



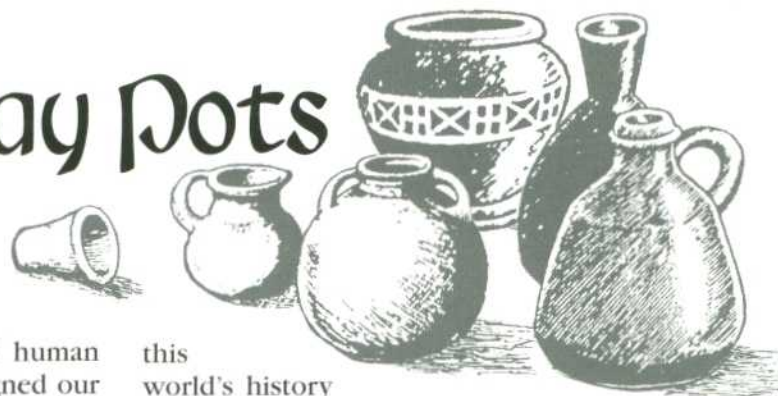
Megiddo Message

*Let your lives be fruitful
in every kind of good action.*

—The Apostle Paul (Col. 1:10)

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Common Clay Pots



Some things are guaranteed not to chip, crack, or break, but human beings are not on that list. God has designed our bodies with marvelous abilities to rebuild and renew themselves. But when disease strikes, there is sometimes little the body can do to fight back. Suddenly we are struck with the fact that we are indeed clay, that the words of the apostle Paul fit us: "We have this treasure in earthen vessels" (II Cor. 4:7). Other translations read "perishable earthenware," "fragile earthen pots," "utensils of mere clay," "pots of earthenware"—common clay pots.

No doubt about the nature of the clay. It is fragile. But the treasure!—here is something else. Here is matchless, eternal wisdom, the "word of our God" which shall "stand for ever" (Isa. 40:6-8). Here is the wisdom by which He "founded the earth" and "established the heavens" (Prov. 3:19). It is the wisdom that is from above, that is "first pure then peaceable, gentle, and easy to be intreated, full of mercy and good fruits, without partiality and without hypocrisy" (James. 3:17). It is wisdom whose price is above rubies, for "in her left hand are riches and honor," and in her right hand "length of days" (Prov. 3:13-18).

What strange and wonderful contents for common clay pots! But this is the way God planned it. This is the way He designed it, "that the excellency of the power may be of God, and not of us" (II Cor. 4:7). This extraordinary treasure includes many jewels of knowledge, priceless jewels. There is the knowledge of the new world God is going to set up right here on earth; knowledge of His entire plan of salvation, and of how we may participate in that plan. Sparkling jewels are each of these, and *we have this treasure!*

Very soon the great plan will be consummated. One of these days we shall see the great work begin openly, and all that God has promised will be marvelously fulfilled. The prophet Elijah will arrive, and from that moment forward all will be different, new, climatic!

What a privilege to know in advance of the destiny of our earth, to know that all the events of

this world's history are moving slowly, steadily toward the great culmination. It is treasure, rich spiritual treasure with priceless value. Our Lord described it in His prayer: "Thy kingdom come, thy will be done on earth as it is in heaven." Here is knowledge that outglitters and outglows and outlasts everything else on earth.

Such is the treasure. And what about the clay pot? Even it has its marvels—designed by God. Packaged together we have an intellect to reason, hands that can work, ears that can hear, and a mind that can comprehend. Altogether it makes up a common clay pot. And in this pot God has placed His treasure.

The problem is that clay pots chip, crack, and break. What can we do about it? There is much we can do about it. In fact, the possibilities are magnificent, because God is the designer, even of the simple clay pot!

We are all familiar with the external forces that threaten us. But God has provided something better for us, if we make ourselves according to His standard, if we cleanse and purify our hearts according to His law. For He can change our vile body—our common clay pot—into something eternal, something age lasting, something that resembles His own glorious body (Phil. 3:20-21). "For this corruptible must put on incorruption, and this mortal must put on immortality. So when this corruptible shall have put on incorruption, and this mortal shall have put on immortality, then shall be brought to pass the saying that is written, Death is swallowed up in victory. O death, where is thy sting? O grave, where is thy victory?" (I Cor. 15:53-55).

Our duty now is to make the most and the best of the clay pot God has given us, to be a fit receptacle for the heavenly treasure. This accomplished, let us pray that He may count us fit for higher and eternal service, and a new vessel that is guaranteed forever against anything that might hurt or harm us, world without end. □

Megiddo means

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

We believe ...

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

Soon-coming events

The Herald and the KING

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

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

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

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Megiddo Message

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The Kingdom of God— When?

Part One

*The message of
the Kingdom
is a summons,
a challenge
to moral
regeneration.*

*T*he Kingdom of God on earth is the heart of the Lord's prayer, indeed of the whole Bible. For thousands of years it has been the theme of believers, for eternity past the thought of God.

How will the Kingdom come? When will it come, or is it here now?

Human conceptions—and misconceptions—of the subject are multiple and varied. To one class it is an invisible, spiritual influence in the heart. They think that the ideal state or Eutopia may come through natural development and the evolution of society. But current events raise doubt as to the Kingdom coming that way. Two great world wars and almost countless subsequent wars have been a shock to those holding a belief in inevitable progress. Human-kind do, indeed, build up, but they also tear down and destroy.

Again, there are those who count not on any natural development or progress but on a great expansion of the Church which some claim was established on the day of Pentecost.

But the imperfect condition of the human heart, added to the many failures of the Church through the ages do not give to the Church the stamp of divinity. If this be the Kingdom of God, after nearly two thousand years of operation, then we may fairly question the wisdom and power of its King.

Human speculations only militate against intelligent reasoning and observation. For an answer we must turn to the Book, our only source of reliable information concerning God's future for our race. There the subject of the Kingdom is introduced in Genesis, and not until we have studied every one of God's sixty-six Letters, concluding with John's appeal for the return of the King ("Even so, come, Lord Jesus"), can we have a complete understanding of this all-embracing, all-pervading theme.

Bible history contributes substantially to a true conception of the Kingdom. There we see the very soul of the patriarchs and of the nation of Israel rooted deep in the hope of the rule of God on earth. This hope was born of God and nurtured by Him; and by Him it shall most certainly be fulfilled. Enoch knew that the Lord would come as Judge and Conqueror (Jude 14-15). Abraham's eyes were strained forward to that future land which shall be his everlasting possession, to that City whose Builder and Maker is God (Gen. 17:8; Heb. 11:10). Job knew that a Redeemer would stand at the latter day upon the earth (19:25). Israel under the rule of the kings, with temple and throne at Jerusalem, was itself an object lesson giving clearer definition to this hope. Captivity could not quench it; the

visions of Daniel marked more specifically the time of its fulfillment. Not at the first advent of the Messiah, as many erroneously believed and still maintain; not until the last vestige of the Roman Empire was swept into nonentity as chaff of the summer threshing floor (Daniel 2) would the Kingdom be established.

The message of the Ascension injected new vitality into the hope of the New Testament Church: This Jesus which is taken away *shall come again* (Acts 1:11). The believers were captured by hope and went everywhere proclaiming Jesus Christ—crucified, resurrected, ascended to heaven and *coming again* (Acts 3:19–23). Thus Bible history from first to last points to the Church's redemption, the earth's transformation: the Kingdom of God.

Upon that Kingdom Bible prophecy focuses. It was the climax of the creation allegory in Genesis; it was the eternal reality of which the temporal theocracy of Israel was type and shadow; it was the theme of David's song, Isaiah's prophecies, Daniel's dreams, Zechariah's visions. It was the theme of Jesus' ministry and the main teaching of His apostles. And finally, the writer of Revelation attempted a portrayal of the new world he saw in vision. In his description, sorrow, pain, evil, death have vanished and in their place is fullness of ineffable joy. No gem or precious stone is too bright to describe it, no sun whose light does not pale beside its glory. Joy is heaped upon joy in a mighty crescendo of language until language can bear no more and there arises, as it were, a grand "Hallelujah Chorus": "and they shall reign for ever and ever" (22:5). It is the Kingdom of God triumphant and eternal at history's end. Thus the Bible closes with an

echo of the theme which has been dominant in it from beginning to end: the coming Kingdom of God.

The devotion of every sacred writer to this theme establishes its importance; the matchless unity of all their utterances stamps it with divinity. As under the direction of one Master Artist, each individual writer contributes to the beauty of the whole, each elaborates and embellishes what has gone before so that the canvas is colored with the hues of heaven.

So vast is the picture—so misrepresented by an ill-informed clergy, so misunderstood by a credulous laity—that it cannot be easily described.

To the Lord's Prayer, familiar to all Christendom, let us go for an introduction.

"Thy kingdom come." He who was born to be King taught His disciples and all succeeding generations to pray for the Kingdom to come. With the location of the Kingdom so clearly designated, is it not inconsistent to chant the simple line and at the same time believe we go to heaven at death?

"Thy will be done in earth, as it is in heaven." If the Kingdom has come, as many postulate, then we ought to be witnessing currently a state of affairs parallel to those which exist in heaven. The obvious absurdity of any such idea leads forthrightly to the Biblical fact: The Kingdom is yet future.

The prayer goes further in its implication to teach what manner of persons shall compose the Kingdom: those who will do God's will as it is done in heaven. Can we imagine any interruption there in performing the Father's will because of sin, any ineffectiveness because of weakness, any resistance because of temptation, any flaw because of ignorance, any pause because of weariness, any

pain because of rebellion? Can we imagine anything but love and brotherhood, peace and harmony there? As His will is done in heaven, so it shall be on earth when the Kingdom comes.

This fact leads us to a conclusion alarming, revolutionary, rousing: *I as an individual must do the Father's will if I expect to participate in that future heaven on earth.*

At once the subject of the Kingdom becomes more than fanciful dreaming of a Utopian world. It becomes a summons, a challenge to moral regeneration here and now. The message of the Kingdom is *a way of life*, rather, THE way of life.

How does one enter? One seeks that Kingdom above every other interest in life (Matt. 6:33). One sells all that he has of opposing interests to secure the admission fee (Matt. 13:45–46). One lives in a constant attitude of preparedness for the return of the King (Luke 12:35–36).

The central theme of Scripture is the Kingdom of God. Physical, glorious, eternal, it is the unifying note, the binding cord, uniting the central thought of all the scriptural writers who in turn were moved by one directive—the mind of God. By letting them interpret their allegories, similes, dreams and parables, we can obtain a pattern four-square, significant and accurate.

However, interpretations of Scripture have resulted in a wide diversity of opinions, ranging from a mere figure of speech or a place in the human heart to a state or condition of the Church, or some ethereal and indefinable abode on high. Likewise the time of its establishment has been placed in various periods, from the day of Pentecost to specific dates in our present century.



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Various attempts to determine an exact date for the Second Advent—expressly forbidden by Jesus (Mark 13:32)—have resulted in much disillusionment, skepticism and confusion until a modern writer says, “We live in that endtime between...a kingdom which is present and which we may enter, and a Kingdom we can neither be nor create.” He expresses it as an “ever coming Kingdom,” though he who seeks it “can never see the ineffable glory of the rule of God triumphant on earth; nor can all his efforts usher it in.”

How utterly tragic if noble men and women through the ages—such as the unflinching Jeremiah, the heroic Antipas, the valiant Paul, the King Himself, who dedicated their lives to this loftiest goal of seeking the Kingdom, and many who submitted to the horrible death of the martyr rather than relinquish their hope shall have lived and died in vain! How utterly divested of hope and purpose should the present-day Christian be if he could not rely implicitly upon such Scriptural certitudes as Luke 13:28 which bears the definite assurance that faithful ones will actually come and sit down with Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob in the Kingdom of heaven (Matt. 8:11). This and numerous other pointed passages permit no evading of the glorious Scriptural fact that God’s Kingdom—literal and not mythical, visible and not imaginary, physical and not spiritual—shall be established on earth.

★ **The Question: When?**

God once had a kingdom upon earth with Saul established as the first king. The boundaries of that kingdom were extended by David. It reached its zenith with Solomon in all his glory, the splendor and magnificence of whose temple and reign was such that the queen of Sheba said the half of it had not been told.

That temporal kingdom, a mere shadow of the eternal future realm, was, as foretold by Ezekiel, to be “overturned, overturned, overturned”—three times,

to be no more “until he come whose right it is; and I will give it him” (21:27).

The promise of the restoration of an overthrown kingdom appears again in the New Testament. “After this I will return, and will build again the tabernacle of David, which is fallen down; and I will build again the ruins thereof, and I will set it up: that the residue of men might seek after the Lord, and all the Gentiles, upon whom my name is called, saith the Lord, who doeth all these things” (Acts 15:16-17).

Contrary to the false hope of blinded millions who vainly dream of going to heaven at death, Jesus said He was as a nobleman going into a far country to receive a Kingdom and after a long time to return (Luke 19:11-12; Matt. 25:19). This assures us that Christ is to be the King of that realm, and that earth is to be His domain, but our question is still unanswered: *When* is that Kingdom to be established?

★ **After Six Days**

In the Genesis allegory is an indication of when this Kingdom will be established. When the Son of God at last receives His promised inheritance of the Kingdom, God rests. And when, according to the Genesis allegory, shall this rest begin? After His work—logically—has been completed. We read, “God finished on the sixth day those his works which he had made; and on the seventh day he desisted from all these works of his which he had made” (Gen. 2:1-2, Septuagint Version).

A Bible rule for calculating time as stated by Peter—“One day is with the Lord as a thousand years” (II Pet. 3:8)—expands the allegorical six days to 6,000 years. The man made in God’s image, the church, is to be finished at the end of the six days or 6,000 years. On the seventh day when God rests He turns the project over to the man made in His image, of whom His Son is the glorious Head. This is Moses’ style of describing the Kingdom which shall be established at the end of a period of 6,000 years.

★After Four Universal Empires

The prophet Daniel arose to the summit of his mortal career when the proud empire of Babylon was at the height of its glory. In that splendid court and before the magnificent throne of Nebuchadnezzar Daniel made known his immortal interpretation of the king's mysterious dream of the great metallic image. In that dream four world empires were represented, each to be successively destroyed or dissolved. And this interpretation was given when only the first of these empires was in existence. In the head of gold was represented the soon-to-be vanquished Babylonian Empire. Silver breast and arms indicated Medo-Persian pre-eminence. This was followed by the brazen-coated Greeks, represented in the belly and thighs of brass. The last phase of the image—legs of iron and feet part of iron and part of clay—prefigured the iron rule of the Romans; the inclusion of clay suggesting the long, lingering stages of degeneracy. Each occurred just as foretold.

When the image of human rule should be completed, what should be its destiny? According to the dream, a stone cut without hands would destroy and scatter the image. Then the stone would become a great mountain which would fill the whole earth. Thus Daniel and his contemporaries, along with all who would read the prophecies in the ages to come, would know that down in the last extremity of the fourth universal kingdom there would be a change: A little stone cut out of the mountains without hands would smite the image—not in the head, nor the breast, nor the thigh, but upon the feet—down when the time allotted to these

human kingdoms should have expired.

"Then was the iron, the clay, the brass, the silver, and the gold, broken to pieces together, and became like the chaff of the summer threshingfloors; and the wind carried them away, that no place was found for them; and the stone that smote the image became a great mountain, and filled the whole earth" (Dan. 2:35).

The conclusion and climax of the prophecy is told in graphic language in verses 44-45: "And in [the completion of] the days of these kings the God of heaven shall set up a kingdom never to be swept away, with a sovereignty that shall never pass to others; it shall break all these kingdoms to bits and make an end of them, but it shall stand for ever, as you saw how the stone was hewn from the mountain by no human hands and how it broke to bits the iron, the bronze, the clay, the silver, the gold. A great God has told the king what is to happen in the future: the dream is certain, and its meaning sure" (Moffatt).

This Kingdom, superior to all the preceding kingdoms of men and everlasting in duration, will be

the fifth universal empire—God's eternal Kingdom on earth.

The time of the establishment of this kingdom is *after* the fourth and last of the universal empires has waxed and waned. The Roman Empire—fallen so many centuries ago from its iron zenith, divided, broken—has reached the state symbolized by the toes of the image: the iron is mixed with miry clay. Numerous ambitious generals—Hannibal, Napoleon, Mussolini, Hitler, Stalin and all their aspiring successors—cannot by the most clever strategy or the most sophisticated weapons establish a fifth world empire, for the God of Heaven long ago decreed that His kingdom would follow the *fourth* empire of man. "In the days of those kings the God of the heavens shall set up a kingdom which shall never be destroyed, nor shall the kingdom be left to another people; it shall break in pieces and annihilate all these kingdoms, but it shall stand forever" (Dan. 2:44, American Trans.).

This same marvelous foreknowledge of the rise and fall of empires is revealed again in Daniel 7, with the same grand climax. After the arising of four successive beasts out of the sea of nations (which parallel the four phases of the image), "the saints of the most High shall take the kingdom, and possess the kingdom for ever, even for ever and ever" (7:18).

In this vision, the descriptions of the beasts are significant. First, a lion indicates the strength and supremacy of Babylon. The second, a bear raised on one side, shows the second with a preliminary (Median) phase of lesser eminence and duration than the second (Persian)

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*While the busy day dies slowly
O'er the sea;
And the hour grows quiet and holy
With thoughts of Me.
E'er you slumber, go and do
What must be done,
For it may be in the evening
I will come.*

*As the evening shades grow longer
And the night
Descends to veil the hills
From mortal sight,
Behold, I say unto you, Watch!
Let the door be on the latch
In your home.
For it may be at the midnight
I will come.*

*When the house is hushed in slumber,
Quiet, still,
And the hours grow long and dreary,
Cold and chill,
Keep the door upon the latch
In your home.
In the chill before the dawning
'Twixt the midnight and morning
I may come.*

*Keep your faith lamps brightly burning
All the night,
As you wait through vigils long
The morning light.
Behold, I say unto you, Watch!
Let the door be on the latch
In your home.
For I soon will break the silence
And will come!*

phase. Next in the succession of beasts is the four winged leopard, in which can be seen Alexander's four generals who ruled the Grecian Empire after his premature death, also the speed with which he made his conquests.

The fourth beast of the vision, "dreadful and terrible, and strong exceedingly," has an identifying "little horn" — the papal outgrowth of the Roman Empire—which wore out the saints, changed God's times and laws, and "beat down true religion" (7:25; 8:12). When does all this come about? And what shall happen next? When shall the Kingdom be established? It follows next in sequence. For "the judgment shall sit, and they shall take away his [the little horn's] dominion.... And the kingdom and dominion, and the greatness of the kingdom under the whole heaven, shall be given to the people

of the saints of the most High, whose kingdom is an everlasting kingdom, and all dominions shall serve and obey him" (7:26-27).

We have found that the Kingdom of God will be established after the six days of man's rule, also after the fourth universal empire has flourished and declined. The vision in Daniel 7 indicates also another event which must precede God's Kingdom on earth. It is the apostasy, the 1,260 years of spiritual darkness or total departure from true religion, a work incited and carried to its dire culmination by the "little horn."

Jesus also includes this dark interlude in His outline of events which must precede the end. When our Lord sat upon the Mount of Olives, His disciples came to Him privately, seeking to know the sign of His coming and of the consummation of the age. There, in intimate discourse with His closest associates, He outlined events which should follow through oncoming centuries.

Reading through Matthew 24 (or the parallel chapter, Luke 21), we follow Jesus as He foretells the destruction of Jerusalem which some of their generation should witness (vs. 4-20).

Next in the great chain of events was to be the long dark period of apostasy: "For then shall be great tribulation, such as was not since the beginning of the world to this time, no, nor ever shall be. And except those days should be shortened, there should no flesh be saved: but for the elect's sake those days shall be shortened" (vs. 21-22).

Paul adds to the catalog of prophecy his prediction of the same event. In warning the Thessalonian brethren not to expect the consummation of the ages and Christ's return in glory during that era, he said, "Now with respect to the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ...let no man in any way deceive you, for it cannot come unless the apostasy comes first" (II Thess. 2:1-3, Weymouth). Paul knew that there was to be a falling away from the truth, from the faith once delivered to the saints.

Would the apostasy continue unbroken until the Second Advent, so that Christ at His return would find no living believers to welcome Him? No! Jesus in

the same discourse of Matthew 24 informed people of all coming ages that He would not return in glory until the "fig tree," long barren and unproductive, was again bearing fruit. In this illustration was Jesus' means of describing the renaissance of true religion after the apostasy. When that fig tree and other trees of the field bear the fruit of holiness, then, in Jesus' words, the Kingdom of God is "near, even at the doors" (v. 33).

But Jesus was also very careful to warn clearly that the exact time would still be unknown. "Of that day and hour knoweth no man, no, not the angels of heaven, but my Father only" (v.36).

Then follows the urgent warning: "Therefore be ye also ready: for in such an hour as ye think not, the Son of man cometh" (v. 44).

By yet another illustration Jesus indicates that the apostasy will end prior to His second advent. A cry at midnight would awaken a few virgins from their sleep to prepare to meet the Bridegroom at His return (Matt. 25:1-13).

★ *Signs of the End of the Age*

The life of the great apostle Paul was flaming with the fire of a boundless faith and an inflexible purpose, his goal: the Kingdom of God. He indicated that he had completed his moral preparation for it, when he said, "I have fought a good fight, I have finished my course, I have kept the faith: henceforth there is laid up for me a crown of righteousness, which the Lord, the righteous judge, shall give me at that day: and not to me only, but unto all them also that love his appearing" (II Tim. 4:7-8).

As to when that new government was to be set up on earth, he, like Jesus, made plain that the actual date was not revealed. "But of the times and the seasons, brethren, ye have no need that I

write unto you. For yourselves know perfectly that the day of the Lord so cometh as a thief in the night" (I Thess. 5:1-2). But that the living expectants should not be taken unawares, he continued, "For when they shall say, Peace and safety: then sudden destruction cometh upon them" (v. 3).

To us who live in this auspicious era and are cognizant of this momentous sign pointing to the imminence of the second advent, Paul addresses the words that follow: "But ye, brethren, are not in darkness, that that day should overtake you as a thief. Ye are all the children of light, and the children of the day: we are not of the night, nor of darkness. Therefore let us not sleep, as do others; but let us watch and be sober" (I Thess. 5:4-6).

Of all who prophesied as to when the Kingdom shall be established, He who is heir to its throne, being the most concerned, should be the most informed. The Pharisees had asked Jesus when the Kingdom should come. In answer He said, "The kingdom of God cometh not with observation: neither shall they say, Lo here! or, lo there! for, behold, the kingdom of God is within you" (Luke 17:20-21). This text is plainer when we learn that the phrase translated "within you" might also be rendered "among you, in your presence," alluding to His presence in their midst. Even if the Kingdom could be in the hearts of men, would it be in the hearts of those wicked Pharisees who were questioning Jesus? Jesus was alluding to the very presence of the King among them, though they were unaware. (The marginal reference in most Bibles gives as an alternate rendering, "among you".)

Jesus continues in Luke 17 to answer the question of when the Kingdom should come, using a

comparison with the time of Noah and the time of Lot:

"As it was in the days of Noe, so shall it be also in the days of the Son of man. They did eat, they drank, they married wives, they were given in marriage, until the day that Noe entered into the ark, and the flood came, and destroyed them all. Likewise also as it was in the days of Lot; they did eat, they drank, they bought, they sold, they planted, they builded; 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" (vs. 26-30). Here are signs portending the return of the King. When the world should arrive at a prevalent state of morals so low as that of Sodom, and such excessive pleasure seeking as in the Noachian times, we could look for His appearing to bring in the Kingdom. We need no statistics to convince us that this sign is amply fulfilled. Signs of the pleasure craze and of immorality cover our billboards; they infest the theaters, the movies, the gambling centers and casinos; they are piped into the homes of our nation by cable and video; they are displayed publicly at newsstands nationwide; they walk at large and unrestrained upon our streets. Of a truth, "the great day of the Lord is near,...and hasteth greatly" (Zeph. 1:14).

Luke 21 gives more indications of the time of the end: "And there shall be signs in the sun, and in the moon, and in the stars; and upon the earth distress of nations, with perplexity; the sea and the waves roaring; men's hearts failing them for fear, and for looking after those things which are coming on the earth: for the powers of heaven shall be shaken" (vs. 25-26), preliminary to their passing away with



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Get ready!*

a great noise which Peter foretells (II Pet. 3:10). When was the international scene ever more uncertain, perplexed, or unsettled! The political heavens are shaking indeed—a strong confirmation of the prophecy's fulfillment.

Although the day and hour is not for us to know, the times and seasons are obvious, for when this state of affairs exists, the following verses emphasize: "Then shall they see the Son of man coming in a cloud with power and great glory. And when these things begin to come to pass, then look up, and lift up your heads; for your redemption draweth nigh" (vs. 27-28).

☆ ***"Be Like Men Who Are Expecting Their Lord"***

What is to be the reaction of believers in times like these? Simply this: Be alert! Get ready!

Whenever the return of the King is mentioned, the message is to "Get ready!" Jesus' words in Luke 12 are direct. He first tells His listeners to make the seeking of that Kingdom their first business (v. 31), encouraging them if so doing, with the words, "Fear not, little flock; for it is your Father's good pleasure to give you the kingdom." Then follow verses 35-38 (Moffatt): "Keep your loins girt and your lamps lit, and be like men who are expecting their lord and master on his return from a marriage-banquet, so as to open the door for him at once when he comes and knocks. Blessed

are those servants whom the lord and master finds awake when he comes!

"Whether he come in the second or the third watch of the night and finds them thus alert, blessed are they!"

For preparation Peter urges the addition to our character of the Christian virtues which he lists categorically: "And beside this, giving all diligence, add to your faith virtue; and to virtue knowledge; and to knowledge temperance; and to temperance patience; and to patience godliness; and to godliness brotherly kindness; and to brotherly kindness charity. For if these things be in you, and abound, they make you that ye shall neither be idle nor unfruitful in the knowledge of our Lord Jesus Christ...Wherefore the rather, brethren, give diligence to make your calling and election sure: for if ye do these things, ye shall never fall." And concludes, "For so an entrance shall be ministered unto you abundantly into the everlasting kingdom of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ" (II Pet. 1:5-11).

Only by obedience to the law of God can we be ready in pure white garments of righteousness when Jesus comes, and so receive that "abundant entrance... into the everlasting kingdom of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ." Only then can we hope to hear the King speak to us the sweetest words ever to fall upon mortal ears; "Come, ye blessed of my Father, inherit the kingdom prepared for you." □

A mile?
Quite a challenge, but ...
Yes, Lord, I can manage that.

A second mile?
My legs seem weighted now,
It is so tedious, but ...I'll try.

Beyond the second mile?
What exhilarating freedom!
I feel renewed, refreshed....
—Because You are walking with me.

A Question of

Loyalty

1. **What prophet of the Lord took a firm stand for God against a wishy-washy king? It was a rewarded for his loyalty?**

Answer: The prophet was Micaiah. His firm stand: "As the Lord liveth, what the Lord saith unto me, that will I speak" (I Kings 22:14). After he delivered the prophecy, the king ordered, "Put this fellow in prison, and feed him with bread of affliction and with water of affliction, until I come in peace." (I Kings 22:27)

2. **A certain servant once received high commendation for his loyalty in the presence of his closest relatives. It was a matter of loyalty. Who was the servant and what was the commendation?**

Answer: Moses was the servant, and the commendation was that he was faithful in all his house. (Num. 12:5-7)

3. **What man refused to be bribed even by a wealthy king to speak what the Lord did not say? It was a matter of loyalty.**

Answer: Balaam refused to go beyond the commandment of the Lord, even against the pleading of king Balak. He said, "If Balak would give me his house full of silver and gold, I cannot go beyond the commandment of the Lord, to do either good or bad of mine own mind; but what the Lord saith, that will I speak?" (Num. 24:13)

4. **To whom did Paul testify that he had taught the entire Gospel message? – a matter of loyalty.**

Answer: To the Ephesian brethren, when he was leaving them. "For I have not shunned to declare unto you all the counsel of God" (Acts 20:27).

5. **To whom did God declare the absolute necessity of speaking His words faithfully? It was a matter of loyalty. What common comparison did Jeremiah make?**

Answer: Jeremiah. "The prophet that hath a dream, let him tell a dream; and he that hath my word, let him speak my word faithfully. What is the chaff to the wheat? saith the Lord" (Jer. 23:28). The faithful servant was compared to wheat, the unfaithful servant to chaff.

6. **What teenager remained loyal to God even though he had not a single friend, acquaintance or family member within a thousand miles?**

Answer: Joseph.

7. **A certain high commendation is reserved for distinctive service. It is a matter of loyalty. What is that commendation?**

Answer: "Well done, thou good and faithful servant: thou hast been faithful over a few things, I will make thee ruler over many things." (Matt. 25:21)

8. **Who said, "Whosoever committeth sin is the servant of sin?" In what context?**

Answer: Jesus. "And ye shall know the truth, and the truth shall make you free. They answered him, We be Abraham's seed, and were never in bondage to any man: how sayest thou, Ye shall be made free? Jesus answered them, Verily, verily, I say unto you, Whosoever committeth sin is the servant of sin." (John 8:32-36)

9. **A certain person made a strong confession of loyalty to a great person, only to have it severely tested less than 24 hours later. Who was the man and what was the confession of loyalty?**

Answer: Peter, "And he said unto him, Lord, I am ready to go with thee, both into prison, and to death" (Luke 22:33) and "Peter answered and said unto him, Though all men shall be offended because of thee, yet will I never be offended." (Matt. 26:33)

10. **What three qualities distinguish those whom the Revelator saw on Christ's side at the time of Armageddon? It was a matter of their loyalty.**

Answer: They are called, and chosen, and faithful. (Rev. 17:14)

11. **Paul sent a certain former slave as his personal emissary, and commended him as "a loyal and beloved brother." Who was this man?**

Answer: Onesimus. "With Onesimus, a faithful and beloved brother, who is one of you. They

shall make known unto you all things which are done here." (Col. 4:9)

- 12. A certain energetic prophet of the Lord was commissioned by God to speak in a foreign country. They didn't like him, and ordered him to go home. Who was the prophet, and what was his answer to the order to go home? It was a matter of loyalty.**

Answer: Amos was the prophet. When ordered to go home, he spoke to them more words of the Lord: "Amaziah the priest of Bethel then sent word to Jeroboam king of Israel as follows. 'Amos is plotting against you in the heart of the House of Israel; the country can no longer tolerate what he keeps saying. For this is what he says, "Jeroboam is going to die by the sword, and Israel go into exile far from its country.'" To Amos, Amaziah said, 'Go away, seer; get back to the land of Judah; earn your bread there, do your prophesying there. We want no more prophesying in Bethel; this is the royal sanctuary, the national temple.'" (Amos 7:10-14, JB)

- 13. By what ceremony do we openly declare our loyalty to God?**

Answer: By observing the Lord's Supper each year. "As often as ye eat this bread, and drink this cup, ye do shew the Lord's death till he come." (I Cor. 11:26-27)

- 14. What statement points out the loyalty of those seen standing with Christ on Mount Zion?**

Answer: "These are they which follow the Lamb whithersoever he goeth." (Rev. 14:4)

- 15. Whom did Paul rebuke for the sharp decline in their loyalty to him? What was the reason for the change?**

Answer: The church at Galatia. The reason for the change: because he told them the truth. "Where is then the blessedness ye spake of? for I bear you record, that, if it had been possible, ye would have plucked out your own eyes, and have given them to me. Am I therefore become your enemy, because I tell you the truth?" (Gal. 4:15-16).

- 16. Who had his loyalty tested by fire, so to speak, when he was asked to give up his only visible link with the promises of God?**

Answer: Abraham. "By faith Abraham, when he was tried, offered up Isaac; and he that had received the promises offered up his only begotten son, of whom it was said, That in Isaac shall thy seed be called" (Heb. 11:17-18).

- 17. What capable teacher did Paul send to the church at Corinth after he had written them a letter of severe reproof? Paul commended this man for his loyalty in the Lord.**

Answer: Timothy. "For this cause have I sent unto you Timotheus, who is my beloved son, and faithful in the Lord, who shall bring you into remembrance of my ways which be in Christ, as I teach every where in every church." (I Cor. 4:17)

- 18. To what point did Christ say His brethren must be faithful if they would receive the crown of life?**

Answer: Faithful unto death. "Be thou faithful unto death, and I will give thee a crown of life." (Rev. 2:10)

- 19. What two persons showed outstanding loyalty over a very long period of testing and among a very disloyal people?**

Answer: Caleb and Joshua. "...Caleb the son of Jephunneh the Kenazite, and Joshua the son of Nun: for they have wholly followed the Lord." (Numbers 32:12)

- 20. What solemn warning did Peter give in his Second Epistle? It was a matter of loyalty. What did he recommend as a formula for loyalty?**

Answer: II Peter 3:17-18. The formula: Grow in grace. "Ye therefore, beloved, seeing ye know these things before, beware lest ye also, being led away with the error of the wicked, fall from your own steadfastness. But grow in grace...."

- 21. Finish the sentence: "Their heart was not right with God, neither were they _____."**

Answer: "Neither were they steadfast in his covenant" (Ps. 78:37). The Moffatt Bible translates it, "They had a wavering mind, they were not loyal to his compact."

- 22. What great event during the early centuries after Christ was a direct result of a lack of loyalty on the part of individual believers? Who foretold this lack of loyalty?**

Answer: The apostasy from true religion. Paul foretold it. "For the time will come when they will not endure sound doctrine; but after their own lusts shall they heap to themselves teachers, having itching ears; And they shall turn away their ears from the truth, and shall be turned unto fables." (II Tim. 4:3-4)

- 23. Which of the seven churches were commended for their outstanding loyalty?**

Answer: Pergamos. "I know thy works, and where thou dwellest, even where Satan's seat is: and thou holdest fast my name, and hast not

denied my faith, even in those days wherein Antipas was my faithful martyr, who was slain among you, where Satan dwelleth." (Rev. 2:13) Also Philadelphia, "I know thy works:... for thou hast a little strength, and hast kept my word, and hast not denied my name." (Rev. 3:8)

- 24. Whom did Nehemiah choose to be ruler over Jerusalem after the city was rebuilt? Upon what criteria was the decision based? It was a matter of loyalty.**

Answer: Hanani. "That I gave my brother Hanani, and Hananiah the ruler of the palace, charge over Jerusalem: for he was a faithful man, and feared God above many." (Neh. 7:2)

- 25. To what dangerous animal did Paul compare disloyal brethren in the church? What did he say they would do?**

Answer: Grievous wolves. "For I know this, that after my departing shall grievous wolves enter in among you, not sparing the flock." (Acts 20:29-30)

- 26. A certain workman refused to be terrified by crafty enemies, and used his loyalty to his job as a reason for declining their request. Who were the enemies, who was the workman, and what was his statement of loyalty?**

Answer: The enemies were Sanballat, Tobiah, and Geshem. Nehemiah was the workman, and his statement of loyalty was: "I am doing a great work, so that I cannot come down: why should the work cease, whilst I leave it, and come down to you?" (Neh. 6:1-3)

- 27. A certain large group of people made an outstanding profession of loyalty that might have sounded sincere had their true character not been known. Who were the people, what was their statement of loyalty?**

Answer: The children of Israel (Joshua 1:16-17). "And they answered Joshua, saying, All that thou commandest us we will do, and whithersoever thou sendest us, we will go. According as we hearkened unto Moses in all things, so will we hearken unto thee."

- 28. Who affirmed that he never handled the Word of God deceitfully but was ever loyal to the truth?**

Answer: Paul. "But have renounced the hidden things of dishonesty, not walking in craftiness, nor handling the word of God deceitfully." (II Cor. 4:2)

- 29. A certain group of people wanted to hear from the prophets a certain type of words, and not another type. They were not loyal**

children of God. What did they want to hear?

Answer: Isaiah 30:9-10; "That this is a rebellious people, lying children, children that will not hear the law of the Lord: Which say to the seers, See not; and to the prophets, Prophecy not unto us right things, speak unto us smooth things, prophecy deceits" (KJV).

This passage is phrased in the Living Bible: "...if you don't write it, they will claim I never warned them. 'Oh, no,' they'll say, 'you never told us that!' For they are stubborn rebels. They tell my prophets, 'Shut up—we don't want any more of your reports!' Or they say, 'Don't tell us the truth; tell us nice things; tell us lies. Forget all this gloom; we've heard more than enough about your 'Holy One of Israel' and all he says.'"

- 30. Who taught that supporting oneself and family was part of his loyalty to God?**

Answer: Paul to Timothy; "...if any provide not for his own, and specially for those of his own house, he hath denied the faith, and is worse than an infidel." (I Tim. 5:8)

- 31. Stewardship is a matter of loyalty. Who said this?**

Answer: Paul. "Moreover it is required in stewards, that a man be found faithful." (I Cor. 4:2)

- 32. A certain prophet described prophetically Christ's absolute faithfulness in declaring the entire Word of God. Who was the prophet and what was the prophecy?**

Answer: Moses was the prophet. The prophecy: "I will raise them up a Prophet from among their brethren, like unto thee, and will put my words in his mouth; and he shall speak unto them all that I shall command him." (Deut. 18:13, 18)

- 33. What did Jesus say that showed His absolute loyalty in teaching His disciples all that the Father had taught Him?**

Answer: "Henceforth I call you not servants; for the servant knoweth not what his lord doeth: but I have called you friends; for all things that I have heard of my Father I have made known unto you." (John 15:15)

- 34. By what criteria did Jesus tell His hearers to judge His personal loyalty to His Father?**

Answer: "Jesus answered them, and said, My doctrine is not mine, but his that sent me. If any man will do his will, he shall know of the doctrine, whether it be of God, or whether I speak of myself. He that speaketh of himself seeketh his own glory: but he that seeketh his glory that sent him, the same is true, and no unrighteousness is in him." (John 7:16-18) □

*The great day dawns! The eastern sky
Is radiant with morning light;
The Sun appears to watching eye,
To lift the gloom, dispel the night.
The blessed Sun of righteousness
Is rising, o'er the earth to shine;
He's coming to all peoples bless
Who will accept His reign Divine
The great day dawns!*

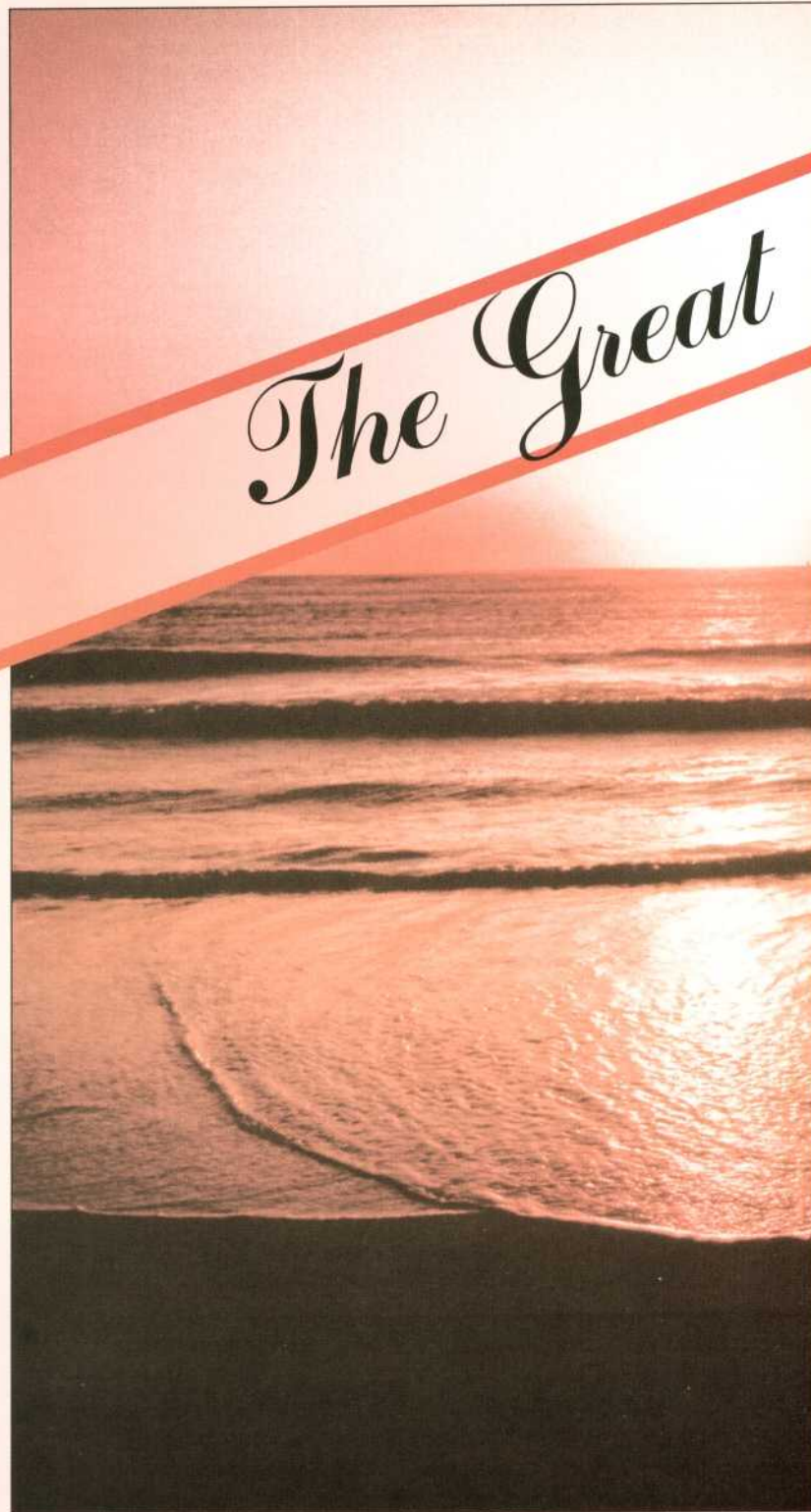
*The great day dawns, unheeded by
A world that's wrapped in slumber deep;
In ignorance they calmly lie
While just a few the vigil keep;
A faithful few, with anxious hearts,
Assured the day will break at last.
What joy the welcome sight imparts
To know the night is nearly past,
The vigil o'er.*

*The great day dawns! Oh, wondrous day,
For near six thousand years foretold,
By Jesus, Paul and Peter, too,
And all the holy men of old!
In vision they beheld the hour
When horrors of the night would flee;
When God would manifest His pow'r;
And those on guard would surely see
The glad day dawn.*

*The great day dawns, but ere the Sun
Shall reach its zenith in the sky,
God's will must on this earth be done—
With His commands all must comply.
All potentates, both great and small,
All men of high or low degree
Must, answering His loving call,
To Jesus bow submissively
And bend the knee.*

*The great day dawns, unheralded
By trumpet blast or roll of drums,
But legion are the ones who lead
The way before Him as He comes.
Ten thousand angels will attend
The Lord of lords and King of kings;
Ten thousand others God will send
To sound the message that He brings
Of joy and peace.*

The Great



Day Dawns



*The great day
dawns when Jesus comes
His faithful servants to reward;
A thousandfold will be the pay
Of those who serve with one accord.
On one hand riches, honor, too,
And on the other length of days
Are promised to the ones who do
His bidding, as they sing His praise
With joyful heart.*

*The great day dawns, in which the Truth
Shall take the place of error dark;
No more shall many, while in youth,
On paths of crime and sin embark.
All will be taught the living way,
And those who will not walk therein
Shall be destroyed without delay,
For none can live a life of sin
When that day dawns.*

*A great day dawns, whose blessings man
With finite mind cannot conceive;
The fact that it is in God's plan
But very few will now receive;
And fewer still will strive to lay
Aside each sin and worthy be
To share the glories of this day
That will be real to you and me
If we believe.*

*Oh, hail the day now bursting forth,
Ye weary ones of ev'ry clime!
With joyful anthems greet the birth
Of Christian era so sublime.
This day will see the sick made well,
The deaf shall hear, the dumb shall sing,
The lame shall leap for joy and swell
God's praises till the echoes ring
From shore to shore.*

*The great day dawns. It is THE DAY,
The great day of the Lord—
When all men ev'rywhere shall see
The dawn of universal good.
No day of four and twenty hours
Is this, but for a thousand years
The saints are free from toil and care,
From partings, sorrow, pain and tears,
And then throughout eternity!*

—L. L. Snyder

What Do You Like?

The one and only path with an ending worthy of the name is the narrow, difficult way leading to everlasting life.

Low or mediocre tastes need not remain so; we can change.

True nobility is made, not born.

There is no simple answer. The question is not, "What can you do?"; for a man might be able to sing or play or write or paint like an angel, and yet be a blackguard at heart. Nor is it, "What are your relations with others?"; for there have been rogues whose personality was so winning or so compelling that they were accepted, obeyed and even beloved by their contemporaries. One might sway millions, even for good, by his oratory; he might lead a nation or group of nations in a just cause, yet in his private life be a villain. It has happened.

Perhaps the question which would determine the quality of a character more accurately than any other is, "What do you like?" Our true nature is best known by what we do in our leisure time. In other words, what do we like?

It might be profitable for us to ask ourselves, "If I could do just as I like for the rest of my life, what would I do? An honest answer might be difficult, so accustomed have we become to the dictatorship of circumstances and conventions; but we really should appraise our tastes from time to time as a yardstick of our spiritual growth.

It is a long way from the bottom to the top of the scale of human tastes. Both extremes are noted in the Word of God. At one end are those who "sleep not except they have done mischief, and their sleep is taken away unless they cause some to fall" (Prov. 4:16). At the other we find, "I *delight* to do thy will, O my God (Ps 40:8)." In between lie every shade and grade of human liking. Let it be said in justice to our race that only a relatively

small number of exceptionally vicious persons find pleasure in the debauchery of others. The great bulk of humanity are found at a somewhat higher level, meaning well, but averse to change or strenuous effort, their dreams being of such things as food and drink and sleep, of recreation and bodily ease and the acquisition of money to provide more of these gratifications.

From this broad and teeming level many roads of ambition lead upward, none of them crowded, but all, with one exception, proving to be blind alleys. Success in the gratification of the higher tastes in art, science, statesmanship or benevolence, must be its own reward; for at the end of each short road, death throws over all human projects the mantle of futility.

The exception noted above, the one and only path with an ending worthy of the name, is the narrow, difficult way leading to everlasting life. If we have no love of life, that road is certainly not for us. God will never save a man against his will; and for the man or woman of low tastes, eternal life in His Kingdom would be eternal torment. The Law of God is only for those who would "love life and see good days" (1 Pet. 3:10). The others are permitted to live their own lives, to follow their own likes and dislikes, low or high, to make their social order in their own image, and then, as they prefer, to perish forever like the beasts of the field (Psalm 49:12, 14).

Fortunately, it has been so arranged by the Creator that most normal human beings have a strong attachment to life, and even a desire for the survival of their own person-

ality, worthy or unworthy. It is to this inborn urge for personal immortality that we owe our escape from the miry level of the commonplace. But we do not attain immortality simply by wishing for it; the matter is not so simple as that. At the entrance to this narrow way, once we have found it, we pause to read the signs and to count the cost; and we see between us and the goal of our desires many things that we do not naturally like.

Occasionally we read or hear of or even meet an individual whose natural bent seems to be entirely for good, who thinks noble thoughts and does noble actions by nature. Wrestling with our own pettiness and carnality we may envy these superior personalities, not realizing that their nobility comes not by accident of birth, but by the superior job they have done in controlling and educating their tastes, which basically are much like our own. For therein lies our only hope—the fact that low or mediocre tastes need not remain so, but can be elevated. Granted that there is a wide variation in the heredity and natural endowments of individuals, we may safely assert that nature's nobleman does not exit. True nobility is made, not born. Man is a being with animal nature and instincts but spiritual possibilities, and only as these possibilities are developed does he become something more than a biped mammal with reasoning powers.

"My thoughts are not your thoughts, neither are your ways my ways, saith the Lord." Very well, then; since the Divine thoughts are contrary to nature in every way, we may fully expect, as we have said before, that we shall not like them. God's demands invade every conscious moment of our life; human nature cries, "Let me alone!" The law of God says at every crossroads, "This way." Nature says, "The other way—my own way." The warfare is intense for a time—sometimes for a long time. Saint Paul experienced this mental conflict; his experiences

and complete change-over are recorded in the 7th chapter of Romans. And every Christian may expect to have to fight it out on the same line. The desire for life and immortality, and faith in the promise thereof, compels us to keep up the battle and conform to the law, perhaps reluctantly or grudgingly. But this is not enough. This is not "glorying in the cross," nor delighting to do His will.

How, then, shall we ever learn to like the things which at this stage of development seem a burden? Just as we learn to like anything else which is unpleasant—by keeping at it until we do. In business and industry, the young man who flits from job to job in the hope of finding entirely congenial work is far less likely to succeed than the one who selects his work and buckles down to the task of learning to like it. "If there be first a willing mind," the battle is half won. And through all the dust and din, the sweat and blood of the conflict, the thing which keeps us in line until our tastes are changed from flesh to spirit is the hope of the reward.

"No man having drunk old wine," said Jesus, "straitway desireth new; for, saith he, the old is better." But when our eyes are opened to what the poisonous old wine is doing for us, it should convince us that the new is far better, and our taste for the old should rapidly diminish and disappear. Certain cures for alcoholism are said to be so effective that the former drunkard is now nauseated by the very thought of intoxicants. This is the goal which we must reach in our fight against the old habits of thought and action. When our tastes are fully changed, we will no longer find anything attractive in the things God has forbidden. The reluctance and rebellion and sense of compulsion will be gone. We will loathe ourselves in our own sight for all the iniquities and abominations of the past, and will turn with relief and eagerness to

(Continued on page 22)

*How shall we ever
learn to like the
things which now
seem a burden? Just
as we learn to like
anything else which
is unpleasant—by
keeping at it until
we do.*

*We shall never, in
this mortal state,
outgrow the need of
watchfulness.*

*God's demands
invade every
conscious moment
of our life.*

Which View of Inspiration?

▶ *Jesus and the Apostles quoted heavily from the Old Testament. Shall we set our judgment against theirs? Shall we disallow what they took for granted as true?*

Now let us ask: Is it reasonable that we should be the arbiters of what is or is not inspired? Would God leave us in this position, with no higher direction or authority, in a matter so vital as the communicating of His Divine message?

On the other side of the question, is it reasonable to believe that every copyist, every translator, every human handler of the Word of God was one hundred percent flawless, and that as a result we have the Word of God today absolutely free from error?

On the basis of the teaching of Scripture itself, we feel compelled to take a position which rules out both the viewpoint of partial inspiration theory and the verbal plenary theory of inspiration.

Upon what shall we base our view of inspiration? The most important is the position of Scripture itself, and hence the question: What do the Scriptures require us to believe?

We should not overlook Jesus' authority, and Jesus said Himself, quoting from the Old Testament Scriptures, "Man shall not live by bread alone, but by every word that proceedeth out of the mouth of God" (Matt. 4:4; cf. Luke 4:4). Notice that we live "by every word that proceedeth out of the mouth of God," not by every word whatever its source.

We have also a passage from the book of Proverbs: "Every word of God is pure: he is a shield unto them that put their trust in him. Add thou not unto his words, lest he reprove thee, and thou be found a liar" (Prov. 30:5-6). Notice again that what is referenced is "every word of God," i.e., every word inspired by God.

Another key passage is by the apostle Paul, recorded in II Tim. 3:16. This passage is often taken as the basis for belief in verbal plenary inspiration. However, if examined carefully, it supports the opposite position. The passage reads in our Common Version, "All scripture is given by inspiration of God, and is profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness" (II Tim. 3:16).

If we compare this translation with the original Greek, we find that the first "is" is not in the original, hence the passage would read more correctly, "All scripture given by inspiration of God is profitable..." etc. The *New English Bible* renders it, "Every inspired scripture has its use for teaching the truth," etc. *Today's English Version* has a footnote which reads, "Every scripture inspired by God is also useful..." The *Concordant Version* reads, "All scripture inspired by God is beneficial for teaching...." Green's *Interlinear Greek New Testament* reads, "Every scripture God inspired and profitable for teaching, for conviction, for correction, for discipline, which in righteousness that complete may be the of God man to every work good and fully fitted." The word order is not familiar to us, but the sense is clear. *Wilson's Emphatic Diaglott* reads, "All Scripture, divinely inspired, is indeed profitable for Teaching, for Conviction, for Correction, for that Discipline which is in Righteousness."

If we consider what Paul is saying, we must realize that to say every Scripture literally is inspired would be to contradict his point. In this passage Paul is delineating just what inspiration

includes: All that is "profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness."

Here we have our definition of inspired Scripture. If we look more closely at these terms, we find that there is a wealth of meaning in them. Inspired Scripture is profitable for "doctrine," (i.e., teaching or instruction); "for reproof" (i.e., that which is useful to produce conviction of sin, to refute and dispel error); "for correction" (i.e., for amendment of one's life, "to direct the erring into the right, to show what is right both by precept and example, to warn and censure with love and authority"); "for instruction in righteousness" (i.e., "for building up and establishing by spiritual instruction in the thoughts of God, so that thought and character make a mold according to the pattern of Christ"). David referred to such instruction when he said of the Lord, "He hath made me wiser than mine enemies....I have more understanding than all my teachers: for thy testimonies are my meditation. The entrance of thy words giveth light; it giveth understanding unto the simple" (Ps. 119:98-99,130). (Definitions are from the *Greek-English Lexicon*).

Moved by God's Spirit

In II Peter 1, the apostle communicates the same thought about inspiration. He says first that the message he and the other Apostles received was all genuine, there were no idle tales mixed in. He writes, "For we have not followed cunningly devised fables, when we made known unto you the power and coming of our Lord Jesus Christ, but were eyewitnesses of his majesty" (II Pet. 1:16).

Peter continues to emphasize the verity of the message, then speaks of the authority behind it. "All this only confirms for us the message of the prophets, to which you will do well to attend, because it is like a lamp shining in a murky place, until the day breaks and the morning star rises to illuminate your minds. But first note this: no one can interpret any prophecy of Scripture by himself. For it was

not through any human whim that men prophesied of old; men they were, but, impelled by the Holy Spirit, they spoke the words of God" (II Pet. 1:19-21, NEB).

This passage is rendered in the *Jerusalem Bible*: "So we have confirmation of what was said in prophecies; and you will be right to depend on prophecy and take it as a lamp for lighting a way through the dark until the dawn comes and the morning star arises." The NIV reads, "For prophecy never had its origin in the will of man, but men spoke from God as they were carried along by the Holy Spirit." They were ordinary people, but they were moved by God.

What is the meaning of "prophecy"? According to *Thayer's Greek-English Lexicon* it is: "Discourse emanating from divine inspiration and declaring the purposes of God, whether by reproving and admonishing the wicked, or comforting the afflicted, or revealing things hidden, especially by foretelling future events."

Peter also spoke of the prophets writing by the "Spirit" in his First Epistle. Speaking of the promise of salvation he says, "Of which salvation the prophets have enquired and searched diligently,...searching what, or what manner of time the Spirit of Christ which was in them did signify, when it testified beforehand the sufferings of Christ, and the glory that should follow. Unto whom it was revealed, that not unto themselves, but unto us they did minister the things, which are now reported unto you by them that have preached the gospel unto you with the Holy Spirit sent down from heaven" (I Pet. 1:10-12). The same "Spirit" was activating the Apostles that revealed knowledge of the future to the prophets before them. The same power of God was in Christ and also in the prophets who prophesied of Christ, His sufferings, and the glory that should follow. They were inspired by God to foretell future events. In this way they were dispensing knowledge that could not have been known by any other means.

"We must regard inspiration as a special supernatural gift bestowed on about 30 people out of all mankind in order to qualify them for the special business of writing the Scriptures."

Inspired Or Not?

The Bible has come to us through the instrumentality and direct oversight of God. But this does not mean that every word and letter of it required inspiration. God works through human instruments, and sometimes He spoke directly through them, and they wrote what He directed them—consciously or unconsciously—to write. At other times, they wrote from their own experience or background, and because they were serving God and living within His sphere of activity, the experiences they wrote are useful to us for edification or instruction.

But not every sentence or thought required inspiration. For example, the writing of the genealogy of those who were serving in the temple after the captivity did not require inspiration. The documenting of ancestry was very important to these people, but no inspiration was required to establish it.

Luke was able to write about a shipwreck which he experienced along with Paul and a number of others, in the same way that we might write about our experiences. Paul needed no inspiration to tell about his journey from one city to the next, and how he was treated, or where they preached, or how many listened. Paul needed no inspiration to recall that fourteen years after his conversion he went up to Jerusalem with Barnabas (Gal. 2:1). In all of these writings, God was overseeing, so that the completed Scriptures would contain the information we need for salvation. He was the Master behind the plan, but He was using the writers themselves and their own resources.

In several passages Paul is explicit about what he was writing from his own understanding and what he was writing under the direct influence of inspiration. Sometimes he would distinctly say that his words were "from the Lord." Concerning his teaching he said, "But I certify you, brethren, that the gospel which was preached of me is not after man. For I neither received it of man, neither was I taught it, but by the revelation of Jesus Christ" (Gal. 1:11-12).

But just as any person trained or educated in a certain philosophy or way of thinking will write in accordance with that philosophy, so the Bible writers were men trained and educated in God's ways, and wrote according to His ideas, whether they were directly inspired to write them or not.

In writing about the Lord's Supper, Paul said distinctly, "I have received of the Lord that which also I delivered unto you." He had not been present at the Last Supper, and would have had no knowledge of it except it had been revealed to him (1 Cor. 11:23-24).

The gospel writers recorded many events they did not witness, and this required inspiration. How else could we know the details of Jesus' trial, or His prayer in the garden where He went alone, or the words He heard which no one else heard (John 13)? But Jesus Himself told how this would be possible. In His final address to the disciples the night before his crucifixion, He told them they would receive the Holy Spirit power, which would bring "all things" to their remembrance (John 14:26). In this way they would know what to write, and what was correct knowledge, and their writings could be relied upon as divinely authored.

When the Bible writers recorded events they did not experience or witness; when they spoke prophetically; when they taught the laws of God and what is required for salvation, they spoke or wrote by inspiration, because the knowledge they were writing was not their own. This is what Paul meant when he spoke of the "mystery" that had been revealed unto them—it was knowledge they could not have had except they received it from God. It was known "only to the initiated" (Lexicon definition of original word for "mystery"). But it was not mysterious; it was knowledge *revealed* and needful.

But the fact that not all of the Bible required inspiration to write does not mean that God has not provided it for a purpose, for our instruction and edification. We need the Scriptures, and we can learn from the Scriptures,

whether inspired or not. The Bible is the Word of God, and "the things written aforetime were written for our learning" (Rom. 15:4). In distinguishing between what is inspired and what is not inspired, we are not distinguishing between what we will decide to believe, or what we will obey, or what we will accept as authoritative. It is not our prerogative to pick and choose from what God has provided. It is our privilege and responsibility to see the entire picture of God working with His human family, guiding, teaching, instructing, commanding a certain way of life, and showing how it can be done in real life situations. Were we to remove everything from the Bible which did not require inspiration to write, we would not have all that we needed for our growth and instruction. *We might have all we needed of practical instruction and admonition, but we would miss the lessons of how this instruction can be applied in everyday situations. We need the records of history to give reality to the setting, to show the authenticity of the text, and the passage of time. We need the allegories, parables, and poetry to teach us, as well as to challenge our minds. We need the prophecies to build our faith, and tell us what is coming. We need it *all*, and God has mercifully met our need.

To Summarize

Inspiration excludes knowledge which we can obtain by the use of our own faculties of observation (our five senses), or from our own experience. Inspiration *includes* all knowledge that can be known only as it is revealed from God.

Before we discuss the different positions on the subject, let us more clearly define what we mean by inspiration. By inspiration we refer to the communicating of Divine knowledge. This *excludes* knowledge which we can

obtain by the use of our own powers of observation or experience, or through the use of our five senses. Inspiration *includes* all knowledge which can be known only as it is received from God.

The Bible supports this view of

Immortal, Invisible, God Only Wise

*Immortal, invisible, God only wise,
In light inaccessible hid from our eyes,
Most blessed, most glorious, the Ancient of Days,
Almighty, victorious, Thy great name we praise!*

*To all, life Thou givest, to both great and small,
And true life Thou off'rest, the best life of all.
We blossom and flourish as leaves on the tree,
And wither and perish—but naught changeth Thee.*

*Give thanks to Jehovah: 'Tis nothing of thine,
This light that is shining with radiance Divine;
Thou hast nothing worthy thou didst not receive
From God Thy Creator, To Him honor give.*

*Keep Him e'er before thee, keep self out of sight;
So shalt thou shine for Him with radiant delight
Walk e'er in His presence, give God the first place:
Endeavoring always His leading to trace.*

*Great Father of glory, pure Father of light,
Thine angels adore Thee, all veiling their sight;
All praise we would render; O help us to see
'Tis only the splendor of light hideth Thee!*

inspiration. We are dependent upon God (His inspiration or revelation) for all knowledge that pertains unto "life and godliness" (II Pet. 1:2-3). We might exhaust all our human resources, but we would have no source of information about how we can please God,

*This view of inspiration gives meaning even to parts of Scripture which obviously do not require inspiration. Moses needed no inspiration to tell how rebellious the people were after the ten spies gave their evil report, or how many died in the calamity that followed. But when Moses wrote about Abraham, Isaac and Jacob, he needed inspiration to impart that knowledge to him.

how we can obtain the higher life He offers apart from knowledge revealed by God. The word translated "life" in II Peter 1:3 is the same word Jesus used in John 6:27 when He said, "Labor not for the meat which perisheth, but for that meat which endureth unto *everlasting life*, which the Son of man shall give unto you." Jesus used this term again when He spoke to the woman at the well about that special water which would spring up "into everlasting life." The term "life" is used 134 times in the New Testament, and the Lexicon defines it as "the state of absolute fullness of life, both essential and ethical which belongs to God." The Lexicon says further, "Life real and genuine, a life vigorous and active, devoted to God, blessed, the portion even in this world of those who put their trust in Christ, but after the resurrection to be consummated by new ascension that will last forever." How could we learn about this life, except through God-imparted knowledge?

Another term (in II Pet. 1:2-3) related to "life" is "godliness." How can we learn about the godliness God requires, except through inspiration? The word "godliness" used here is defined in the Lexicon as "the duty which every man owes to God." If we are going to know what constitutes this duty, if we are going to know how to live forever, we have to have knowledge from a higher source, a source beyond ourselves. For such knowledge

we must look to God.

As with every other topic of Scripture, we feel compelled to take a position which can be supported from Scripture itself. And this position rules out the "partial inspiration" theory, which allows one to pick and choose as he wishes. It also rules out verbal plenary inspiration if it implies that every word and letter is inspired directly by God. We are left with a solidly founded belief in inspiration which gives us a book written under God's direction, filled with the information He intended us to have: words of inspiration, edification, warning, and personal conviction and testimony, along with writings by His selected authors, who wrote their experiences and their thoughts or evaluations also for our learning. As Paul wrote, "For whatsoever things were written aforetime were written for our learning, that we through patience and comfort of the scriptures might have hope" (Rom. 15:4).

Jesus and the Apostles quoted heavily from the Old Testament, and never once do we hear them disallowing any portion of it. Among their quotations were passages about the flood, Jonah and the whale, the creation narrative, and many others which those supporting partial inspiration often deny. Shall we set our judgment against theirs and feel that we are superior to Jesus and His Apostles? Shall we disallow what they did not even question but took for granted as true? □

What Do You Like?

(Continued from page 17)

the table of the Lord, to the broader fields and greener pastures, the glorious liberty of the sons of God.

It is never safe to assume that we have safely reached this exalted plane. We cannot slough off our physical inheritance, and, as we have often been warned, so long as we are in the flesh we

shall be subject to its temptations, which should never be trifled with or underestimated. We shall never, in this mortal state, outgrow the need of watchfulness. The only safe course in regard to evil is in following the wise man's advice in Prov. 4:15: "Avoid it, pass not by it, turn from it, and pass away." And when we think we have done all this, when we think we have arrived and can almost see the City ahead, let the Apostle's warning be ever before our eyes, "Wherefore let him that thinketh he standeth take heed lest he fall." □

The Inspiration of the Scriptures

by the Rev. L. T. Nichols.

The Bible is a wonderful Book, the Book of all books, the Book that is from God; the only Book in which are written the words of Him before whom, by and by, we shall have to stand and render our account for what we have done.

The Bible sets before humanity certain undeniable proofs of its Divine origin, and from its holy Record I have become fully convinced of its truthfulness. I was once upon the fence, so to speak, and ready to go either way, as I surveyed the ideas of men of theological training and found them at variance with what I could read in the Book; consequently my faith was somewhat weakened in that Divine Book for a time. But I made up my mind that I would go to work like an honest man, and before I would throw away a Book of its distinction I would give it careful and candid consideration and delve down deep until I had studied the matter thoroughly, before I would dare to take a stand against the pages of the Holy Book.

The result of my investigation has proved most gratifying, and from the weight of evidence I fully believe the Bible to be of Divine authority instead of human origin. Thanks be to God, the teachings of the theologians are not the teachings of the Bible! In reading the blessed Word, we must let it be its own expositor, and how different are its teachings. When any word, phrase, or sentence is issued by Jehovah in His message to man, we are to let Him tell what He means instead of placing a meaning of our own upon His statements.

We take the position that the Bible is as up-to-date, as reasonable, as accurate, as open to analysis as any earthly science. We hold that, as originally written, it contains not a single contradiction, absurdity, impossibility or error; that it agrees with nature and all true science. We assert that it goes even further and reveals in itself and by an honest comparison with history that it is of Divine origin. Nothing less than this position can satisfy the seeker for a life

beyond this transitory career; God has provided us with a trustworthy Guide.

This Holy Book was written by "holy men of God" in various times and under different conditions over a period of sixteen hundred years, from Moses the great Law-giver, to John the Revelator. It was written by statesmen, by prophets, by herdsmen, by shepherds, by fishermen, by wise men, by all classes of individuals, and their writings agree so unanimously that it drives me to the conclusion that it is indeed the inspired Word of the God of heaven, and I am thoroughly convinced of its divinity. Why am I thus convinced? Because a writing composed of sixty-six books by forty different authors could not be compiled over a period of sixteen hundred years with such unanimous agreement and not be of Divine origin. It would be impossible today to find as many different books by different authors and find them in agreement upon so many different topics as are presented in the Divine record.

The Bible is the Word of the great Jehovah, who can tell the end from the beginning, who can tell the future as well

*All I know is
what I can learn
from the inspired
Word of God.*

*When any word,
phrase, or sentence
is issued by Jehovah,
we must let Him tell
what He means
instead of placing a
meaning of our own
upon His statements.*

The Inspiration of the Scriptures

as the past. The power of God working upon the minds of men caused them to write the things we find recorded therein. This is inspiration.

Such a Book is worthy of our earnest investigation. We should pore over its pages, should peruse

every word and commandment and see that we have not missed one thing; and we should believe its glorious precepts with a desire to follow on and do the things written therein. It is "wisdom from above," says James 3:17.

He who knew the end from the beginning has declared that human ways and thoughts are all vanity; we must therefore

become armed with the mind and thoughts of the high and lofty God of truth. As the apostle Peter declares, "Grace and peace be multiplied unto you through the knowledge of God, and of Jesus our Lord, according as his divine power hath given unto us all things that pertain unto life and godliness, through the knowledge of him that hath called us to glory and virtue" (II Pet. 1:2-3). Seeing that human

wisdom is a thing of naught, we must not look to it, nor to ourselves, for knowledge, but must come to this inspired Book of God, for all things that "pertain unto life and godliness" come through a study of this blessed Word. "Whereby are given unto us

exceeding great and precious promises: that by these ye might be partakers of the divine nature, having escaped the corruption that is in the world through lust" (v. 4).

We take the position that the Bible is as up-to-date, as reasonable, as accurate, as open to analysis as any science.

"The inspiration of the Almighty giveth...understanding."

The power that imparted this wisdom to the holy men and women of old came from the same God who will grant us the great reward in the future and cause us to live to all eternity if we are worthy. It was His Divine power that inspired the Bible writers. The same power caused the Master to teach wherever He went the "glad tidings of the kingdom of God" (Luke 8:1). The same power enabled Him to answer when the opposers came to Him and found fault with Him, asking by what authority He did those things. He answered—because He knew their thoughts, because He knew they were only caviling—"The baptism of John, was it from heaven, or of men? answer me" (Mark 11:30). He knew what to say because He had this same power within Him. They dared not answer Him, but "reasoned with themselves, saying, If we shall say, From heaven; he will say, Why then did ye not believe him? But if we shall say, Of men; they feared the people: for all men counted John, that he was a prophet indeed" (vs. 31-32). They knew that if they answered one way they would defeat their own purpose; and if they answered the other way, they feared the people. Either way their argument was cut in two.

In olden times the angels were the means used to cause the writers of this Holy Book to inscribe what God wanted us to know. In Hebrews 1:14 we read, "Are they not all ministering spirits, sent forth to minister for them who shall be heirs of salvation?" The prophets and apostles were moved by the power of God to tell us of the glory and beauty of the great future; and they were moved upon to preserve this knowledge in writing for us to read. Thus "holy men of God spake as they were moved by the Holy Spirit" (II Pet. 1:21). They were not allowed to speak their own ideas; neither are we, for Peter declares, "If any man speak, let him speak as the oracles of God" (I Pet. 4:11)—to learn God's knowledge and what we must do, we must go to what those inspired men wrote.

The book of Hebrews tells us how God revealed His knowledge in time past. "God, who at sundry times and in divers manners spake in time past unto the fathers by the prophets, hath in these last days spoken unto us by his Son" (Heb. 1:1-2). This is why we have His Word, and it is inspired as God directed His holy men to write. If He spoke in times past by the prophets and by His Son, will you and I know anything concerning His plan unless we consult the Record wherein He made known His purpose? We should never of ourselves be able to know; we cannot expect to find this knowledge apart from the writings of those through whom He spoke.

Do not think, though, that every word in the Bible is inspired, no, not by a long, long way. That which is inspired is that which foretells something that will come to pass, something that we could not know of ourselves. All the prophetic sayings of Scripture are the result of inspiration. "There is a spirit in man: and the inspiration of the Almighty giveth them understanding" (Job 32:8).

Inspiration relates to something not otherwise knowable.

When Jesus said in John 8:45, "Because I tell you the truth, ye believe me not." He was not speaking by inspiration but was simply telling what He could observe; He could see that they did not believe what He was telling them. But when He said, as in Luke 17:26, "As it was in the days of Noe, so shall it be also in the days of the Son of man." He was speaking by inspiration; He was foretelling what conditions would be in the last days when He should come the second time. This is how God spoke in times past unto the fathers—by the prophets, then He spoke by His Son, and that which was revealed by them was revealed by inspiration.

Holy men of God spoke as they were moved by the Holy Spirit. This places the dividing line between what is inspired and what is not. All on this side of the line—that which we already know—is not inspiration; but all on the other side of the line, that which we do not know, things relating to the future, is revealed by inspiration. For example, Paul needed no inspiration to request of Timothy, "The cloak that I left at Troas with Carpus, when thou comest, bring with thee" (II Tim. 4:13). It required no inspiration for the chronicler to record that there was a child born and that he was named Hezekiah. It took no inspiration for the prophet to relate that during Hezekiah's reign as king he had a serious illness. But to foretell the outcome of that illness, and to tell the king that he would live another fifteen years and then to foretell that all the treasures he had delighted to show to the king of Babylon would be carried away to Babylon, is inspiration. To tell an event before it comes to pass, to tell what man cannot know of himself, is inspiration.

That which is past history needs no inspiration to reveal it. The line of demarcation between what is inspired and what is not inspired is the line between the historical and the prophetic. The holy men of old did not have to be inspired to tell what they had experienced, but to reveal what was in the mind of God needed inspiration. For example, Moses needed no inspiration to write that he went down into

Egypt and there encountered much opposition, that he went before Pharaoh and finally assembled a great throng of Israelites whom he led out of bondage. How did he know these things? Not by inspiration but by actual experience. But the power that moved Him to each of these accomplishments was of God. God moved Moses to return to Egypt, and to go to Pharaoh, and inspiration from God directed Moses to lead the Israelites out of Egypt.

We need no inspiration to tell you what has happened during the last sixty years; but to show what is to take place in the future needs inspiration, and we cannot do it. Apart from the Word of God we would be in total ignorance of what is in the future; we would not know anything about the plan of God but for the holy men whom God inspired to write the things "that pertain unto life and godliness." Apart from what they wrote we would not even know that all things pertaining to future life come "through the knowledge of him that hath called us to glory and virtue."

We today are not inspired as were those "holy men" of old, therefore we cannot foretell future events. Yet, in another sense we are inspired. We might call it "secondary" inspiration. "First" inspiration is that which God reveals directly, as He did to men in olden times; it is knowledge that comes by direct communication from God.

"Second" inspiration is that which comes to those who read and believe what others were inspired to write. This is the inspiration we have, for we have never seen an angel or heard his audible voice. But

As originally written, the Bible contains not a single contradiction, absurdity, impossibility or error; it agrees with nature and all true science.

We assert that it goes even further and reveals in itself and by an honest comparison with history that it is of Divine origin.

The Inspiration of the Scriptures

we can be inspired as we read the inspired words that were written for our learning.

We have a "secondary" inspiration because we receive our knowledge "second hand." We personally were moved to make a sacrifice that we might give to others the knowledge we had obtained by

deep study; this is why we built the large steamship for our work on the Mississippi and tributaries. I need no inspiration to tell you of the day I made up my mind to start out in this great mission work; but there was inspiration back of it—second

inspiration. As I perused the inspired pages, I read, "Gather the people," and it inspired me, or moved me, to act. There was a great work to be done, and we needed to be gathered together to accomplish it; being together, we would be in a better condition to keep the commandments of God.

In the first chapter of the last book of the Bible

we read how we may receive this second inspiration: "Blessed"—do you want to be blessed with life eternal, with joy and happiness that shall increase as the ages roll by? Do you not want to be one of those blessed ones? Then hearken to the words of Jesus: "Blessed is he that readeth, and they that hear the words of this prophecy,

and keep those things which are written therein: for the time is at hand" (Rev. 1:3). We have to read, hear and keep the inspired Word of God.

All I know is what I can learn from the written Word of God, what I have learned from the inspiration of the Bible. "The inspiration of the Almighty

giveth...understanding" (Job 32:8). That which we can see, needs no inspiration; but to know that which is beyond our experience, that must be revealed to us by inspiration.

I would much rather know what God has said than what all mankind together may say. God knows everything; man knows so little. Man can give you no information beyond this life; He may give you a home, or a few dollars, but he can never give you anything that pertains to life eternal; nothing whatever. He can never give you a life beyond that narrow home toward which we all are drifting. What will be your wealth, what will be your fame, your joy, your pleasure then? We shall remain in the tomb unless we now use the means that God has revealed by which it can be unlocked. Unless He comes who has the key, and unlocks it for us, we shall remain there forever. But we have the blessed promise of deliverance, if we comply with His requirements.

The prophet Daniel by inspiration told of this deliverance: "And at that time (the time of the end) shall Michael stand up, the great prince which standeth for the children of thy people: and there shall be a time of trouble, such as never was since there was a nation even to that same time: and at that time, thy people shall be delivered, every one that shall be found written in the book" (Dan. 12:1). We must have our names written in the book if we want to be delivered; this is what we learn by the inspired writing of the Prophet.

"And many of them that sleep in the dust of the earth shall awake" (v. 2). Why? Because they have taken heed to the knowledge that will unlock the tomb for them, because they have their names written in the book of life. This is the promise from God; it has come to us through the inspiration of the Scriptures.

We advise you to throw away all human creeds and come to this blessed Volume, for it is a "thorough furnisher unto all good works" (II Tim. 3:17). What more could you want? The Bible gives us a religion worth having; it is something real, something you can depend on. I am all wrapped up in these words of life, the inspired Scriptures of truth that tell us what we must do to live forever, and I have a longing desire for you to be wrapped up in them also. I am willing to spend and be spent that others may obtain life eternal.

Start today. Believe what God has caused to be written for our learning, and then go to work to be more patient, more kind, thoughtful, longsuffering, meek, humble, gentle, and easily entreated; then you will get the crown of life eternal. This is what God has promised. □

God has provided us with a trustworthy Guide.

The Bible is the Word of the great Jehovah, who can tell the end from the beginning, who can tell the future as well as the past.

Don't resist God's authority. Be like Habakkuk. Say, I am going to my watch-tower and wait. I know He is working all things together for good.

*Come, friends, let's be rid of doubt,
And choose the road we're sure about.*

The shortest cut to wealth is through the lane of contentment.

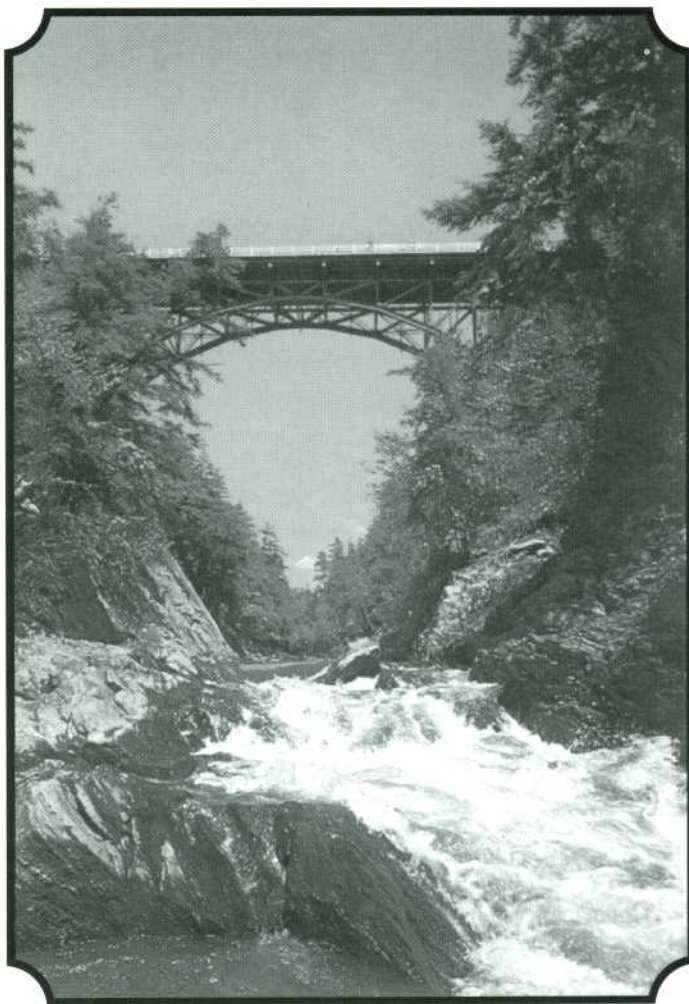
*Lord, let me always think to pray
For these three graces every day:
The grace to say "Thy will be done,"
Grace to control my unruly tongue,
And for this last and greatest part,
Serve Thee with all my strength and heart.*

Do more than talk—say something. Do more than exist—live.

*The road to success is dotted with
many tempting parking places.*

We cannot direct the wind, but we can adjust our sails.

We like to feel that God owes us an answer to every question, a solution to every problem. But He doesn't. And when we refuse to accept what we cannot change, we are saying in effect, "Lord, I don't like your way of doing it. I have a better idea." How can God ever love and bless such a one?



The highest culture is to speak no ill.
The best reformer is the man whose eyes
Are quick to see all beauty and all worth,
And by his own discreet, well-ordered life
Alone reprove the erring. When the gaze
Turns in on thine own soul, be most severe;
But when it falls upon a fellow man.
Let kindness control it; and refrain
From the belittling censure that springs forth
From common lips, like weeds from marshy soil.

The right temperature at home is maintained by warm hearts, not by hot heads.

Add to
your faith **VIRTUE;**
and to virtue

KNOWLEDGE;

and to
knowledge **TEMPERANCE;**
and to temperance

PATIENCE; and to patience

GODLINESS;

and to godliness

BROTHERLY KINDNESS;

and to brotherly kindness

CHARITY.

II Peter 1:5-7