

Who Is Mother Earth?
The First World Conqueror
Keep On Keeping On

He's Really Coming!

ALIVA: The Jews

EDITORIAL -



He's Really Coming!

J. B. Nicholson, Jr.

t was any thirteen-year-old boy's wildest dream. Two months off from school. Traveling through Central America with his dad. The Yucatan jungle. Army ants. Man-eating snakes. Exploration up the Belize River. Snorkeling off the second longest coral reef on the planet. Conch fritters. Fresh papaya. Man, that was livin'!

I could hardly believe we were on the way. With bags packed, tearful goodbyes, and high hopes, we jetted south. There was one stopover in Miami, where we were received by some dear friends for an overnight stay. In spite of the soft sheets and humming air conditioner, it was hard to sleep through the night.

As we headed through the city the next morning, my dad asked if we might stop for some film. Our friend's big Chrysler pulled to the curb.

"Lock the doors, will you, son?" my dad asked. It didn't take me but a minute to get the job done and I turned to follow the men to the camera store.

They had vanished. I couldn't even find a film store! My conclusion: the Lord had come, and I was left behind.

It was any thirteen-year-old boy's wildest nightmare. To show you how depraved is the human heart, my first thought was: here I am with a car but no keys, in a strange city with no friends, and no money for even my next meal (the fact that I was thirteen may have had something to do with that last concern).

Then the reality gripped my heart. LOST! I was lost! Like many from Christian homes, I had made a profession as a little child and it could well be that that was my birthdate in heaven's eyes. But there comes a day when one must have deep and solemn dealings with God — no longer kneeling at Mother's side or lisping along after Father's prayer, but wrestling alone with God.

"Lord," I began, "I'm not even sure if You can save me now. I thought I let You in a long time ago. Now I want to make sure." I do not recall much else from the prayer, but I do remember the peace that came, the assurance that all was well with my soul. Though I did not know the verse, I knew the truth of 1 John 3:19–21: "Hereby we

know that we are of the truth, and shall assure our hearts before Him. For if our heart condemn us, God is greater than our heart, and knoweth all things. Beloved, if our heart condemn us not, then have we confidence toward God." My heart had been assured before Him.

Just then I heard my father's footsteps and his question: "Where were you, son?" How could I tell him I had been to Calvary and back?

Several decades have rolled by since that balmy Miami day, but the reality of the imminent return of Christ has never left me. I often think of my grandfather's sister, Mary, who died at eight of diphtheria. It was her task, before her illness, to help her mother prepare breakfast for the large family. Often, as she pushed back the drapes to let in the morning sun, she would ask, "Do you think He'll come today, Mommy?"

That's living in the light of His return, isn't it' One can have all the eschatological questions an swered yet have no longing for the Beloved. There are important questions to be answered, to be sure. And this issue includes some articles on the subject. But in the final analysis, what the Saviour longs to hear is the outbreathing of the heart: "Even so, come [quickly], Lord Jesus."

The apostle Paul kept his appointment book with utter simplicity. There were only two days circled. The first was this day. He would forget the things behind that would detain or discourage or divert him from the present responsibility. The second day was that day (2 Tim. 1:12; 4:8). Oh, how he loved to speak of it!

There were three great themes that ran through his teaching on the future like mighty rivers to bring to life what might have become nothing more than dry theology. He preached it as a blessed hope (Titus 2:13) and therefore a source of joy to those who wait for Him; as a sanctifying hope (1 Thess. 1:9–10) that caused the saints to turn their hearts from the temporal to the eternal; and a motivating, imminent hope (1 Cor. 15:51–58) that should stir us from lethargy to eager service for our Lord. It was Amy Carmichael who reminded us that we have all eternity to celebrat our victories, but only a few, short hours to win them.



UPLOOK

(USPS 620-640) Founded in 1927 as Look on the Fields, is published eleven times per year by



GOSPEL FOLIO PRESS P.O. Box 2041 Grand Rapids, MI 49501-2041

POSTMASTER: Send address changes to: UPLOOK P.O. Box 2041 Grand Rapids, MI 49501-2041

UPLOOK magazine is intended to encourage the people of God in fidelity to His Word, fervency in intercessory prayer, labors more abundant and love to the Lord. Believing in the practical Headship of Christ and the local autonomy of each assembly, this is not intended to be an official organ of any group or federation of local churches. The editor and authors take responsibility for materials published. For any blessing which accrues from this publication, to God be the glory.

Gospel Folio Press is a tax-exempt corporation looking to the Lord to provide for the needs of this

istry. This magazine is sent freely to those who request it, but evidently is not freely produced. U.S. donations should be sent to:

> UPLOOK P.O. Box 2041 Grand Rapids, MI 49501-2041

Canadian funds should be sent to:

Gospel Folio Press, Ontario P.O. Box 493 Thamesford, ON N0M 2M0

Be sure to enclose your former address label when sending a change of address. Please let us know of changes six weeks in advance.

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N #1055-2642 ited in the U.S.A. © Copyright 1991 Gospel Folio Press

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Wrath or Rapture?

J. B. Nicholson, Jr.

's the rapture of the Church the next thing on the divine agenda? Could it not be possible that the Great Tribulation will intervene? Does it really matter? Some go so far as to suggest a kind of prophetic agnosticism, saying that good men have differed on the subject, so there is no way we can be sure. Scripture makes it clear that we are in the dark, but also that a light is shining, "a more sure word of prophecy" (2 Pet. 1:19). We can't all be right now with our obviously different views, but some day, thank the Lord, we shall — when we see Him. Should we not just wait till then? I think not. Prophecy is not merely pre-history; it has its moral implications. What we think of the future will most certainly affect how we live in the present.

It might be helpful to begin with some clarifications. First, let it be stated that rapture is not only a biblical idea but a biblical word. The Greek word harpazo occurs thirteen times in the New Testament and is used to describe the catching up of Philip from the Negev (Acts 8:39) and of Paul into the third heaven (2 Cor. 12:2-4). It is this word which appears in 1 Thessalonians 4:17 as "caught up." The Latin translation uses the word rapture from which our word rapture is anglicized.

Second, we note that much of the debate swirls around the word "the." Those who believe in a pretribulation rapture are not attempting to hold a comfortable doctrine that avoids tribulation. Trouble is to be the lot of all who live godly in this present age, our Lord forewarned us. But will the Church pass through *the* Tribulation, that period called "tribulation — the great one"? Some solid reasons cause us to answer, "No."

Third, let it be stated that we are left in no doubt how the prophetic scriptures are to be understood. We must simply ask how the prophecies which have already come to pass were fulfilled. The answer is: literally. How would it then follow that we are left to spiritualize the prophecies remaining to be fulfilled?

When one comes to the study of any portion of the Word of God, we bring with us certain presuppositions. This is necessary, or we would never accomplish anything. For example, we do not begin each study with the questions: Is there a God? Has this God revealed Himself? Is the Bible that revelation? There is a time for such questions, but surely not every time we open the Book.

One of the foundational issues which must be decided early in any serious study is the distinction between Israel and the Church. Has the Church replaced Israel or do they have distinctive origins, characters, and destinies? If God is finished with Israel, and she has no place in the momentous events of the last days, then we will come to the conclusion that the "elect" in Matthew 24 and the 144,000 of Revelation 7 are a spiritualized description of the Church. Yet the great covenant that God made with Abraham in Genesis 12 has never been revoked. The Lord Jesus Himself looked forward to the future of Israel when He said that the Holy City would be trodden down of the Gentiles until the times of the Gentiles should be fulfilled.

It is not our purpose to draw the many distinctions between Israel and the Church,¹ but such a study may well conclude with the observation that "the Church is not a sort of glorified Israel, but her direct contrast." If Israel has no future, distinct from the Church, the Old Testament prophets will have a lot of explaining to do.

Let me suggest only three reasons³ why I believe the rapture is next on God's timetable:

1. The Church must be removed so that Israel can be restored. If one takes such passages as Ezekiel 20 & 39 and Isaiah 66 in their plain and obvious sense, we must conclude that it is the divine purpose to return Israel not only to Jerusalem and Judea but to Jehovah. Yet as long as the Church is on the earth, all Jews who come to God become part of this mystery, the one Body. Israel, therefore, cannot be restored spiritually as a nation with her earthly hopes and promises as long as the Church, a heavenly people, is being constructed of both Iews and Gentiles who turn to the Lord. As well, there is the impossibility that the Lord would own two temples on earth at the same time. In the present age of grace, the Church is His habitation, an holy temple in the Lord. Yet we read that the "man of sin" will, in the midst of the Tribulation sit "in the temple of God" (2 Thess. 2:4). The true restoration of Israel's God-given religion can only

WRATH OR RAPTURE?

come about when the Church is gone.

2. The character of the Great Tribulation excludes the Church as much as it includes Israel. It is called "the time of Jacob's trouble" (Jer. 30:7). Specifically addressing Israel (v. 3), the Lord tells them of His purposes in returning them to the land and restoring them to Himself by correcting them (v. 11). See also Daniel 12:1 where those in that time of unprecedented trouble are referred to as Daniel's people. While it is true that the Gentile nations are included in the judgment of those terrible days, none of the Tribulation passages in either the Old or New Testament ever mention the Church. In fact, the Church is not only not mentioned, but is given specific promises of deliverance (see 1 Thess. 1:10; 5:9; Rev. 3:10; 6:17).

Perhaps, some say, we shall be delivered from the wrath as Israel was delivered from the plagues in Egypt, not by being physically removed but by being supernaturally preserved. Yet the promise of Revelation 3:10 is that we will be kept from (ek, out of) not only the trial of that hour, but from the "hour of trial" itself. And if kept out of somehow means kept in, of one thing we ought to be clear: the Tribulation saints are not kept from the troubles; many are slaughtered for their fidelity (Rev. 6:10-11; Mt. 24:22)!

Also, when we look for the Church on earth between Revelation 3 and 19, she is not to be found. Walvoord concludes: "How strange it would be in such a tremendous movement of events as will take place in the Tribulation time that no mention of the Church as such would appear if, as a matter of fact, the Church is actually in the period and enduring its trials." And that's not the only silence! If the Church is to pass through this time of wrath, why are the epistles silent on how to act under such conditions? Why are we repeatedly told instead to watch for our Saviour?

If such evidences leave you unconvinced, surely you must agree that it will not be the Church that goes through the Tribulation but only an infinitessimal part. And why? Is it that the believers in the last days are more carnal than at any other time and must be purged by this? Why, then, would the Lord tell the elect how to flee from it (Mt. 24:16-21)? If it is an honor to suffer this for Him, why would they seek an escape? Sadly, apostate Christendom will pass through this time on earth. Will a handful of saints from the Church be there too? Or is His coming for us imminent?

3. The imminency of Christ's return, the certain

hope of the early Church, could not survive the Great Tribulation. You cannot have it both ways. Either His coming is next, or the time of great trouble. Some, who seek to discredit the pretribulation view, tell us it is a novel idea invented by J. N. Darby or "borrowed" from a teenage Scottish mystic! While it is true one would be hard pressed to prove pretribulationism from the early fathers (or post-tribulationism, for that matter), one would also be hard pressed not to find the imminency of the Lord's return in the early writings of the Church.5 This same view is also seen in the writings of the Reformers.6 And what of the New Testament? Were not the Thessalonian believers waiting for His Son from heaven (1 Thess. 1:10)? And even though Paul was ready to labor and ready to die, he included himself in the "we which are alive and remain" category at the time of His coming as opposed to "them which are asleep" (1 Thess. 4:15). 7

If our Lord's coming might be, as far as we know, at any moment, if we are to be "like unto men that wait for their lord" (Lk. 12:36), then we shall anticipate with joy the shout, the voice, and the trump. Ah, say some, the last trump of 1 Corinthians 15 is the seventh trumpet of Revelation 11. If so, we must await the painful passage of Jacob's trouble before we see our Lord. There are, however, two serious flaws in the argument. First, the Church's trumpet summons is treated as a factual account, as real as the shout and the voice. But surely the seals and bowls and trumpets of outpoured wrath are not to be taken as actual; John was seeing in figure what eventually would come to pass. And even if the seventh trumpet of Revelation 11 is literal, it is not the last trumpet. At the coming of Christ to earth to establish His millennial kingdom, Matthew 24:31 tells us that a trumpet blast will gather His elect. As Walvoord notes: "There is no necessity of relating a trump for the Church with trumpets of judgment upon the unsaved. Each trumpet must be related to its own order. Any child in school knows that the last bell for one hour may be followed by a first bell for the next hour."8

With whatever measure of light we peer through the darkness for the Daystar, can we not take the simple, sweet, and stimulating words of our Saviour as the blessed Book concludes: "Surely I come quickly," and respond with highly-beating hearts: "Even so, come (quickly), Lord Jesus."

(Footnotes on p. 25)

Front Lines

IN JOURNEYINGS OFT

Brother Ross Rainey of Plymouth, MI has recently returned from a month of ministry in southern California and, after some meetings in the Detroit/ Windsor area, plans in the will of the Lord to visit assemblies at York and Sunbury, PA, Lakefield, ON and Victoria, BC.

We also have news that brother Robert Spicer of Amherst, NY has been teaching the Word at the Queensdale assembly in Hamilton, ON and the Brockview assembly in St. Catharines, ON. He then was hoping to spend two weeks preaching in the New York City area. We are thankful to God for the millions of miles that preachers and missionaries travel each year with seldom an incident. Preserved from "dangers seen and unseen," we should thank the Lord for such care.

FIFTY YEARS OF GOD'S FAITHFULNESS

On September 7, D.V., there will be a day of rejoicing and praise to the Lord for His lovingkindness shown through a half century at Rest Haven Homes, Grand Rapids, MI. All are invited to share the joy and see "what God has wrought."

Brother J. Boyd Nicholson, Sr.

of St. Catherines, ON will be the guest speaker. Tours of the premises will be conducted and reports will be given. A light supper will be served. Commemorative activities will begin at 2:00 PM. For details, contact:

Rest Haven Homes, Inc. Box 2051 Grand Rapids, MI 49501 (616) 454–6248

STORY BOOK LODGE

Story Book Lodge Christian Camp continues to see the wonderful ways of God in fruit in the Gospel and in daily provisions. William and Karen Howell with two young children moved up from Brookfield, MO in May to help full-time at camp. They will also contribute in the area with the Gospel and God's Word. They come commended from their home assembly in Brookfield to relieve the Tuiningas who, for forty-three years, led the camp with faith in God's provisions.

A home has been provided for Ben and Jean Tuininga just north of camp — a move of only four hundred feet from Cedar Cove, their previous home. They will continue to serve as helpers and advisors wherever necessary. The friends and board of the Camp praise God for what

He is doing. The local congregation in Virginia (fourteen miles away) and those more distant in Minneapolis, Duluth, Baudette, Fargo, and others contribute with personnel, materials and prayer. All happily say, "To God be the glory" for the

many who hear the Gospel and come to personal faith in the Lord Jesus Christ during ten weeks of summer camps and during many weekend retreats throughout the year.

AFTER THE STORM

This letter has come to us from one of the Lord's servants in Bangladesh.

May 3, 1991

Since this may be the first you hear from us since the cyclone hit on April 29, let me start by saying WE ARE ALL FINE. There has been no phone service, fax, or telegrams, so there has been no way to get a message to you.

In the afternoon of the 29th, we were warned that a cyclone was expected to hit Chittagong at midnight, a number ten (the worst), and the eye was to be at Chittagong. When we went to bed, the wind and rain had started. The wind kept getting worse and worse. We thought it was so bad, it couldn't get worse - but it did. We looked outside and it was unreal. Huge trees were just whipping around. Suddenly one of our window latches gave way, the window flew open, and all the glass broke out. Then another window blew out. While we were cardboarding up that one, a third blew out and we realized we couldn't keep up. So we packed all valuables which would be ruined by water and put them in our bathroom. Then we evacuated to Stacie's bedroom, where Darren had already gone. It was very noisy; then there was a lull; then it returned with a vengeance from another direction. We really didn't sleep much. Our house shook but held. It's cement and built like a bunker (thank God). We got up at 5:00 when it started to



Rest Haven Homes

FRONT LINES

get light and looked around. We could not believe the devastation. All the missionaries, however, were safe. Praise the Lord.

We have not had electricity since then, or water, except a little trickle occasionally. We had a little building (of bricks) on our roof which was demolished. Tin from many houses was scattered everywhere and quickly scarfed up by looters.

It's a little hard managing in this heat with no refrigerator, water, showers, or heat. But we can't complain. We are safe and we have our children and home. At least thirty thousand have been killed (including one National Christian whose wall fell on him, and two children swept away by the 15-foot tidal wave) and millions homeless who lived in mud or bamboo homes. We are conducting relief programs through the national churches.

Those interested in sending help either in the way of finances or materials to the disaster zone can send their gifts to the Disaster Fund at Christian Missions in Many Lands. Their mailing address is:

CMML Inc. P. O. Box 13 Spring Lake, NJ 07762–0013

Whatever you send to CMML for the designated purpose of overseas relief will be sent overseas in its entirety. Presently CMML is looking for suitable workers in Bangladesh to distribute relief materials. Pray that God will direct them to the Lord's servants there who are equipped for this great task.

MOUNT HERMON BIBLE CONFERENCE

Here is an opportunity to enjoy a Bible conference in the beautiful Santa Cruz Mountains in California. Mount Hermon Bible Conference Center is seven miles south of San Francisco, and eight miles from the Pacific Ocean.

The conference, sponsored by California Bible Conferences, will be held, D.V., October 7–11, 1991. Speakers are Mr. Arnot McIntee, of St. Catharines, ON, and Mr. Elliot Van Ryn, of Hiahleah, FL.

Enjoy a time of sound Bible teaching, fellowship, excellent food, beautiful scenery, and special programs.

For information or registration forms, contact:

Mr. Henry Kamena 1400 W. 13th St., Sp. 91 Upland, CA 91786 Phone (714) 985–0437

MINNESOTA LABOR DAY CONFERENCE

Again the annual Labor Day Conference will be sponsored by the Minneapolis and St. Paul MN assemblies. Preceded by a prayer meeting Friday night, the conference will be held at Irondale High School, 2425 Long Lake Road, New Brighton, MN on August 30–September 2.

Speakers expected are Mr. David Glock and Mr. J. Boyd Nicholson, Sr. For more information, contact:

Mr. Glen C. Ellis 4549-5th St. NE Columbia Heights, MN 55421 Phone (612) 572–1379

OUTREACH IN KINGSTON, JAMAICA

Joe Reese and Wes DiPietro will be leading a short-term mission to Kingston, Jamaica from July 1–15, D.V. Sixteen of the Lord's people — nine adults and seven teenagers will be working with Bethany Chapel in Kingston doing tract distribu-

tion, children's meetings and Gospel meetings as well as practical work on a building project in a nearby area. Please pray for this team made up of believers from Riverside Bible Chapel and Bethel Bible Chapel in Sault Ste. Marie, ON.

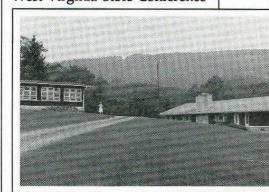
NEW SPANISH WORK IN ATLANTA

Prayer is requested for a new Spanish speaking work begun several months ago in Atlanta, GA. Members of the Flores family, on moving from Miami, FL to Atlanta, were burdened with the need for a work among the Hispanics in that area. Afternoon meetings are held in the North Atlanta Bible Chapel, on North David Hills Road. For information contact:

Nestor Flores 3783 Princess Court Lawrenceville, GA 33244 Phone (404) 717–0037

WEST VIRGINIA BIBLE CONFERENCE

Set in the breathtaking scenery near Bluestone Lake in southern West Virginia, the West Virginia Bible Conference



is to be held August 4-10. Christian fellowship, ministry from the Word provided by Rob Lindsted of Wichita, KS and Sandy McEachern of Drayton, ON, wholesome food and healthful activity all combine to



make this an unforgettable experience. There are arrangements for nursery, and children and youth activities. For further information, write:

WV Bible Conference 30 Tyler Street Westover, WV 26505 Or call: Gary Pavelko (304) 291–3138

BLESSING IN BELLE CHASSE

The annual Lake Park Chapel Bible Conference was held May



Mr. and Mrs. Eddie Schwartz

4–5 in Belle Chasse, LA (near New Orleans). Brother Eddie Schwartz of Burlington, NC brought helpful ministry Saturday and Sunday, with additional ministry from James Bonner of Needham, AL, Bob Brown of Slidell, LA, and William Walker of Lafayette, LA. There was much to encourage the saints to remain faithful to the Word of God, and to diligently search it out and apply it to the heart and life.

HINDUS HEAR THE GOSPEL

In March, of this year, saints from the Believers' Bible Chapel, Leroy, OH met at the home of Margaret and Sid Bhatt (Hudson, OH) to study the "Prophecies through the Bible." Jim Melough led the study and presented the Gospel to several Hindu friends and neighbors. Pray that the seed will bear fruit and that precious souls will be

added to His Kingdom.

DON'T FORGET

In earlier issues of UPLOOK, we informed you of some upcoming conferences. Don't forget to keep in mind: the Straffordville, ON Conference (June 22–23), contact:

Mr. Robert Humphrey
93 James Ave.
Tillsonburg, ON N4G 1A7
Phone (519) 688–6802;
the Yosemite, CA Conference
(July 7–14), contact:
Mr. Henry Kamena

1400 W. 13th St., Sp. 91 Upland, CA 91786 Phone (714) 985–0437; the Skyland Bible Conference (June 29–July 5), contact:

Mr. John Taylor P.O. Box 754 Jamestown, NC 27282.

TORONTO LADIES' MISSIONARY CONFERENCE

It's not too early to begin planning for the annual Ladies' Missionary Conference to be held on September 28 in Martingrove Collegiate, corner of Maringrove Road and Edlinton Avenue in the West end of Toronto, ON. There are programs for girls in grades 2–8 and nursery for children under 2. For more information, contact:

Mrs. Eunice Kay I523 Silver Spruce Dr. Pickering, ON L1V 5G9 Phone (416) 831–5335

HARTFORD FALL CONFERENCE

On September 20–22, the Prospect Bible Chapel plans to convene its annual Bible Conference to be held at 576 Prospect Avenue, Hartford, CT 06105. Prayer meeting, Friday at 7:30 PM; meetings on Saturday at 2:30 PM and 6:30 PM, and Sun-

day at 10:30 AM, 2:30 PM and 5:30 PM. The Lord's servants expected to minister the Word are Dr. Charles T. Grant (Minnesota) and Mr. Billy Stevenson (Illinois). For further information, contact:

Thomas E. Woods 31 Strickland Street Manchester, CT 06040 Phone (203) 643–4477

OTTAWA Y.P. INVADE THE SAULT

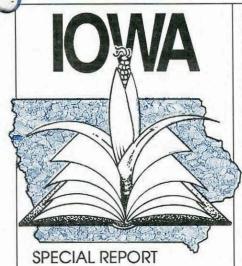
Lord willing, June 7–9, a team of young people headed by Joe Mikhael from Rideauview Bible Chapel and the Ottawa, ON area will conduct a youth conference at Bethel Bible Chapel in Sault Ste. Marie, ON. Topics to be addressed include assembly distinctives and commitment to the Lord and then to His work. The young people will be taking both the morning and evening services on the Lord's Day.

BARRYVILLE, NEW YORK CONFERENCE

The Hillside Gospel Chapel's Annual Conference will be held in the Lord's will on July 13 and 14 at Barryville, NY. Speakers expected are Neil Dougal and Gordon Reager. For more information, contact Daniel Hamilton at (914) 557–6710.

NEW BUILDING IN MARKHAM, ONTARIO

The Lord's hand of blessing has been on the assembly in this northeast suburb of Toronto, ON. The Christians meeting at the Markham Bible Chapel, 50 Cairns Drive, raised their "Ebenezer" at the official opening of their new building on June 2. We rejoice with them and trust the Lord will continue to encourage them in their labors.



We do not think of Iowa as a smoking battlefield. Perhaps a cornfield, but not a battlefield. Yet many crucial spiritual battles have been fought there.

Iowa has been the scene of repeated Gospel conquests. At the turn of the century, the influx of immigrants brought many Scottish and Irish believers to Iowa. Scriptural congregations were formed. Beginning in the 1930's, an extensive campaign took place in northeastern Iowa, mainly through the preaching of Oliver Smith and his co-laborers. They held Gospel meetings in some two hundred places. It was literally true at that time that God was adding to the Church "daily" such as should be saved. The Des Moines Register spoke about Oliver Smith in a feature article in one of its Sunday papers as the preacher who was taking over northern Iowa! It surely seemed so when whole families were being converted and a crowd of one thousand "Smithites" would assemble in sparse rural Iowa for a baptism.

Again in the early seventies there was a remarkable movement of the Spirit of God, largely among teenagers and college students. The Boone-Stratford

and Webster City assemblies were formed. The Gospel activity at Iowa State University in Ames was so intense that it became known as Iowa Saint University. At one point, a frustrated sociology teacher complained in front of his class, "Isn't there anyone here willing to stand up for immorality?!"

The cults have been busy too. The Maharishi Yogi made Fairfield, Iowa the world center for Transcendental Meditation. Other cult and occult groups are being observed by the branches of law enforcement. Also strong liberal elements lobby hard in Iowa, because it is the scene of early presidential primaries as well as the testing ground for public school curriculum. Christian parents in Iowa are a watchful lot due to the outrageous proposals of liberal groups such as the National Education Association (NEA).

The heartland is strategic, both geographically and spiritually. Many faithful Gospel ministers have and do labor there, but "there remains much land to be possessed." There are four key places to pray for.

Iowa City: The home of the University of Iowa has long been a hotbed of political leftists. The Gospel preaching has been arduous there. David Arbogast lives in Iowa City and has conducted encouraging home Bible studies and personal evangelism. This last spring, he worked with others doing open-air preaching in the free speech area on the university campus. It became immediately evident that this and mass tract distribution can be very effective. Pray that God will raise up able men to assist David in the Gospel work open before him.

Ames: Dave and Rose Ham-

mond and their five children have labored in Ames and on the Iowa State University for two years. They are commended to the work of the Lord by the assembly in Redfield, Iowa. Pray that God will provide co-laborers for David and Rose and give them wisdom with the souls they have influence with there.

Fort Dodge and Webster City: Dennis and Deb Thompson labor in the work in Webster City but also help with door-todoor evangelism and Bible studies in Fort Dodge, just twenty miles from Webster City. Mr. and Mrs. Lloyd Walterick labored for many years in Fort Dodge and there was a strong Gospel testimony there. As of this writing that congregation is no longer meeting. More recently Brad Hanes from Waterloo, Iowa has spearheaded a more aggressive Gospel campaign in Fort Dodge and a number of believers have come from a distance to help him proclaim Christ in his hometown. There is a nucleus of believers there. Pray for Jeff and Shelly Enabnit and their three children that God will strengthen their hands and give them co-laborers.

Mason City: North of Ames and Webster City is Mason City. John Muldoon takes a great deal of responsibility in a new meeting there. The group of twenty or so believers began meeting in the last two years. They are preparing for a series of Gospel meetings in the fall with Jim McKendrick of Grand Rapids, MI and Nate Borrett of Marion, IA. Pray that God will give the little meeting a time of joy and blessing. "Hitherto have ye asked nothing in My Name. Ask and ye shall receive, that your joy may be full."

The Jews Are Coming Home!

was standing in a harp maker's shop a few blocks from the King David Hotel in Jerusalem. The little door harp chimed its tune as a young Jewish woman came breathlessly in, eyes bright with love. After selecting a beautiful hand-carved door harp, she asked the proprietress if she could have a quotation hand lettered in gold on her purchase, something from Solomon's chief song. Excitedly she told of her upcoming marriage to her fiance from New York and . . .

The meticulous strokes of the gold-tipped brush were suddenly arrested, and the artist's hand poised in midair. Slowly she raised her eyes to the other.

"He is making aliya, isn't he?" she asked carefully. Forcefully.

"Yes. Yes, of course."

Smiling broadly, the girl returned to the graceful sweep of another Hebrew character. She hadn't exactly said she wouldn't finish the job if he wasn't making aliya, but the inference hung pungently in the air.

What is aliya? It is the Hebrew word for "return," the name used for the phenomenal drawing of Jews from the four corners of the earth to the land of Israel.

About 760 B.C., when the last rays of hope for Israel's repentance were dying like sunlight beyond the purple mountains of Moab, Isaiah wrote of a hope beyond Israel's defeat at the hands of Babylon. "The Lord shall set His hand again the second time to recover the remnant of His people which shall be left . . . And He shall set up an ensign for the nations, and shall assemble the outcasts of Israel, and gather together the dispersed of Judah from the four corners of the earth" (Isa. 11:11–12).

Sixty years later, in the blackness of Jerusalem's desolation, the Weeping Prophet would add his Amen (Jer. 16:14–15). Ezekiel too, from far-off Babylon, in the midst of his symbols and visions, would plainly state, "I will take you from among the heathen and gather you out of all countries, and will bring you into your own land" (Ezek. 36:24).

Could it be that this was fulfilled in the First Aliya when a remnant returned with Jeshua and



Zerrubabel? It was to these already in the land that Zechariah relayed this word from the Lord, "If it be marvelous in the eyes of the remnant of this people in these days, should it also be marvelous in Mine eyes? saith the Lord of hosts... Behold, I will save My people from the east country and from the west country; and I will bring them, and they shall dwell in the midst of Jerusalem..." (Zech. 8:6-8).

Is this the aliya prophesied in Scripture that we are seeing today? If it is, it is only the beginning. The return God speaks of is not merely geographical but spiritual; a return not only to the Land but to the Lord. Yet it may be that the rising political tides that are carrying the Jews back to Israel will cause them to seek a Greater Refuge than the Jewish Agency.

ALBANIA

In the second week of April, the last members of Albania's Jewish community landed at Ben Gurion Airport. In a secret operation, more than three hundred Jews were allowed to quietly leave with the aid of the Greek and Italian govern-

ments. They had not been allowed to practice their religious beliefs for forty years.

Economist David Kantozi quoted an Albanian proverb: "The heavy stone has its place." He explained, "If I am a Jew, it is in Israel. If I am an Albanian, it is in Albania."

— JERUSALEM POST, WEEK ENDING APRIL 20

ETHIOPIA

About three thousand Ethiopian Jews have arrived in Israel since the start of the year, and thousands more were expected this month. However, what no one expected was a massive, two-day airlift that swept fourteen thousand Jews in forty-one flights out of Addis Ababa where they had been trapped by rebel fighting. The Israelis brought in everything from loading ramps to air traffic controllers and effectively took over the airport for forty-six hours. At the last moment, Ethiopia demanded \$35 million for allowing them to go "home."

— ASSOCIATED PRESS

RUSSIA

In one week during December 1990, twelve thousand new immigrants arrived in Israel, more than in all of 1988. Immigration now runs at fifteen to twenty thousand per month with an estimated one million Russian Jews waiting to come. This number may rapidly increase if antisemitism continues to rise in Russia.

The TV news reports now have Russian subtitles and there are four new Russian dailies being



published in Israel. This tremendous influx is both a blessing and a challenge for Israel.

Four million Jewish citizens are being called upon to absorb two million more. That's the equivalent of asking the U.S. to receive one hundred twenty-five million people in the next two or three years. Israel already has housing, land, water and job shortages. State Budget Director David Boaz has warned that unemployment could climb to 22 percent by 1994.

American Jews are being expected to bear much of the financial burden for what has been dubbed "Operation Exodus II." Since the beginning of the special campaigns for the exodus of Soviet Jewry in early 1990, the United Jewish Appeal (UJA) and related organizations have raised \$600 million. Operation Exodus II will bring their total contributions to \$1.3 billion. The UJA is also guaranteeing another \$900 million in bank loans.

— ISRAEL MY GLORY, APRIL-MAY 1991 and JERUSALEM POST

THE UNITED STATES

More dollars than people have been moving from the U.S. to Israel in recent days. American Jews may be some of the last to be drawn by the great aliya, perhaps driven only by persecution. But among the Orthodox, there is a rising cry to prepare for the coming of Messiah. A full-page ad in the Jerusalem Post on the approach of the festival of Pesach (Passover) was taken for a message to "the sons and daughters of our people Israel, everywhere." It was a call to recognize the hand of God in delivering Israel during the recent Gulf War, mentioning the fact that there "is no explicit mention of [God's] Name in the entire book of Esther" because God had declared He would hide His face on that day. Likewise, wrote Rabbi Schneerson, the rapid victory in Iraq "unfolded a clearly extraordinary miracle for the benefit of Jews as well as for the benefit of the entire world."

Calling on Jews "to elevate their daily Jewish conduct to the level of the supra-natural," he states that this will "hasten the fulfillment of the prophecy: 'As in the days of your liberation from [Egypt] will I show you wonders,' and [the Lord] will now fulfill His promise: 'I have found David My servant, with My holy oil have I anointed him,' followed immediately forthwith by the true and complete Geulo (redemption) through Moshiach (Messiah) Tzidkeinu."



y name is Carl Greer. I was born in Gulfport, Mississippi, on July 6, 1952, but lived most of my life in southeast Louisiana. I grew up in a religious family that talked about God and prayed often. At a young age, I was baptized into a denominational church that my parents attended for a short time. The pastor, a friend of the family, was accused of drinking on a fishing trip with some of the elders, was dismissed shortly thereafter, and my parents left the church. My mother and father were both alcoholic for as long as I can remember, but they did try the best they knew to be good parents and provide a good home. I can remember believing there was a God, but never gave it much thought past that, and neither I nor any of my family knew Him personally at that time.

At the age of 13, I began drinking. At 19, I smoked my first "joint." Anyone who says marijuana doesn't lead to stronger drugs just hasn't smoked it long enough. As time passed, I began mixing drugs and alcohol, and, by the time I was 33, my life was totally out of control. One night, in a drug-induced vision so clear I really thought it was happening, I saw myself putting a pistol in my mouth and pulling the trigger. In desperation and fear for my life, I entered a drug and alcohol detoxification program.

Shortly after being admitted, I began to see my whole life pass before me. The waste, the emptiness, the unhappiness! All the years spent going nowhere! I realized there was something missing in my life . . . an emptiness that I could not seem to fill with anything the world, drugs, alcohol or sex had to offer. I started reading the Bible, looking for answers . . . something to fill the emptiness. With the guidance of the Holy Spirit, I was led to realize that what I was looking for was not a "what" at all, but a "Who" . . . the Lord Jesus! God's Spirit drove home such verses as Isaiah 1:18–20, "Come now, and let us reason together, saith the Lord: though your sins be as scarlet, they

Carl Greer Gets Life

shall be as white as snow; though they be red like crimson, they shall be as wool. If ye be willing and obedient, ye shall eat the good of the land. But if ye refuse and rebel, ye shall be devoured with the sword; for the mouth of the Lord hath spoken it." I realized what I needed to do! So after reading Matthew 6:6 and feeling that the going into a "closet" was somehow involved in the whole process, I climbed into the small military-style wall locker in my hospital room, closed the door, confessed to God that I was a sinner, and accepted Jesus Christ as my Lord and Saviour.

After thirty days, I was told that for me to go on to the halfway house, I would have to be drugfree for thirty days. At the time, the doctor had prescribed a strong anti-depressant that he said I would need to be on for the rest of my life. This would disqualify me from going on to the halfway house program that I felt I really needed. I knew that "with God, all things are possible," so my first step of faith was to quit taking the antidepressants. Thirty days later, I went into the halfway house for sixty days, and then on to the three-quarter-way house for another sixty days! By this time, in spite of accepting Christ, I had lost my car, my home, my business, and my family. I was sober, but humanly things didn't look too good. But God is faithful!

That was five years ago. I still have problems, but now I have peace in my heart and joy in my life, thanks to the Lord Jesus. God has been so good to me. My family and I are back together! I have a good job! I am actively involved in a local assembly with a great group of Christians to gather with! BEST OF ALL, through Christ Jesus I have the gift of God: Life . . . Abundant Life . . . Life Eternal . . . WITH HIM!

Psalm 34 says: "I sought the Lord, and He heard me, and delivered me from all my fears... This poor man cried, and the Lord heard him, and saved him out of all his troubles... Oh, taste and see that the Lord is good; blessed is the man who trusteth in Him."

This truly is the story of my life . . . IN HIM!

Hope

he great hope of the Church is her Lord's return for His own. It is necessary to define the biblical word "hope." There is no element of uncertainty; it is a Godgiven assurance respecting the future. — Hy Pickering

Trembling we had hoped for mercy — Some lone place within His door; But the crown, the throne, the mansion, All were ready long before. - E. F. Bevan

"But sanctify the Lord God in your hearts: and be ready always to give an answer to every man that asketh you a reason of the hope that is in you with meekness and fear."

(1 Peter 3:15)

We sinners of the Gentiles once had no hope (Eph. 2:12). Now we who have trusted Christ do have hope, but what kind of hope is it? It is a joyful hope (Rom 5:2); a saving hope (Rom. 8:24); an abounding hope (Rom. 15:13); a unifying hope (Eph. 4:4); a glorious hope (Col. 1:27); a patient hope (1 Thess. 1:3); a blessed hope (Titus 2:13); a certain hope (Heb. 6:11); a better hope (Heb. 7:19); a living hope (1 Peter 1:3); a reasonable hope (1 Peter 3:15); and a purifying hope (1 John 3:3). But one thing it is not called is an eternal hope. Some day our hope will be gone — because it will have changed to the realization of it!

"And we desire that every one of you do show the same diligence to the full assurance of hope unto the end."

(Heb. 6:11)

Faith appropriates, but hope anticipates. Faith looks backward, love looks upward, and hope looks onward. Faith accepts, but hope expects.

Griffith Thomas

"Now the God of hope fill you with all joy and peace in believing, that ye may abound in hope, through the power of the Holy Ghost."

(Rom. 15:13)

Life with Christ is an endless hope; without Him, a hopeless end.

O child of God, there is for thee A hope that shines amid the gloom, A gladsome hope that thou shalt see Thy Lord, for He will surely come.

Then joy unmingled will be thine, Earth's tears and trials all forgot; So cheer thy heart, no more repine, His Word is sure: He'll tarry not. — T.D.W. Muir

"For we are saved by hope: but hope that is seen is not hope . . . But if we hope for that we see not, then do we with patience wait for it." (Rom. 8:24-25)

To find each hope of glory gain'd, Fulfilled each precious word; And fully all to have attained The image of our Lord.

Mary Bowley Peters

There was a king in ancient England named Ethelred. Never ready to protect his country from approaching armies, he had to try and pay them off in exchange for peace. It earned him the nickname of "Ethelred the Unready." If the believer is ready for the Lord's return, he will be ready for anything ready to witness, ready to serve, ready to suffer, ready to die, ready to give account for his

All that we are, as saints on earth, All that we hope to be When Jesus comes and glory dawns -We owe it all to Thee. - H. Bonar

The First World Conqueror

J. Stanley Collins

orld conquest has been the objective of kings, emperors, rulers, and dictators from the dawning of time. Over and over again great empires have arisen to fling their armies ruthlessly on their fellow creatures in order to gain their objective, to place one man on the throne of the world. None have ever succeeded; none ever will.

And yet the orld has been

world has been conquered. One Man, without an army, without

human aid, without human strategy, without the loss of one life, has conquered, and is now waiting to take over command.

One morning, as it began to dawn, He stood by the side of an empty tomb. All power in heaven and earth stood vested in Him.

Did I say He accomplished this without the loss of one life? Then I am wrong. One life was lost, but it was His. Blood was shed, but it was His. Agony and suffering was endured, but He alone endured it. A battle was fought, but unlike all other would-be world conquerors, He alone knew who to attack, and He alone was strong enough to attack the one who up to His coming was the actual world ruler.

Think of the wars that have been fought, of the millions that have perished. Think of the blood that has been shed. Listen to the sound of martial music, the thunder of thousands of horses, the roll of the drums, the cries of the wounded and the dying, and then remember it was all for nothing. Satan looked on and laughed as men slew their fellowmen by the millions.

From the day that man fell in the Garden of Eden, the absolute authority of Satan as god of this world was never challenged. Weapons stronger than man could forge were needed. No man born of woman could now hope to succeed. As every child was born into the world, Satan could lay his hand on its head and say, "mine."

But help was forthcoming, and in due time a baby lay in a manger at Bethlehem. The birth of that child caused the greatest joy in heaven, and the greatest consternation in hell. For the first time, Satan found he could not claim a child as his own, for this child had been born sinless.

All the powers of hell were marshalled to destroy Him, but all was useless. The child grew and waxed strong; the overshadowing power of God Almighty was upon Him. Satan saw in that child the One who would one day overthrow his kingdom, wrest from his hand the scepter of authority, and lead out from his power a great number that no man could number. From the moment of His birth, every shaft that hell could forge was leveled at Him. All was useless. He stood alone in the wilderness, and there endured every form of temptation that Satan could devise. Satan offered him the world. He would even sacrifice that, if only he could break down the sinless Man who

MasterPIECE

stood before him. Satan knew his time was short. If he could not crush this Man, then this Man would crush him.

Only one sin would suffice to bring Him under Satan's power, and ruin forever the chance of redemption for humanity. The time was drawing near, and although Satan made every attempt possible, Christ could say, as the shadow of the Cross fell athwart His path, "The prince of this world cometh, and hath nothing in Me" (John 14:30). And so at last the battle joined, and the Christ, having lived a perfect, holy, sinless life, was able and entitled to offer Himself without spot to God to make a way whereby God could be just and justify the ungodly.

Behold Him as He hangs naked, bleeding and alone. He conquered, not with force of arms, not by riding over the bodies of His enemies, not by taking the lives of others, but by giving His own. Heaven looked down, hushed to silence; more than twelve legions of angels stood ready to come to His aid; all heaven watched while one Man, single-handed, and alone, engaged all the forces of Satan. Then from the darkness of the cross, the

cry of the mighty Victor arose: "It is finished" (John 19:30).

It echoed through the courts of heaven and blended with the millions of voices raised to extol the Victor. It echoed through the caverns of hell and all there knew that the death-knell of Satan was being sounded.

As the sun rose and illuminated that Figure standing in that garden, it revealed the first world conqueror. From the world He had redeemed, He ascends to heaven. For the first time in the history of the universe, a Man is seen entering heaven, clothed with a vesture dipped in blood. His hands, feet, side and brow are bearing the honored wounds of the battle. No one dare stay His entry — the everlasting doors swing open, and slowly He proceeds through the gathering and exulting millions. He approaches the very throne of God, by whose side there is the empty seat He vacated thirty or more years before. He ascends the throne and takes His place at the right hand of God, and He is there now - waiting until His enemies be made His footstool, for "He must reign until He hath put all enemies under His feet."

Jesus & Alexander

- Author Unknown

Jesus and Alexander died at thirty-three;
One lived and died for self; One died for you and me.
The Greek died on a throne; the Jew died on a cross;
One's life a triumph seemed; the other but a loss.
One led vast armies forth; the other walked alone;
One shed a whole world's blood; the other gave His own.
One won the world in life and lost it all in death;
Christ gave His life that we might share it all through faith.

Jesus and Alexander died at thirty-three;
One died in Babylon and one on Calvary.
One gained all for self, and One Himself He gave;
One conquered every throne; the other every grave.
One made himself a god; One stooped in humbleness;
The one lived but to blast; the other but to bless!
When died the Greek, forever fell his swords;
And Jesus died, but lives forever Lord of lords.

Jesus and Alexander died at thirty-three;
The Greek made all men slaves; Jesus can make men free.
One built a throne on blood, the other built on love;
The one was born of earth; the other from above.
One won this earth, to lose all earth and heaven;
The other gave up all that all to Him be given.
The Greek forever died; the Jew forever lives;
He loses all who gets, and wins all things who gives.



Alexander the Great

It Is the Last Hour

Franklin Ferguson

his present period of time, from the Cross to the coming of the Lord, is looked at in two ways. It is a day to be followed by a night; it is a night to be succeeded by a day (Isa. 21:11–12).

Speaking of His service as the perfect Servant of God, our Lord said: "I must work the works of Him that sent Me, while it is day: the night cometh, when no man can work" (John 9:4). Judging the times we are living in, we may indeed say, "The day goeth away, for the shadows of the evening are stretched out" (Jer. 6:4). It is quite evident there remains very little daylight now, before the darkness closes in, and we are compelled to rest from our labors for the Lord. Those who have "borne the burden and heat of the day" will be exceedingly blessed to reach home from the field, to rest with the Master.

The great Apostle Paul, viewing things from a different standpoint, says: "The night is far spent, the day is at hand" (Rom. 13:12). In the Gospel of Mark we find the night divided into the four watches — evening, midnight, cock-crowing, and morning (Mark 13:35). The "Sun of Righteousness" set at Calvary in a stormy scene, and the night set in — long, dark, and dreary; no light

anywhere visible, but as seen by faith in the face of Jesus Christ (2 Cor. 4:3–6).

The question is given in the margin of the Revised Version as, "Watchman, what hour of the night?" It is not a question of the state of the night, but what is the time? Weary watchers are longingly looking for the "break of day" and the rising again of the Sun of Righteousness, with healing in His rays (Mal. 4:2). Oh, what joy thrills the heart as the watchman's cry is at last heard: "The morning cometh!" which means the long night vigil is ending.

To all who compose the Church, the coming One will first appear in the morning watch as the "Bright and Morning Star," the forerunner of the day (Rev. 22:16). They say, "the darkest hour is just before the dawning"; and as this worldstate seems to have reached its darkest, then let us comfort our hearts by the words of the beloved Apostle John: "We know that it is the last hour" (1 John 2:18, R.V.).

The hour is made up of moments — quickly passing. It may be any moment now, and we shall hear the thrilling "shout" of our descending Lord, and be "caught up" (the raised and living saints together) to meet Him in the air, in the twinkling of an eye (1 Thess. 4:13–18; 1 Cor. 15:51–58).

Seeing that the redeemed are "children of the day . . . let us not sleep as do others, but let us watch and be sober" (1 Thess. 5:5–6). Great will be the reward which He shall give to those who have been true to Him during His absence.

But what of the night? Its very name is darkness. Men say, however, we live in a most enlightened age. Is it so? Certainly many run to and fro, and knowledge is increasing (Dan. 12:4).

But Christ, who is the only true source of divine light, is "despised and rejected of men," therefore spiritual darkness as truly covers the face of humanity as darkness covered the deep in

the beginning (Gen. 1); and when God said, "Let there be light," it revealed a condition of chaos, not order. Oh, the child of God must not be mistaken about this age. It is not one of light and real advancement, but one of grossest darkness and fearful retrogression.

Everything shows plainly that the night is indeed "far spent," and our blessed hope is about to be realized. There seems as never before, the probability that the Christian reader may be included in "we shall not all sleep." Whether we die or not, He is surely coming quickly, and the Church, which is His Bride, will be with Him in all His glory!



Things Which Cannot Be Shaken

J. H. Jowett

here are seasons in life when everything seems to be shaking. Old landmarks are crumbling. Venerable foundations are upheaved in a night and are scattered abroad as dust. Guiding buoys snap their moorings, and go drifting down the channel. Institutions which



hills collapse like a stricken tent. Assumptions in which everybody trusted burst like balloons. Everything seems to lose its base, and trembles in uncertainty and confusion.

Such seasons are known in our personal life. One day our circumstances appear to share the unshaken solidity of the planet, and our security is complete. And then some undreamed of antagonism assaults our life. We speak of it as a bolt from the blue! Perhaps it is some stunning disaster in business. Or perhaps death has leaped into our quiet meadows. Or perhaps some presumptuous sin has suddenly revealed its foul face in the life of one of our children. And we are "all at sea!" Our little, neat hypotheses crumple like withered leaves. Our accustomed roads are all broken up, our conventional ways of thinking and feeling; and the sure sequences on which we have depended vanish in a night. It is experiences like these which make the soul cry out with the Psalmist in bewilderment and fear: "My foot slippeth" (Ps. 94:18). His customary foothold had given way. The ground was shaking beneath him. The foundations trembled.

Where can we find a footing? Where can we stay our souls? Where can we set our feet as upon solid rock amid the many things which are shaking? What things are there which cannot be shaken? (Heb. 12:27).

I wish to explore the Word of God, to recall one or two of these assurances in order that we may stay our souls upon them in the terrible strain and uncertainty through which we are passing, and in which we may have to live for many succeeding days.

THE SUPREMACY OF SPIRITUAL FORCES CANNOT BE SHAKEN

The obtrusive circumstances of the hour shriek against that creed. Spiritual forces seem to be overwhelmed. We are witnessing a perfect carnival of insensate materialism. The narratives which fill the columns of the daily press reek with the fierce spectacle of barbaric labor and achievement. And yet, in spite of all this appalling outrage upon the senses, we must steadily beware of becoming the victims of the apparent and the tran-

THINGS WHICH CANNOT BE SHAKEN

sient. Behind the uncharted riot, there hides a power whose invisible energy is the real master of

The ocean can be lashed by the winds into indescribable fury, and the breakers may rise and fall in crashing weight and disaster; and yet behind all the wild phenomena there is a subtle, mystical force which is exerting its silent mastery even at the very height of the storm. We must discriminate between the phenomenal and the spiritual, between the event of the hour and the drift of the year, between the issue of a battle and the

tendency of a campaign. All of which means that, "While we look at the things which are seen, we are also to look at the things which are not seen" (2 Cor. 4:18). For remember, spiritual forces cannot be shaken.

THE POWER OF TRUTH CAN NEVER BE SHAKEN

Disloyalty may have its hour of triumph, and treachery may march for a season to victory after victory; but all the while truth is secretly exercising her mastery. In the long run, the labor of falsehood will crumble into ruin. There is no permanent conquest for a lie. You can no more keep the truth interred than you could keep the Lord in Joseph's tomb. You cannot bury the truth, you cannot strangle her, you cannot even shake her! You may burn up the records of truth, but you cannot impair the truth itself! When the

records are reduced to ashes, truth shall walk abroad as an indestructible angel and minister of the Lord!

There was a people in the old days who sought to find security in falsehood, and to construct a sovereignty by the aid of broken covenants. Let me read to you their boast as it is recorded by the prophet Isaiah: "We have made a covenant with death, and with hell are we at agreement: when the overflowing scourge shall pass through, it

shall not come unto us, for we have made lies our refuge, and under falsehood have we hid ourselves" (Isa. 28:15). And so they banished truth. But banished truth is not vanquished truth. Truth is never idle; she is ever active and ubiquitous, she is forever and forever our antagonist or our friend. "Therefore thus saith the Lord God . . . the hail shall sweep away the refuge of lies, and the waters shall overflow the hiding place . . . your covenant with death shall be disannulled, and your agreement with hell shall not stand. " (Isa. 28:16-18). Thus saith the Lord! We may silence a

fort, but we cannot para-

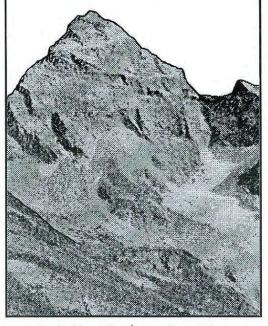
lyze the truth. Amid all the material convulsions of the day, the supremacy of truth remains unshaken.

THE LAW OF MORAL RETRIBUTION CANNOT BE SHAKEN

Nothing that happens can bribe the nature of things and interfere with the dire and deadly sequence of cause and effect. And what is the law of moral retribution? It is this: "The wages of sin is death" (Rom. 6:23). Nothing can shatter that! By no possible human device or expedient, and by no brilliancy of momentary triumph can we cheat the law, and escape the long reach of its inevitable process. "The wages of sin is death." Not a death faraway removed, which allows a long interval of undisturbed vitality. The invasion of death is im-

mediate. The entrance of death is coincident with the sin. This kind of death is not a final crisis, it is a present process; it is not a swift annihilation, it is a sure decay. When we sin, our nobler powers at once begin to die, our nobler strength begins to waste. There is no escape from the sequence. "The wages of sin" is benumbment, coma, death. Every sinful deed houses its own nemesis, and the nemesis becomes active at once. Nay, we may give the statement a more piercing inwardness

"This kind of death is not a final crisis, it is a present process ... When we sin, our nobler powers at once begin to die."



THINGS WHICH CANNOT BE SHAKEN

still. Every iniquitous thought and purpose harbors its own nemesis, its own hostile and destructive germ, a germ which proceeds to immediate consumption. When we sin something dies, the nobler man or woman shrinks and shrivels, and is despoiled of some of the forces of vitality. That is the law of moral retribution. Study that law of retribution in the recorded history of King Saul. You can watch the gradual process, like a creeping paralysis, stealing over the soul. Nay, now and again there are spasms, or even seasons, of seeming triumph, while all the time you can almost see

the law at work, dismantling the soul, drying up its vital energies, and holding it in the clammy grip of inevitable and unbribable death. "The wages of sin is death." Amid all the tremblings and the uncertainties of life that law remains unshaken.

THE SOVEREIGNTY
OF THE LORD GOD
REMAINS UNSHAKEN

Earth-born clouds may veil His throne; they cannot destroy His decrees. The heavy cloud of circumstance gathered about the life of the prophet Isaiah, and he walked in uncertainty and confusion, as though his Lord had been taken away. But "in the year that King Uzziah died I saw the Lord, high and lifted up" (Isa. 6:1). Yes, but in the day of obscurity, before the robe of darkness was rent, the holy Lord was still there, and so were

the cherubim, and the seraphim, and all the ministering angels of righteousness and grace. The Lord cometh in the thick cloud (Ex. 19:9).

When Abraham Lincoln was assassinated, and the American people were stunned by the blow, a vast crowd gathered in their bewilderment around the White House, and James Garfield came out upon the balcony of the house and cried aloud, in the words of an ancient Psalmist: "Clouds and darkness are round about Him, righteousness and judgment are the habitation of His throne" (Ps. 97:2).

Yes, we must distinguish between the battle smoke and the Great White Throne. God's sovereignty may be hidden; it can never be broken. This book of the Scriptures is a stormy book, stormy from end to end. And yet it reveals the sovereignty of God.

The revelation of the sovereignty of God is not given only in green pastures, and in a balmy air, and under a blue and radiant sky. It is given amid social convulsions and upheavals, in the presence

of menace and terror, amid the massed assemblies of material hosts. The revelation of His sovereignty is given when the hurricane is sweeping the land, and when all the watercourses have overflowed their banks. The Lord is revealed as King in the flood!

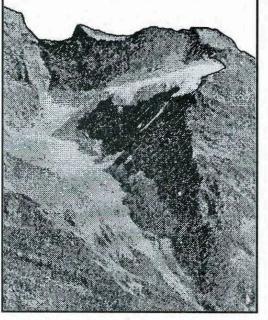
I turn to the Book of Revelation. It is full of dread and appalling movement. Dragons and beasts are rising mysteriously out of the sea, and upon their heads is the name of blasphemy. Multitudes are worshiping the beast, and the earth is choked with abominations. But in the thick of all the fierce, rebellious movement, and in the very heyday of unclean and hateful things, there is "the voice of a great multitude, as the voice of many waters, and as the voice of mighty thunderings, saying, Alleluia: for the Lord God omnipo-

tent reigneth" (Rev. 19:6).

Brethren, the sovereignty of the Lord God cannot be shaken. But the assurance of that sovereignty is not to lull us into laxity and ease. The revelation can be abused. It can be used as a sedative by the indolent, when it is purposed to be a tonic for the faithful.

"The Lord reigneth!" Every man, then, to his duty, that with both hands and a consecrated soul he may wholeheartedly do the King's will.

"The sovereignty of the Lord . . . can be used as a sedative by the indolent, when it is purposed to be a tonic for the faithful."



I Press Toward the Mark

A. Soutter

hilippians chapter 3 is one of the most outstanding chapters in Holy Writ on the great theme of Christian endeavor.

Paul first enumerates those things that had placed him in the front rank of Jewish culture and learning, things that had made him to excel in religious attainment and knowledge, and then, at a stroke, he puts them all aside as he fixes his earnest gaze on the goal, which goal finds its embodiment in the person of his Saviour and Lord, Jesus Christ.

be the propelling force in his life.

In this great passage on the godly endeavor of the Christian, four imperatives emerge. They are as follows:

Recognize your imperfections. We will be of little use for God or man if we go through life on the tiptoes of a fancied perfection and superiority. Paul did not do that. He was intensely practical. "Not as though I had already attained or were already perfect." Better by far to stand foursquare on the firm ground of experience, recognizing that

while much ground has been gained, much remains to be captured.

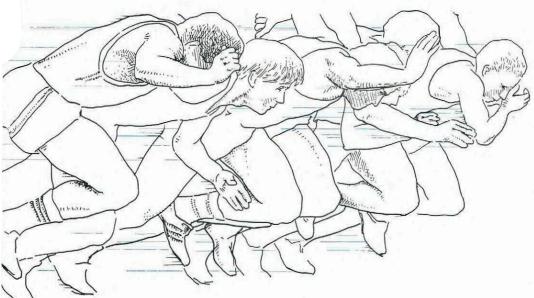
Forget the things that are behind. Joshua would never have become Israel's great commander if he had not forgotten that shameful defeat at Ai. Peter would never have carried the Gospel banner high if he had not put behind his back the words he spoke by the fire in the high priest's hall. And there is a sense in which it is better to put the consciousness of our greatest triumphs on a shelf

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sciousness of our greatest triumphs on a shelf of forgetfulness.

Press forward to the goal. Paul, with hands outstretched, went straight for the goal. We know from his final letter that nothing was allowed to hinder, for he says, "I have finished my course" (2 Tim. 4:7). His record was outstanding; his example a shining one. Well might he say, as he does here, "Brethren, be followers together of me."

Make sure of the prize. The winning of the prize is an incentive that God Himself has placed before us. Moses had respect unto the recompense of the reward. He looked steadily at the ultimate reward, and he received it. Who among us would not covet the "well done" of our Master in that great day of recompense?



Paul was possessed by a passion and purpose that was threefold. "That I might know Him." This knowledge surpassed by far the combined knowledge that humankind has acquired all down the ages. "And the power of His resurrection." This power shall never be superseded by any other power in God's universe. "And the fellowship of His sufferings." This fellowship, so full and fragrant, enabled this man of God to walk side by side with his divine Master through storm and sunshine, over valley and upland, during the long years of his pilgrimage.

"If by any means," says Paul, "I might attain unto the resurrection of the dead." He deemed that the dynamic power of the resurrection should

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Sir Robert Anderson

John Bjorlie

Then said Great-Heart to Mr. Valiant-for-Truth: "Thou hast worthily behaved thyself. Let me see thy sword." So he showed it to him. When he had taken it in his hand and looked thereon a while, he said, "Ha! it is a right Jerusalem blade." — The Pilgrim's Progress

ir Robert Anderson (1841-1918) was one of the few who could engage in controversy without being contentious. Many wish they could "convince the gainsayer" but, unable to keep a cool head, they instead confirm the gainsayers in their heresies. The homey saying remains true, "If you can't take the heat, get out of the kitchen." Robert Anderson was one of those rare Christians who did not become blistered under heated attacks.

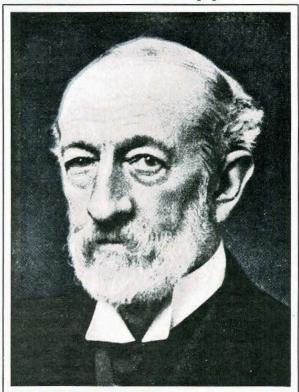
He called himself "an anglicized Irishman of Scottish extraction." Born in Dublin, Anderson, as a youth, learned that no one who has not been converted can be a child of God. He wrote, "As time went by, my conviction deepened that I had not been 'converted.' But owing to my early experience and to the restraints of a Christian home, I continued to lead 'a religious life.'"

The year 1860 saw sweeping revival in Northern Ireland. New spiritual longings were awakened by the conversion of one of his sisters through attending meetings which J. Denham Smith was holding in Dublin. "The fact of my sister's conversion still held me, and I cherished the thought that the next Sunday services in the kirk might bring me blessing. But the morning service left me more discouraged than ever; and I made up my mind that if the evening one brought no relief I would give up the quest, and seek to enjoy life again as best I could.

"The evening preacher was John Hall. He boldly proclaimed forgiveness of sins and eternal life as God's gift in grace, unconditional, to be received as we sat in the pews. His sermon thrilled me. Yet I deemed his doctrine unscriptural, so I waylaid him as he left the vestry and on our homeward walk tackled him about his 'heresies.'"

Hall met Anderson's challenges by quoting Scripture. Having answered every question, he faced Anderson on the pavement and solemnly repeated his appeal: "I tell you as a minister of Christ and in His Name that there is life for you here and now if you will accept Him. Will you accept Christ or will you reject Him?" Anderson later said, "After a pause, I exclaimed, 'In God's Name I will accept Christ.' Not another word passed between us, but after another pause he wrung my hand and left me. And I turned homeward with the peace of God filling my heart."

Anderson was soon preaching the Gospel himself. The revival spread to Sligo, and when George Trench went there to carry on the work, he asked Anderson to join him. The clergy were unsympathetic and the evangelists were treated to a crusade of ridicule in a local newspaper which ac-



cused them of being impostors, preaching for filthy lucre's sake and getting their salaries from a committee in London. One issue published a letter (said to have been picked up on the road), in which they were taken to task for embezzling the contents of their money boxes! Worse still, there appeared a seemingly genuine account of their getting drunk at a picnic! When Trench had to re-

turn home owing to ill health, some doggerel verses described the quarrel which led "the Trencher" to desert his pal, "Handy Andy." The attacks only advertised the meetings. Many attended out of curiosity or looking for amusement, and spiritual power was continually manifested in conversions.

Around this time, Anderson was called to the Irish Bar but was soon redirected into secret service work in connection with the "Fenian" terrorists. This led to his crossing to England. First in the Home Office, then at Scotland Yard, and finally in retirement, he remained a Londoner for the rest of his life.

Duty made him a relentless tracker of criminals. But "the dynamiters" would have been more than surprised had they known that the man who hunted them down was author of many books on the Bible and the Christian life. No less amazed would have been many a burglar had he come upon the Central Intelligence Department (CID) Chief giving a Gospel appeal in some mission.

Anderson became the director of Scotland Yard just as the "Jack the Ripper" murders were taking place. Sir John Moylan in his Scotland Yard and the Metropolitan Police states that "the period 1890 to 1900 proved to be one during which there was an almost continuous decrease in crime . . . By signal successes in sensational murder cases such as that of Neil Cream, the poisoner, and Milsom and Fowler, the Muswell Hill murderers, and by steady achievement in the less advertized, every-

Misrepresenting the Queen

In his consuming passion for what is vital to the Christian faith, Sir Robert Anderson was sometimes compelled to appear dogmatic and narrow-minded. He disliked combat intensely, and suffered under its consequences to himself. But never, for a single moment, did he betray the slightest bitterness of spirit toward an opponent. He commended himself to every man's conscience even when he failed to carry their judgment. Few men ever lived who had so many opponents and so few enemies. The following is an extract of an argument Anderson gave to answer attacks against the Scriptures:

"A few years ago, a certain London merchant killed an unfortunate wretch whom circumstances had placed in his power. He did not actually kill him with his own hands, but he had him brought to a secluded room prepared for the purpose. And there he stood by while his victim was strangled by a man whom he had hired to do the deed. I myself examined the place. I can testify moreover that all the facts were known not only to the authorities but to the Queen. And yet not only did the homicide go unpunished, but with the full knowledge of all I have related. Her Majesty singled him out for Royal favor and conferred a title upon him. What estimate will my readers form of such conduct on the part of the Queen whom we have been taught to regard as a pattern and paragon of public and private virtue? But before they pass judgment, they ought to know a few additional details. The victim was a condemned murderer; the man paid to strangle him was the common hangman. The secluded room was in Newgate Prison; and the merchant who received a knighthood was the Sheriff whose official duty it was to execute the criminal."

"And now," the author continues, "the meaning of my parable will begin to dawn upon the reader. Let these added details be suppressed, and a narrative which does not contain a syllable that is untrue or even exaggerated may seem to endanger the reputation of the Queen. And it is precisely by this sort of suppression that the Bible and the God of the Bible are misrepresented. Will any person of culture in our day dare to defend the extermination of the Canaanites? Will anyone, I answer, dare to defend the strangling of a helpless wretch in a shut-in room?"

Men read the Bible in the false light of evolution. They picture semi-civilized tribes on the upward path of progress being exterminated by an invading horde of religious fanatics. Actually they were a degenerate race whose destruction was decreed by a God of infinite mercy because they had given themselves up to loathsome sin. Archaeology shows that they were lapsing from civilization, not emerging from barbarism. God's mercy is seen in that the Jews were strangers in Egypt for four generations, "because the iniquity of the Amorites was not yet full."

day business of dealing with rogues in general, the CID built up in the 'nineties' a world-wide reputation for efficiency in crime detection . . . Crime reached a low watermark in 1899." The period of Sir Robert Anderson's service as Chief of the CID was 1888 to 1901.

Anderson was deeply concerned about prison evangelism, and was considered an authority on prison reform. Up to that time, most prisons followed the dungeon pattern — thick, iron bars, slits of windows, faulty ventilation and semidarkness in the cells. As is still true, the prisons created far more criminals than they cured. One bit of Anderson's sage advise was this: "The restitution of stolen property ought to be insisted on. A burglar should not be set at liberty until he had disclosed what he had done with his booty. This would go far to abolish the market for stolen property and even put an end to stealing. If necessary, the thief should compensate the individual robbed by work done and paid for in prison."

Some of his books such as Criminals and Crime, The Lighter Side of My Official Life, and Sidelights on the Home Rule Movement may never be reprinted. But his writing on things eternal continue to bear fruit. C. H. Spurgeon said the book, Human Destiny, was "the most valuable contribution on the subject I have seen." This volume deals with denials of the biblical doctrine of eternal punishment, important because currently certain evangelical leaders have adopted these denials.

His book, The Silence of God, was a great com-

fort to perplexed souls, especially during the First World War. The Coming Prince contains one of the clearest studies available dealing with the seventy weeks of Daniel's prophecy. Others of his books are, In Defence, Daniel in the Critics' Den, The Hebrews Epistle, The Honour of His Name, The Bible and Modern Criticism, The Entail of the Covenant, Misunderstood Texts, The Lord from Heaven, Forgotten Truths, and Redemption Truths.

He enjoyed warm fellowship with such eminant servants of Christ as Horatius Bonar, James Gray, A. C. Dixon, and C. I. Scofield.

Anderson abhorred irreverence and levity in the things of God. He wrote, "We may come down to our own level, as it were, when reasoning with others about their conduct or their attitude to the dread solemnities of life. But no one of a reverent spirit can fail to be distressed by the flippant language in which 'the glorious Gospel of the blessed God' (2 Cor. 2:17, Weymouth) is sometimes 'huckstered.'"

A friend described Sir Robert Anderson this way: "On the platform, he appeared warrior-like; in conversation, he was professor-like; in friendly intercourse, brother-like. Throughout his life, he bore the true test of Christian manhood: the better known, the better loved."

Further reading:

Chief Men Among the Brethren, by Hy. Pickering The Life of Sir Robert Anderson, by A. P. Moore-Anderson

A Man with a Secret

At a prophetic conference in 1894, Sir Robert Anderson said: "The coming of Christ is not some strange thing that faddists have imported into Christianity. It is part and parcel of Christianity. No one has any right to call himself a Christian who denies the coming of the Lord Jesus Christ." In that address, however, he gave a warning against fixing dates in connection with that coming, saying that someone had sent him a copy of a prophetic magazine published fourteen years previously and giving the names of 120 writers, many of them men of eminence in the church, who were unanimous in believing that the end of the world would come before the year 1890. He then went on to say: "You ought not to be merely a person who holds the doctrine of the Advent; if you are a Christian you should hold it as a living hope in the heart . . . Get hold of this that every Christian is a man with a secret. If word came to you tomorrow morning that you had come in for a hundred pounds, think how such a secret would affect you. All day long those about you would see something strange in you; they would say, 'He has some secret; I wonder what it is.' But would a hundred sovereigns lying at the bank for you be a greater thing than this - the riches of Christ that cannot be measured, that you are His own, and that He is coming for you? . . . Here is the secret to carry with you into your daily life, "the secret of the Lord . . . with them that fear Him."

Keep On Keeping On

Northcote Deck

aving been allowed by God to see thousands of natives in the Solomon Islands turned from the darkness of their devil worship to the light of the Gospel, I can confidently witness that this has been accomplished wholly through the Word of God, the only textbook this island church has ever known.

I want to emphasize five simple words from that Word, which should be at once a comfort and a challenge to all Christians. They are found in Romans 2:7: "... patient continuance in well doing." This simple phrase is one of the truest and most concise descriptions of the believer's life and service for God.

"Patient continuance" represents one word in the Greek, yet these two English words helpfully and truly stress two of the qualities most needed for every Christian in character and service. Hebrews 10:36 urges: "Ye have need of patience." Yet why should I need to be patient? Why should I have to put up with people and unkind circumstances? Why does not God make the Christian life smooth and easy? One reason is that "the whole world lieth in the evil one" (1 John 5:19, A.S.V.), and the enemy of souls is not going to make life an easy

But there is a far deeper reason. It is found in Galatians 5:22, which reads, "The fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace . . ." These first three qualities are essentially enjoyable. Who does not want to be loved, and to be lovable? And joy — well the word denotes that it too is enjoyable. And peace and a quiet heart are so desirable in these days of

anxiety and world unrest. These first three quiet virtues are all delightful to experience. But long-suffering, which comes next in this analysis of "the fruit of the Spirit," gives us pause. Actually the word here rendered longsuffering is translated in Hebrews 6:12 as those "who through patience inherit the promises." Thus suffering and patience are almost synonymous and repre-

sent the same exercise of soul.

Longsuffering! We feel instinctively we would rather avoid it. We would rather be without this emotion of the soul. Yet we cannot, for it is part of the indivisible "fruit of the Spirit." It is His beneficent outworking in our souls, just as much and just as essential as the love, joy, and peace. Our Saviour was not exempt from this emotion. True, He was "anointed with the oil of gladness above His fellows," yet He was at the same time supremely "the Man of Sorrows." Just as in the meal offering, which typified the perfections of Christ in its evenness and balance, in which no quality was in excess, and no quality was lacking,

so in the experience of Christ both joy and sorrow were needed in the perfect balance of His emotions. And so they must be with us, if we are really to have "the mind of Christ." We may habitually dwell in joy, the keynote of the Christian life; yet we must at times also experience the suffering of patience. Let us remember that, though the tree needs the sunshine to make it grow up, it also needs the storms to make it grow down, to become "rooted and grounded."

So James 1:4 urges us, "Let patience have her perfect work, that ye may be perfect and entire,

path for us.

wanting nothing." Here the exercise is personal, and in the soul. It represents the growth of Christian character. Slow it may be, but it is so needful. Then Romans 5:3-4 outlines both the process and product of patience in exercise. "We [know]," writes Paul "that tribulation" suffered and accepted in the will of God, "worketh patience." Here is one process by which patience is developed. It does not come full-orbed to the believer, but needs to grow steadily and gradually, as we accept tribulation as God's will for us. Next its product is stressed, for "patience" works and enriches "experience," and experience accumulated and remembered works and increases "hope," a "hope [that] maketh not ashamed." Here is a blessed sequence of operations which knows no finality, one of the chief assets of growth in grace and character.

In James 5:7 we have the other aspect of the need and gracious operation of patience: "The husbandman waiteth for the precious fruit of the earth, and hath long patience for it." Here this difficult virtue is stressed in regard to service. And how needed and often how difficult it is in exercise, most Christian workers will readily agree. Of course, some fruits ripen more slowly than others. We may have to wait long, till God's time comes, and then how often He rewards us with such a harvest!

Then we have the word "continuance." Here is the other quality so vital in our service for God, yet at times so difficult. It is true that "Hope deferred maketh the heart sick." Yet, thank God, when things have seemed most hopeless, He graciously surprises us with showers of blessing and gracious results. Of course, the only safe basis of successful work for God is as of old: "They continued steadfastly in the apostles' doctrine" (Acts 2:42), for only the pure Word of God is "quick and powerful." Yet there is such a thing as "a dead orthodoxy," men holding the truth which does not hold them. So I think we must add to this another condition: "If ye continue in My Word." That goes deeper and implies a glad acceptance of His will in our lives day by day. Then John 15:9 goes right to the heart of things: "Continue ye in My love." It is only as we daily exercise this most compelling power that we can be successful in life and service.

Acts 6:4 stresses still another absolute requisite for us. "We will give ourselves continually to prayer." For if we are too busy to pray, we are too

busy. Then will follow its inevitable sequel: "I continue," cries Paul, "I continue unto this day, witnessing both to small and great" (Acts 26:22). So the ardent apostle lived. God give us grace and determination that we too shall so continue!

Finally, we have "well doing." What a simple, concise, and yet accurate summary of much of Christian life and service! Just "well doing," day by day, with nothing spectacular or romantic or exciting! Just "the daily round, the common task." After all, how much of Christian life and service is composed of small daily duties, and simple acts of kindness and self-sacrifice, often unnoticed by anyone but Him. Yet little things can be made great things, when they are deliberately made God's things. Did not the Saviour stress this great truth when He specially noticed and commended the value to Him of the widow's mites and the cup of cold water? He was watching then. He watches still such acts of devotion done for others yet done with our eyes on Him. As the age draws to its close soon, there may come a complete cessation of earthly service. When He comes, the tense of the word "well doing" will be changed. May it be "well done" for each of us in that great day. U

Footnotes from p. 5 Wrath or Rapture?

- ¹ J. D. Pentecost, in his book, *Things to Come*, pp. 201–202, lists twenty-four such distinctions.
- ² A. Van Ryn, "Prophecy to Profit," Light & Liberty, May 1966, p. 105.
- ³ J. Walvoord, in his book, *The Rapture Question*, pp. 191–199, cites fifty arguments for pretribulationism, some stronger than others.
- 4 Ibid., p. 65.
- ⁵ H. C. Thiessen, Will the Church Pass Through the Tribulation?, p. 15.
- ⁶ L. S. Chafer, Systematic Theology, IV, pp. 278-279.
- ⁷ C. F. Hogg & W. E. Vine, Touching the Coming of the Lord, pp.164–167, for a fuller treatment of imminency.
- 8 Walvoord, Op. cit., p. 185.

LOOK AT BOOKS



What About the Future?

Jim McKendrick

e all have an inner compulsion to know what the future holds. Fortune tellers and soothsayers have held a grip on the minds and souls of men for centuries and today's world is no different. Prophecy is a subject that holds a compelling interest for all of us. The Bible is the greatest and most comprehensive prophetic book that has ever been written. Its Author is the omniscient God of heaven who is the planner and executor of all history.

However, as good and sincere men have studied the Bible, they have come away with different interpretations of prophecy, and the consequences have brought confusion and discouragement in the Church. In some cases, Christians have just shrugged and decided that it is impossible to know the future, while others have fought and divided the Church over some prophetic scheme.

For those who would like to delve into this subject, I would recommend three books. They will answer some questions you may have; they will give you solid biblical exposition and encourage you to live for the Lord in light of His return.

If you have only one book on prophecy in your library, it should be Dwight Pentecost's Things to Come. John Walvoord says in his introduction: "Dr. Pentecost has with rare skill dealt with many controversial issues, has met and solved many prophetic problems . . . has condensed a mass of material often not contained in even larger prophetic libraries . . ."

As Mr. Walvoord says, this book meets many of the issues, and answers many of the questions. What is premillennialism, postmillennialism, and amillennialism? How do we interpret prophecy? What is the relationship of the Church to Israel? When does the rapture take place? What about the different judgments mentioned in Scripture? These and many other questions are taken up in this book. The first sixty-four pages of the book are on the subject of interpretation. This forms the basis of argument for the rest of this book. The many different interpretations are listed and explained and then, in a precise fashion, he brings you to a scriptural conclusion. It is a wealth of information presented systematically and in an easy-to-read fashion.

The second important book that you should have is *God's Timetable*, by David Long. It is just ninety-six pages, but is one of the finest overviews of the major prophetic passages of Scripture I have read. The emphasis in the book is to show that the prophecies of Daniel's visions, the Olivet discourse, the prophetic passages of the epistles, especially the Thessalonians, and the book of Revelation are all interwoven and have distinct links that draw them together into one complete pattern in which God reveals the future of His creation. To catch the links of these passages is to answer some very important questions in the search of proper prophetic interpretation.

The third book that I would recommend is Rob Lindsted's The Next Move. This is completely different from the other two books. Dr. Lindsted looks at the historical events around us such as the State of Israel, the Middle East and the energy crisis, and the current political make-up of Europe, and draws comparisons between what is happening around us and what the Bible says will happen in the last days. The comparisons are startling and revealing. As in all of this type of book, you may not agree with all the conclusions and inferences drawn, but you will not come away from this book without a real sense of the nearness of the Lord's return. And this is precisely what Rob Lindsted wants to happen. It is a book written to shout to the Church today, "Wake up! Be alert! Preach the Gospel! The Lord is coming soon!"

In reading God's Timetable and The Next Move, I have been enlightened and challenged. Things to Come has been drawn upon to use as a reference tool in areas that have been unclear to me and has been a source of instruction. 1 Peter 3:15 says, "Sanctify the Lord God in your hearts; and be ready always to give an answer to every man that asketh you a reason of the hope that is in you with meekness and fear." May you be equipped to answer the challenges that are rising today to bring into question the imminent return of the Lord Jesus Christ for His Church, and may your heart be stirred to more fully sanctify Christ as Lord in your heart.

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Every Day Reading Plan

Section 7: Deuteronomy — Passing on the Word

July 1	Deut.1:1-46	Moses speaks: a reminder of failure at Kadesh
July 2	Deut. 2:1-3:20	Moses continues: the wilderness wanderings
July 3	Deut. 3:21-4:40	God's leader and God's way for Israel
July 4	Deut. 4:41-6:25	A new generation taught the Word of God
July 5	Deut. 7:1-26	Separation is the path to victory
July 6	Deut. 8:1-20	Obedience is the path to blessing
July 7	Deut. 9:1-29	Israel undeserving of the land
July 8	Deut. 10:1-22	God's love restated and the covenant renewed
July 9	Deut. 11:1-32	Now the choice: blessing or cursing
July 10	Deut. 12:1-32	Conditions for blessing: false or true worship
July 11	Deut. 13:1-18	Conditions for blessing: false or true prophets
July 12	Deut. 14:1-29	Conditions for blessing: clean or unclean food
July 13	Deut. 15:1-23	The sabbatical year and the perpetual servant
July 14	Deut. 16:1-22	The yearly festivals and righteous judges
July 15	Deut. 17:1-20	Rules for judges and kings
July 16	Deut. 18:1-22	Priests' rights, Canaan's wrongs and God's Prophet
July 17	Deut. 19:1-21:9	God's justice for killers, war, and inquests
July 18	Deut. 21:10-22:8	Laws about life in the land
July 19	Deut. 22:9-30	Laws about life in the land, continued
July 20	Deut. 23:1-25	Laws about life in the land, continued
July 21	Deut. 24:1-22	Laws about life in the land, continued
July 22	Deut. 25:1-26:19	Laws about life in the land, concluded
July 23	Deut. 27:1-28:14	Ebal and Gerizim: cursing and blessing
July 24	Deut. 28:15-68	What happens when we turn from God
July 25	Deut. 29:1-29	See what God has done; watch what God will do
July 26	Deut. 30:1-10	Repentance leads to restoration
July 27	Deut. 30:11-20	God's commands are not grievous: He is
		worth serving!
July 28	Deut. 31:1-29	Moses' closing instructions to Israel
July 29	Deut. 31:30-32:52	Moses' farewell song to Israel
July 30	Deut. 33:1-29	Moses' final blessing of Israel
July 31	Deut. 34:1-12	The vision and death of Moses

Deuteronomy

he Greek name deuteronomion is the compound of deuteros, meaning "second" and nomos, "law," because this fifth book of Moses includes a restatement of the Mosaic law. But obviously God's Word is not redundant and the book of Deuteronomy is more than a reiterating of what can be found in Exodus through Numbers. As usual, the Hebrew name Debarim, or "Words" is taken from the first phrase in the book, "These are the words."

Regarding time, the book contains forty years of history encapsulated in about forty days of actual events and anticipates prophetically Israel's future up to the golden days of Messiah's reign. How is the forty-day span calculated?

The book begins on the first day of the eleventh month of the fortieth year (Deut. 1:3) of the wilderness journey. Seventy days later, (on the tenth day of the first month of the forty-first year) they had just crossed the Jordan (Josh. 4:19). But in the last chapter of Deuteronomy, we're told that they mourned for Moses thirty days. Thus the entire book, from 1:3 to 34:8, covers less than forty days.

The wasted years of the wanderings are set in stark contrast by the forceful reminder in Deuteronomy 1:2 — "(There are eleven days' journey from Horeb by the way of Mount Seir unto Kadesh-barnea.)"

Yet this is not simply a recounting of the facts as found in the rest of the Pentateuch. In the form of exhortations, it is the moral evaluation of their past behavior, of God's longsuffering and holy expectations for them as they enter into their possession. Thus are often repeated: "the land" (over one hundred times); "given" — a reminder of God's goodness (seventy-five times); "this day" — the need for present choice in spite of the last generation's failure (seventy times); and "possess" — a call for the response of obedient faith to the promise of God (nearly seventy times).

Perhaps the key passage is chapter 6, which includes what the Jews today call the *shamah* (v. 4). There we see the Word of God percolating into every area of life: in the heart first (vv. 5–6); in the home (v. 7); in the habits of life (v. 7); in our hands (v. 8), and in our houses as well as before the heathen (v. 9).

How necessary it is to grasp, if not the details, the grand principle of the book. Past mistakes may warn us, but only the giving over of our hearts to love and obey the Lord is fit preparation for the battles that lie ahead. If I rightly know Him, I will love Him; if I love Him, I will trust Him; if I trust Him, I will obey Him. When I cannot understand His ways, I can still trust His heart. And the time to prepare for the conflict is before it, not in it. Such godly character is not developed in crisis, it is merely displayed there. So the time to teach our children is in their childhood. The time to get alone with God is before the day begins. The time to seek His aid is before we try ourselves. Simply put, it is the principle running through the whole Book: God first!

Deuteronomy is referred to over eighty times in the New Testament and was quoted by the Lord Jesus more than any other Old Testament book. He found it especially suitable as a "shield of faith" with which to quench the fiery darts of the wicked one during his temptation at the beginning of His public ministry.

Like the books of Exodus and Numbers, Deuteronomy may be divided into three sections: the first part (ch. 1–4) is HISTORICAL, recounting God's goodness in the past; the second part (ch. 5–26) is LEGISLATIVE, calling Israel to obedience in the present; the third part (ch. 27–34) is PROPHETIC, looking forward to the Lord's restoration and blessing of Israel in the future.

The believer will find much help here in tracing the love and grace of God in His dealings with Israel and in being reminded of the importance and blessings of the obedient life.

FOR FURTHER STUDY:

An Outline of Deuteronomy, C. A. Coates,
Stow Hill Bible & Tract Depot
Lectures Introductory to the Pentateuch, W. Kelly,
Bible Truth Publishers
Commentaries on the Old Testament, The Pentateuch,
Vol. III, Keil & Delizsch, Eerdmans.



Slow Learners, Slow Travelers

Eleven days' journey takes forty years! (Deut. 1:2)

SECTION ONE (Chapters 1–3) Looking back to the wilderness ISRAEL'S HISTORY REVIEWED

MOSAIC COVENANT REPEATED

SECTION TWO (Chapters 4–11)
Looking back to Sinai
GOD'S LAW RESTATED

CANAAN COVENANT

INTRODUCED

SECTION THREE (Chapters 12–27) Looking ahead to Canaan GOD'S LAW ENFORCED

SECTION FOUR (Chapters 28–30) Looking ahead to Christ ISRAEL'S HISTORY PROPHESIED

SECTION FIVE (Chapter 31)
Anticipating future responsibilities
LAST COUNSELS TO PRIEST, LEVITES, & JOSHUA

SECTION SIX (Chapters 32–34)
God, the blesser in the past & Israel's blessings in the future
LAST WORDS AND DEATH OF MOSES

Who is Mother Earth?

John Bjorlie



hen, as a child, I first heard the fable of Little Red Riding Hood, the surprising thing to me was not the wood-chopper's

timing, or grandma's survivability, but the amazing gullibility of Little Red Riding Hood.

We think grown-ups cannot be so fooled, yet the professing church today is giving in to the most colossal case of mistaken identity ever. I am referring to the revival of goddess-worship. Feminists insist that Christianity must make reparation for past inequality, and that the fastest way to do this is by changing God's gender.

While many religious women claim to be feminists, most probably do not endorse the feminist agenda and must not have been listening when the feminists wrote their manifestos and proclaimed their aims.

Serious feminists realize the utter contradiction of feminism to the teaching of the Bible. Read the titles of their books: Beyond God the Father: Toward a Philosophy of Women's Liberation by Mary Daly, Theology After the Demise of God the Father: A Call for the Castration of Sexist Religion by Alice Hageman, or Changing of the Gods: Feminism and the End of Traditional Religions by Naomi Goldenberg. The latter puts it this way: "The feminist movement in western culture is engaged in the slow execution of Christ and Yahweh. Yet very few of the women and men now working for sexual equality within Christianity and Judaism realize the extent of their heresy."

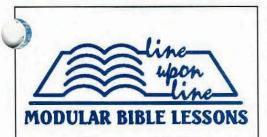
Their solution is to propose another god, or rather, another goddess. This masquerade among religious feminists is not the result of reverent Bible study, but rather a mimic of what is happening among secular feminists. Unbelievers have long claimed that the Bible has dealt unfairly with the ancient goddess Astarte, (otherwise known as Artemas or Diana). They say that we should

recultivate an appreciation for old Mother Earth, or Mother Nature as she is popularly called. In the May 6, 1991 edition of Time magazine, the religion section reported that "Worshipers of Mother Earth are part of a Goddess resurgence." The article reports: "The Goddess is not just a female version of God. She represents a different concept,' says Merlin Stone, author of When God Was a Woman. While the Judeo-Christian God is transcendent, the Goddess is located 'within each individual and all things in nature,' she says." These beliefs have always been current within Wicca (witchcraft), paganism, and New Age thinking. But is the nominal Christian Church recoiling in horror? Instead, the gullible are racing one another to the feet of Diana's shrine.

We are talking about something bigger than equal rights. When the feminists insist we refer to God as a mother, or as a female, they are not just suggesting a different side of God's nature. They are proposing a totally different personage. True, there are qualities about God's dealing with us that suggests a mother's care. For instance, Christ said He longed to gather Israel under His protection, "even as a mother hen gathers her chicks." And in Proverbs, wisdom is spoken of in the female gender. "She makes her voice to be heard in the streets." But the obvious and repeated teaching of Scripture is that God has revealed Himself not as our mother or as our parent, but as our Father. If the Holy Spirit had so chosen, He could have inspired the writers to use "non-sexist" Greek expressions such as "parent," but He has not. There is a reason for this. When God formed the woman, she was taken from man. He was the source; she was the result. Likewise, God is the source of all things; the earth is the result.

Goddess worship inverts this divine order. It was, is and ever will be the worship of the blessings, but not the Blesser. Such worship has deified pleasure and prosperity. As was true of the temple to Diana at Ephesus this soon devolves into things too ugly for these pages.

Surprising, isn't it, that more do not look past the costume and exclaim, "My, but what big teeth you have!"



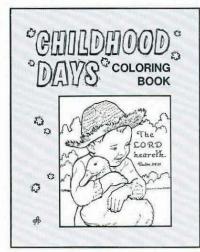
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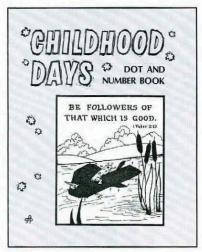
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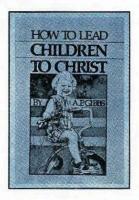
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Waiting & Watching

s the fishing fleet neared the Scottish coastal village from which they had been absent for many weeks, the captain scanned the shoreline with his binoculars. "Willie," said the captain, "there's your Freda. And Jock, there's Mamie and the two bairns there. John, I see . . . " So he described the little knot of loved ones at the wharf.

When he had finished, one man asked, "Do you see my wife there, captain?"

"I'm sorry, Angus, I don't see her; she's not there."

When the ship docked, Angus was first off the vessel. Hurrying through the crowd, he furtively glanced this way and that. Surely she would be there, unless . . . He pushed the unhappy thoughts from his mind. Passing quickly through the village to his house on the hill, he opened the door.

There was his wife. "Oh, Angus," she said, "I've been waiting for you."

"The wives of the other men," he responded sadly, "were watching for them."

atch ye therefore: for ye know not whethe master of the house cometh, at even, or at midnight, or at the cockcrowing, or in the morning.

— Mark 13:35