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Megiddo Message



*The desert shall rejoice and
blossom as the rose;
It shall blossom abundantly and rejoice,
even with joy and singing. – Isaiah 35:1–2*

by RUTH E. SISSON

Why NOT Yet?

For more than century now our *Megiddo Message* has been proclaiming the imminent return of Jesus Christ. For more than a century it has been saying, "The Bridegroom is coming. Get ready to meet him."

Now, after a century of unfulfillment, how do we feel? Are we disappointed?

NO.

Are we discouraged?

NO.

Are we wondering if our fathers and mothers in the faith were mistaken in expecting Christ in our time?

NO.

Maybe we should modify our position to something like, "It seems likely that Christ may come in our time"?

Again the answer is NO, a thousand times NO!

Our position has not changed, and it will not. We in 2017 take precisely the same stand that was taken by our predecessors in the faith. We repeat it today as emphatically as ever they said it: "The Lord is coming soon—get ready to meet Him." What looks to us like a century-long delay only means that the great Day is a century nearer!

But the inevitable "Why?" remains. Why not yet? Why hasn't Christ come? If our faith in the Word of God is well founded and that Word is true, why hasn't He come? Why not yet?

First, Christ has not yet come because God's time has not yet expired.

When the time is right, Christ will come. "When the fullness of the time had come" God sent Christ the first time (Gal. 4:4). And can we not trust Him to act in such a timely manner again?

In the meantime, God being from eternity to eternity and we being creatures of a moment, so to speak, can't we allow that His view of time may be very different from our own? What is a single century on His time scale, He to whom a thousand years "are but as yesterday when it is past, and as a watch in the night"? (Ps. 90:4).

Second, Christ has not yet come because God's mercy surpasses anything we can imagine.

The door of opportunity is still open. This means that He is still waiting for a few members of His family to complete their work. And should we not be grateful? Who among us would have had a chance if Christ had come when our forbears expected Him?

Yes, thank God for the seeming delay?

Were those who were preaching the imminent return of Christ 100 plus years ago wrong in doing it? Their calculations and estimates of time were wrong, as it has turned out; but Jesus said clearly that "no one knows" the day or hour of His coming (Matt. 24:36), so how could they know? But they were not wrong in proclaiming its imminence when they did. In fact, expecting the Day of the Lord at any time, would have the effect of spurring on each Believer to greater urgency. For when the Bridegroom comes the bride (or Church) must have made herself ready. Each member has only his or her life time to put on the wedding dress. —Rev. 19:7–8.

God knows our need. He knows the complacency that naturally plagues us, and our human tendency to put off—and might this not be one reason He allowed the Day to be expected too soon? Had the full length of time been known a century ago, isn't it possible that those of that generation, being human like ourselves, might not have had the impetus to go ahead and accomplish the work they were called to do, to prepare themselves for the coming of the Lord?

Furthermore, had the generations before us taken lightly so great a promise as that of the Second Advent of Christ and put "far away" the Day of the Lord, had they not felt the urgency of the time, would they not have been showing great disrespect to the Author of the plan? God means us to take Him seriously whenever He speaks—even though we are not told all the details we might like to know. And if, on the basis of limited knowledge, we make a misjudgment, will God condemn us for this? Were any people ever condemned for serving Him too early or preparing too soon for what He predicted?

No, the fact that the great Day of the Lord has tarried longer than we anticipated means only that it is that much nearer now. Prophecy

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, with the help of God, of applying to 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 Jesus Christ will soon return to rid the earth of all sin and suffering and inaugurate an eternal and worldwide Kingdom of peace and righteousness, until God's will is done here as it is now done in heaven.

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Megiddo Message

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BDAG—Arndt, W., Gingrich, F. W., Danker, F. W., & Bauer, W. (1996). A Greek-English lexicon of the New Testament and other early Christian literature; **DBL**—Swanson, J. (1997). Dictionary of Biblical Languages with Semantic Domains; **EDNT**—Balz, H. R., & Schneider, G. (1990-). Exegetical Dictionary of the New Testament; **GES**—Gesenius, W., & Tregelles, S. P. (2003). Gesenius' Hebrew and Chaldee lexicon to the Old Testament Scriptures; **HAL**—Koehler, L., Baumgartner, W., Richardson, M., & Stamm, J. J. (1999). The Hebrew and Aramaic lexicon of the Old Testament; **LSJ**—Liddell, H. G., Scott, R., Jones, H. S., & McKenzie, R. (1996). A Greek-English lexicon; **LN**—Louw, J. P., & Nida, E. A. (1996). Greek-English lexicon of the New Testament : Based on semantic domains; **SHG**—Strong, J. (1997). The new Strong's dictionary of Hebrew and Greek words. **THAYER**—A Greek-English Lexicon of the New Testament (1889).

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 (2 Cor. 10:4-5).

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Errata

Oops! An error slipped into our Winter 2016 issue. In the statement of our beliefs, under "Jesus Christ," it stated of Christ that "He was seated at the right hand of the **Mother**, crowned with immortal glory."

Our sincere thanks to all who responded to the error! No, we have not changed our beliefs, and the Bible says repeatedly that Jesus was seated at the right hand of the **Father**. The error was caused by the software and missed the final proofreading. —The Editor

"Heaven on Earth"

The Bible contains many texts proclaiming that Christ's Kingdom will be established right here on this earth. Contrary to the belief of many, no souls will "fly away" at death to a paradise somewhere in the great beyond.

Here are a few passages of Scripture verifying that earth made over new is to be the location of Christ's Kingdom, and the home of Earth's righteous ones who will spend eternity with Christ:

"God himself that formed the earth and made it;...he created it not in vain, he formed it to be inhabited" (Isaiah 45:18).

"The righteous shall inherit the land, and dwell therein for ever.... For such as be blessed of him shall inherit the earth" (Ps. 37:29, 22).

"And the Lord shall be king over all the earth" (Zech. 14:9).

"And they sung a new song, saying, Thou...hast made us unto our God kings and priests: and we shall reign on the earth" (Rev. 5:9-10).

"As truly as I live, all the earth shall be filled with the glory of the Lord" (Num. 14:21).

***"Your Kingdom come,
Your will be done on earth
as it is in heaven."*** —Jesus

...and why not apply some of those conditions now?

When Jesus taught His disciples to pray, He taught them a prayer of promise, a prayer that underlies the entire plan of God for this earth. These are His words: *"Your Kingdom come, Your will be done on earth as it is in heaven"* (Matt. 6:10).

Have we comprehended the breadth and depth of this statement? Or has familiarity obscured its meaning? What was Jesus saying? That when the plan of God is complete, earth will no more be an island alone. The will of God will be done here as fully as it is now done in heaven. Earth will become part of heaven!

When I find myself thinking of this promised

heaven on earth, I visualize an unlimited positive future when all opposition to God is overcome and all the promises of God are fully realized.

But first there is a time of preparation, during which people are prepared to belong to the heavenly family. The first phase of this time, from Adam to the return of Christ, is 6000 years (which is now almost complete), plus an additional 1000 years of more intense, worldwide training.

During this time Jesus would have us praying for the fulfillment of the promise, for the Kingdom to come and God's will to be done here as it is now done in heaven.

Why should we keep praying? God does not need to be persuaded about His own plan. The benefit is ours.

One of the primary reasons Jesus wants us to pray, I believe, is our need to keep hope alive in our hearts. Living in the face of opposition and indifference, we need to keep reaffirming our confidence that beyond the world of human beings are laws that operate by rationality and the design of an Almighty Creator.

Yet God has made us free moral agents, and as a result in the affairs of human beings there is disorder, disharmony, disobedience, distrust; and therefore, chaotic departure from the rational and kind law of God for human life. The prayer of Jesus directs us to look above, to envision the day when in this world of disorder, harmony will appear, distrust will be changed into trust, anarchy be transformed into community, and irresponsible freedom into mindful service for the common good.

Can we dare to envision such things? Can we, in the face of the growing hopelessness of our age, survive if we do not build our hopes and efforts around the promises of God? This hope is expressed in the phrase found in several hymns and supported amply by Scripture: **"One day."** *One day* all the righteous men and women will be without prejudice of nationality, race, culture, economic status, or gender. *One day* there will be no "Jew or Greek, slave nor freeman, male nor female" (Gal. 3:28), for God's children will all be one new harmonious family in Christ Jesus. It is not so now, but *One day* it will be so.

One day our losses will stop and with them grief, separation, and loneliness. *One day* friends will not betray friendship, spouses will not disappoint with unfaithfulness, children will not cast aside parental instruction.

One day we will not betray our own abilities by taking alluring shortcuts, looking for an easy way through life.

One day human freedom will be matched with responsibility, opportunity with effort, and generosity with thankfulness.

One day "Nation will not lift up sword against nation, neither shall they learn war any more" (Isa. 2:4). *One*

day men shall "beat their swords into plowshares and their spears into pruning hooks." *One day* groups of men and women living in organized societies called nations will have a wider vision than that of tribal loyalty.

One day the all-powerful Prince of Peace will cry "Enough," and the war machines of the world will stop. Is there strong opposition to that heavenly vision? *One day* it will end, for God has promised it.

So, what do you do in the meantime? While you are waiting, after you have prayed for the Kingdom of God to come and for Christ's rule to be total and God's will supreme, what do you do today?

Live like you pray! The phrase "*on earth as it is in heaven*" pictures the finale, the grand culmination ahead, everyone reverencing God and allowing in their lives only what honors God. Since God calls hatred "murder," there can be no hatred among those He has approved, so banish hatred from your heart here and now (1 John 3:15). If there is no disloyalty in heaven to cause distrust, live with loyalty today and give no cause for distrust by deceitful practices and betrayed friendships (Rev. 14:5). Practice here and now the living sacrifice that is holy and acceptable to God (Rom. 12:1). Since peace will be the law of life among the saints (Col. 3:15), be a peacemaker and do your part to make peace possible (Rom. 12:18). Dare to live now according to the stan-

dards of that new world, where weapons of destruction will not be needed (Mic. 4:2-5; Ps. 46:9).

Does the phrase "*on earth as it is in heaven*" seem impossible? Start to live right now with that glorious culmination in view. Ask yourself, Would God accept me as I am right now for a place in that glorious heaven-on-earth? What do I need to change in my life to fit into that world of tomorrow?

It is one thing to pray and envision that bright new world, and altogether another to live now to its standards. But this is what we must do if we would be accepted then. For when the time is right, God will act decisively. He will send Jesus Christ (Acts 3:19-20), preceded by the grand prophet Elijah, to turn the hearts of men to God (Mal. 4:5-6). Those who refuse to turn will be removed (Prov. 2:21-22).

How can we prepare to live in Christ's Kingdom—heaven on earth? There is only one Way: by allowing in our lives now only what will be allowed in the Kingdom on earth! (Matt. 16:19).

Jesus Christ will return to earth and bring about those changes promised, when the time is right. We want to do our utmost to live by God's heavenly laws now, so that we can be accepted to live in Christ's Kingdom when the Lord's prayer is fulfilled and God's will is done on earth as now it is done in heaven.

There is no other way of *being* there when the Kingdom comes! ■



*I am waiting for the coming
Of earth's long-expected Lord;
For the signs are now fulfilling
That He gave us in His Word.*

*I am watching, I am waiting,
For that promised happy day;
Yet I do not cease my working;
I must work as well as pray.*

A Thousand Years on Earth

Before the earth can be part of heaven the Bible outlines a period of transition, a time of 1000 years, during which Jesus and His new regime will take the reins of government and establish the Kingdom of God on earth. The new regime will initiate broad, sweeping changes which will completely transform the world as we know it (corrupt, sinful, tragedy-stricken) into one new worldwide nation (perfect, peaceful, prosperous, ideal) where all will be members of one family and all work together for the good of each other.

The following article outlines the Bible evidence that during this thousand-year period of transition, widely called the Millennium, Jesus and the saints will be literally reigning, living and working on earth.

Of all that the Bible reveals about the wonders and glory of Christ's Kingdom, perhaps no single fact is more arresting than its reality. Jesus' Kingdom will be the real rulership of a real king and His chosen associates (Jesus Christ and the saints). And it will be a government of real territory (the earth). In the words of the Revelator, "*We shall reign on the earth*" (Rev. 5:10).

Yet some people believe that during this thousand-year period of transition, Jesus and His saints will reign from heaven. What in Scripture leads them to believe this? Many go to Revelation 7:9, where the Revelator saw in vision the saints standing before the throne, and they comment: "This Scripture shows plainly that the righteous are all taken to heaven immediately after the first Resurrection." They apparently conclude that because the saints are said to stand "*before the throne*," they assume that that throne is the throne of God in heaven.

God's throne is in heaven. "*The heaven is my throne*," says the Lord (Isa. 66:1). "*The Lord's throne is in heaven*" (Ps. 11:4). But this does not say that

the throne of Christ is in heaven. "*The heaven, even the heavens, are the Lord's; but the earth hath he given to the children of men*" (Ps. 115: 16).

Is not Christ among the children of men, of the seed of Abraham, made like His brethren? (Heb. 2:16-17). And will not He as King have a throne on earth? Read the words of the prophet Jeremiah: "*At that time Jerusalem shall be called The Throne of the Lord; and all the nations shall be gathered unto it, to the name of the Lord, to Jerusalem*" (3:17). Jerusalem is a city on earth, and the nations of earth will "*be gathered unto it*"—and surely all the nations of the earth will not be taken to heaven! There is no suggestion that the throne of the new government will be in heaven.

The angel Gabriel prophesied of Christ at the time of His birth that "*the Lord God shall give unto him the throne of his father David; and he shall reign over the house of Jacob for ever*" (Luke 1:32-33). This pictures an earthly setting for the Kingdom, for David did not rule from heaven. David's throne was on earth; Christ's throne will likewise be on earth.

Psalms 110:1 is sometimes quoted by those who believe Christ and the saints will reign in heaven during the thousand years, while the earth is being cleansed of all evil. The text reads: "*The Lord said unto my Lord, Sit at My right hand, until I make Your enemies Your footstool*." The very next verse shows that when the time comes for Christ to take control He will be on the earth. "*The Lord shall send the rod of Your strength out of Zion*" [a city on earth] (v. 2). "*Rule*" from heaven until Your enemies are perished? No, "*Rule in the midst of Your enemies*." What enemies could Christ have in heaven? The chapter continues to tell of Christ's reign on earth: "*He shall judge among the nations, He shall fill the places with dead bodies*" (v. 6)—this surely could not happen in heaven.

The Bible contains text upon text indicating that the earth will be the domain of Christ and His saints, and nothing whatever is said of a thousand-year delay.

Revelation 20:4 speaks of the reign of Christ and the saints: *"And they lived and reigned with Christ a thousand years."* But is there any possibility that this may be in heaven? The chapter begins with an angel coming down from heaven, laying hold on the *"dragon,"* the *"old serpent, which is the Devil, and Satan,"* and binding him a thousand years. This event cannot take place except on the earth. In verse 3, Satan is cast into the *"bottomless pit,"* shut up, and a seal set upon him that he should deceive the *"nations no more, till the thousand years should be fulfilled."* The term *"nations"* depicts an earthly group of people, not a heavenly.

According to Revelation 20:7-9, Satan is to be *"loosed"* at the end of the thousand years, and shall go out to again deceive the nations of the earth; *"and they went up on the breadth of the earth, and compassed the camp of the saints about, and the beloved city: and fire came down from God out of heaven, and devoured them."* Here again the earth—not heaven—is the base of operation.

Another text indicating the location of Christ's reign is in Revelation 2:26-27: *"And he that overcometh...will I give power over the nations: and he shall rule them with a rod of iron."* Do the saints in heaven need ruling *"with a rod of iron"*? It is the nations of earth that Christ and the saints will be ruling.

Rulership

Revelation 5 depicts the time of the opening of the *"seven seals,"* an act which only *"the Lamb"* was worthy to perform. To open the seals suggests enacting the program of events which the seals represent. Then follows the triumph song of the worthy saints: *"You have made us kings and priests to our God, and we shall reign on the earth."* Nothing is said of a thousand years in heaven after which they should reign on the earth. They are redeemed, and at once their reign on earth begins.

The prophet Daniel tells us when this new government will be set up. In a prophetic vision given to Nebuchadnezzar King of Babylon and interpreted by Daniel, a small stone (representing the kingdom of Christ) smote the great

image (representing the kingdoms of men) on the feet. After the little stone smote the image, it immediately began to grow; and it grew and grew until it *"became a great mountain, and filled the whole earth"*—not heaven (Dan. 2:35). Daniel also tells that in the last days of the rulership of men *"shall the God of heaven set up a kingdom, which shall never be destroyed"* (Dan. 2:44). And it is *"in the days of these kings,"* not a thousand years later, that God sets up His kingdom under Christ (Dan. 2:34-35, 44).

Conquest

All the events which the Bible outlines to follow the return of Christ center around solving the problems of earth's government and benefiting the people on the earth. Upon the arrival of Christ the King, the proclamation will go forth to every kindred, and nation, and tongue, and people, saying: *"Fear God, and give glory to him; for the hour of his judgment is come"* (Rev. 14:7). Mankind will be faced with the ultimatum: submit or perish. It will be the hour of decision (Joel 3:14). The result will be Armageddon, an all-out struggle between the forces of Christ and the forces of evil men (Rev. 16:13-14, 16).

This battle of Armageddon is to be fought on the earth, and the saints will be in command, directing, commanding. Christ Himself will ride forth *"conquering, and to conquer"* (Rev. 6:2)—how could He possibly be said to do this if reigning from heaven? The leaders of earth will *"make war with the Lamb, and the Lamb will overcome them: for he is Lord of lords, and King of kings: and those who are with him are called, and chosen, and faithful"* (Rev. 17:14). Here is pictured the King and *"those who are with him"* overpowering the forces of evil—how could this possibly be done from a heavenly platform?

Christ and His associate rulers will direct the Battle of Armageddon on the earth.

Another chapter in Revelation pictures Christ and His righteous administration as a *"white horse"* and *"he who sat on him was called Faithful and True, and in righteousness he judges and makes war"* (Rev. 19:11). And *"out of his mouth goes a sharp sword, that with it he should strike the nations. And He Himself will rule them with a rod of iron"* (Rev. 19:15). The next verse is definite: *"And He has on his robe and on his thigh a name written: King of kings, and Lord of lords."* This is Christ the King, and He is on the scene of earth, where there is evil to be put down.

Psalms 149 describes this world-shaking event which will take place on earth, with the saints in command: *"Let the children of Zion be joyful in their King...Let the saints be joyful in glory: let them sing aloud...Let the high praises of God be in their mouth, and a two-edged sword in their hand; to execute vengeance on the nations, and punishments on the peoples; to bind their kings with chains, and their nobles with fetters of iron"* (vs. 2, 5-8). This would be possible nowhere but on earth; and Christ and the saints will surely be present, for the text concludes with *"This honor have all His saints."*

Malachi 4:1 pictures Armageddon as the *"day"* that shall be *"burning like an oven,"* in which all *"the proud, yes, all who do wickedly, will be stubble. And the day which is coming shall burn them up, says the Lord of hosts, that will leave them neither root nor branch."* Verse 3 reveals that the righteous shall be present, directing this work of cleansing the earth from the incorrigible element, not far away in heaven: *"And you shall trample the wicked; for they shall be ashes under the soles of your feet, on the day that I do this, says the Lord of hosts."*

Progress, Renovation, Education

The wicked, rebellious element removed, the road for progress will be wide open, and progress there will be, *"For the earth shall be filled with the knowledge of the glory of the Lord, as the waters cover the sea"* (Hab. 2:14). Jeremiah, depicting this same period of time, said of the inhabitants of earth, *"And they shall teach no more every man his neighbor, and every man his brother,*

saying, *Know the Lord: for they shall all know me, from the least of them unto the greatest of them*" (Jer. 31:34). People on earth will be taught of God, and who will teach them if all the people of God are absent for a thousand years?

Proverbs 10:30 declares forthrightly that *"the righteous will never be removed."* Would not a thousand years in heaven involve the removal of the *"righteous"*—especially if the earth is to be desolate during that time?

The Psalmist, inspired by God, describes the extent of the new government as *"from sea to sea, and from the river to the ends of the earth"* (Ps. 72:8). And the details that follow show definitely that this will be true when Christ first takes office, while there are still mortal people on earth in need of education and help. We read that *"kings" shall "fall down before him,"* and *"all nations shall serve him";* He shall *"deliver the needy when he cries, the poor also";* He shall *"redeem their soul from deceit and violence"*—all this must meet fulfillment prior to the time when all men everywhere on earth are immortal, as they will be during the Age beyond the Millennium.

Happiness and Prosperity

Isaiah 65 pictures in heart-warming words the conditions under which earth's blessed inhabitants will live during the glorious Millennium when Christ and the saints will be reigning on earth. And we can know that the description applies to the Millennium rather than to the Age beyond because during that time a *"child shall die one hundred years old"* (Isa. 65:20)—and there will be no death in Eternity (Rev. 21:3-4). Physi-

cal suffering will be unknown, and the life span will be greatly lengthened: *"Anyone dying under a hundred years must be accursed by God"* (Isa. 65:20, Moffatt).

"And they shall build houses, and inhabit them; and they shall plant vineyards and eat their fruit. They shall not build, and another inhabit; they shall not plant, and another eat: for as the days of a tree so shall be the days of My people, and My elect shall long enjoy the work of their hands" (Isa. 65:21-22).

These prophecies of Isaiah are not being fulfilled anywhere on earth today, nor can they fit into the scheme of the finished handiwork of God when there will be *"no more death, neither sorrow nor crying"* (Rev. 21:3-4); hence they must picture life on earth during the glorious Millennial Age, when Christ and the saints will *"live and reign...a thousand years."*

The prophecies of Scripture all point to the throne of Christ being established on earth. The words of Zechariah confirm again: Christ comes to dwell among the people of earth. We read, *"Sing and rejoice, O daughter of Zion! For behold, I am coming, and I will dwell in your midst, says the Lord."* And this prophecy cannot apply to the Age beyond the Millennium, for again the *"nations"* of earth are in the picture: *"Many nations shall be joined to the Lord in that day, and they shall become My people. And I will dwell in your midst....And the Lord will take possession of Judah as His inheritance in the Holy Land, and will again choose Jerusalem"* (Zech. 2:10-12).

The Bible leaves no question: Christ's reign will be *on earth!* ■



Abib 2017 Calendar

Spring Equinox (first day of Spring)	March 20, 2017
Abib 1	Tuesday evening, March 28, 2017
	Wednesday, March 29, 2017
Abib 13, Christ's New Passover	Sunday evening, April 9, 2017
Abib 15, Christ's Resurrection	Wednesday morning, April 12, 2017
Resurrection Service	Sunday morning, April 16, 2017
Ascension Day	Sunday, May 21, 2017
Pentecost (Feast of Weeks)	Wednesday, May 31, 2017

Be There! Enjoy...

Have you tried to imagine what life on the angel plane must be, where each new aeon brings fresh raptures and joys in a cycle that goes on and on and on and on from glory to glory, with eternal youth, eternal health, eternal life?

What will the saints do in God's new world, when everyone who lives is immortal? What will life be like? What will we do—if we are among those supremely privileged ones—throughout Eternity?

In a day when boredom with the daily routine is the lot of millions, the idea of Eternity—a future stretching into infinity—might seem almost frightening. If we have trouble filling the next hour, what would we do with Eternity?

This problem is as improbable as it is unreal. Those who will be part of Eternity all have one fundamental quality: *they love life*. And all who love life have no problem filling it, even when it is cumbered with difficulties and limitations. Can we imagine that when all the difficulties and limitations are removed, what immense possibilities will be open for doing, being, and becoming?

What are a few of these possibilities?

The conventional view of heaven has little to offer. While most people don't expect to be sitting around on a cloud playing a harp, few think of heaven, or a new earth, as a particularly exciting or eventful place. Too often the future abode is described in terms that are at best vague and unreal.

But the Bible is neither vague nor unreal. It is exact in its picture of Eternity.

First of all, it tells us that the future life God has promised will be real living in a real place, with real people. The place will be the earth glorified and beautified, under the dominion of a real king and His associates. This territory will extend *"from sea to sea, and from the river unto the ends of the earth"* (Ps. 72:8). *"All the ends of the earth shall see the salvation of our God"* (Isa. 52:10). And the Lord Himself shall be king (Zech. 14:9).

What will life be like in that new world? Though we may not have all the details we would like, the Bible gives us a few broad promises that are all inclusive and thrilling beyond anything we can imagine. Our God has promised to

do for us *"exceeding abundantly above all that we ask or think"* (Eph. 3:20). Stop and ponder this for a moment. The promise is not **all** we can ask or think, or **above all** we can ask or think, or **abundantly above**, but it even surpasses all that—EXCEEDINGLY!

Another expansive summary statement of the promises of God is found in 1 Cor. 2:9, where the apostle Paul is quoting from Isaiah: *"As it is written, Eye has not seen, nor ear heard, nor have entered into the heart of man, the things which God has prepared for those who love Him."*

If this is not enough, the Psalmist adds on top of all this the promise of abundant satisfaction. *"They are abundantly satisfied with the fullness of your house; and you give them drink from the river of your pleasures. For with you is the fountain of life: in your light we see light"* (Ps. 36:8–9).

And there is more. Wrote the Psalmist again with prophetic vision, *"You will show me the path of life, in your presence is fullness of joy; at your right hand are pleasures forevermore"* (Ps. 16:11).

The Bible also gives us pictures of

what will *not* be part of Eternity and the new world God will bring into being. This may seem strange, but what better way could He communicate to us a real picture of a *new* world, we who see so much today of what needs to be eliminated!

The Revelator pictured clearly the new world as a world with *no pain, no sorrow, and no death* (Rev. 21:3–4). We will not even get tired. The promise is, *“They that wait upon the Lord shall renew their strength; they shall mount up with wings as eagles; they shall run, and not be weary; and they shall walk, and not faint”* (Isa. 40:31).

Add to all this the absence of frustration, disappointment and danger, for in that new world there will be nothing to hurt or destroy (Isa. 11:9). There will be *no poverty and no oppression* (Isa. 32:17–18; Mic. 4:2–4). There will be *no violence* or threat of it (Isa. 60:18). There will be *no war* or wanton destruction (Ps. 46:9). There will be *no night*, for the glorified earth will be filled with the light of its glorified inhabitants (Rev. 21:25; Isa. 60:19). Above all, there will be *no sin* (Rev. 21:27).

Now let us translate all this into everyday terms, and what is the Bible saying? With all the negatives of our world removed, what will there be to do and enjoy, to envision and become? What will there be in challenge and opportunity?



Perhaps you are one who associates happiness with music.

The new earth will be a very musical place. Read the book of Revelation with your ears open, and hear how

much there is of rapturous melody and singing, praise and adoration, rousing trumpets and ringing harps. Again and again when the throne of Christ is mentioned, the music is ringing. The throne of Christ is surrounded with singing angels who are praising God and acclaiming the victory of the saints on earth.

If music is in your soul, either to perform or to compose, or even to sing or make melody in your heart, you will find the new earth a delightful place. What could be better than an eternity of time through which to sing and make melody in your heart—the happy expression of one fully satisfied. What could surpass an eternity of time in which to create and compose to the glory of the heavenly Creator—and the greatest voices in the Universe to perform your compositions!

Or perhaps you prefer to listen while others perform. There is coming a performance that you will not want to miss, when the victorious earthborns will join multitudes of the heavenly hosts, even *“ten thousand times ten thousand, and thousands of thousands; Saying with a loud voice, Worthy is the Lamb...to receive power, and riches, and wisdom, and strength, and honor, and glory, and blessing.”* But you won’t be a silent listener long, because it is written of that time that *“Every creature which is in heaven, and on the earth, and under the earth”* will reply in exultant tones, *“Blessing and honor and glory and power be to Him who sits on the throne, and to the Lamb forever and ever”* (Rev. 5:11–13)!

You won’t want to miss the music at the Marriage Supper of the Lamb. Read John’s mini-preview of it in Revelation 19, where he tells of hearing *“a loud voice of a great multitude in heaven [angels and more angels!], saying, Alleluia! Salvation and glory and honor and power belong to the Lord our God.”* The chorus swells as yet more celestial voices join in, as *“the voice of a great multitude, as the sound of many waters, and as the sound of mighty thunderings, saying, Alleluia! For the Lord God Omnipotent reigns.”* And then, giving all honor to the victorious saints, rings out this song of triumph: *“Let us be glad and rejoice and give Him glory, for the marriage of the*

Lamb has come, and His wife has made herself ready. And to her it was granted to be arrayed in fine linen, clean and bright, for the fine linen is the righteous acts of the saints” (Rev. 19:1, 6–8).

Has there ever been a performance on earth to equal it?



Or perhaps you are one who likes to travel. Most people do, but too often lack the time and means.

With citizenship in the new Jerusalem will come a passport to the Universe. Present-day space programs give only the tiniest tantalizing glimpse into the limitless handiwork of our great Creator and the myriad realms that lie beyond our little planet.

Do we wonder if space travel is a realistic possibility? Not if we have read the Scriptures, for remember the promise: *“Eye has not seen, nor ear heard, nor have entered into the heart of man, the things which God has prepared for those who love Him”* (1 Cor. 2:9).

Observe the activities of the angels, and you will find them the greatest space travelers in all history. Whenever we read of an angel in Scripture, his appearance is always sudden; he is always either coming or going. Remember the introductory words of Gabriel to Zacharias: *“I am Gabriel, which stand in the presence of God”* (Luke 1:19).

And the angels are not dependent on any earthly vehicles of conveyance. When we read that Jesus will send His angels to *“gather together His elect...from the farthest part of earth to the farthest part of heaven”* (Mark 13:27) we do not picture them scheduling transportation on jetliners or spacecrafts. Of course not! These heavenly glorified beings,

whose home is some distant world, have life within themselves, and with that life comes knowledge of the laws of the universe. No longer are they planet-bound. They are travelers of the first order—*experienced* travelers.

Again and again through the Bible we read of the angels traveling between heaven and earth. It seems so near, so easy. Yet when we read of the vast distances between us and the stars, our little minds are stunned. Have you ever wondered what kind of celestial express route might link earth to heaven, upon which the angels can travel at speeds far beyond the slow speed of light? Might this not be what Jacob saw symbolized in a dream as a ladder reaching from heaven to earth, upon which the angels of God were continually ascending and descending? (Gen. 28:11–16). Were it not for such a possibility, travel between stars even within our local group of galaxies would take many hundreds of thousands of years!

Flying is as natural to angels as walking is to us. In the book of Revelation, how many times did the apostle John see in vision an angel “fly” in the midst of heaven!

Interstellar and interplanetary travel is one of the most common activities of the angels, for many have been the visits of the angels to our planet. In fact, we have no way of knowing how many angels are here right now. And when heaven opens its doors and takes in our little earth, and earth becomes a part of heaven, all the space routes of the universe will be open to us. Blessed traveling!

Certainly one of the greatest fascinations of travel is the delight of meeting people of other lands and cultures. What could surpass the delight of meeting the inhabitants of other worlds—worlds that have been glorified for aeons, or worlds newly glorified, or worlds yet in the process of development.

In the words of our hymn,

*“We now may let our minds expand
with all their power combined,
And yet we cannot comprehend
the joys we there shall find.”*



Or perhaps you are one who enjoys administration, authority, organization—making things work, getting things done, everyone working happily together. It is an art sorely needed by our present governments. But because of the built-in weaknesses of the present system, little can be changed

But the new world will offer limitless opportunities in administration all the way up to the planet level. This, we are told, is a regular part of angel work. We read in the book of Hebrews that “*He has not put the world to come, of which we speak, in subjection to angels*” (Heb. 2:5). In other words, our present world is under the direction of the angels. They are here, devising the means, performing the work, protecting, guiding, assisting wherever we have need. They know what it was to be in our place, and they can help us. Shouldn’t we thank God for these Divine administrators, “*sent forth to minister for those who shall be heirs of salvation*”? (Heb. 1:14).

And do good administrators need authority? We have never seen anyone with authority such as the angels have. And they have no problem knowing who is right or wrong because they can read the human mind. Even Jesus, while still a mortal man, had this ability (John 2:25). With such an aid, the angels have no problem overpowering an evil force—because they can know its intentions before it even moves to strike. No human foe do they fear, for their resources are omnipotent!

Recall how the angel stepped into the fiery furnace and protected the

three Hebrew children from the wrath of the king. Neither fire nor fury could frighten that angel.

Recall the angel of the Lord marching into the camp of the Assyrians and smiting many thousands in one night, giving a tremendous victory to God’s people. A prodigious task from a human point of view, yet it was easy for an angel who knows the basic laws of life.

Picture the angels administering the law for the nation of Israel upon Mt. Sinai, ten thousand coming down to demonstrate God’s authority (Exodus 19, 20). It was a grandiose occasion, no doubt, even for angels. Some blew trumpets, others made the mountain shake, while others made it appear as a smoking, fiery furnace. It was an occasion long remembered—by angels *and* men!

The authority of the angels has also been *felt* as well as seen. How would you like to have been the angel who wrote those blazing words of doom upon the wall in the Babylonian palace that night? (Daniel 5). That angel had authority which made the proud king tremble, but the angel was not afraid. He was on a mission in behalf of God’s chosen ones, bringing to pass a prophecy made many years before. Who among all those “high” officials of Babylon could challenge him? That angel had authority!

Wouldn’t we delight in some of these angel duties?



Perhaps your greatest desire is to teach—or study. In either case, eternity will not be one moment too long for

you. In fact, only in eternity will you have time to become a master in all the fields that interest you. Only in eternity will you be able to satisfy your desire to instruct and teach others.

Your first need will be of a mind that can comprehend and retain the vast resources of knowledge that will be opened. Our world has not seemed short on knowledge—but it has seemed so to us only because of our very limited brainpower, though scientists tell us we use only some ten percent of what we have. Yet to absorb the knowledge that will be available in eternity we will need much more than the remaining ninety percent. But when Christ refashions our mortal bodies into the likeness of His own resplendent, glorious body (Phil. 3:20–21), a “new mind” will be part of the package. God will abundantly meet our need!

And for the first time in the history of this world, all available knowledge will be perfect and error-free. This means that what you learn (or teach) today will not be contradicted tomorrow by some new discovery.

What subjects will be open for study? Let your imagination browse for a century, and you still will not have even scratched the surface of possibilities. There will be courses in every area of the explored and unexplored sciences known today—*plus*. What about learning the pre-history of our earth—and other worlds; the angels can write the course, for some of them were there.

Or what about a course in the background, progress and destiny of our Solar System. When we have mastered these rudimentary topics, we may want to go on with courses in interplanetary communications, courses in space travel, courses in planet guidance and development, and courses in the basic architecture and design of galaxies—all these and incomprehensibly more lie within the realm of the imagination. And—remember—we are not to be limited by this. Let us repeat the Eternal’s promise: *“Eye has not seen, nor ear heard, nor have entered into the heart of man, the things which God*

hath prepared for them that love Him” (1 Cor. 2:9).

Or perhaps you favor the arts, creative or mechanical. These, too, will offer limitless opportunities.

What about teaching? Angels have been teaching for ages, even on our little planet. Angels were sent to instruct Abraham. The Law of Sinai was given by the disposition of angels, and angels were present to help with instruction of the people. Most of the time unseen, they have been the prime teachers of God’s people through the ages.

But in the age to come there will be one great difference. For the first time, these angelic instructors will be seen. The promise is, *“your eyes shall see your teachers”* (Isa. 30:20)—a great change from the era immediately preceding, though their work has never been in question.

Think you for a moment that you will be bored with Eternity?



Perhaps you are one whose strongest desire is to help the less fortunate, to relieve pain and suffering and the miseries of old age. This is a noble desire in the world of today, but in Eternity there will be no suffering to relieve—for all sickness, pain, old age and death will have been removed!

Or perhaps you long to relieve the trauma of the oppressed and underprivileged. This desire, too, will be out of date in Eternity, for in that new world—for the very first time in the history of our planet—there will be no unwilling subjugation of one people to

another. You will have to find another outlet for your spirit of helpfulness!

You will not have to look far, for God’s whole plan centers in the people He is blessing. And when there is nothing more you can do for people on this planet, when all who live here are fully satisfied and immortal, there will be other people on other worlds, people yet unborn, who will need your help. There will always be people to instruct and bless, and that ministering is the happy duty of the angels (Heb. 1:14).

Oh, the fathomless reaches of God’s mercy!



Or maybe you prefer less spectacular assignments—how would you like to serve on a “special services” committee, and take your turn in performing miscellaneous duties?

It’s not likely that you ever aspired to becoming a messenger, but messenger duties are nothing to be despised—not when the angels are performing them! Indeed, message-bearing will be one of the most delightful tasks in Eternity!

Imagine the joy of the angel who was sent to announce to Abraham and Sarah the birth of their long-awaited child of promise. Or imagine the thrill of announcing to the youthful Mary that she was to be the mother of the Messiah, the future King of the whole world. No ordinary duties these!

Or think of the angel who was sent to deliver Peter from prison, to escort him through the gates and down the street to safety. Or think of the angel

who appeared to the apostle Paul on the stricken ship, giving comfort and assurance. Think of the angel who was commissioned personally by Jesus to deliver His revelation to John on the Isle of Patmos. *"I Jesus have sent mine angel"*—think of *being* that angel, that personal messenger of Jesus Christ!

And think of the special assignment that has been given to myriad angels—to accompany Jesus when He returns to earth, for by His own testimony He is coming with His *"holy angels,"* hosts of them. Perhaps some have already gathered for the great occasion!

Every step toward setting up the new system and removing the old will be assisted by angels. They will bring Elijah; they will *"gather together his [Christ's] elect"* (Matt. 24:31). They will even officiate at the Judgment seat of Christ. The prophet Daniel saw in prophetic vision the great King upon His throne of Judgment and *"thousand thousands"* ministering unto Him (Dan. 7:10).

Again our imagination fails—we cannot begin to conceive of all the special services we may be able to perform through eternity!



Perhaps your strongest yen is to be original, creative, the designer of something fresh and "new."

While there is *"no new thing under the sun,"* *"under the sun"* does not describe all of God's realm. The new world will have possibilities for things

both under and above the sun—infinite possibilities.

The present world has no opportunity that can even begin to compare with the possibilities that will be open to you in the new world. For angels have power to *create*!

Yes, angels are instrumental in the creating process. They have been on this earth, and we have every reason to believe that it is the same on other worlds, for God is doing all according to His eternal purpose (Eph. 3:11). Just look at a telescope picture of our own Milky Way galaxy, with its hundred billion shining worlds—and it is only one among many billions of galaxies. Can't we "see" that the process of developing and perfecting worlds has been going on from time immemorial?

The art of creating might take on many forms, as lowly as designing the plants and flowers of a world like ours; as lofty as drawing the blueprints of a new universe. Does it seem impossible? There is only one thing sure about our speculations—that they cannot approach the reality, for remember that God has promised to do *"exceeding abundantly above all that we ask or think."* The best that we can imagine is only enough to whet our appetite, to stimulate our curiosity and longings, and move us to muster all our God-given faculties to qualify for these exalted privileges.



Why dream about Eternity? Why think about it? Why try to imagine

what is unimaginable? Because no other incentive is strong enough to impel us to offer to God the complete sacrifice He requires of us, holy and acceptable to Him (Rom. 12:1).

Eternity with all its limitless possibilities is not a "free-for-all." The Bible tells us clearly and explicitly that God's matchless rewards are reserved for the pure, the meek, the upright, those who become holy as He is holy (Matt. 5:5, 8; 1 Pet. 1:15–16); for those who are *"undefiled in the way, who walk in the law of the Lord"* (Ps. 119:1); for those who *"persist in doing good"* (Rom. 2:7 NLT).

Keeping in our minds a vivid and glowing picture of what lies ahead will give us the power to complete the task of total self-mastery that God has assigned us. And this we must do, for He will have no old creatures in His new world. Everything in that realm will be "new," all new. *"Behold, I make all things new."* Nothing old or impure or ugly or contaminated will be allowed, for *"there shall in no wise enter...any thing that defileth, neither whatsoever worketh abomination, or maketh a lie: but they which are written in the Lamb's book of life"* (Rev. 21:27).

Why has God revealed so much of the possibilities of eternity? Because it is the stimulus we need; because nothing less would impel us to make the full surrender He requires, to perfectly love Him with all our heart, and all our soul, and all our mind, and all our strength (Mark 12:30–31).

That new world *will be*. It is not an idle dream. It is real, and soon it will be here. It was the prayer of our Lord, *"Your kingdom come. Your will be done on earth, as it is in heaven"* (Matt. 6:10). And said the prophet Isaiah speaking of the Eternal's plans for this earth, *"He created it not in vain, he formed it to be inhabited"* (Isa. 45:18). Someday this earth will shine with the glory of its immortal inhabitants (Daniel 12:3), and shine *through all eternity*.

What will we be doing through Eternity? Be sure to be there, and you will find out! ■

What Will Immortality Be Like?

*The ransomed of the Lord
shall...come to Zion with
singing, with everlasting joy.*

—Isa. 35:10

by GERALD R. PAYNE

What would it be like to be a shining immortal being? How would it change our lives?

First of all it would remove our instinctive dread of death. Try as we may to forget it, we cannot escape the knowledge that we are mortal, and that in the course of time we all must die. Immortal beings are beyond this. To them, the future is all life, life and more life!

Then too, it would remove all fear of sickness, debilitating disease, pain, and suffering. As the years go by, we would no longer be constantly reminded of our mortality as our eyesight, our hearing, our teeth, and on and on, begin failing with no possibility of full restoration. As a matter of fact, immortal beings no longer “grow older.” The millenniums just pass on one after the other while they go from “glory to glory.” This is a whole new avenue of thought: to no longer “grow older.” But it is very real—because immortal bodies have absolutely nothing to

wear out. They are always new, fit and strong. As time passes, their minds grow wiser, stronger and more attuned—just the opposite of mortality!

Then, being immortal would put us on the “other side” of the Judgment—we are accepted! No longer need we have any fear of sin, or of displeasing God. Having received His stamp of approval, we are His forever. No chance of failing or falling short.

Then, too, as immortals we would no longer have to fear for the temporal side of our world—for the depleting of the natural resources on which we are so dependent. We would no longer have to spend the greater portion of our conscious moments working to preserve life—acquiring food, clothing, shelter and medical care. We no longer would have to be concerned that we get enough exercise, that we eat the right kinds of foods and not over-indulge. No longer would we have to be concerned for our homes, keeping them in repair and protecting them from flood, fire and storm.

There are many things that cause discomfort in this life that are necessary for survival—such things as

hunger, thirst and fatigue. Putting on immortality will eliminate any need for such.

Then add to all this another of God’s promises, that of “everlasting joy” (Isa. 35:10). “*They shall obtain joy and gladness, and sorrow and sighing shall flee away.*”

Joy is a little word with great meaning. According to Webster, joy is a “very glad feeling, happiness, great pleasure, delight.” Couple “joy” with immortality and what do you have? “Everlasting joy”!

What will immortality be like? Picture the happiest moment you ever experienced going on...and on...and on...and on...from joy to joy, with never a pain or sorrow or worry to mar that pure, rapturous joy.

The delights of immortality will surpass even that, for in the words of the inspired Prophet, mortal eye has never seen, mortal ear has never heard, and mortal mind has never imagined what God has prepared for those who truly love him (1 Cor. 2:9).

Isn’t it enough to stimulate us to give God our very best—so that He may share these wonders of delight with us, world without end? ■

The *King* Triumphant

*Jesus, our Lord and our Savior,
Is dwelling in heaven above;
But soon He is coming with blessings,
For all who abide in His love.
Yes, Jesus ascended to Heaven
And sits at the Father's right hand,
But soon He will come to His people,
To welcome His own waiting band.*

*With power He's coming to conquer,
Commanding the world to obey;
To turn from their warfare and carnage
And walk in the new, living way.
The kings at His presence shall tremble,
"Who is this that comes from far,
Commanding the world to obey Him,
To lay down their weapons of war?"*

*Who is this demanding dominion
Who comes with His armies apace?
Our people shall NOT bow before Him:
Assemble your hosts to His place!"
Vain men, 'gainst the power of Jehovah,
Go forth with their weapons of war,
Resisting in open rebellion,
The King who has come afar;*

*The One who is strong to redeem them,
To save them from sorrow and strife,
To deliver their land from oppression
To give them the blessings of life.
The Lord who is coming from heaven,
With power all nations to bless,
All nations design to resist Him.
And keep Him from giving them rest.*

*The people take counsel together,
Their kings and their rulers combine,
To cast off the bands of the Savior,
Their armies against Him in line.
The hosts of the Lord rise in conflict,
His strong ones prevail 'gainst weak man;
The battle is sharp and decisive,
Thwarting earth's kings in their plan.*

*For God, who beholds them from heaven,
Looks down from the place of His might,
Commands that His chosen ones conquer,
And put down earth's kings in the fight.
To His Son He has given dominion,
And power to conquer and reign,
He'll establish His kingdom forever;
Eternal His throne shall remain.*

*Earth's rulers submit now before Him,
The nations bow down to His will,
Compelled to His kingship acknowledge,
His mandates of peace to fulfill.
Jerusalem stands forth triumphant,
In glory outshining the sun;
The throne of the Lord is established,
The reign of His glory begun.*

*The law now goes forth from Mt. Zion,
While blessings descend from our God:
Jerusalem shines forth in glory;
Earth's capital, ruling in love.
The nations, now freed from their thralldom
Rejoicing, can lift up their head;
A strong One has brought them redemption.
Has freed them from sorrow and dread.*

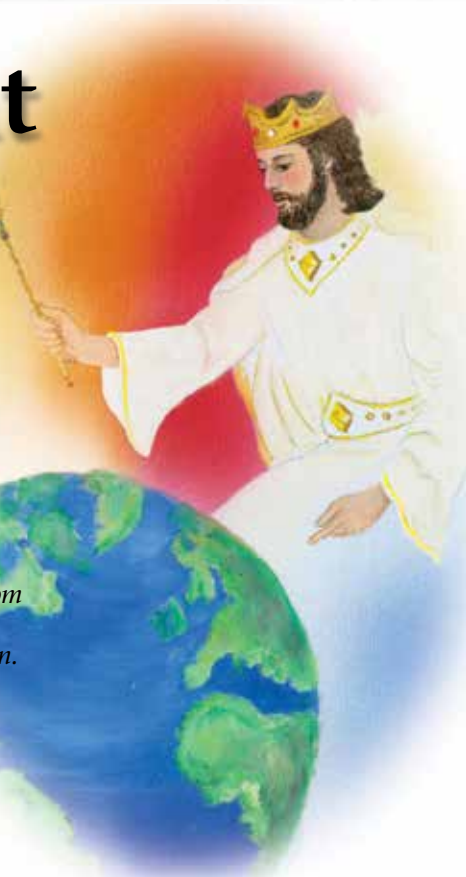
*No more will the cannon roar frighten,
No tidings of war, cause alarm,
For Christ is now reigning in Zion,
The strong One to banish all harm.
Just listen! What songs of rejoicing,
What music is filling the air!
For now is earth's sad conflict over,
God's Kingdom established so fair.*

*The eyes of the blind He has opened,
The ears of the deaf are unstopped,
The tongue of the dumb is rejoicing,
The lame one now leaps as a hart.
No sickness is known the world over,
No terrors now make men afraid,
There's nothing to hurt, harm or frighten,
For peace with all men has been made.*

*The earth shines resplendent in beauty;
The desert blooms forth as the rose;
The land is majestic in glory;
Earth's nations enjoy sweet repose.
The angels' sweet melodies voicing
Sing praise to the King on His throne;
"All glory to God in the highest,
And peace, for God's Kingdom has come."*

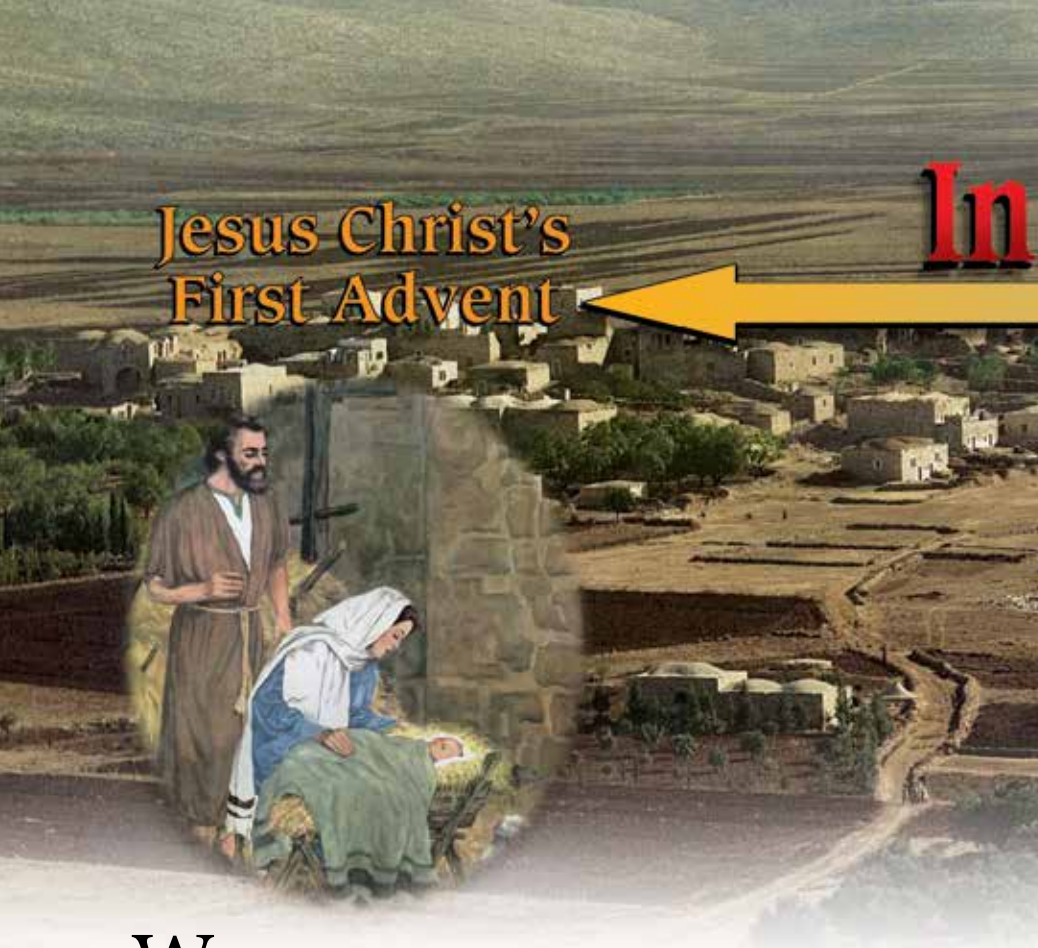
*Rejoice and be glad all ye people,
Let praises fill heaven and earth,
For the Hope of the ages is reigning,
The land has received a new birth.
The prayer of the Savior is answered,
God's will on the earth now is done;
To Him be all power and glory,
Forever and ever, Amen.*

—Mary A. Lee



Jesus Christ's First Advent

In the TIME



When Jesus came the first time, it was not strange that those acquainted with the Divine plan felt that the “point of fulfillment” had been reached. At long last the words of the ancient prophets were being fulfilled. Jesus could read the Scriptures and point to passage after passage that spoke of Him.¹ And so the Apostles spoke and wrote as though they were in the time foretold, the “last days.”² Truly the long-looked-for Messiah had come and the establishing of the Kingdom was *next* in order of Divine events.

Next, but not immediately. Some two millenniums had to come between, two millenniums during which the Gospel would be preached to all parts of the known world;³ then a great power of darkness would arise, totally silencing true religion.⁴ Then slowly the darkness would begin to

break until finally the light would shine again.⁵ And then, at last, would come the final fulfillment of *all* that the prophets had spoken, the Second Advent,⁶ the Great Day of the Lord.

We find ourselves today at a most significant point in the history of the world. We are living literally *in the time between*, between two comings—*after* the first period of fulfillment and *just before* the second.

Though most of those who heard or read the prophecies concerning the Messiah were not aware, the ancient prophets had forecast *two* comings of Christ, a first and a second. Sometimes they compassed both prophecies in a single statement, for example the prophecy of Isaiah: “*Unto us a child is born, unto us a son is given: and the government shall be upon his shoulder...*” (Isa. 9:6). “*Unto us a child is born*”—here is a prophecy of Christ’s first coming, when He would be born of the virgin Mary, of the seed of David. “*And the government shall be upon his shoulder*”—here is the Prophet looking further into the future when Christ should come a second time, as earth’s conqueror and ruler, the King of the whole earth.

Jesus came just as foretold, born in obscurity, in the town of Bethlehem. He ministered among men, as was prophesied, died, and was resurrected and taken to heaven, all as prophesied.

But those fulfillments were only *part* of the prophecies, for just as surely as He came the first time *He will come again*. Just as He went away He will return. The angels promised: “*This same Jesus, who has been taken from you into heaven, will come back in the same way you have seen him go into heaven*” (Acts 1:11 NIV).

Some year will mark the beginning of the most important year ever, the year which will bring the end of all things as we know them and the opening to all things to come. Some year will be the year in which Jesus will return. It may be the year we are now in. Never before has there been so much evidence pointing to the end of the age. Never before has there been more to support our confidence that we are nearing the climax of all climaxes, the Second Advent of the Messiah. As one believer has said, “Christians never had more reason to believe that the coming of Christ would occur any day than they have in the *present* prophetic crises of the world.”

One of these days something dramatically new will occur. The events forecast for the end time all fulfilled, the heavens will open and down the parted sky will come the King with all His retinue of shining angels,⁷ myriads of them!

¹ Luke 24:27

² Hebrews 1:1; 1 John 2:18

³ Col. 1:23; Mark 16:19–20; Rom. 10:17–18

⁴ Dan. 7:25; 8:12

⁵ Daniel 12:5–6; Joel 2:21–22

⁶ Heb. 9:28; Matt. 24:30; Acts 1:11

⁷ Matt. 16:27; Mark 8:38; Rev. 1:7.

BETWEEN

Jesus Christ's Second Advent

Then will follow the judgment of His servants⁸ and the rewarding of the saints,⁸ an event which Daniel foresaw and described in these vivid and symbolic terms: *"I beheld until thrones were placed, and the Ancient of days did sit [in judgment].... A fiery stream issued and came forth from before him: thousands of thousands ministered unto him, and ten thousand times ten thousand stood before him"* (Dan. 7:9–10 ASV).

Christ will be crowned King,⁹ and His new and wholly righteous government will demand allegiance worldwide.¹⁰ This will arouse the furor of the nations, as they *"gather together against the Lord and against his Anointed One. 'Let us break their chains,' they say, 'and throw off their fetters'"* (Ps. 2:2–3 NIV). All nations will participate, to resist the new power (Zech. 14:1–3). The result: the battle of Armageddon,¹¹ in which the forces of evil will fight for the last time, to their eternal destruction.

With Christ and the saints victorious, the new government will be in full sway, initiating worldwide programs of rehabilitation, re-education, restoration, and reconstruction. It will be the glorious Millennium,¹² a thousand years of peace, progress and prosperity¹³ such as this world has never before known. Then will follow the final cleansing of the earth from evil,¹⁴ and the dawn of Eternity.¹⁵

All this is forecast in the Word of God; all this is in store for planet Earth! It is enough to overwhelm the human mind. And it is no vain

Never before has there been so much evidence that we are nearing the climax of all climaxes, the Second Advent of the Messiah.

dream—it is all real, it is all in the plan of God, and it *shall be!*

These Divine forecasts will surely happen; the God of heaven has decreed them. And right here in our world! The ground on which we stand will one day be under the jurisdiction of that new Kingdom. So will the land that is under the dominion of every other government on earth today. *"All the ends of the earth shall see the salvation of our God"* (Isa. 52:10). All people everywhere shall bow before the new King, *"all nations shall serve him"* (Ps. 72:11). His dominion shall extend *"from sea to sea and from the river unto the ends of the earth"* (Ps. 72:8).

This is the blessed hope, the hope of the world through Christ. Is it our

hope? Are we living as though we believe it? Are we living every hour of the time between in lively anticipation of these great events?

When Christ comes, will we be ready to welcome Him? God grant that we may be so gripped by this hope that it will possess us, strengthen us, and stimulate us to live at our very best—always. ■

⁸ 1 Pet. 5:4; 2 Tim. 4:1; Matt. 25:31

⁹ Rev. 19:16; 17:14

¹⁰ Zech. 14:9

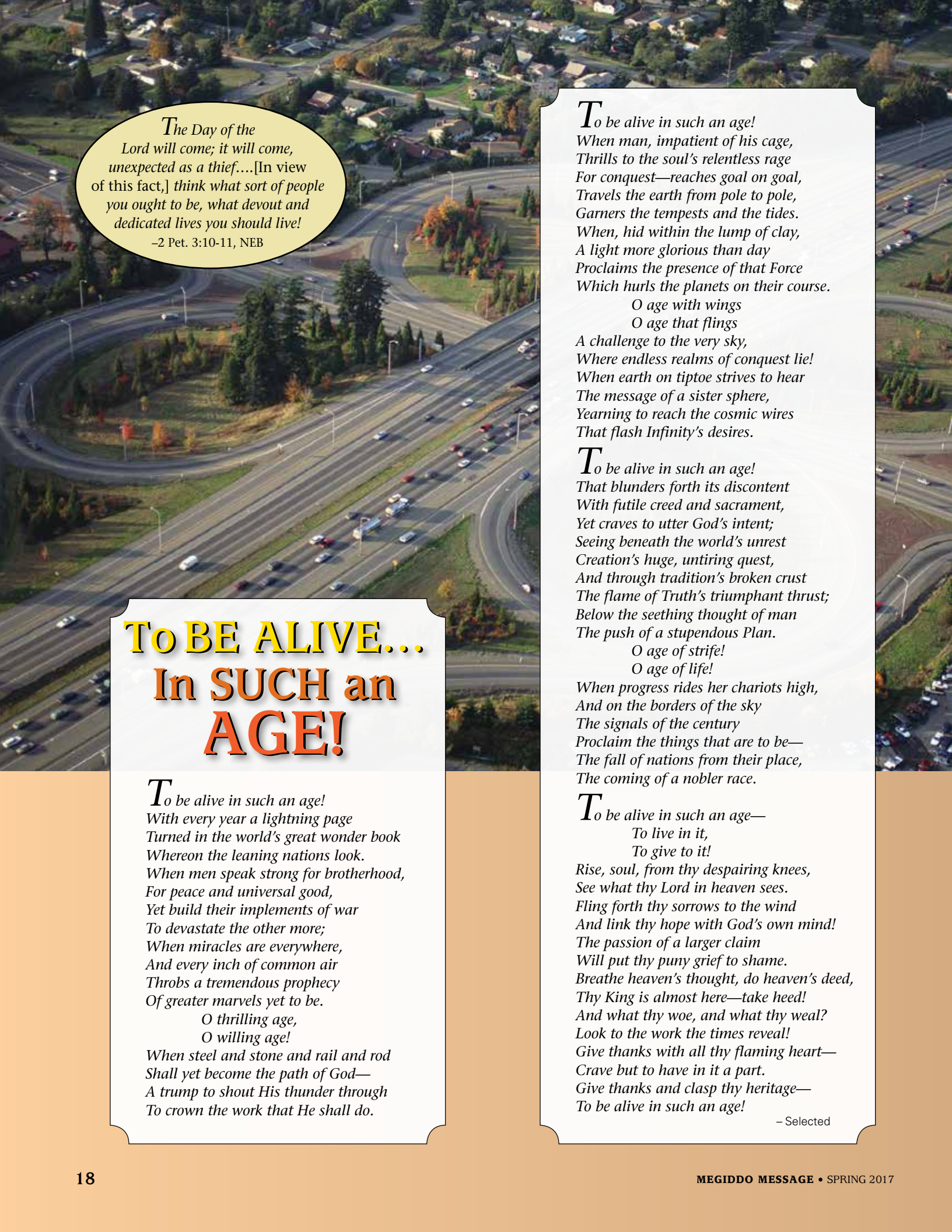
¹¹ Rev. 16:16

¹² Rev. 20:4

¹³ Isa. 32:17–18

¹⁴ Rev. 20:14–15

¹⁵ Matt. 6:10



*The Day of the
Lord will come; it will come,
unexpected as a thief....[In view
of this fact,] think what sort of people
you ought to be, what devout and
dedicated lives you should live!*

—2 Pet. 3:10-11, NEB

To BE ALIVE... In SUCH an AGE!

*To be alive in such an age!
With every year a lightning page
Turned in the world's great wonder book
Whereon the leaning nations look.
When men speak strong for brotherhood,
For peace and universal good,
Yet build their implements of war
To devastate the other more;
When miracles are everywhere,
And every inch of common air
Throbs a tremendous prophecy
Of greater marvels yet to be.*

*O thrilling age,
O willing age!*

*When steel and stone and rail and rod
Shall yet become the path of God—
A trump to shout His thunder through
To crown the work that He shall do.*

*To be alive in such an age!
When man, impatient of his cage,
Thrills to the soul's relentless rage
For conquest—reaches goal on goal,
Travels the earth from pole to pole,
Garners the tempests and the tides.
When, hid within the lump of clay,
A light more glorious than day
Proclaims the presence of that Force
Which hurls the planets on their course.*

O age with wings

O age that flings

*A challenge to the very sky,
Where endless realms of conquest lie!
When earth on tiptoe strives to hear
The message of a sister sphere,
Yearning to reach the cosmic wires
That flash Infinity's desires.*

*To be alive in such an age!
That blunders forth its discontent
With futile creed and sacrament,
Yet craves to utter God's intent;
Seeing beneath the world's unrest
Creation's huge, untiring quest,
And through tradition's broken crust
The flame of Truth's triumphant thrust;
Below the seething thought of man
The push of a stupendous Plan.*

O age of strife!

O age of life!

*When progress rides her chariots high,
And on the borders of the sky
The signals of the century
Proclaim the things that are to be—
The fall of nations from their place,
The coming of a nobler race.*

*To be alive in such an age—
To live in it,
To give to it!*

*Rise, soul, from thy despairing knees,
See what thy Lord in heaven sees.
Fling forth thy sorrows to the wind
And link thy hope with God's own mind!
The passion of a larger claim
Will put thy puny grief to shame.
Breathe heaven's thought, do heaven's deed,
Thy King is almost here—take heed!
And what thy woe, and what thy weal?
Look to the work the times reveal!
Give thanks with all thy flaming heart—
Crave but to have in it a part.
Give thanks and clasp thy heritage—
To be alive in such an age!*

— Selected

KNOW YOUR BIBLE

"Let the wise listen and add to their learning" -Proverbs 1:5



Fig

Figs are slow growing trees, bearing fruit for about 10 months of the year. The large leaves make useful wrappings. Cakes of dried figs were excellent food and easy to carry.

PLANTS OF THE BIBLE

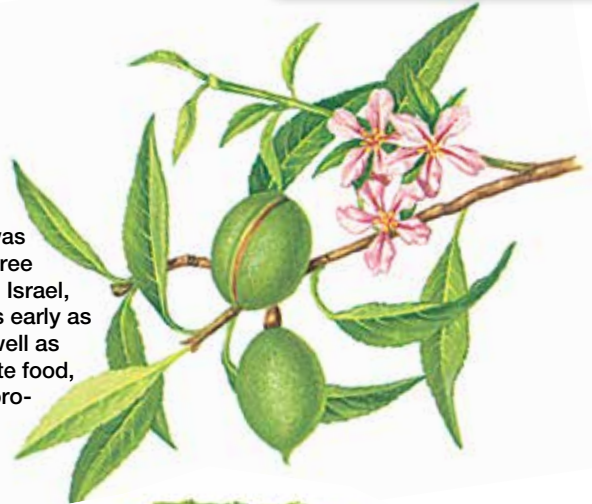
1. A burning bush caught this man's attention.
2. Cedars are renowned in the Bible as coming from this place.
3. Noah's ark was made out of this type of wood.
4. This plant provided Jonah with shade (for a while).
5. Jesus condemned this tree because it had no fruit.
6. This man climbed a tree in order to see Jesus.
7. The spies brought back a sample of this fruit, so heavy that two men had to carry it.
8. This judge of Israel is said to have dwelt under a palm tree between Ramah and Bethel.
9. Aaron's rod that budded brought forth this type of fruit.
10. Noah sent out a dove from the ark which brought back a leaf plucked from this plant.
11. Absalom was fleeing battle when he got his head caught in this type of tree.
12. When Solomon reigned, it is said that every man dwelt in safety, under a vine and this tree.
13. Jotham spoke a parable about trees. In the parable, what agreed to be king?
14. When Elijah fled from Jezebel and asked God that he might die, he did so under this tree.
15. This man had a vineyard next to the king's palace.
16. According to Jesus, in order to move a mountain, we need an amount of faith comparable to this.

FROM THE BOOK OF GENESIS

1. Before being deceived, how many years had Jacob planned to serve in order to marry Rachel?
2. What was the name of "Bethel" before it was changed by Jacob?
3. To where was Abraham instructed to take his son Isaac to offer him as a sacrifice?
4. Name the mother of Dan and Naphtali.
5. Who did Abraham take to wife after Sarah died?
6. What relationship was Laban to Rebekah?
7. Who named his wells Esek, Sitnah, Shebah, and Rehoboth?
8. Rachel died while giving birth to what son?
9. Which of the following was not one of Abraham's sons: Medan, Midian, Eliezer?

Almond

The almond was the first fruit tree to blossom in Israel, sometimes as early as January. As well as being a favorite food, the nut also produced oil.



Cedar

The beautiful, giant cedar of Lebanon once grew in great forests. The wood is a warm red color and long-lasting. It could be carved and decorated, and was used to panel Solomon's temple and palace.

1 Kings 6:15-7:12



HILLS AND MOUNTAINS

1. According to Psalms, how do mountains skip?
2. Where did the ark come to rest?
3. Where did Solomon build the house of the Lord?
4. Whose army was defeated at Mount Tabor?
5. What notable event happened at Mount Sinai?
6. Moses saw the promised land from this mountain.
7. What did Joshua build on Mount Ebal?
8. Who died on Mount Hor?
9. As Jesus walked to the cross, what did He prophesy the "Daughters of Jerusalem" would say to the mountains?
10. What did Aaron and Hur do for Moses on the hill top during a battle with the Amalekites?
11. Luke quotes a prophecy concerning John the Baptist in which every mountain will be.
12. Who lived in Mount Seir? ■

ANSWERS ON PAGE 26



One ROAD TO CONVICTION

The author relates his own spiritual journey.

by EDWARD SHAYLER

Lorna's Story

This story begins around 1920 in a little village of Trehearne in Manitoba, where a family who had migrated from England became part of the reason this country has so much freedom of thought. The father followed the Anglican Church doctrines. The

mother was a member of the United Church; she was also the organist and treasurer. When they began raising a family of six children, the mother wanted for her family the "Bible Truth," and began searching for a way to teach that to her children. Through an advertisement in a local regional paper, she began corresponding with the Megiddo Church. She was doubtful in the beginning that a small Church could know Bible truths more thoroughly than some of the theologians who had spent decades studying. This lady was also out of place with her new circumstance. She was an expert pianist. She had studied music in the London Conservatory of Music and was a qualified music teacher. She was determined to find a way to teach her family the true meaning of the Scriptures.

The Megiddo Church began to send her Children's Bible Lessons, and so the teaching began. She also found herself highly dedicated to her own studies of the Scriptures using the same format: writing and receiving replies. The family grew up having these Bible studies every Sunday, but they were indifferent; and their father, a good man was more interested in the social aspirations of the community. As the children grew up it was difficult for them to find a means of financial support, as there was no other industry but farming. The only answer seemed to be in relocating to larger populated areas; which in their case was the city of Winnipeg. The old-

est girl found a job at a Jewish Orphanage and was able to help her two sisters get employment there also. I lived in Winnipeg at that time, and I first met this family in 1937.

My Story

I, on the other hand had very limited family influences spiritually. My young life had been spent living with my grandparents who had come from Scotland. They claimed to be Scotch Presbyterian, and I assume that it was the religion of their parents before them. I have learned since that some of what they believed came from Celtic folklore. They believed in the "wee folk" (Leprechauns). My grandfather told us that they were in trees, in the barn, in the house, and followed us all over; and if we didn't please them they would "get" us, and also God will rain down fire and destruction. I had watched life begin and end on the farm where we lived and I just did not believe what he told us. At other times I talked to the other children at school, and each seemed to have a very different version of God. When I was beginning school I learned that there was no Santa Claus and proceeded to convince a neighbor family who were my school friends. They told my Grandfather, and I was in serious trouble.

When eleven years old I was sent to Winnipeg to meet my mother and stepfather, and their family worship was not much of anything, but my mother had a Bible and she spent time reading it, and did impress me with the thought that she was searching to find how to understand the Bible. She insisted on saying grace before meals and practiced good morals. However, our relationship was never intimate as her new family monopolized her time. But this principle of searching for the proper answers never left me.

Every Sunday morning for many years in our home we have been listening to a sermon that we received from the Megiddo Church. In fact, this worship service has become a necessary part of our life, and everyone who knows us respects the time we dedicate to it. I have been sitting here wondering when it all began. It has been one of the most continuous endeavors of this household.

The Messages from the Megiddo Church began arriving, indirectly, nearly one hundred years ago, and the predominant factor has always been "TRUTH." Sometimes it is difficult to understand how Bible truths find their way into each person's mind; there seems to be a different process for every mind. In our case, the dominance of the European aristocracy was being left behind because of the severity of their moral principles—which applied to everyone but themselves. It had become a situation of "It's my way or no way." It was not a question of moral values but dominance. "Keep up good appearances" became the buzzword of the times. This caused the general population to follow the demands of their ancestors, especially in matters of spiritual beliefs. The religious beliefs of families had been made an institution more than a belief. It was looked upon as part of the inheritance, and because "they were, you were," or out you went.

The district we lived in (Winnipeg) was also home to the poorest of the poor. But even within this group were people of sound moral principles, and some of them became my friends. This was the time of the great depression, and I had to find a way of being responsible for myself. Steady work for young boys was almost impossible to find. These were the days of the "Soup Kitchens." I found several ways to earn "my keep," and most days it required all my effort; but it was better than living off the street. Some of the jobs were delivering telegrams or bread on a bicycle, shining shoes in a shoe shine parlor, working in market gardens, and helping on farms. Then I went to forest camps, and from there, to the Army soon after I married Lorna. Lorna and I discussed religion, and I promised never to interfere with her spiritual beliefs. She had demonstrated to me that she wanted to follow what her mother had been teaching. Lorna had all of the qualities of one who wanted to be a good Christian.

I spent six and a half years in the military, four of which were in combat. I was taken prisoner of war by the Japanese in Hong Kong. One of my possessions as a prisoner of war was a Bible. I began to read the Bible for the first time in my life, but like most people, I did not accomplish understanding it.

After liberation and during the next several years, I acquired an attitude in the belief that because of the many sins I had committed, forgiveness would be impossible for me so I might just as well follow the crowd. Lorna gave up trying to persuade me otherwise and concentrated on our two children. We talked about our preferences of spiritual teaching. This is where she became the dominant mother, and I knew I had better not interfere. Every Sunday she conducted Sunday school in our house with material received from the Megiddo Church. I was excused.

Through my own selfishness and stubbornness I was received less and less into their personal routines. I felt rejected and alone; fortunately I had a conscience loaded with guilt. I had been using alcohol more and more and came to view every ambition not worthy of the effort. Several times I

tried to stop living in the way that had become a daily process, but without success. I closed my mind to all outside advice, determined to see myself through without help from anybody. My life had become a shambles without hope; I could not find work to provide the necessities, and every employer I worked for asked me to leave. I blamed my predicament on everyone but me.

The Turning Point

One day I was desperate. Having no one else to turn to, I did something that I hadn't done for years: I kneeled down and asked God for help. But then, I reasoned, God would not be interested in helping a derelict like me. Maybe if I showed Him some genuine effort; if I sought help, then asked Him, He might have compassion.

I joined a self-help group who presented me with a program to follow. The program consisted of twelve steps. The third step read as follows: "Turn my will and my life over to the care of God as I understand Him." I felt as though a great weight had been lifted right off

my back. I realized that this was a spiritual program and that it could only take me so far. My old aspirations came back to haunt me. I had better learn "God's Will" for me. I stuck with my resolve and started reading from my old friend, The Bible. This time I resolved to search out meanings that I could not understand. Immediately I received help from Lorna and my family, but I was still in denial and felt they could think as they liked but *I had to search out the "truth"* by myself. I cheated and began reading the material sent by the Megiddo Church. I read it when the family was not watching.

Everything I read, I checked and double-checked to prove it wrong. The more I read and the more I checked, the more it proved to be true. I began to live the way I was told in the gospels. And was I amazed at the improvement in our lives!

We became a family again, and I found peace. It is the most incredible journey I ever experienced—the wonderful and beautiful friendships, full sound nights of rest, blessings beyond any of my dreams. Parts of the Scriptures that used to confound me I now understood. Every day we learn more and more.

All this has given me a determination to put what I learn into practice. The result is a conviction so strong that I doubt any influence in the world could shake it. ■

UNWAVERING FAITH

*Oh, for a faith that will not shrink,
Though pressed with many a foe;
That will not tremble on the brink
Of poverty or woe;*

*That will not murmur nor complain
Beneath the chastening rod;
But in the hour of grief and pain
Can lean upon its God.*


*A faith that shines more bright and clear
When tempests rage without;
That when in danger knows no fear,
In darkness feels no doubt;*

*A faith that keeps the narrow way,
By truth restrained and led,
And with a pure and heavenly ray
Lights up a dying bed.*

*Lord, may I have a faith like this
And then whate'er may come,
I'll taste e'en here the hallow'd bliss
Of an eternal home!*

— Selected





Did You Say,

Happy NEW YEAR?

I sometimes wonder if "Happy New Year!" isn't for many people a 21st century oxymoron. Yes, many are happy. But what about those who have fallen victim to doubt, cynicism, and fear? Where is happiness for those whose dominant emotions are self-love and hate? What can make the new year any different from the old one?

*This year the Sacred New Year
begins March 28, 2017 at 6:00 pm*

*If our faith and
commitment are
on the deeper
level of our lives,
the surface storms
will not shake us.*

*H*appiness is for most of us a matter of choice. We can have a happy new year if we can be victors over time, not victims of it. We might think of time as simply raw material. It is our task to apply the energy and the art to make something beautiful, or if we allow it, time can make something ugly of us. How often we see people after a long absence and wonder what time has done to them. Some faces are exquisitely carved while others are cold and hard with lines of cynicism or fear.

Not what happens *to* us but what happens *in* us—that is what makes or breaks our happiness.

Even though we have to live in a world of hate, strife, and fear, we do not have to let "the world" live in us. Else we are sure to be all tangled up, half slave and half free.

As Christians, our happiness can be independent of our environment. Our human life moves on two levels: a surface level and a deeper, sub-level. On the surface level are our encounters with the culture, statecraft, and applied science. On this level, labor, money and "things" concern us. On this level we buy and sell, and gain or lose. We are alert, active, eager, and the days always seem too few and too short.

Then there is the deeper, sub-level of life. This level remains the same in spite of changes on the surface. On this deeper level are the secret sources of our strength and inner confidences. Here our hope, our faith, and aspirations are the import-

ant issues. On this level are our life purposes and our higher commitments. The words of Jesus, the Prophets, and Apostles all speak to this deeper level of life.

If our faith moves only on the first level, it is only an outward, social rite, a form devoid of godliness. And, being on the surface, it is constantly exposed to the elements around us.

What we are in our deeper life determines what we do on the surface. If we have inner peace and contentment deep down where our real life is, surface storms will not shake us. Time will have no tyranny over us. The opinions of others will not affect us. Those who attack the Bible and the foundations of our faith will not touch us because we give them no access to the deep, sub-level of our lives.

We have our choice. "The days of our years" fly by so quickly. We can live every day on the surface and be affected by the things around us, or we can live every day supported by those deep, sub-surface qualities of hope and faith in God.

Let this new year, if God grant it, be a consecrated year. Then it will be a *happy* year filled with joyful service to God and to one another as we anticipate the indescribable happiness God has in store for every faithful one. Yes, He is waiting with blessings beyond anything we have ever seen or heard (1 Cor. 2:9), beyond anything we can ask or imagine! (Eph. 3:20).

I am sincere when I say it: *Happy New Year!* ■



JESUS' BIRTH IN THE SPRINGTIME

Observing Jesus' birth in the springtime rather than in winter makes so much more sense than observing it in December. The shepherds would not be out watching their sheep on the Judean hillsides during the cold rainy season. This was done only between March and October.

The song entitled "The First Nowell" sung by many at Xmas time states the shepherds were "keeping their sheep on a cold winter's night that was so deep." How contrary to the facts! Of course, there are other reasons why the Megiddo Church observes Jesus' birth in the springtime. The enrollment that Caesar Augustus ordered required only the male member's presence. Yet Mary made the journey with Joseph to Bethlehem in her condition.

Loyal Jews were commanded to *"observe the month Abib"* (Deut. 16:1). No doubt Mary wanted to be there for the yearly New Moon feast. Many people had come to Bethlehem, for they found no room for lodging except in a stable or cave where Jesus was born. It would have also been unwise for Caesar Augustus to order a census in the winter time when road conditions were difficult for traveling.

Recently I saw on the internet a CBC News article regarding celebrating Christmas on December 25th. The writer recognized that December 25 is not the true date of Jesus' birth, but most people go along with it anyway because of all the pagan traditions. They feel a need to conform to this world, whereas the apostle Paul admonished *"do not be conformed to this world, but be transformed by the renewing of your mind, that you may prove what is that good and acceptable and perfect will of God"* (Rom. 12:2). Jesus said *"men loved darkness rather than light, because their deeds were evil. For everyone practicing evil hates the light and does not come to the light, lest his deeds should be exposed"* (John 3:19-20).

Let us heed the words of the apostle Paul—*"Watch, stand fast in the faith, be brave, be strong"* (1 Cor. 16:13).

— E.R., Ontario, Canada

CAN YOU FOLLOW INSTRUCTIONS?

In an emergency a person can rise to heroic heights by being able to follow instructions. I read where the pilot of a private plane while flying the plane died suddenly of a heart attack. A 78 year old woman without flying experience was able to land the craft by following instructions from the ground controller. Someone quoted the odds for such an achievement as 20,000 to 1.

When people lack the wisdom, skill, and strength to fulfill a difficult task, it is all important to follow the instructions of another.

Following instructions is especially necessary in our spiritual lives. Since it is *"not in man who walks to direct his steps"* (Jer. 10:23), God in His Word gives us what we need to guide us. Psalm 119:9 asks, *"How can a young man keep his way pure?"* The answer: *"By living according to Your Word."* Likewise Paul said in 2 Timothy 3:16, *"All Scripture...God-breathed is useful*

for teaching, rebuking, correcting and training in righteousness."

We have the instructions, but they are useless unless we follow them. But if we follow them to the end, they will bring us to our goal of eternal life.

— B. C., Iowa

BE PROGRESSIVES!

Sometimes I think of a motto I saw somewhere a long time ago. It said, "Don't complain about your problems. The only people who don't have problems are in cemeteries."

As Christians we should not be complainers. We need problems to help us grow. If you or I bought a new car forty years ago, drove it home, parked it in the garage, and not started it since, what would we have? A car with only ten miles on the odometer, which we have never used, and probably, after forty years, it wouldn't run. It would be good for nothing, like the linen garment Jeremiah hid in the rocks by the river. When he went back to get it, it had deteriorated and was useless.

We have the knowledge we need to qualify for salvation (Phil. 2:12), but if we don't use it, it is worthless to us, and we will never inherit eternal life.

In today's world many people call themselves progressives. I'm not sure what they mean by being progressive, but for us, progressive means making progress in developing a new character, one that will be pleasing to the Lord, and will assure us a place in His eternal kingdom.

Our impatience must be turned into patience, our rudeness into courtesy, our pride into humility, our selfishness into a willingness to help others, by being kind and considerate. As Paul said, *"So then, as we have opportunity, let us do good to all men, and especially to those who are of the household of faith"* (Gal. 6:10).

We can't change the world, we can only change ourselves.

— S.K., Tennessee

Why Not Yet?

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 2

upon prophecy has been fulfilled, telling us that the end of the age is upon us. It has not yet come, but it IS a whole century nearer than it was a century ago! *"For yet a little while, and He who is coming will come and will not tarry"* (Heb. 10:37).

So let the consuming question with us be, What can I do to be ready when the Great Day of the Lord comes? What can I do to assure that I will be accepted when that Day comes?

For lo, it will come!

"And everyone who has this hope in him purifies himself, just as He [Christ] is pure" (1 John 3:3). ■



“MAKE IT AS Secure As You Can”

On the day after the Roman soldiers had executed Jesus, Pontius Pilate found himself facing the somewhat uneasy chief priests and the Pharisees. *“The Pharisees...said, ‘Sir, we remember how that impostor said, while he was still alive, After three days I will rise again.’ Therefore order the sepulchre to be made secure until the third day, lest his disciples go and steal him away, and tell the people, ‘He has risen from the dead,’ and the last fraud will be worse than the first.’ Pilate said to them, ‘You have a guard of soldiers; go, make it as secure as you can’”* (Matt. 27:62–65, RSV).

Think about that! Just how would they secure anything enough to successfully thwart the purpose of Almighty God?!

The Jewish authorities openly confessed one of their fears: that Jesus’ disciples might steal the body and then launch a movement based on the claim that their Leader was risen from the grave. Underneath their expressed fear was another one that the priests and Pharisees found no courage to acknowledge: What if, by the power of God, Jesus were to come forth *alive* from the grave?

What the Jewish authorities found impossible to express, Pilate dared to insinuate in his order to those who were responsible for posting the guard at the tomb of Jesus: *“Make it as secure as you know how.”* It was as if he was saying, Do everything possible to keep Jesus in the grave!

Religious leaders and unbelievers for centuries have been trying to make the grave as secure as possible, to keep Jesus in the grave. For some strange reason it is easier to believe

in a continuation of life after death than to believe in a restoration of life. Somehow the human mind resists openly acknowledging the power of God to renew and restore life.

But a physical, bodily resurrection is the plan of God for every sleeping believer. This plan has been certified to us by the fact of Jesus’ resurrection, which rests on solid evidence:

- the empty tomb;
- the changed attitude of the disciples and the spread of Christianity
- the appearances of Jesus to the women and other disciples

The resurrection of Jesus brought about a new expectation, a new joy and a new watchfulness. Quite naturally, the central figure was Jesus Christ, crucified, resurrected, ascended, and who would shortly return. The New Testament writings reveal how intensely and how eagerly the early Christians anticipated the second coming of their Lord—they mention it more than three hundred times. No sooner was He out of sight than they began looking forward to His return.

One of these days, Jesus will come! When that Day arrives, the unbelievers will still be unbelieving. But not a single living person anywhere will be unaware, unaffected, or oblivious. For *“Behold, He cometh with clouds, and every eye will see Him”* (Rev. 1:7)—*every eye, no exceptions.*

Jesus Christ is coming as King! All the power of the nations combined cannot thwart God’s vow to fill the earth with His glory (Num. 14:21). ■

THE “SMART” RED HEN

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 29

Little ducklings will go right into the water, but little chicks won’t. You’ll see your little chicks eating tiny pieces of grit and gravel, and they’ll swallow that

into their gizzards—they won’t know why they eat grit, but they must have grit to grind up their food because they don’t have any teeth.”

“They do *all that* by—by instinct, Mom?”

“That’s right. By the instinct God

gave them to know what to do without being taught.”

“I guess nobody—even if he lived to be a million years old—could ever know as much as God,” decided Paul. ■

The above story was reprinted from *Happy Acres* by Erling Nicolai.



Lucy Bliss Sisson

On December 31, 2016, we met to pay our last respects to a friend and sister, Lucy Sisson, who passed away on December 29. A daughter of the late Ivan Bliss and DeFrancis Adams, Lucy was born July 12, 1923, in North Plymouth, New York. The middle child among seven, she had three older sisters and three younger brothers.

She was married to Howard Sisson in 1946 in Norwich, New York, and together they shared an active life until his death in 1989. They had one daughter, Ruth.

In 1965 the family relocated to join the Rochester Congregation, and Sister Lucy enjoyed contributing her time and talents to the work of the Church, until she was stricken with a type of vascular dementia in 1998, from which she never recovered. She was lovingly cared for in her own apartment by her daughter Ruth with the help of a dedicated, caring team until a couple weeks before her death.

She is survived by her daughter, Ruth Sisson, of Rochester, New York (who is the current pastor of the Megiddo Church), by her youngest brother Roger Bliss, of New Berlin, New York; many nieces and nephews, and great-nieces and great-nephews.

Sister Lucy was very conversant with the Bible evidence supporting the beliefs of the Church. During her earlier years she authored a large part of the *Understanding the Bible* series published by the Megiddo Church. In Church Bible Studies she was an active participant, and helped in replying to questions from subscribers. She had a large repertoire of choice memorized Bible verses which she could readily quote, even at the age of 90. As long as she was able she contributed to the church's musical organizations, and was a ready standby to give hospitality to visitors. Generous by nature, she especially enjoyed helping the elderly, whether with shopping or with transportation to an appointment. She loved the out of doors, and found genuine delight in making her gardens bloom.

Whenever the subject of religion came up for discussion with visitors, she was quick to cite the Bible teaching about life after death, and to reaffirm how much "sense" it made to her, that the Bible taught death is a sleep, and that the soul is the "whole person," not a part of him. She often told how she could never believe we have immortal souls that go to heaven when we die. The subject was close to her heart as she recalled the death of her mother when she was only 11. She told how people tried to console her at her mother's funeral, that her mother was happy up in heaven—an idea she refused to believe, even then. In her very practical, emphatic way she told how she had questioned the minister, saying, "But how can my mother be up in heaven? She's RIGHT THERE in the casket." Of course, the minister tried

to explain that the "real her," the invisible part of her, was up in heaven, that just her body was in the casket. But young Lucy couldn't see it that way. And when she learned later that the Bible never once says the soul or spirit is immortal or undying or goes to heaven at one's death, and that the Bible clearly says *"the dead do not know anything,"* and *"there is no work, nor device, nor knowledge, nor wisdom in the grave"* (Eccl. 9:5, 10), that death is a sleep, and that believers *"sleep in Jesus"* until the resurrection, all of this made perfect sense and she believed it wholeheartedly.

She even would go further, to Psalm 49, where King David explained that people die like animals. *"Like sheep they are laid in the grave"*—perhaps not a complimentary statement, but a fact, until such time as God chooses to *"redeem"* believers' *"soul[s] from the power of the grave"* (see Ps. 49:14-15). If God redeems a soul from the power of the grave, that soul was in the grave and needed to be resurrected from the grave, not brought down from heaven.

Her record is closed, until the day of Resurrection when *"the Lord Himself will descend from heaven with a shout, with the voice of an archangel, and with the trumpet of God. And the dead in Christ will rise"* and Christ will reward *"every one according to his work"* (1 Thess. 4:16; Rev. 22:12).



Dorothy Eleanor Fleming

We have received word of the passing of a long time friend and correspondent of the Church, Dorothy Eleanor Fleming of Arizona, on January 13, 2017. She was 95 years of age.

Sister Dorothy Fleming was born November 16, 1921, in Kirkland, Arizona, to Elmer and Alma Beall. The family raised goats for a living, and her father was a beekeeper. In her childhood, Dorothy, being an only child, enjoyed being outdoors—a love she never lost.

In August 1940, she was married to Clifton H. Fleming Sr., and they shared life together until his death in 1984. They had five children: Wynona (John) Kapica, now living in Rochester, New York; Theron (Debbie) Fleming, of Arizona; Forrest (Debby) Fleming, of Arizona; Thane (Nancy) Fleming of Arkansas; and Leith (Toba) Fleming of Arizona.

Soon after marrying, Clifton and Dorothy relocated to Arkansas, where they had their first child. They then moved back to Arizona, where they had three more children as they moved around.

About 1950 they settled on a ranch in Beardsley, Arizona, where their last child was born. They supported the family by

raising goats, cattle, sheep and chickens. There was always plenty of work for everyone.

About 1985, Dorothy's mother, Alma Beall, came to live with Dorothy and remained in her care until her mother's death in 1990 at the age of 100.

Sister Dorothy became acquainted with the Megiddo Church through her husband Clifton Sr. His acquaintance with the Megiddo Church was a direct result of the Church's yacht missionary effort on Lake Champlain in 1923. Clifton, then living in Vermont, purchased a set of books from one of the bicycling missionaries. When he moved to Arizona, his Church literature went with him, and the *Megiddo Message* came regularly to their home.

About 1957, some members of the Megiddo Church visited the Fleming ranch in Arizona. Dorothy Fleming felt a bond of genuine friendship, and began corresponding with some of the members of the Church. In 1991, Dorothy visited the Megiddo Church in Rochester, and again in 1996. In 2011 she visited the Church with her daughter-in-law Debbie Fleming.

During the years Sister Dorothy corresponded with the church. Her letters were often singular as she told of unique lessons she had learned from her goats.

About 2002, she gave up raising goats, bought a small trailer, and moved to Kingman, Arizona, where she was able to live on her own and next door to her son and daughter-in-law, Theron and Debbie, who kindly looked after her needs. When she could no longer care for herself, they found a place for her in a nearby nursing home, and continued to look after her needs.

Dorothy is survived by her five children, 12 grandchildren, 23 great grandchildren, and one great-great grandchild. She was predeceased by one grandson.

Dorothy's stepson Clifton Fleming, Jr. and daughter Wynona Kapica are active members of the Megiddo Church in Rochester, New York. ■

The following are excerpts from some of Dorothy Fleming's letters printed in the *Megiddo Message*. The first was a reply to a letter she had received from a sister at the Church.

The thought you expressed so well regarding the daily record the Angel writes of our words and deeds should make each one of us stop and think. If only we bore that fact in mind that we will again face those words and deeds, it should most surely act as a rein to our ways and help us to make a better record.

Paul surely gave us words of promising encouragement when he told us we would not be tempted above that we were able. But we know we must be fortified with the armor of truth to make a successful escape.

What we have to watch for is the snares, the little things in life that catch us unawares and trip us up.

—Dorothy Fleming (MM, 1952)

From the *Megiddo Message*, April 14, 1951:

How we should praise God for the knowledge He has given us, and for opening our minds to receive it! Many may hear but only argue and disbelieve....

It seems anyone with any understanding could see that the majority of their theological ideas are contrary to God's Word. But the greatest thing with many is the idea that Jesus did it all! And, too, they like to have a devil to blame when 'they' don't do right.

The poor washer woman who unwittingly daily wore a fortune in pearls (which she had found on the street) could aptly illustrate our condition, if we do not put to use the knowledge we are so fortunate to possess.

May we be found striving to be worthy of the pearl of truth that God has entrusted to us.

—Dorothy Fleming (MM, 1951)

ANSWERS TO BIBLE QUESTIONS ON PAGE 19

PLANTS OF THE BIBLE

1. Moses (Ex. 3:2-4)
2. Lebanon (Ps. 104:16)
3. Gopher (Gen. 6:13-14)
4. A gourd (Jonah 4:6)
5. Fig (Matt. 21:19-21)
6. Zacchaeus (Luke 19:4-5)
7. Grapes (Num. 13:21-25)
8. Deborah (Judges 4:4-5)
9. Almonds (Num. 17:8)
10. Olive (Gen. 8:11)
11. Oak (2 Sam. 18:9)
12. Fig tree (1 Kings 4:25)
13. Bramble (Judges 9:7-15)

14. Juniper (Broom) (1 Kings 19:2-4)

15. Naboth (1 Kings 21:1)

16. A mustard seed (Matt. 17:20)

FROM THE BOOK OF GENESIS

1. Seven (Gen. 29:17-18)
2. Luz (Gen. 28:18-19)
3. Land of Moriah (Gen. 22:1-2)
4. Bilhah (Gen. 30:4-8)
5. Keturah (Gen. 25:1)
6. Brother (Gen. 24:29)
7. Isaac (Gen. 26:17-33)
8. Benjamin (Gen. 35:16-19)
9. Eliezer (Gen. 25:1-2; 15:2)

HILLS AND MOUNTAINS

1. Like rams (Ps. 114:4)
2. Mountains of Ararat (Gen. 8:4)
3. Mount Moriah (2 Chron. 3:1)
4. Sisera (Judges 4:12-16)
5. Ten commandments received (Ex. 19 & 20)
6. Nebo (Deut. 32:48-52)
7. Altar (Josh. 8:30)
8. Aaron (Num. 20:27-28)
9. Fall on us (Luke 23:28-30)
10. Held up his hands (Ex. 17:8-12)
11. Brought low (Luke 3:2-5)
12. Esau (Deut. 2:5)



DESIGNED TO BE A PARASITE

The Brown-headed Cowbird and European Cuckoo are Brood Parasites.



Brown-headed female cowbird

There is no cowbird "family" as the adult birds have many and various mates. The female lays her egg in another bird's nest and then flies away, leaving the work to the host "mother." Did the cowbird just chance to acquire these specialized habits that allow it to exist as it does? Not a chance.

European cuckoo



Dependent on foster parents to incubate her eggs and raise her young, the cuckoo jettisons a host's egg to make room for her own.

The cuckoo plays parasite to some 300 species. Remarkably, it even lays eggs that resemble those of its host—the better to make sure its eggs are treated like those of the foster parent. How could such a remarkable instinct be taught or evolved over time?

Newly hatched, a cuckoo ejects its host's eggs. How could such a unique instinct become part of a bird's genetics without a Designer?

A huge young cuckoo begs "mother" for more food.

The European cuckoo is another bird notorious for the habit of depositing its eggs in the nests of other birds, leaving the involuntary hosts with the work of incubating the eggs and feeding the young. The cuckoo plays parasite to some 300 species.

Can anyone think that parasitism is a chance arrangement for survival? It is yet another evidence of our Creator's awesome designs in providing for His creatures. ■



(above) "Mother" blue-winged warbler feeds a giant cowbird chick. Cowbird chicks usually hatch a day or two before the eggs of the host bird, and grow rapidly, giving the cowbird chick a competitive advantage. As a result, the host's chicks often perish. Just think how many "just right" things have to be to have brood parasitism work. Only a Designer could mastermind this feat!

One unwilling host, a yellow warbler, tried to foil the parasite by roofing over its eggs. But each time the cowbird laid another egg. The cowbird won—its egg is on top. (below) Cutaway view shows the five-story apartment.



Each female Brown-headed Cowbird deposits as many as 40 (some say 80) eggs per year in nests that belong to other bird species.



PRODIGAL PARENTS

What is the matter with the young birds nowadays? Why are so many of them so wild?" How often these questions are asked in Wington when it is reported how many young birds quarrel and cheat and steal and stay out late at night! It is common knowledge that the Owl children and the Nighthawk children sometimes stay out until dawn!

Well, Mr. J. Edgar Kingbird, being the Head of the FBI (the Feathered Bureau of Investigation) says the real trouble with the young birds is the old birds—by which he means their fathers and mothers.

For example, it is not surprising that the Owl children stay out until the wee small hours, because their parents are night-owls themselves! Not so very long ago as Mr. and Mrs. Owl started out to their club one evening, Mrs. Owl said to little Hoo-Hoo Owl, "Don't bother to wait up for us, dear. We have a key." But, when she and Mr. Owl returned, several hours later, little Hoo-Hoo opened the door for them. Said Mrs. Owl,

Phoebe Cowbird never learned, *"Be humble, thinking of others as better than yourself. Don't think only about your own affairs."* —Phil. 2:3-4 NLT

"You should have gone to sleep. I told you we had a key."

"Yes," said little Hoo-Hoo, "but Grandmother is not in yet, and she does not have a key."

But, back to Mr. J. Edgar Kingbird. "So many parents," he says, "being quite busy with parties and meetings of all kinds, allow their children to roam the woods and the fields, leaving the responsibility of their up-bringing to social workers and neighbors and teachers and the Sunday School. But, it does not work," says he, "because there is no substitute for the love, care, and the personal attention, and especially the good example which every little bird needs and has the right to expect from its own father and mother. In general," insists Mr. Kingbird, "the wildness of the young birds is accounted for by the neglect of the old birds."

A good example—or rather, a bad example—is Mrs. Cowbird. Do you know how she raises her children—I mean, how they get raised? She is too lazy to build her own nest and too taken-up with parties and clubs to hatch her own eggs. So, the other day while Mrs. Warbler was attending choir rehearsal, Mrs. Cowbird sneaked up to her nest and slipped one of her own eggs into the little brown nest—then sneaked away again.

When Mrs. Warbler returned, she exclaimed, "What, again? Twice is once too many! I'll not do it a second time!" You see, Mrs. Cowbird did the same thing last year, and Mrs. Warbler, having a very warm heart under her warm feathers, let Mrs. Cowbird's egg stay. And, having placed three of her

own beside it, she sat on all of them until they hatched. But, what do you think? Mrs. Elsie Cowbird's egg hatched two days earlier than her own. Thus Phoebe Cowbird had the start on the three little Warblers, and whenever Mrs. Warbler brought home a worm, Phoebe would grab it first and swallow it before one of the little Warblers could so much as get a nibble. She was so selfish and greedy that Mrs. Warbler's own little children almost starved to death, and all of them were very much relieved when one day Phoebe Cowbird flew away and never came back.

Everywhere Phoebe went she was selfish and quarrelsome, never dividing the worms and bugs she found, and stealing whatever she could from other birds. For this reason she was very unpopular in Wington. She was what one would call "A Bad Egg"—only she was already hatched! Which was really worse than if she had never been born at all.

Her mother met her one day and gave her quite a scolding. "You should be ashamed of yourself," she said. "You are a disgrace to Wington. Why have you turned out like this? You have always had everything you wanted!" Which, perhaps, was the very reason Phoebe was spoiled and wild. She had always had everything she wanted.

Be that as it may, now that she is grown she looks so much like her mother that you can hardly tell them apart—and acts like her too, for who do you suppose it was that laid the Cowbird egg in Mrs. Warbler's nest this year? Not Elsie, but Phoebe Cowbird! And that is what made Mrs. Warbler so angry when she found the second Cowbird egg in her nest. "Like mother, like daughter!" she exclaimed. "I'll never hatch another Cowbird egg as long as I live!"

So, Mrs. Warbler did a very clever thing. She just added another floor to her nest—by which I mean, she put a new layer of grass and straw on top of the Cowbird egg and left it down there in that cold cellar while she hatched her own little brood in the nice warm nest above.

So far as I know, Phoebe Cowbird's egg is still there, unhatched, and by this time, no doubt, spoiled. And now you know why Phoebe Cowbird has no little children. ■

Phoebe Cowbird grabs the worm first from Mrs. Warbler.



The above story is reprinted with permission from *Bird Life in Wington* by J. Calvin Reid. Published by Wm. B. Eerdmans Publishing Co., Grand Rapids, MI.



THE “SMART” RED HEN

Paul stared. He was sure there was something moving inside the overturned box. It was the box on which Mark, his older brother, would stand when he reached for eggs in the highest row of nests. One board on the side of the box was broken off, and Paul could see that something had gotten inside that darkened box.

He watched for quite a while, not quite daring to get close and look right inside. Then suddenly a hen poked her head out, and looked at Paul as if to ask him what he was doing there in the poultry house.

The way she cluck-clucked to herself, Paul knew she wanted to set on eggs, but at Happy Acres Farm, hens were not allowed to hatch eggs because all the chicks were bought at the hatchery.

Paul watched the red hen go cluck-clucking as she went over to the water fountain for a drink. Paul decided that he would peep inside the box to see if she might have a nest hidden there.

But just as Paul got down on his knees to look inside the box, the hen came flying straight at him, her wings fluffed out. Cluck-clucking angrily, she pecked him with her sharp bill.

“Ouch!” cried Paul, and he ran out of the poultry house and straight to Mom. Soon he was back with Mom to show her the broody hen.

By this time, the cluck-clucking hen was gone.

“She’s very likely out in the yard, getting something to eat,” said Mom. “We’ll see if she has a nest under that box.”

So Mom tipped the box up and there was a nest of eggs—eleven of them, closely-packed together. Mom felt of them and said, “Feel the eggs, Paul.”

“Oh, they’re warm—warm like toast!”

“Yes. The hen must have been setting on them for some time. So we won’t be able to use the eggs for cooking or to sell. Guess we might as well let her hatch the eggs.” Mom turned to Paul, “I think we’ll let this hen and her chicks be Paul’s chickens!”

Paul’s eyes sparkled. “Oh, that will be fun!”

Mom turned the box back over the nest as the red hen returned to the poultry house. Spying Mom and Paul, the hen came running, her wings fluffed out. She cluck-clucked angrily as Mom and Paul walked away from her nest.

“She’s not a nice hen, though,” decided Paul. “She could have better manners. She thinks she’s smart—just like those big roosters.”

Mom chuckled. “She is afraid we may be harming her eggs—she just wants to frighten us away from them.”

Every day after that, Paul would run many times to the hen house to see his broody hen. Dad pulled another board off the box so Paul could see more easily

inside without troubling the cluck-clucking hen.

One day as the hen came back to her nest after she had been out feeding, Paul was surprised to see her carefully turning over every egg with her bill. When she had finally settled herself down over the eggs, Paul ran to Mom to report what he had seen.

“Oh, yes,” said Mom, “the hen must turn the eggs every day. Otherwise, the little baby chick that is growing inside the shell may stick to the side of the shell, and it wouldn’t grow to be strong and healthy.”

“That hen of mine must be extra bright,” concluded Paul.

“I am quite sure it’s just like every other hen, Paul, because all setting hens will do that to their eggs.”

A few mornings later, Paul saw his hen out in the dewy grass. He watched her as she returned, with wet feet, to her nest. Alarmed, he ran to the house, “Mommie,” he cried. “My hen has wet feet—and she’s going right to her nest with those wet feet. She’ll get the warm eggs wet!”

“Oh, that’s all right, Paul. She’s just doing what’s best for her eggs. When eggs are hatching they need to get a little wet. In fact, at the hatcheries the hatchery people not only turn the eggs every day like the setting hens do, but they sprinkle the eggs with a little water, too.”

“Did the hatchery people learn from the hens?”

“Yes, I’m sure that’s where they learned.”

“How did the hens learn?”

“Well, I’m afraid the hens never learned at all. I’m sure your red hen doesn’t know why she turns the eggs, and she doesn’t go out and get her feet wet on purpose. She just does those things by instinct.”

“What’s instinct, Mom?”

“Birds and animals and fish can’t think or figure things out for themselves the way people can. When God first created us, He made us so that we can think, and we can choose what we want to do. But birds and animals and fish can’t think for themselves like people. God gave them instincts instead. Your hen has the instinct to hatch eggs—she does things that are right for her eggs even though she doesn’t know why she does them.

“Someday the baby chicks will break through the egg shells and come out—and they’ll do many things that are best for them without knowing why.

CONTINUED ON PAGE 24



MEMORY VERSE:

*O Lord, how manifold are Your works!
In wisdom You have made them all.
The earth is full of Your possessions.*

—Psalm 104:24



THIS SOON WILL PASS AWAY

*When some great sorrow, like a mighty river,
Flows thro’ your life, ‘tis then you need Truth’s power,
When dearest things are swept from sight forever,
Say to your aching heart each passing hour:
This, soon, yes, soon, will pass away.*

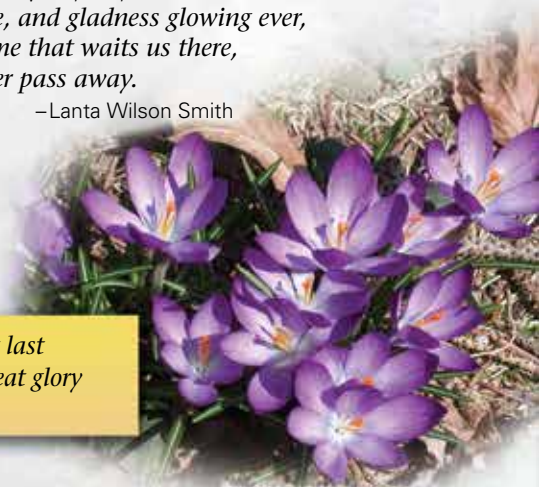
*When ceaseless toil has hushed your song of gladness,
And you have grown almost too tired to pray,
Let this truth banish from your heart its sadness,
And ease the burden of each trying day:
This, soon, yes, soon will pass away.*

*When fortune smiles, and full of mirth and pleasure
The days are flitting by without a care,
Lest you should rest with only earthly treasure,
Let these few words their fullest import bear:
This, soon, yes, soon, will pass away.*

*When earnest labor brings you fame and glory,
And all earth’s noblest ones upon you smile,
Remember that life’s longest, grandest story
Fills but a moment in earth’s little while:
This, soon, yes, soon, will pass away.*

*Thank God that worldly things are not forever!
Thank God, eternity is free from care!
Its joy and peace, and gladness glowing ever,
And bliss supreme that waits us there,
Shall never, never pass away.*

–Lanta Wilson Smith



IT CAME TO PASS

*For our present troubles are quite small and won’t last
very long. Yet they produce for us an immeasurably great glory
that will last forever! —2 Cor. 4:17 NLT*

Some members of a church were sharing their favorite Scripture passages with each other. A number of the verses were quoted on “assurance,” on “faith,” on “hope,” on “God’s provision.” One elderly man stood up and said that his favorite words from the Bible were: *“And it came to pass”* (in the KJV the phrase *“And it came to pass”* occurs 396 times). He continued: “When sickness strikes it encourages me to know that ‘it comes to pass’. When I find myself in trouble I know it won’t last forever, I’ll soon be able to say: ‘It came to pass.’”

Although this man had placed a different meaning on those words than intended by the writers of Scripture, he saw an important truth that is taught in the Bible. No matter how unending a trial may seem, the time will come

when it is no longer a burden but it may be a blessing. In fact, it will seem like nothing in the light of eternity.

Second Corinthians 4:17 puts trials in this very special light. Paul says, *“Our light affliction is but for a moment.”* But that isn’t all. He tells us what it is working out for us: *“a far more exceeding and eternal weight of glory.”* Our burdens are temporary enablers for our triumph.

Whether your trials last for days, months, years or a lifetime, they are still only a moment in the light of eternity. Like the wise old Christian, you can also say: *“It came to pass.”* Only the eternal crown of glory will come to stay!

**We can endure anything
for the eternal weight of glory. ■**

"Happy are all who perfectly follow the laws of God. Happy are all who...always do his will, rejecting compromise with evil, and walking only in his paths" (Ps. 119:1-3 TLB).

*There's always a good crop of food for thought.
What we need is enough enthusiasm to harvest it.*

*Not only is it difficult to say the right thing in the
right place but, more difficult still, to leave
unsaid the wrong thing at the tempting moment.*

*Circumstances are the raw material out of which we make
character, and develop strength and virtue.*

*It seems the natural desire of each to do something outstanding.
But usually it is the little things done well that,
added together, make life significant.*

*Speak kindly today and when tomorrow comes
you will be in better practice.*

*Make a success of living by seeing the goal
and aiming for it unswervingly.*

The art of remembering is the art of taking an interest.

*He who can suppress a moment of anger
can prevent a day of sorrow.*

*Think twice before you speak or act—
you will speak or act more wisely.*

FORGET AND REMEMBER

Forget each kindness that you do

As soon as you have done it,

Forget the praise that falls on you

The moment you have won it;

Forget the slander that you hear

Before you can repeat it,

Forget each slight, each spite, each sneer,

Wherever you may meet it.

Remember every kindness done

To you, what e'er its measure;

Remember praise by others won

And pass it on with pleasure;

Remember those who lend you aid

And be a grateful debtor;

Remember every promise made

And keep it to the letter.

HAVE YOU PLANTED YOUR LETTUCE PATCH?

"Let us leave the elementary teaching about Christ and go on to maturity..." – Heb.6:1

"Let us hold unswervingly to the hope we profess, for He who promised is faithful." – Heb.10:23

"Let us not give up meeting together as some are in the habit of doing." – Heb.10:25

"Let us throw off everything that hinders and the sin that so easily entangles." – Heb.12:1

"Let us be careful that none of you be found to have fallen short of it." – Heb.4:1

"Let us therefore make every effort to enter that rest..." – Heb.4:11

"Let us then approach the throne of Grace with confidence" – Heb.4:16

"Let us draw near to God with a sincere heart in full assurance of faith." – Heb.10:22

"Let us consider how we may spur one another on toward love and good deeds." – Heb.10:24

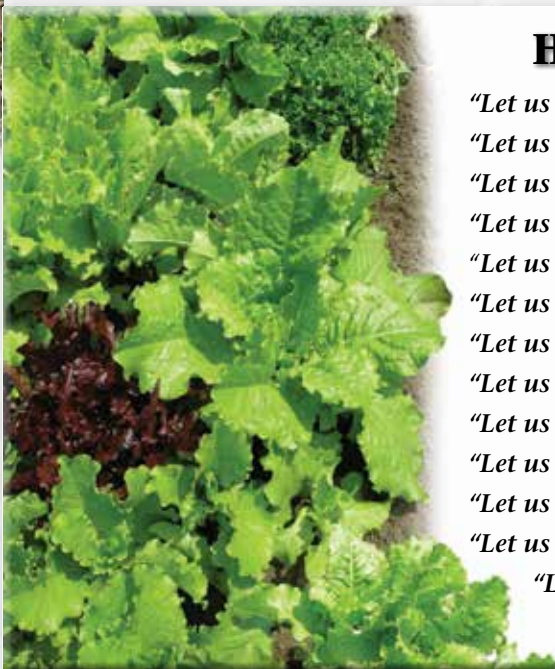
"Let us encourage one another and all the more as you see the Day approaching." – Heb.10:25

"Let us run with perseverance the race marked out for us." – Heb.12:1

"Let us fix our eyes on Jesus, the author and perfecter of our faith." – Heb.12:1

"Let us hold firmly to the faith we profess." – Heb.4:14 ■

(above quotations are from the NIV).





New Year **Resolutions**

I will...

walk in daily fellowship with my Heavenly Father...
like **Enoch**

keep in mind the better country, the heavenly...
like **Abraham**

be patient under all circumstances...
like **Job**

know that God will exalt when the time is right...
like **Joseph**

choose rather to suffer than to enjoy the pleasures
of sin for a season...
like **Moses**

uphold the hands of my spiritual leaders...
like **Aaron** and **Hur**

refuse to be discouraged though multitudes disobey
like **Caleb** and **Joshua**

advance whether my friends are many or few...
like **Gideon**

always strengthen myself in the Lord, from whom comes my help...
like **David**

consecrate myself to do God's work and answer the call of Christian
duty with "Here am I, send me"...
like **Isaiah**

be faithful to God and commune with Him often, come what may...
like **Daniel**

keep faithful in my commitment to Christ, even though He rebuke
me, and have the courage to try again each time I stumble...
like **Peter**

show a right spirit even to those who oppose me...
like **Stephen**

forget the things which are behind and press forward to
that which lies ahead...
like **Paul**

study the Word of God and give myself to it wholly...
like **Timothy**

look beyond the cross to the joy that is set before me...
like my **Lord Himself...**

so that I may endure without flinching, and someday join all the
faithful in Christ's Kingdom.