lives! The book of Revelation describes that glorious time: "There shall in no wise enter into it anything that defileth, neither whatsoever worketh abomination, or maketh a lie" (Rev. 21:27).

What is our attitude toward God's high demand of holiness and the standard that will prevail in the New Age?

A nineteenth century English minister, J. C. Ryle, states it well. We quote:

"Where will our place be [then] if we are strangers to holiness now?

"Suppose for a moment that you were allowed to enter God's new world without holiness. What would you do? What possible enjoyment could you feel there? To which of the saints would you join yourself? Their pleasures are not your pleasures, their tastes not your tastes, their character not your character. How could you possibly be happy if you had not been holy during your life?

"Now perhaps you love the company of the light and the careless, the worldly-minded and the covetous, the reveller and the pleasure-seeker, the ungodly and the profane. There will be none such in the Kingdom.

"Now perhaps you think the saints of God too strict and particular and serious. You rather avoid them. You have no delight in their society. There will be no other company in the Kingdom.

"Now perhaps you think praying, and Scripture-reading, and hymn-singing, dull and melancholy, and stupid work—a thing to be tolerated now and then but not enjoyed. You reckon a day of worship a burden and a weariness; you could not possibly spend more than a small part of a day

in worshipping God. But remember, the Kingdom will be a never-ending day of worship. How could an unholy man or woman find pleasure in occupation such as this?

"Think you that such an one would delight to meet David, and Paul and John, after a life spent in doing the very things they spoke against? Could you rejoice to meet Jesus face to face after cleaving to the sins to which He died, after loving His enemies and despising His friends? Could you stand before Him with confidence, and join in the cry, 'This is our God; we have waited for him, . . . we will be glad and rejoice in his salvation?' (Isa. 25:9). Think you not rather that the tongue of an unholy man would cleave to the roof of his mouth with shame, and his only desire would be to be cast out! He would feel a stranger in a land he knew not, a black sheep amidst Christ's holy flock. The song of angels and all the company of the saints would be a language he could not understand. The very air would seem an air he could not breathe.

"I know not what others may think, but to me it does seem clear that the heavenly Kingdom would be a miserable place to an unholy man. It cannot be otherwise. People may say, in a vague way, that they hope to live on forever; but they do not consider what they say. There must be a certain meetness for the 'inheritance of the saints in light.' Our hearts must be in tune. To reach the holiday of glory, we must pass through the training school of grace. We must become heavenly-minded, and have heavenly tastes, in the life that is now, or else we shall never find ourselves accepted in the life to come."

Indeed, the "righteous Lord" who "loveth righteousness, and his countenance doth behold the upright" will not perpetuate any inferior material. He is "righteous in all his ways, and holy in all his works" (Ps. 145:17), and if we would dwell with Him we too must be righteous and holy. There is no other way to belonging. We must be now what we will want to be then.

Holiness NOW

The New Testament calls us to a life of holiness which is in the present tense: now! The apostle Paul, after reminding the Corinthians of God's great and supremely generous offers, writes, "Having therefore these promises, dearly beloved, let us cleanse ourselves from all filthiness of the flesh and spirit, perfecting holiness in the fear of God" (II Cor. 7:1). "Let us cleanse"—now. "Perfecting holiness in the fear of God"—now. It is all pres-

ent-tense action. It is not something that happened at some time in the past, but it is something that is to be happening continually in the holy life.

Holiness is a life to be lived, not an experience to look back upon. Holiness is not a static concept of good and evil. It is an ever-present, now-demand. It is something that affects every motive, every word, every will in each situation of life as we meet it. To be holy we must learn to think in terms of holiness in everything we do—now. It is a concept we cannot lose sight of for a single moment. We are called to be holy people unto the Lord our God, and each time we fail to exhibit holy conduct in the everyday situations of our lives, we jeopardize our high calling and show disdain for the One who called us.

To be holy we must maintain a humble, submissive, yielded attitude toward God in each ongoing situation we encounter. It is something to do—now. Holy is as holy does—right now.

Those who are not committed to upholding Christian principles are constantly judging those who profess to be, on the evidence of their holiness. They expect "holy" people to live as holy people should; and rightly so. "Holy is as holy does." Bad attitudes, questionable activities, petty rivalries, arguings, jealousies, harsh criticisms, strifes and fiery displays of passion are out of character for holy people. We know it. The world knows it. And—most serious of all—God knows it. How watchful we should be. We are no better than our lives prove us to be. Holy is as holy does.

Doctrine and deed must be parallel. "Holy is as holy does" must apply to character and conversation before those who observe us can recognize us as holy people. Character and concept cannot be separated. One questionable action can destroy more confidence than a hundred carefully directed acts can reconstruct. We may be able to explain why we did such-and-such, but the world looks for examples, not explanations. As the poet writes:

*What you are
Speaks so loud*

*That the world can't hear what you say.
They're looking at your walk,
Not list'ning to your talk,*

*They're judging from your actions ev'ry day;
Don't believe
That you deceive*

*By claiming what you've never known;
They'll accept what they see
And know you to be,*

They'll judge from your life alone.

If we would prove our holiness, we must be able to demonstrate spiritual power and strength of character even in a day when anything goes. We must be able to demonstrate conviction when it is more popular to compromise. We must be able to show purity in the midst of a polluted world. We must be able to exercise faith in a day filled with fear and anxiety. We must be able to exhibit true holiness under test and stress. This does not mean a namby-pamby, spineless, milksop attitude. Holiness will stand up for right and will say "No" to wrong and wrongdoers. It will work in the great crises of life and in the little inconveniences as well.

Holiness is head and heart and hands under the control of God.

Holiness and US

Sometime after the completion of their first missionary journey, Paul made a proposal to Barnabas. He proposed that they revisit the churches they had founded to see how they were getting on. Were their members continuing steadfast in the faith? Were they growing in grace? Were they going forward in the Lord, or standing still? Were they prospering, or falling away? "Let us go again," he said, "and visit our brethren, and see how they do."

This is a wise and useful proposal for us as well. Let us lay it to heart and apply it to ourselves. Let us search our ways and find out how matters stand between ourselves and our God. Let us "see how we do." Are *you* holy, Am I?

We live in an age of peculiar spiritual danger. All around us the parable of the sower is continually illustrated, vividly and painfully. The wayside-hearers, the stony-ground hearers, the thorny-ground hearers abound on every side. What of us? Have we that good and honest heart where the seeds of holiness can grow and flourish?

Real Christian holiness is never attained or maintained without a constant fight or struggle. The great Apostle who said "I fight. . . I labour. . . I keep under my body and bring it into subjection" (I Cor. 9:26-27) would be dismayed to see the complacent, unruffled, non-exerting attitude we too often display toward holiness.

Holiness is not a thing which begins and ends in noisy profession; it will be seen much more than heard. Genuine Scriptural holiness will compel a man to do his duty at home and adorn the doctrine of Christ in the little trials of daily life. It will make a man more humble, kind, gentle, unselfish, good-tempered, considerate of others, loving, meek and forgiving.

August, 1976

How is it with us in this matter of holiness? How do we do?

Again let us quote a passage from the nineteenth century English minister mentioned earlier:

"Let me ask everyone who may read these pages, Are you holy? Listen, I pray you, to the question I put to you this day. Do you know anything of the holiness of which I have been speaking?"

"I do not ask whether you attend church regularly, or whether you have the name of Christian. I ask something more than all this: Are you holy, or are you not?"

"I do not ask whether you approve of holiness in others, whether you like to read the lives of holy people and to talk of holy things, and to have on your table holy books, whether you mean to be holy and hope you will be holy some day. I ask something further: Are you yourself holy this very day, or are you not?"

"And why do I ask so straitly, and press the question so strongly? I do it because the Scripture says, 'Without holiness no man shall see the Lord.' It is written; it is the word of God, not of man: Without holiness no man shall see the Lord (Heb. 12:14)."

We as professing Christians need to champion anew the essence of holiness as it should affect our lives in these times. Christ, our perfect Example, lived a holy life. He gave Himself totally to performing the purpose and will of His heavenly Father. He purified His heart of every trace of unholiness. And everyone who shares the hope of becoming someday like Him must purify "himself, even as he [Christ] is pure" (I John 3:3). We cannot do less, and follow in His footsteps.

Holiness is the only sound, sure evidence that we are true children of God. Children in this world are generally like their parents. And it is much the same—and more so—with the children of God. The Lord says, "If ye were Abraham's children, ye would do the works of Abraham. . . . If God were your Father ye would love me" (John 8:39, 42). If men have no likeness to the Father in heaven, it is vain to talk of being His sons. If we know nothing of holiness we may flatter ourselves as we please, but we are dead, we are lost. "As many as are led by the Spirit of God, they," and they only, "are the sons of God" (Rom. 8:14).

We should show by our everyday lives the family we belong to. We must let men see by our good conversation (or conduct) that we are indeed the children of the Holy One, or our sonship is but an empty name. "Say not," says one, "that thou

(Continued on page 18)

"For a time is coming when men will not tolerate wholesome instruction, but, wanting to have their ears tickled, they will find a multitude of teachers to satisfy their own fancies, and will close their ears to the truth and will turn away to fables"
—II Timothy 4:3-4, *Weymouth*

The Great APOSTASY

(Book Feature: Part Three)

The Power of Darkness Identified

THE Scriptures contain many symbolic terms for the power that was responsible for extinguishing the light of divine knowledge during the night of the apostasy. Paul calls it the "man of sin." The Revelator talks about the "great whore" and the "mother of harlots." Daniel foresaw a "dreadful beast" and a "little horn." Let us examine these terms more closely.

As we have seen, the power of Rome figured prominently in the corrupting of the true Church and the sabotage of true religion in the early centuries following the Apostolic Age. About the time of Christ, the Roman Empire was at its zenith as a world power; and as she declined, an ecclesiastical dynasty was reared upon her ruins. It was this latter power that had so much to do with turning men's hearts from truth to fables and bringing about the great apostasy.

The prophecies of Daniel clearly outline the development of this power.

A Vision Interpreted

The book of Daniel records two visions, which reveal basically the same prophecies. The first was a dream that Nebuchadnezzar had, of an image composed of different metals—gold, silver, brass, and iron—which was broken in pieces by a little stone which struck the image on its feet and thereupon grew and became a mountain that "filled the whole earth." Daniel's vision was of four great beasts—a lion, a bear, a leopard, and a beast unnamed, which had "great iron teeth" and was more strong and terrible than any of the others.

The first beast, resembling a lion, had eagle's wings. This represented Babylon, the empire in existence at the time the prophecy was made. Then

followed the bear, representing the kingdom of the Medes and Persians. The bear was said to be raised up on one side in recognition of the fact that the Persian division of the kingdom wielded a much greater authority than the Median. The three ribs in the mouth of the bear were symbolic of the three presidents which Cyrus' son, Darius, placed over the whole realm (Dan. 6:2).

The Grecian kingdom under Alexander the Great was represented by a leopard having four wings. Alexander was said to be the man of wings as he made his conquests so quickly that he would be at the next theatre of invasion almost before the news of his former victory had reached that area.

The next beast that Daniel saw appear upon the scene was unlike any living creature he had ever seen. He describes it as "dreadful and terrible, and strong exceedingly; and it had great iron teeth: it devoured and brake in pieces, and stamped the residue with the feet of it: and it was diverse from all the beasts that were before it; and it had ten horns."

Then Daniel continues: "I considered the horns, and, behold, there came up among them another little horn, before whom there were three of the first horns plucked up by the roots: and, behold, in this horn were eyes like the eyes of a man, and a mouth speaking great things" (Dan. 7:7-8). We shall see that the power designated as the "little horn" can be identified as the authority by which divine truths were cast down and the great apostasy came about.

It is interesting to note the enduring quality of the power this horn represents. As Daniel, divinely enlightened, continued looking, he was able to scan twenty-five centuries ahead of him to the time of the return of Christ to earth and the Judgment

scene, and the dissolution of man's incompetent system of misrule (see verses 9 and 10).

Then the divine messenger speaks plainly, telling Daniel that the four beasts that he had seen in vision were representative of four kingdoms that should arise (v. 17). Then Daniel said, "I would know the truth of the fourth beast, which was diverse from all the others, exceeding dreadful, whose teeth were of iron, and his nails of brass; which devoured, and brake in pieces, and stamped the residue with his feet; and of the ten horns that were in his head, and of the other which came up, and before whom three fell; even of that horn which had eyes, and a mouth that spake very great things, whose look was more stout than his fellows. I beheld, and the same horn made war with the saints, and prevailed against them; until the Ancient of days came, and judgment was given to the saints of the most High; and the time came that the saints possessed the kingdom" (Dan. 7:19-22). This "little horn" power is to be still in existence at the time of Christ's return to earth. This power should "speak great words against the most High, and shall wear out the saints of the most High, and think to change times and laws" (Dan. 7:25).

In Daniel 8, the Prophet records another vision that came during the existence of the Babylonian regime. In this vision only three empires following Babylon were indicated. But here again the most destructive power is unnamed, though its position as the kingdom immediately following Greece positively identifies it as Rome. It should produce a "little horn" which would wax "exceeding great," and "by him the daily sacrifice was taken away, and the place of his sanctuary was cast down. And an host was given him against the daily sacrifice by reason of transgression, and it cast down the truth to the ground; and it practiced and prospered" (Dan. 8:9-12). It would "wear out the saints of the most High, and think to change times and laws"—as we have seen it did. And it should "cast down the truth to the ground."

"And his power shall be mighty, but not by his own power: and he shall destroy wonderfully, and shall prosper, and practice, and shall destroy the mighty and the holy people" (Dan. 8:24). In this prophecy the "sanctuary" did not refer to a literal building used for a place of worship but referred primarily to the saints, the spiritual temple or house of God, the members of Christ's true Church. It is the house of Hebrews 3:6, "But Christ as a son over his own house; whose house are we, if we hold fast the confidence and the rejoicing of the hope firm unto the end."

The Woman with the Golden Cup

Revelation 17 pictures this same power with great exactness as the Church of Rome and describes the work she would do. In verse 1 the Revelator was shown the judgment of the "great whore that sitteth upon many waters." Verse 2 reveals that the "inhabitants of the earth have been made drunk with the wine of her fornication." Then in verse 2 the narrative continues:

"So he carried me away in the spirit into the wilderness: and I saw a woman sit upon a scarlet colored beast, full of names of blasphemy, having seven heads and ten horns." We recall that the beast that Daniel saw representing the fourth or Roman kingdom had ten horns, and this woman or ecclesiastical power is said to be seated on this beast, political Rome.

This woman was seen holding a "golden cup"—representing the Bible, the pure gold. But it no longer contained the simple doctrines of Christ. She had filled it instead with the dregs of her fornication. In her hands it was made to speak many things for which not a word of proof could be found in the words of the prophets, Jesus or the apostles.

Another revealing mark of identity is the divine forecast that she would have written upon her forehead, "Mystery, Babylon the great, the mother of harlots and abominations of the earth." For centuries the Church held the Bible away from its parishioners, declaring it to be a book of mystery understandable only to the clergy. Many of its doctrines the Church makes no attempt to explain as originating in the Bible—for the facts are that they belong to tradition, not to the Bible.

The Revelator records the true identity of this evil woman: "And the angel said unto me, Wherefore didst thou marvel? I will tell thee the mystery of the woman, and of the beast that carrieth her, which hath the seven heads and ten horns. . . . And here is the mind which hath wisdom. The seven heads are seven mountains, on which the woman sitteth" (Rev. 17:7, 9). It is common knowledge that the city of Rome is built on seven hills. And this fits into the picture of Revelation 17: "And the woman which thou sawest is that great city, which reigneth over the kings of the earth" (v. 18). During the long Medieval Age, Rome held authority unchallenged—both civil and religious—over a large portion of the civilized world. And even today its authority and influence is widely felt.

(NEXT MONTH: *How Long, O Lord?*)

Wreck-Creation?

WE don't usually spell it this way, but this is how we say it. And sometimes—too often—it comes near to being what it sounds like. Haven't we all seen people returning from a vacation who were nearer to being a "wreck" than a "new creation"?

Ideally, for the Christian, recreation should mean the engaging of mind and body in some agreeable activity that serves to relax and invigorate and refresh one for the tasks which lie ahead. It should leave one encouraged, cheered, refreshed and spiritually renewed. Whatever the activity or inactivity, God must be part of it. If He is not, all is lost. Any recreation without God is "wreck-creation," so far as the aspiring Christian is concerned.

We plan ahead for summer holidays. Planning is essential. But what is the goal in our planning? Is it maximum pleasure? maximum leisure? or maximum spiritual benefit?

We must take care that we do not use our holidays as an escape from stringent Christian duty. Far from it! Holidays—like every other day for the Christian—are "holy days." This was the original intent of the word, until the centuries combined the two words into one and drastically altered the meaning. Today "holiday" for the majority is divested of any spiritual significance.

But holidays for the Christian must remain *holy*. Recreation must always be re-creating, not wrecking, to the spirit man. The command is, "... whatsoever ye do, do all to the glory of God" (I Cor. 10:31). And "whatsoever" is a big word. God wants us to be concerned for the welfare of our physical bodies, but our recreation must serve at the same time to re-create us and refresh our minds in higher values. We read this in the Word of God: "Bodily exercise profiteth little [for a little time]: but godliness is profitable unto all things..." (I Tim. 4:8). Phillips' vivid paraphrase of this text captures the thought of Paul's exhortation even more sharply. Notice the emphasis he puts on the spiritual side: "Take time and trouble to keep yourself spiritually fit. Bodily fitness has a certain value, but spiritual fitness is essential, both for this present life and for the life to come. There is no doubt about this at all, and Christians should remember it. It is because we

realize the paramount importance of the spiritual that we labour and struggle" (I Tim. 4:8-10, Phillips).

As Christians we are under a sacred obligation from which there is no holiday or vacation. We are responsible to God for how we use everything we have—not just in church on Sunday, not just on the job, not just at home, but everywhere and all the time, holidays included. Time is a trust from God to be "redeemed" (Eph. 5:15-16).

Holiday time may either help or hinder our Christian effort, according to the way we spend it. We can use it in activities that dissipate our spiritual strength, or we can use it as an opportunity to get some good, rugged *moral* exercise that will give us greater resources for meeting the tests which are ahead. If we neglect the spiritual in planning for our vacation, we would do better to forget the whole thing. For vacation without God is sure to prove a spiritual disaster, "wreck-creation."

We need to keep our thinking in terms of eternity and our goal, even in recreation. The long-term effects of what we do, in terms of fitting or unfitting us for salvation, are at least a million times more important than the moment's gratification or denial. What real pleasure can we find in doing anything, or going anywhere that we know will lessen our chances of receiving a favorable verdict when we stand before the Judgment seat of Christ? What athlete, dead set on winning a prize, would indulge in any pleasure or pastime that might ruin the health and muscle power that he needs to win? What man seeking public office could enjoy something that might damage his reputation before the public? What man or woman working for a degree would spend time in any activity which would unfit the mind for serious thought and study?

No, our recreation must be consistent with our goals. We need always to think in terms of long-range gain or loss. We need to plan time for daily spiritual exercise lest we, like Esau, find ourselves exchanging an eternal inheritance for a moment's pleasure. We need to build into our schedule time for spiritual refreshment, time when we can get further from the things that pull us down, and get nearer to God. We need time for prayer, Bible study, and quiet, serious meditation on the things of God. The nearer we live to God, the more these higher pleasures will attract us.

If we do this, we shall not return from our holidays with disquiet and distress written all over us because of holiday excesses. Instead, our holidays will have provided real Christian re-creation. ●●

MEGIDDO MESSAGE

SAY "YES!"

CHRISTIANITY is not a negative religion; it is a glorious Yes. Paul says this when he writes, "All the promises of God find their Yes in him" (II Cor. 1:20, RSV). Jesus Himself tells us that whoever hears His words and believes them passes from the negative side (which leads to death) to the positive one (which leads to life).

But when we say Yes to Christ and agree to let Him be the Lord and Ruler of our lives, we immediately realize there are negatives. For all that Christ would not approve must be denied or restrained or removed. The very fact that we must be *in* the world but not *of* it tells us that No is a very important word and a very important attitude of life. This is what Jesus said, "If any man will come after me, let him deny himself [say NO to self] and take up his cross daily, and follow me" (Luke 9:23).

Yet Christianity is a positive religion. This is because the Christian thinks in the positive. He thinks more of what He is gaining than what He is losing. He does not concentrate on *not* doing this or that, or *not* pursuing a pleasure that may be questionable, or *not* thinking about a particular matter or philosophy which might prove undermining to His Christian faith. Rather, he takes the positive approach. Do this, go there, think that, he tells himself; and if "this" and "there" and "that" are all compatible with Christ's life and interests, he has nothing to fear. He need give no conscious thought to the negative side. If I keep myself in suitable company, for example, I do not have to think about the company I must avoid. If I concentrate on always doing what I know to be part of my Christian duty, I do not have to concern myself with the thousand matters that may be questionable. If I consciously direct my thoughts to topics I am certain will prove beneficial and constructive, I don't have to worry about the

things I should not permit myself to think about.

It all adds up to putting first things first; facing the right direction, learning the lesson Paul spelled out when he wrote: "If you are then raised up with Christ, reach out for the highest gifts of Heaven. . . . Be concerned with the heavenly things, not with the passing things of earth. For, as far as this world is concerned, you are already dead" (Col. 3:1-3, Phillips).

Yet every man is tempted. Evil has a way of presenting itself unsummoned—hence our need for the little word No. Jesus used it. Paul used it. We need to use it. We do not know the particulars of Paul's temptations, but we know he had them, for he wrote: "Every athlete exercises self-control in all things. They do it to receive a perishable wreath, but we an imperishable. Well, I do not run aimlessly, I do not box as one beating the air; but I pommel my body and subdue it, lest after preaching to others I myself should be disqualified" (I Cor. 9:25-27, RSV).

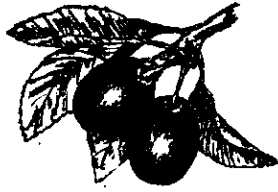
We find ourselves tempted by things around us. Defilement comes also from within. "For from within, out of the heart of men, proceed evil thoughts, adulteries, fornications," and all the evils that defile mankind (Mark 7:21-23). A critical review of our spiritual lives should prove worthwhile. And right at the onset most of us will have to admit guilt—unworthy thoughts are part of us by nature, thoughts so easily hidden from those around us but so open and known to God. When we say Yes to God and what He offers, the whole direction of our minds must be changed. Paul says it bluntly: "Those who live on the level of our lower natures have their outlook formed by it, and that spells death; but those who live on the level of the spirit have the spiritual outlook, and that is life and peace" (Rom. 8:6-7, NEB). To change oneself from the lower to the higher level means saying No many times.

So drastic is the change that Paul compared it to crucifixion. One of the most sublime statements in the Bible is Paul's own testimony on this matter, written when he was in the hottest of the battle. Said he, "I am crucified with Christ" (Gal. 2:20).

Saying Yes to the call of God means crucifixion with Christ, nothing less. And this means saying No to every selfish interest and petty rivalry—Christ lived above these things. It means saying No to the sudden impulse to anger when someone does not agree with us—Christ was self-controlled. It means saying No to the spirit of retaliation that flares within us all too easily when we have been

(Continued on page 17)

Fruitful Fragments



If your faith is worth having, it is worth sharing.

When God puts a burden upon you, He also puts His arms underneath you.

If you are not as close to God as you once were, you need not wonder who has moved.

You can never do right too soon, for you never know how soon it will be too late.

A little sin will add to your trouble, subtract from your energy, and multiply your difficulty.

God's Word should be our daily bread, not a delicacy for special occasions.

Put that thought and energy you use in hiding what you really are into becoming what you ought to be.

Apply thyself wholly to the Scriptures and the Scriptures wholly to thyself.

Sometimes we say more by speaking less.

Big things don't seem to be our greatest trouble. We stumble over pebbles, not mountains.

No garment is more becoming to the true child of God than the cloak of humility.

A good example is the world's best sermon.

It takes unfair treatment to test the Christian's consecration.

From A Reader in New York—

Sin Is Quack Grass!

AS I was trying patiently the other day to separate a tender strawberry plant from its vigorous quack grass assailant, I could think of no better comparison for those pernicious weeds that settle their roots deep in our own hearts. Sin is quack grass.

In this part of the country, quack grass is gardening Public Enemy Number One. I understand there are different names for the weed (like "couch" grass, and "scutch" grass, and "quick" grass), but only one word is necessary to describe its character: undefeatable! Cut it off, and two days later you will see its tender green blades shooting up again. Bury it roughly, and it is sure to think it has been planted. Chop it up, and you only multiply the potential of its creeping rootstock. Put it on the compost heap, cover it with several feet of leaves and soil and lawn clippings. Leave it to rot all summer and all winter—and watch! In the early spring you will see its smooth, bright-green shoots popping out in search of air and sunlight. There it is—quack grass!

There is only one way to get rid of it, and that is to dig deep and remove every inch of its long, ivory roots, and dispose of them. Any piece of root left behind is just one sure promise of more quack grass.

How related are our struggles with the weeds that spring up in our own hearts. There is that deep-rooted desire to be well thought of by those around us, a desire that threatens constantly to crowd out all reason and better judgment and compromise principle for popularity. It gets too tall. We break off the blade and cover it over—and out it shoots in another direction.

Or there is that feeling of security that goes with being not too *unlike* the world around us. After all, we tell ourselves, we must live *in* the world. We cover it over, telling ourselves that little things don't matter too much. But they *do* matter—and the weed continues to grow.

Our whole approach to life is self-oriented. This is all right, when we set our hearts toward God and His way. But underneath is the weed, branching out in all directions as we work to justify our opinions, or gratify our secret desires, or promote our own ideas. Cover the problem in one area, and it is sure to spring out in another. Bury it deep under heaps of good intentions and self-denying thoughts. But it is only a matter of time before the tender shoots of the growing weed will betray our lack of diligence—the root was still alive.

There is only one way to get rid of the weeds of sin. No need to try coaxing them not to grow, or breaking off the part that shows and leaving the rest, or pulling out what pulls easily and stopping there. You have to tear up the ground around the weed and dig deep until you have searched out every inch of its long, sharp roots. For, believe me, sin is quack grass! ●●

The Antique Desk

RAY Quinley whistled as he entered the rear entrance and storage room of Whitsett's Antique Shoppe.

He was half an hour early for work, but he planned to start right in without charging Mr. Whitsett an extra cent. The part-time job cleaning up and making deliveries wasn't much, but it would make it possible for Ray to go to school in the fall. For that he was very grateful to the shop owner and wanted to show his appreciation.

"Good morning, Mr. Whitsett," he smiled.

"You here already?" the older man questioned, checking his watch.

"I had some deliveries left from Monday," Ray explained. "It'll be nine by the time I get the truck loaded."

Mr. Whitsett grunted. "Just so it doesn't cost me."

Ray was looking for a lamp in the back of the storage room when he heard Mr. Whitsett's voice again.

"A beautiful piece of furniture! I want to get it right out in the window."

"You'd never guess it was only fifteen years old to look at it," another voice said.

"I wouldn't believe it myself if I hadn't bought it from my sister."

Ray found the lamp and carried it to the truck. On the way he passed the desk Mr. Whitsett and the other man had been discussing. *It is beautiful all right*, thought Ray, *but how could it be only fifteen years old?* It looked even older than some of the other furniture in Mr. Whitsett's shop. Ray shrugged and started on his deliveries.

It was after eleven when he returned. "Anything else to go out?"

"Not yet," Mr. Whitsett told him. "You can dust the merchandise out front. Be careful, though. Some of that china is worth hundreds of dollars and I wouldn't want it broken."

Dusting was the one part of the job Ray didn't like. He always thought of dusting as girl's work.

He took care of the furniture in the front window first, hoping no one would see him. A customer came in just as he was dusting the new desk.

"Good morning," the lady said.

"Good morning," Ray answered, stuffing the cloth into a rear pocket.

"I noticed that desk from the street," the lady went on. "I don't think I've ever seen it before."

"No, ma'am," Ray agreed. "We just got it this morning."

Mr. Whitsett emerged from the office and walked toward them. "Sorry to keep you waiting; I was on the phone."

"Quite all right," the lady smiled. "This young man was just showing me this desk. I understand it's a new piece in your store."

"Very new," Ray volunteered. "At least for an antique."

"What's that?" the lady questioned.

"It's only fifteen years old," Ray explained. "That would be old for new furniture, but it's real *new* for an antique! Right, Mr. Whitsett?"

The shop owner's face was flushed and he stared at Ray with narrowed eyes. "Wait for me in the office, Quinley," he ordered.

"But..." Ray began, frowning. He walked to the office, puzzled.

"Is it really only fifteen years old?" he heard the lady ask Mr. Whitsett. "Someone has done a marvelous job of artificially aging it, but I was looking for something a bit more authentic. Thank you."

Mr. Whitsett stormed into the office. "That big mouth of yours just cost me five hundred dollars!"

"W-What?" Ray stammered. "How?"

"Why'd you tell that lady the desk was only fifteen years old?"

"Isn't it?" Ray questioned. "I heard some man this morning say it was that old."

"You heard nothing!" Mr. Whitsett corrected.

"Understand?"

"Not exactly."

"Your job is delivery and cleaning—nothing else," Mr. Whitsett snapped. "You had no business talking to that customer. Anything you hear out

back you forget, and furthermore, try not to hear anything!"

"Yes, sir," Ray agreed. "But that desk..."

"I'm selling that desk as a collector's item. Any more questions?"

Ray swallowed. "I guess not."

"Good. Then we understand each other. Go to lunch now, there'll be a lot of deliveries this afternoon."

Ray shrugged and headed across the street to the cafeteria. It wasn't *his* business if Mr. Whitsett sold fake antiques. And he did owe Mr. Whitsett a lot for hiring him; maybe his whole education, Ray decided.

After lunch he walked back and stopped in front of the shop window. His boss wasn't in sight, so Ray went inside and took a closer look at the desk.

"You work here?" a voice asked.

"What? Yes, sir," Ray replied, facing the man. "Just a minute, I'll get the owner. He can help you."

"I'm interested in this desk."

"I just work in the back," Ray explained. "Let me find Mr. Whitsett." He started for the office just as Mr. Whitsett came out of the storage room. "There's a customer out front," Ray whispered. "He's looking at the desk."

"Be right with you," Mr. Whitsett called out. "Did you tell him anything?" he hissed at Ray.

"No, sir," said Ray, quietly.

"Good boy," Mr. Whitsett smiled. "You catch on real quick. The afternoon deliveries are all ready to go except for that end table next to the display up front."

"Sorry to keep you waiting," Mr. Whitsett said to the customer. "Understand you like the desk in the window."

"You don't see too many like this one. How old is it?"

Ray grimaced, then picked up the end table and started out.

"We figure not quite two hundred years," said the owner. Then turning to Ray, "Isn't that what I said this morning?"

Ray could feel his face burning. It was one thing to pretend he didn't know what was happening, but Mr. Whitsett was asking *him* to lie!

"Well, son?" the customer smiled.

Ray swallowed. "Not quite two hundred years," he repeated.

The man looked satisfied, but Ray couldn't let it go that easily. "More like fifteen years," he went on.

"What?" the man frowned.

"Quinley!"

"Fifteen years. But it's as good as a real antique," Ray continued, avoiding Mr. Whitsett's eyes. "Better, really, because the wood's not as old. It'll hold up a lot longer." He stopped talking abruptly and hurried out the back of the shop.

Ray had always enjoyed making deliveries before, but now it was different; probably because he was sure this was the last time. Mr. Whitsett would fire him when he returned, that much was certain. But somehow Ray didn't regret what he had said.

He drove around the block three times before pulling into the alley. Quietly, Ray parked the truck and started to slip past the door but...

"Quinley, come into my office!"

Ray shrugged. He might as well get it over with.

"Why'd you tell that man the desk was only fifteen years old?"

"Because it is," Ray said simply.

"I thought we had an understanding," Mr. Whitsett said.

"But I couldn't say that desk was two hundred years old when it isn't—that's lying."

"I suppose you'd do the same thing again."

Ray nodded. "Yes, I would. You'd better find somebody else to work for you, Mr. Whitsett, somebody that isn't trying to be a Christian. I just can't tell something that isn't so, I just can't do it."

"Don't you need a job? I'd like for you to stay on, Ray, if you will."

"Ah—ah—what?"

"That man was from the Better Business Bureau," Mr. Whitsett went on. "He knew the desk was a phony, and that's why he came in. Your honesty may have kept me from losing my license, or paying a fine, or even going to jail."

Ray was astounded. "All that?"

"All that," the shop owner said. "Most of my antiques are authentic, Ray. I've just been selling a few fakes recently. One of my friends convinced me it was an easy way to make more money. So I thought I'd try it."

"Not so much of a friend."

"I'm through doing business with him. What's more, I'm contacting all the people who bought the phony stuff. They can either bring the pieces back or keep them at a reduced rate."

Ray smiled. "Congratulations!" He thrust his hand forward to Mr. Whitsett.

"Thank you," Mr. Whitsett smiled also. And I do mean, thank you!"

"Then I'll be seeing you Friday."

"No, I won't be needing you part time anymore."

(Continued on page 17)

Questions

"Who will be judged when Christ comes? Will those who received divine judgment during their lifetime be resurrected and brought back for more punishment? What about Korah, or the Sodomites, or Uzzah?"

Many statements in the Bible would indicate that Christ's judgment will be for those who have agreed to serve God and live by His law. The apostle Paul confirms this in I Thessalonians 4:16 with the words: "the dead in Christ shall rise first: then we which are alive and remain shall be caught up together with them in the clouds, to meet the Lord in the air." Notice that it is the *dead in Christ*, not all the dead, which shall be raised for judgment.

In Jesus' parable of the Talents, the master called his own servants and committed unto them his property; and on his return, the master reckoned with *them* (Matt. 25:14). This would indicate that the master (Christ) held responsible only those individuals to whom he had entrusted the care of his estate in his absence.

Paul's statement in Romans 2:12 is also enlightening. "For as many as have sinned without law shall also perish without law: and as many as have sinned in the law shall be judged by the law." Those who sin outside the law will never be held accountable to the law; those who sin under the law, knowing the law, and being responsible to the law, shall be judged by the law.

Concerning those who received divine judgment during their lifetime, we have no specific information. It seems unlikely that the inhabitants of Sodom and Gomorrah were under covenant with God; hence, they would not be called to appear at Christ's Judgment. God destroyed them for their extreme wickedness and immorality, just as He will destroy many of the present inhabitants of the earth during the battle of Armageddon. Anyone who will submit will, of course, be spared. But as the book of Jude tells us, "Sodom and Gomorrah, and the cities about them in like manner, giving themselves over to fornication, and going after

strange flesh, are set forth for an example, suffering the vengeance of eternal fire" (Jude 7). Their destruction should serve as a dramatic reminder of the fate awaiting all who refuse to heed the warning call of God.

In regard to Korah, Dathan and Abiram, also Uzzah, we have no way of knowing whether they as individuals were under covenant with God or not. Seeing that they were "princes of the assembly, famous in the congregation, men of renown, who were challenging the authority of Moses and Aaron, it seems probable that they may have been under covenant. At least they felt themselves qualified to lead and govern Israel politically and spiritually. But the Bible does not say just what was their status. We do know, however, that judgment was pronounced upon them for their rebellion and they were executed at the time. Uzzah, being the son of Abinadab in whose house the Ark had rested for some time, may very possibly have been under covenant with God also, being so closely associated with the sacred articles as he seems to have been. But again we are not told. We know only that he had no right to touch the Ark. His death was a severe lesson to show people then and now that God means exactly what He says. Whether these people will appear at the future Judgment depends on the relationship they established with God. And whatever that be, we can be sure that God is just and whatsoever He does will be right.●

READ for Your LIFE!

HISTORY OF THE MEGIDDO MISSION
THE COMING OF JESUS AND ELIJAH
WHAT MUST WE DO TO BE SAVED?

GOD'S SPIRITUAL CREATION

THE KINGDOM OF GOD

THE GREAT APOSTASY

AFTER DEATH, WHAT?

THE DEVIL AND HELL

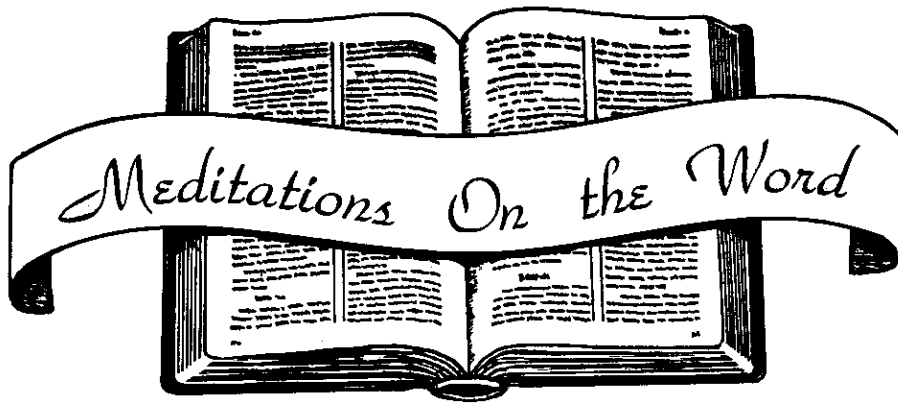
TRINITY OR UNITY?

THE HOLY SPIRIT

THE ATONEMENT

THE SABBATH

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"Now the just shall live by faith: but if any man draw back, my soul shall have no pleasure in him. But we are not of them who draw back unto perdition; but of them that believe to the saving of the soul"
—Hebrews 10:38-39.

THAT faith is an indispensable element in the life of a Christian is evident from the great number of times its importance is stressed throughout the Scriptures. Anyone familiar with the workings of the world of finance knows what an important place there is filled by the element of faith. That this same principle of confidence should hold good in our relation to the Eternal and the rewards He has offered, is but reasonable. True, we have never looked upon the face of God or heard His voice, yet we have very good reasons to believe such a Being exists. To disbelieve it would be to take the untenable position that the visible universe with its symmetry and smoothness of working, the earth, and the myriads of varied forms of life upon it, all came about by accident. We then should witness the phenomenon of a creation without a Creator, a design without a Designer, direction without a Director, effect without Cause.

We may refuse to accept the Bible as the Word of God on the grounds that its claim of divine authorship cannot be backed up by other contemporaneous writings, depending solely on the statements of its authors, who—though honest—may have been misled zealots, ascribing natural phenomena to the divine. But to establish the Authority of the Book it is not even necessary to search back to its beginnings; it proves itself true when taken at face value. The lofty, straightforward character of its teachings at once demonstrates to an open mind that it does not reflect the thought-pattern of the age in which it was produced—for example, compare the Bible with Homer's "Iliad"—and even today it is still far ahead of the times.

When the Old Testament was written, polytheism was the popular belief among the most cultured peoples of the time; yet Moses and the prophets of Israel, without exception, declared unequivocally there is but one God who made heaven and earth, and created all things.

Even before astronomers were speculating whether or not the sun, moon and stars were merely lights hung in the sky, periodically lighted and extinguished, the prophets divinely inspired had knowledge of the magnitude of the heavenly constellations, and of the greatness of the Hand that created them.

Quite recently scientists have begun to suggest that other heavenly bodies are inhabited by intelligent beings similar to the human family, while 1900 years ago the Apostle made it plain that he worshiped a God by whom the whole family in heaven and earth is named (Eph. 3:14-15).

At the time the Bible was written it was universally believed the earth was flat—and indeed it has been scarcely a hundred years since this belief had many supporters—yet the words of the prophet Isaiah have been on record over 2500 years to the effect that the earth is a sphere: "He sits over the round earth, so high" (40:22, Moffatt).

*"Of all the books that mortals wrote
Not one struck true perfection's note,"*

yet perfection of character is the lofty theme maintained all through the divine writings. God said to Abraham, "Walk before me and be thou perfect" (Gen. 17:1); and Jesus, in the first century, declared: "Be ye therefore perfect, even as your Father which is in heaven is perfect" (Matt. 5:48).

The conclusions of self-confident men, educated above the average for their time, have always been accepted as authority in their respective lines, while the Book declares that man at his best estate is only vanity, that his wisdom is foolishness with the Almighty, and that God's thoughts are as much higher than his thoughts as the heavens are higher than the earth. This position alone proves conclusively that the Bible is not of human origin, for man could not be induced to so belittle himself.

Now that we have established a premise in favor of faith in the Bible as the Word of God, let us meditate further on the importance of that faith at such a time as this. In the 1st verse of Hebrews 11 we read, "Now faith is the substance ['ground or confidence'—margin] of things hoped for, the evidence of things not seen." We have not yet received the reward of immortality or seen anyone who has. Our bodies are still mortal, corruptible; we are subject to disappointment, old age, disease and death. Our only ground for confidence that we can escape these limitations of mortality and live for ever comes through our faith in the promises of God. But this faith, to be a moving factor in our lives, must be so strong it will admit no doubt; for "the just shall live by his faith." A living, active faith is the thing the just man lives by, hence he cannot possess life or be a spiritually animate being without it.

This living faith promotes action, and continuity of action. To surge ahead for a spell, and then halt, or recede and draw back, will get us nowhere. The words of the Apostle in I Thess. 4:1 are clear and forceful: "Furthermore then we beseech you, brethren, and exhort you by the Lord Jesus, that as ye have received of us how ye ought to walk and to please God, so ye would abound more and more." Stagnant water would be unfit to quench one's thirst. Likewise a stagnant Christian is of no use to the Eternal; growth and action are indispensable virtues. The only faith that will avail is a faith that worketh by love, a faith buttressed by works of righteousness.

The statement in Hebrews 11:6 that "without faith it is impossible to please him" is but another way of saying that if any man draws back the Almighty will have no pleasure in him. This warning against drawing back unto perdition seems especially fitting for our day. Some nineteen centuries have elapsed since God communed audibly with men through the medium of angels, hence the attitude has developed that His voice will never again be heard on this earth. Scoffers have arisen, 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. 3:4). "But," continues the Apostle, "the day of the Lord will come as a thief in the night"; a thief to those who are not looking for Him. Now is the time to hold on to our "confidence which hath great recompense of reward," to believe that He that "shall come will come, and will not tarry," and spend every moment preparing for that auspicious event.

It is a time to keep our faith in lively exercise, our lamps filled with the oil of a firm belief in God's promises and our lights brightly burning, our confidence in His divine promises unshaken, with our watchword for victory the firm determination that we will not be of those who "draw back unto perdition, but of them that believe to the saving of the soul." ●●

Say "YES!"

(Continued from page 11)

wronged—when Christ was reviled, He reviled not again. It means saying No to ourselves in a thousand details of every day that threaten to hinder our spiritual life and draw us away from Christ.

But it opens the door to countless Yeses. It means a new, higher way to fulfillment; a new, more stable set of standards; a new, holier code of ethics; a new, happier way of life. And it means that when we are called before the Judgment seat of Christ, we will find Him ready to give us an everlasting Yes: "Come, ye blessed of my Father, inherit the Kingdom prepared for you." ●●

The Antique Desk

(Continued from page 14)

Ray's mouth dropped open and he stared at Mr. Whitsett. "But I thought you said..."

"I won't be needing you part time anymore," the shop owner repeated. "I'll be able to use you full time until you have to leave for school in September. Be here tomorrow morning. All right?"

"Yes, sir!" was Ray's enthusiastic response. "Full time!" ●●

Holy IS as Holy DOES

(Continued from page 7)

hast royal blood in thy veins, and art the son of God, except thou canst prove thy pedigree by being holy."

Is it not true that we need frequently to check on ourselves? How is our standard of personal holiness today? What are we demanding of ourselves in holy accomplishment? Where is our patience? How is our zeal? our love? Where is the power of our religion? Where is that unmistakable tone which used to distinguish the saints of old? Has our silver become dross, our wine mixed with water, our salt without savor? Are we more than half-asleep? The night is far spent, the day is at hand. Let us open our eyes more widely than we have done before. "Let us lay aside every weight, and the sin which doth so easily beset us, and let us run with patience the race that is set before us" (Heb. 12:1).

Oh, where is the spirit of Him who was crucified unto the world and the world to Him?

How can we read, "Be ye holy, for I am holy," without feeling a strong desire to be more single-eyed, more heavenly-minded, more wholehearted than we are? We need more of the pilgrim spirit, a more decided separation from the world, more interest in the world to come, a closer walk with God.

Does the goal of "perfect holiness" seem beyond us? It is not. The God who created us knows our capabilities, and He will never ask what we cannot give. He asks only that we do that which will bring us the most creative dimensions of fulfillment and meaning and satisfaction in this life, and will give us eternal life in the future.

Should we not be willing—even anxious—to obey a God who offers so much, to perfect that which is lacking in *our* holiness in the fear of God? This is the only route to becoming a partaker of the divine nature. It is the only way to becoming part of that "holiness" which "becometh thy house, O Lord, forever."

Are *you* holy? Am *I*?

It is the question of the Old Testament: "Who shall ascend into the hill of the Lord? or who shall stand in his holy place?" Then the answer is given: Only he who has clean hands and a pure heart, who pays no heed to falsehood, nor swears falsely. "He that doeth these things shall never be moved." ●●

Our Readers Write...

More Watchful?

Wouldn't it be wonderful to be more on the alert and more watchful, and never get upset? Wouldn't it be wonderful to have our thoughts all centered on divine things? Well, we will be doing this if we are really expecting our Lord to come.

Nothing here on earth really belongs to us now; we only have the use of these things and enjoy them while we are here. All is only temporary, and we are to make the most of our opportunity, to do our best whatever we do, whether physical work or spiritual.

Milton, Iowa

E. T.

Seeking Happiness

With so many material blessings today, it should mean much happiness; but it seems to work in the opposite direction for the teen-agers of today. Too many of them look to drugs and alcohol for happiness. What happiness they could have if they only would study the vision John wrote about on Patmos. He writes that God will wipe away tears from the redeemed eyes. No more sadness, or sickness, or sorrow or sighing, and no more death! He says further that there will be no night there. Immortal bodies require no sleep. And think of visiting new worlds! Oh, to have so much room and so much time to enjoy the heavenly, holy joys of that time!

Davenport, Iowa

W. P.

Look to the Future

We must look to the future; the past is history. It is the future to which we must turn our thoughts and our energies. There was a certain man who was always looking down, hoping he would find a treasure, and all he had to do was to look up and he would see it there. That is the difference between people with a moral code and people without one. We must always be looking up.

*I slept and dreamt
That life was joy.
I awoke and saw
That life was duty.
I acted, and behold—
Duty was joy!*

Most of us would not think of going through the things the apostle Paul went through (II Cor. 11:24-28), and Paul could say, "Our light affliction, which is but for a moment, worketh for us a far more exceeding and eternal weight of glory." It was all joy to him because of the future.

Carrollton, Ohio

H. C. W.

Appreciative

I love your magazine, the *Megiddo Message*. I look forward to every copy. It meets my needs.

Knoxville, Tennessee

Mrs. O. W.

MEGIDDO MESSAGE

From A Reader—

We Are Tempted

We are not all tempted along the same line, but temptations we will have nonetheless. We have been called to please God and not man. As long as human nature is what it is, we will find that the giving up of our human tendencies will not come about naturally or easily. We will have to learn, often by the difficult way, that before accepting the mind of God we have to discard our own mind on every point.

Working out an acceptable character in the sight of God is a very serious business. It is true we are in the world, but we must not be a part of the world. Jesus managed to keep Himself separate from the world. His power was in his separateness. He lived in the midst of a crooked and perverse generation, yet He never became spotted by their evil ways. His close contact with men of crooked natures did not make Him in any way like them; on the contrary, He fully fortified Himself by keeping contact with His heavenly Father. We too must be separated with Him and keep on being separated, daily partaking of His holiness.

The natural man craves top positions. He must be recognized and applauded for his accomplishments or he is not happy. It must not be so with us. Before honor comes humility. God wants His people to be quietly working out their own salvation, away from the plaudits and shoutings of men and not even seek honor one of another. By humility and the fear of the Lord are riches and honor and life. Here is the path of righteousness to be pursued.

Our shortcomings are many, some more evident than others. They spring up without much prompting. If not strongly fortified by much self-denial and by a continual keeping of the thoughts and emotions in their proper place, we will fail miserably. How great is our need to cry daily, "Examine me, O Lord, and prove me: try my reins and my heart" (Ps. 26:2).

A Friend in New Jersey



A man learns the most with his ears open and his mouth closed.

August, 1976

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O God, Send Us!

*Eternal God, whose power upholds
Both flower and flaming star,
To whom there is no here nor there,
No time, no near or far,
No alien race, no foreign shore,
No place unsought, unknown,
O send us forth, as prophets true,
To those whom Thou shalt own.*

*O God of truth, whom science seeks
And rev'rent souls adore,
Who lightest ev'ry earnest mind
Of ev'ry clime and shore,
Dispel the gloom of error's night,
Of ignorance and fear,
Until true wisdom from above
Shall make life's pathway clear.*

*O God of beauty, oft revealed
In dreams of lofty art,
In speech that flows to melody,
In holiness of heart;
Teach us to ban all ugliness
That blinds our eyes to Thee,
Till all shall know the loveliness
Of lives spent near to Thee.*

*O God of righteousness and grace,
Seen in the Christ, Thy Son,
Whose perfect life revealed Thy way,
In whom Thy will was done,
Inspire Thy heralds of good news
To live Thy life divine,
Till Christ shall rule o'er all mankind
And every land is Thine!*

—Selected