

The PLAIN TRUTH

A magazine of understanding

VOL. XIX, NUMBER 2

FEBRUARY-MARCH, 1954

Prophesied to Happen to the United States

Here is the most astounding prophecy for our time. WHY have our American and British nations not been warned of this before? This is the second installment of Mr. Armstrong's forthcoming book—the most startling and eye-opening book, we believe, of this generation.

by Herbert W. Armstrong

SYNOPSIS OF PREVIOUS INSTALLMENT

IT'S TIME the great American and British nations knew the staggering turn of world events prophesied for us. 90% of all prophecy is concerned with it—and a third of the Bible is prophecy!

WHERE do we find the United States, Britain, and the democracies of northwestern Europe, mentioned in Bible prophecy? We are the wealthiest, most powerful nations—the professing Christian nations. A vital point to remember is that we have acquired most of our vast resources and power *since the year 1800 A.D.*

Our Wealth Promised Abraham

Millenniums ago, this same national greatness was promised by Almighty God to Abraham—yet few have ever noticed this astonishing fact. The Bible is an Israelitish Book, concerned only with Israel and other nations only insofar as they come into contact with Israel.

In a world strayed far from God, there was one man, Abram, who was willing to OBEY GOD. When God commanded, "Get thee out of thy country, and from thy kindred, unto a land that I will show thee," Abraham obeyed without a question. "So Abram departed," is the simple Scriptural statement.

The vital point very few have realized is that *God made DUAL promises to Abraham*. The spiritual promise of the Messiah, and of salvation thru Him, is well known. But God made also a most amazing promise of NATIONAL GREATNESS for Abraham's natural-born children, which has been overlooked. To Abram God first said: "I will make of thee a great nation . . . and in thee shall all the families of the earth be blessed." (Gen. 12:1-3). The latter of those promises is repeated in Gen. 22:18: "IN thy seed shall all the nations of the earth be blessed," and in Gal. 3:8,16, this "one seed" is plainly defined as referring to CHRIST. But the "great nation" promise refers solely to RACE, not to GRACE!

This is made certain by repetitions of

God's promises. In Gen. 17:1-5, we find: God said to Abraham, "Walk before me, and be thou perfect, and I . . . will multiply thee exceedingly . . . thou shalt be a father of MANY NATIONS. Neither shall thy name any more be called Abram, but thy name shall be Abraham; for a father of MANY NATIONS have I made thee." Continuing (verse 6), "And I will make thee exceeding fruitful, and I will make NATIONS of thee, and kings" (more than one) "shall come out of thee." This is physical generation, not spiritual regeneration. RACE, not grace.

"And I will establish my covenant between me and thee and thy seed after thee in THEIR generations." (Verse 7). The "seed" here is PLURAL. "And I will be THEIR God." (Verse 8).

Never Fulfilled in Jews!

The Jews have never been more than ONE nation. God promised by flesh generation MANY nations. Later, on Abraham's further obedience after severe test, God made the covenant UNCONDITIONAL. Abraham had fulfilled his

part. God Almighty is now BOUND to fulfill the promises. (Gen. 22:16-18).

In this Scripture, too, is added an important detail of the promises: "I will multiply thy seed as the stars of the heaven, and as the sand which is upon the sea shore; and *thy seed shall possess the gate of his enemies.*" A gate is a narrow passage of entrance or exit. When speaking nationally, a gate would be such as pass as the Panama Canal, the Strait of Gibraltar, the Suez Canal. This promise was repeated in Gen. 24: 60 to Abraham's daughter-in-law: "Be thou the mother of thousands of millions, and let thy seed possess *the gate of those that hate them.*"

The Jews have never possessed the geographical passageways of enemy nations. This cannot be fulfilled *after* Christ's second coming—there will be no enemy nations—only world peace, then. This promise must have been fulfilled in this present world, and by others than the Jews, or we must reject the Holy Bible as the Word of God!

It is a test of the inspiration of the Bible!

These tremendous promises were re-promised to Isaac and to Jacob. Ishmael and Abraham's other sons were rejected from this birthright. Esau sold this birthright, and he was rejected. The promise as confirmed to Isaac is recorded in Gen. 26:1-5. To Jacob it is repeated in Gen. 27:26-29, where *NATIONAL MATERIAL wealth* is promised, and also that heathen nations shall be ruled by the birthright nations of Israel. Another detail is added in Gen. 28:13-14—these nations eventually shall spread around the world.

The Test of Bible Inspiration

Still later, God appeared unto Jacob, whose name was changed to ISRAEL, still further defining the make-up of these "many nations" thus: "And God said unto him, I am God Almighty: be fruitful and multiply; *A NATION* and a *COMPANY OF NATIONS* shall be of thee, and kings shall come out of thy loins." (Gen. 35:9-12). So these "many nations eventually are to take shape as *"a nation"*—one great, wealthy, powerful nation, and another *COMPANY* of nations—a great group, or commonwealth of nations.

This promise has never been fulfilled in the Jews. It cannot be realized thru Christ. It is the promise of RACE, not grace. Yet this promise MUST stand fulfilled today, unless we are to reject the Bible as God's inspired Word! Here is the enigma of the ages! Is this a divine promise unkept? The very faithfulness of God hangs on the answer. Here, then, comes the most astonishing revelation of the whole Bible!

CHAPTER II

The Separation of the Birthright and the Sceptre

NOW WE come to a most vital distinction, and a bit of Bible truth known to but very few.

Very few, indeed, have ever noticed that the promises to Abraham were two-fold. But the Bible itself makes sharp distinction between these two phases of the promises.

The *spiritual* promises—the promise of the "one seed," Christ, and of salvation through Him—the Bible calls "the SCEPTRE." But the *material* and *national* promises relating to many nations, national wealth, prosperity and power, and possession of the Holy Land, the Bible calls the "BIRTHRIGHT."

Race, Not Grace

Let us understand the meaning of the terms:

"*Birthright*: native right or privilege."—Standard Dictionary. "Any right acquired by birth."—Webster's. A birthright is something which is one's *right*, by birth. It has nothing to do with grace, which is unmerited pardon, and free gift which is *not* one's right. It has to do with RACE, not grace. Birthright possessions are customarily passed down from father to eldest son.

"*Sceptre*: kingly office; royal power; badge of command or sovereignty."—Standard Dictionary. The promised kingly line culminates in *Christ*, and involves *grace* to all.

We have seen how both sets of promises, right of birth, and gift of grace, were unconditionally made by God to Abraham. Both the birthright and the sceptre were re-promised by the Eternal to Isaac and to Jacob.

But the fact that should open your eyes, as a joyous truth newly discovered, is that from that point *these two sets of promises became separated!* The Sceptre promises of the kingly line culminating in Christ, and of grace thru Him, were handed on to JUDAH, son of Jacob and father of all Jews. But the astonishing truth is that the Birthright promises were never given to the Jews!

Birthright and Sceptre Separated

"*The Sceptre shall not depart from Judah.*" (Gen. 49:10).

"*But the Birthright is JOSEPH'S.*" (I Chron. 5:2).

Of course it is well understood that the Sceptre went to Judah, and was handed down through the Jews. King David was of the tribe of Judah. All succeeding kings of David's dynasty were of the House of David, tribe of Judah. Jesus Christ was born of the House of David, and the tribe of JUDAH.

"Salvation," Jesus said, "is of the JEWS!" (John 4:22). "The Gospel of Christ," wrote Paul, "is the power of God unto salvation to everyone that believeth; to the JEW *first*, and also to the Greek." (Rom. 1:16). The promises of GRACE were handed down thru JUDAH!

But the promises which the Bible terms "the BIRTHRIGHT" have not been understood at all. Few have understood the nature of the Birthright promises. Few have ever noticed that God made any promises to Abraham other than the Sceptre. *Few know what's in the Bible!*

Birthright Never Given to the Jews!

Fewer still have understood that these great national material promises *were never given to the Jews!*

The astonishing and *vital* fact the MANY have overlooked is "the Birthright is JOSEPH'S." And, as we shall see later, neither Joseph nor his descendants were Jews! Astounding as it may be, it's TRUE!

This knowledge about the BIRTHRIGHT is the pivot of this entire truth which will prove THE KEY to the understanding of all PROPHECY! It's of supreme importance that you get this clearly in mind!

"Birthright," as defined above, includes only that which comes by RIGHT of birth. No one can receive eternal life as a *right*, from natural birth. If it were our RIGHT, inherited by BIRTH, it would not be by GRACE! Salvation comes by GRACE—God's GIFT, by undeserved pardon—unmerited FAVOR. We can receive *only material* possessions as a *right* by birth. And when that right is passed down thru generations to ever-multiplying descendants, it finally devolves into a NATIONAL inheritance. It confers only *material* possessions, power, or position. It does *not* bestow *spiritual* blessings. It is a matter of RACE, not grace!

What the Birthright Conferred

Just what special material inheritance was passed on by the Birthright few have understood.

Yet it conferred the richest, most valuable material inheritance ever passed from father to son—the most colossal wealth and power ever amassed by man or Empire! The magnitude of this Birthright is staggering! Yet the churches, the religious leaders, the scholars and higher critics of the Bible, seem never to have read it.

It includes all that first phase of God's tremendous promises to Abraham. This legacy GUARANTEED on the authority of God Almighty, *unconditionally*, multitudinous population, untold wealth and

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Where Will the Millennium Be Spent?

In Heaven? or on Earth?

by Herbert W. Armstrong

WHERE are the saints of God going to REIGN for the coming thousand years?

Some say: "On the Earth!"

Others say, "Up in heaven! All unsaved people shall be destroyed by the brightness of Christ's coming. The earth will be desolate during this thousand years."

But WHAT DOES THE WORD OF GOD SAY?

Will you notice, now, Revelation 20:6: "Blessed and holy is he that hath part in the first resurrection: on such the second death hath no power, but they shall be priests of God, and of Christ, and shall reign with Him a thousand years."

This THOUSAND YEARS is commonly called "the MILLENNIUM." But the question we now want to settle—and settle it rightly out of God's Word—is, WHERE shall we SPEND that thousand years? And over WHOM shall we reign?

The facts of the resurrection and second coming of Christ are plainly expressed in I Thes. 4:14-17, and I Cor. 15:52. The dead in Christ are resurrected, and the living in Christ are translated, and all are caught up to MEET the Lord in the clouds, in the air of the earth's atmosphere. But the question is, WHERE DO WE GO FROM THERE?

Now, in order to reign, these saints must have someone to reign OVER. To rule is to RULE over. A king reigns over his subjects. The subjects are always of inferior station and power to the king. The king is in authority OVER his subjects. And so, whether in heaven or on earth, there will have to be someone of INFERIOR RANK—of LOWER POSITION, over whom the saints shall have POWER and AUTHORITY! Now WHO will the immortal saints reign over?

Notice Rev. 3:21 Jesus said: "To him that overcometh will I grant to sit with me in my throne, even as I also overcame, and am set down with my Father in His throne." Jesus spoke those words. He says that He is, at this time, sitting in WHOSE throne?—notice it—He says "as I . . . AM set down with my FATHER in HIS throne." The Father's throne is in heaven. The heavens have received Jesus UNTIL the times of restitution of all things (Acts 3:21). During this dispensation He is sitting on HIS FA-

ther's throne. And HIS FATHER'S THRONE IS IN HEAVEN! as the Scriptures plainly state.

TWO Thrones in Heaven?

Then, my friends, WHERE WILL JESUS' THRONE BE, when He LEAVES His Father's throne?—when the times of restitution of all things comes?—and when He sits on HIS OWN throne? He does not say that the saints shall sit with Him on the Father's throne *in heaven*. He says they shall sit with Him *IN HIS THRONE*. Will His throne, too, be in heaven? Will there be TWO thrones in heaven? Will Jesus have a throne there, competing with the Father? A Kingdom with TWO thrones is a kingdom divided, and Jesus said a kingdom divided against itself cannot stand. Jesus is not now, at this time, sitting on HIS own throne, but in HIS FATHER'S throne, reigning WITH His Father in exactly the same manner the saints shall sit with Him, in HIS throne, reigning with Him. Where, then, will HIS throne be?

Why, we read in Luke 1:30-32 that Jesus will be given the throne of DAVID. And DAVID'S THRONE IS ON THE EARTH! According to Ezek. 21:37, that throne, which will be located in the city of Jerusalem, ON THIS EARTH, is to be given to JESUS, whose right it is.

Now notice carefully. GOD'S throne is in heaven. DAVID'S throne is existing today on EARTH. At THIS time now, Jesus is on His FATHER'S throne, *in heaven*—but when the saints reign for a thousand years, they shall be sitting with Him, on HIS throne, the throne of DAVID, which throne is located ON THE EARTH!

Now notice Rev. 2:26-27: "And he that overcometh . . . will I give POWER over the NATIONS: and he shall RULE them with a rod of iron." Notice it!—these same overcomers who shall reign with Jesus ON HIS THRONE, are to be given POWER over other people. And the ones they shall RULE are THE NATIONS. The nations of THIS EARTH! Can you conceive of nations in heaven so sinful they need to be RULED with a rod of iron?

Then again, notice Luke 1:33: "And He—Jesus—shall reign over THE HOUSE

OF JACOB forever." It is the HOUSE OF JACOB—the nations of Israel and Judah—whom God has BLINDED during this time (Rom. 11:7-8), whose blindness shall be removed and who shall find salvation (Rom. 11:25-26), when God sets His Hand again the SECOND TIME to recover the remnant of His people Israel (Isa. 11:11), during the times of restitution of all things! What a glorious GOSPEL! What wonderful GOOD NEWS!

Now notice one more text which tells in the PLAINEST OF LANGUAGE *when* the saints shall reign. Remember they are to reign OVER—to rule the nations. They shall reign *a thousand years*. Now turn to Rev. 5:10, and let us see whether we shall be willing to believe the plain words of GOD. Here we read of a new song about Christ who redeemed "men of every tribe, and tongue, and people, and nation and hast made them unto our God kings and priests: and they shall reign ON THE EARTH!" There it is, properly translated and in PLAIN LANGUAGE. "They shall reign ON THE EARTH." God give us willingness to believe it!

How Jesus Will Return to Earth!

Let us see now HOW Jesus will return to earth. In Acts 1:9-11, we read: "And when He (Jesus) had spoken those things, while they beheld, he was taken up; and a cloud received him out of their sight. And while they looked steadfastly toward heaven as he went up, behold, two men stood by them in white apparel; which also said, Ye men of Galilee, why stand ye gazing up into heaven? This same Jesus, which is taken up from you into heaven, shall so come in like manner as ye have seen him go into heaven."

We know He shall return at the close of this age, just prior to the battle at Jerusalem which climaxes this world's defiance of God's rule. His coming is described in the 19th chapter of Revelation, beginning the 11th verse. All nations are gathered against Jerusalem for this great battle, their armies having previously assembled at Armageddon (notice also Rev. 16:13-16). This same battle is described in the 14th chapter of the Book of Zechariah.

Notice it: "Behold the day of the

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VOL. XIX

No. 2

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Sent FREE to all who request it,
as the Lord provides. Address
all communications to the editor.

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By the Radio Church of God

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Lord cometh . . . for I will gather all nations against Jerusalem to battle" (Zech. 14:1-2). This can be only the last battle of the great day of God Almighty, for it is the only time described in Scripture where ALL NATIONS are to be gathered against Jerusalem for battle, prior to the millennium. Now notice the 3rd and 4th verses: "Then shall the Lord go forth"—second coming of Christ—"and fight against those nations . . . and His feet shall stand in that day upon the Mount of Olives, which is before Jerusalem on the east." Notice it—Jesus' feet shall stand upon the Mount of OLIVES—WHEN? It says "IN THAT DAY"—not a thousand years AFTER that day when this battle is being fought, but IN that day.

And so we see Jesus shall so come in like manner as He went, just as the Scriptures say. When He went, He was standing on the Mount of Olives. He was visibly caught up. A cloud received Him out of the disciples' sight. As many Scriptures affirm, He shall COME with clouds. And in the very DAY of the battle before Jerusalem, Jesus' feet shall stand once more on the Mount of Olives! Yes, He is coming AS HE WENT. He WENT from the Mount of Olives, and He shall RETURN to the Mount of Olives!

Now will He remain on the earth from that time, or immediately return to heaven? Notice verse 8: "And it shall be IN THAT DAY, that living waters (salvation, thru the Holy Spirit) shall go out from Jerusalem . . . in summer and in winter shall it be." Beginning from that very day when He comes, this event, the work of the times of restitution of all things, shall continue on thru SUMMER, and thru WINTER!

Shall the land be desolate and unin-

habited from that time on for a thousand years? Notice verse 10: All the land shall be turned as a plain from Geba to Rimmon south of Jerusalem: AND IT SHALL BE LIFTED UP, AND INHABITED." And again notice in the 16th verse, those left of the heathen, Gentile nations whose people were not destroyed in the battle at Armageddon, "shall even go up FROM YEAR TO YEAR to worship the KING, the Lord of hosts, and to keep the feast of tabernacles." Here we find the picture of these nations being ruled over WITH A ROD OF IRON—notice verses 17-19—when Jesus is KING over all the earth (verse 9), sitting on David's throne, and when the resurrected and immortal saints are reigning WITH Him a thousand years, ON THE EARTH, ruling

THESE NATIONS from year to year—notice it—from YEAR TO YEAR, from the time of the second coming of Christ! How plain!

And notice, too, that the nations which come from year to year are not altogether obedient—observe, in verse 17-19 how God will punish those who will refuse to obey. So these are not immortal saints. They are GENTILES. And notice carefully that these mortal sinning Gentiles shall be required to come up TO JERUSALEM—and Jerusalem is ON THE EARTH. And it is AT THE TIME when Jesus Christ has returned to rule as KING of kings, and LORD of Lords—yet future. It cannot be BEFORE the millennium. It cannot be AFTER it. It MUST be during the millennium. And the place is ON THE EARTH. Here, my friends, are unanswerable Scriptures!

Will Israel Ever Accept Christ and Be Saved?

Now what about the JEWS? What about ISRAEL? Has God cast them eternally away? Some seem to think so. What do the SCRIPTURES say?

Back in the 26th chapter of Leviticus we read how God warned His chosen race that IF they would not obey Him, He would PUNISH THEM—for a duration of 2520 years! Not with eternal loss of salvation—but a duration of 2520 long years—the prophetic "seven times" mentioned in verses 18, 21, 24, 28. The children of Israel became divided into TWO NATIONS—one called the House of Israel, the TEN Tribes,—the other the House of JUDAH, consisting of Judah and Benjamin, called the Jews. Israel sinned first, and was driven among the Gentiles, losing their identity. The world today commonly believes they are Gentiles. Then Judah sinned worse than Israel, and the Jews were taken to Babylon B.C. 604-585. God took away national dominance from Judah, and turned it over to the Gentiles.

Now I want you to study carefully one of the most wonderful, important chapters in all the Bible—the eleventh of Romans. Notice the question in verse 1: Has God cast away the Israelites? In verse 2 Paul says "NO!" Study verses 7 and 8. A few of them accepted salvation, but the rest were BLINDED—and—note it—GOD blinded them! Notice verse 11. They have not stumbled that they should FALL, or lose salvation, but salvation has come to the Gentiles—WHY?—to provoke Israel to JEALOUSY, so they, too, will turn. Notice verse 15—they are to be received again—and as life from the dead. Verse 23 says those who abide not still in unbelief shall YET receive salvation. Now study carefully beginning verse 25: "Blindness in part is happened until Israel"—HOW LONG? Forever? No—note it—"UNTIL

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the fulness of the Gentiles be come in"—the end of this age during which God is calling a people from among the Gentiles to bear His name (Acts 15: 14). And so, says verse 26, "all Israel SHALL BE SAVED:"—how? "As it is written, There shall come out of Sion the Deliverer, and shall turn away ungodliness from Jacob." The Deliverer, Jesus Christ, is coming again!

When He comes, the Gentile times will be over—the BLINDNESS will be removed from the Israelites—and their opportunity—their FIRST chance—of salvation will then come to those whom God had blinded! This is at the time when He comes to REIGN on HIS THRONE—the throne of David, with the saints made immortal reigning and ruling with Him—and the time is DURING THE THOUSAND YEARS! Notice verse 31. These blinded Israelites have not now, in this age, received mercy, that thru the mercy of the Gentiles saved in this age, they MAY, THEN, obtain mercy and salvation. How? Because these saved Gentiles will then be kings and priests, assisting in this wonderful work!

WHAT Will the Millennium Be Like?

Now compare what we read with the wonderful 11th chapter of Isaiah. This is the time when, verse 11, God is going to set His hand again the SECOND TIME to recover the remnant of HIS PEOPLE, who have been dispersed around the world. It is the time when they shall be regathered to the Holy Land—a time yet future. Observe verse 1: the Branch is Jesus Christ.

Observe that He shall, at this time, RULE, and REIGN, verse 4. Now when is this time? Verse 6: the time when wild animals are so tame that wolves and lambs play together—when leopards lie down peacefully with little kids—the calf and the young lion—and a little child shall lead them, unharmed. Verse 7, the lion will no longer eat raw meat—but HAY like the ox. Now wild animals will not be this tame BEFORE the millennium. It will be during, or AFTER the thousand years, then. Will these wild animals be taken to HEAVEN?—or will this take place ON EARTH?

Observe the 8th verse: there will be NURSING babies, and weaned babies there unharmed as they play with the most deadly snakes. At this time, then, BABIES ARE BEING BORN. Will there be NURSING babies IN HEAVEN? Will there be nursing babes in the promised NEW EARTH—after the thousand years? THINK! Will babes be playing, without harm, with deadly snakes BEFORE the millennium? No, this MUST be during the thousand years, and it MUST be ON THE EARTH!!

Now come to verse 9. Animals will

not be killing one another for food, and the WHOLE EARTH will then be FULL of the knowledge of the Lord!

That cannot be PRIOR to the millennium. The earth could not be full of the knowledge of the Lord if it were then desolate, and without an inhabitant! This proves the place of the thousand years is ON THE EARTH!!

And now notice, in THAT DAY—the very same day when wild animals are tamed—when children are still being born—and when the EARTH is full of the knowledge of the Lord, and when the Lord is reigning and ruling with a rod of iron—verse 11 says that in THAT DAY—that very same time—the Lord shall set His hand again the SECOND TIME to recover the remnant of His people, Israel!

And in THAT SAME DAY (verse 10) the Gentiles shall seek Christ the "root of Jesse"—and so there will be GENTILES present, seeking the Lord and His salvation! Study verse 12. Jesus shall assemble the outcasts of Israel, and gather the dispersed of Judah. It is the time of the great REGATHERING OF ISRAEL AND JUDAH! And notice verse 14—during this same time the Israelites shall *spoil*, or conquer the nations of the east, and lay hands on the Edomites, the Moabites, and the Ammonites!

The End of HUMAN Reign

After the national punishment of the Jews, God turned the reign of world government over to a succession of GENTILE kingdoms. There were to be just FOUR great universal world-ruling kingdoms—The Chaldean Empire, called "BABYLON"; the Persian Empire; Alexander's Grecio-Macedonian Empire with its four divisions; and the ROMAN EMPIRE, which has had six past revivals and is destined to arise once more as a union of ten *fascist* dictator nations in Europe—ruled over by a great religious power (Rev. 17:12).

This Gentile reign, and its END, is pictured in Daniel 2, and 7. You are probably familiar with the dream IMAGE of Nebuchadnezzar, described in the prophecy of Daniel 2.

At the END of this Gentile reign, what is to happen? Notice Daniel 2:44: "And IN THE DAYS OF THESE KINGS (*not* a thousand years *after* their reign) shall the God of heaven set up a kingdom . . . but it shall break in pieces and consume all these kingdoms, and it shall stand FOREVER."

Now where will that Kingdom be? The dream, interpreted by this verse, says: "the stone that smote the image"—Christ and His Kingdom, which consumes these Gentile kingdoms (I Cor. 10:4), "became a great mountain (nation), and filled THE WHOLE EARTH."

And in Daniel 7:27, we read: "And the KINGDOM (God's Kingdom) . . . *under* the whole heavens, shall be given to the people of the SAINTS." Not IN heaven, but UNDER it! Now WHEN? The "little horn" (a persecuting religious power) of this prophecy in Daniel 7, "made war with the saints, and prevailed against them UNTIL the Ancient of Days came, and . . . the saints possessed the Kingdom." The leader of this persecuting power is called the false prophet (Rev. 19:20), and he lasts UNTIL we reign UNDER the whole heaven. This prophecy positively precludes any 1,000 year reign IN HEAVEN!

Three Misunderstood Texts

Now consider three texts that are often woefully misinterpreted to reject the undeniable truth of other Scripture.

II THESSALONIANS 2:8: This is the text supposed to teach that all wicked people will be destroyed by the brightness of Christ's coming.

Notice verse 3. His coming will not occur until the MAN OF SIN is *revealed*. Who is the man of sin? The same as the false prophet for he does the same deeds. Now notice verse 6—he is to *be revealed* in his time.

Continue into verse 8: "And when shall THAT Wicked *be revealed*, whom the Lord shall . . . destroy with the brightness of his coming: EVEN HIM, whose coming is after the working of Satan." (Verses 8 and 9.)

Note it! Does this say ALL the wicked and unsaved people shall be destroyed by the brightness of Christ's coming? No, the Bible does NOT say that—it says THAT Wicked person who is to BE REVEALED—"EVEN HIM"—just *one man*! He is the FALSE PROPHET, and his destruction is also described in Rev. 19:20. How plain!

JEREMIAH 4:23-27: This is wrongly applied to the WHOLE earth during the millennium.

Study the book of Jeremiah from the first chapter. God commissioned Jehovah to WARN JUDAH to turn from their sins. If they did not, Nebuchadnezzar of Babylon was to bring his armies against them, make THEIR LAND desolate, their cities empty, and carry the Jews to Babylon as slaves.

Note Chapter 4, verse 5: Nebuchadnezzar, "the destroyer of the Gentiles" (verse 7), is on his way "to make THY LAND DESOLATE; and *thy cities* shall be laid waste without an inhabitant." This is the cities of Judah. Study verses 13-17. It is only the cities of JUDAH, verse 16, to be made waste. Notice verse 30—"When thou"—the Jews of Jeremiah's day—"art spoiled, what wilt thou do?"

This passage has no reference whatsoever.
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Are We Really "Christians"?

You may be in for a surprise! Very few people understand the plain, scriptural truth about what a "Christian" really is.

by Roderick C. Meredith

WHAT would Jesus think of our modern definition of a "Christian"? The truth is that very few people in this world realize what a *true Christian* really is.

A poignant illustration of this fact is contained in the primary definition of the noun "Christian" in *Webster's New Collegiate Dictionary*. Here it is: "One who believes, or professes or is assumed to believe, in Jesus Christ, and the truth as taught by him."

Most of us realize that our modern age has strayed far from the deep faith in God held by our forebears. This is the atomic age—the age when God seems "out of date" to many of the younger generation.

Most of this world has come to accept the "traditions of men" instead of the revealed *will* of Almighty God. Many give *lip service* to Jesus Christ, but their *hearts* are far from Him.

People *reason* that if they attend whatever church they have been taught to believe in, if they are reasonably sincere in their faith, and if they live a fairly clean and "moral" life, that they are good *Christians* and will be saved. Is this idea correct? Are *you* and your friends and loved ones relying on this kind of reasoning?

Jesus Christ is now sitting at the right hand of God the Father in heaven (Acts 7:56). Are you *sure* that He regards YOU as a member of *His church*? If so, is your belief based on the teachings you received from *men*, or can you *prove* your belief by the only infallible guide—the *inspired Word of God*?

Do you really *KNOW* what constitutes a "Christian"—a true follower of Jesus Christ?

Where the Name Started

First let us note that the term "Christian" is used only three times in the Bible. In the history of Acts, we find that the church at Antioch was a sort of home base for Paul and Barnabas on their missionary tours. Paul did his first regular teaching here. Acts 11:26 records, "And the disciples were first called *Christians* at Antioch."

Toward the end of his ministry, Paul was being tried before King Agrippa. He reminded the king that the death and resurrection of Christ was a well-

known *fact*, "for this thing was not done in a corner." Paul mentioned the prophets, who foretold these very happenings. "Then Agrippa said unto Paul, Almost thou persuadest me to be a *Christian*" (Acts 26:26-28).

But the Christians were a small, persecuted, and despised group, and the "almost persuaded" attitude of King Agrippa was not strong enough to overcome his vanity. It would take quite a shock to make Agrippa dedicate his life to follow Jesus of Nazareth.

The last place where the word "Christian" is used in the Bible is found in I Peter 4:16. Peter was writing to the Christians who were scattered abroad in persecutions which were falling upon God's true church. He told them to set a good example of love and patient endurance before the world, and exhorted that none of their number should ever suffer as an evildoer. "Yet," he wrote, "if any suffer as a *Christian*, let him not be ashamed, but let him glorify God on this behalf."

Here we find that Jesus' followers must be prepared to suffer persecution and reproach for their belief. But they must accept it cheerfully, as Jesus did, and glorify God for the lessons of patience and self-mastery that He enables them to learn.

These three scriptures show that Christians are *active followers* of Jesus who are willing to give up their *own* way as He did, and even to endure persecution, if necessary, in order to obey God—the Creator of the heavens and the earth.

Although these scriptures present somewhat of a contrast to our modern dictionary definition of a "Christian," they only give us a general idea of the real meaning of the term.

To find who the true disciples of Christ really are, let us turn to *His own teaching*. There are many ideas and opinions of *men* on this subject, but does Jesus reveal in His word any *absolute conditions* that must be met before He will recognize us as His true disciples?

Let us put our own ideas and human opinions aside for a moment, and SEE WHAT JESUS CHRIST SAYS ABOUT THIS MATTER.

After all, He is the one who really *knows*!

Jesus' Instruction

In what is known as the "Sermon on the Mount," Jesus taught his disciples the *basis* of the truth He came to reveal. These teachings contain *more spiritual truth* than whole volumes that have been written by men.

Jesus taught the disciples that to be great in God's kingdom, we must "*do and teach*" His commandments (Mat. 5:19). He revealed that God's law is a *spiritual law*. One not only breaks the command against adultery by a physical act, but, "whosoever looketh on a woman to *lust* after her hath committed adultery with her already in his heart" (Mat. 5:28).

Christ instructed His followers not only to obey the commandment against killing, but He said, "*Love your enemies*, bless them that curse you, do good to them that hate you, and pray for them which despitefully use you, and persecute you" (verse 44).

He summed up these instructions by commanding them, "Be ye therefore *perfect*, even as your Father which is in heaven is perfect" (verse 48).

How many people calling themselves "Christian" are actively striving to follow these spiritual principles in their daily lives? Do they *love* their enemies and *pray* for them? Are they growing spiritually every day toward the goal of having *perfect character* even as God?

Or have we forgotten what JESUS HIMSELF said His followers should do?

Continuing, we find that Jesus taught His disciples *how* they should give "alms" or perform good deeds, *how* they should *pray*, and *how* they should *fast* (Mat. 6:1-18). In each case, He assumed that His followers *would* be leading that kind of life. He was teaching them *how to live*—not some empty ritual or impractical theory.

The Christian Way

In Matthew 7, Jesus warned his followers, "Enter ye in at the strait gate: for *wide* is the gate, and *broad* is the way, that leadeth to DESTRUCTION, and MANY there be which go in thereat: Because strait is the gate, and *narrow* is the way, which leadeth unto LIFE, and FEW there be that find it" (verses 13-14).

Notice that Jesus prophesied that *few*

would find the way to eternal life. It is not the broad, popular, easy way that so many have assumed. Are you sure that you are on the way that Jesus taught would lead to eternal life?

Jesus warned us to, "Beware of false prophets, which come to you in sheep's clothing, but inwardly they are ravening wolves. *Ye shall know them by their fruits.* Do men gather grapes of thorns, or figs of thistles? Even so every good tree bringeth forth good fruit; but a corrupt tree bringeth forth evil fruit" (verses 15-17). The "fruits," the product, or results of true prophets, then, should be a society filled with love, joy, and PEACE—the "fruit" the Holy Spirit always produces (Gal. 5:22).

The peoples of western Europe and America have always called themselves "Christian." Our countries are filled with professing Christian churches. Has the "fruit" or result been love and peace—or WAR?

Let's face facts.

Something is terribly WRONG with this so-called "Christian" society of ours. We call Jesus our Lord—but is He?

Jesus answers, "Not every one that saith unto me, Lord, Lord, shall enter into the kingdom of heaven; but he that doeth the will of my Father which is in heaven" (Mat. 7:21).

"Lip service" to Jesus Christ is not enough! We must be DOING God's will. We must act on Jesus' commands. "And everyone that heareth these sayings of mine, and doeth them not, shall be likened unto a foolish man, which built his house upon the sand . . . and great was the fall of it" (Mat. 7:26-27).

Jesus taught a definite way of life. That way is obedience to the will of God the Father. Anyone professing to be a Christian, but going a different way, is "likened unto a foolish man."

Jesus cried, "Why call ye me, Lord, Lord, and do not the things which I say?" (Luke 6:46).

We are rather ridiculous, aren't we? There are plenty of names in the world to choose from. But WHY do individuals, churches, and nations call themselves "Christian" while they continue to teach and practice an entirely different way than that taught by Christ?

Bible is Consistent

The religious ideas and teachings of men are varied and confused. Even the great denominations have repeatedly changed their doctrines from time to time. But the teaching of the Bible is consistent and unchanging.

The true servants of God in all ages have written and taught the same basic way of obedience to God. "Thy WORD is truth," Jesus said (John 17:17). And again He said, "The scripture cannot be

broken" (John 10:35). *God does not contradict himself in His inspired Word.* We should always bear this in mind in studying the Bible.

So Jesus continued to teach the same truths all through His ministry, and the apostles preached the same gospel—not something different.

Later in Jesus' ministry, one asked Him, "Good master, what good thing shall I do, that I may have eternal life?"

Jesus answered, "Why callest thou me good? there is none good but one, that is, God: but if thou wilt enter into life, keep the commandments" (Mat. 19:16-17).

This is the way Jesus taught would lead to eternal life. He said nothing about a meaningless ceremony of "joining" a church and "accepting" Him as Savior. He taught that if He is to be your Lord you have to obey Him.

Did Jesus know what He was talking about?

Many organizations of men seem to think He didn't, for they have substituted a dead faith and belief in His person, but deny the way of salvation which He taught.

The apostles were to continue preaching the same message Jesus did. Before His ascension to heaven, He commanded them to go forth and instruct all nations, "teaching them to observe all things whatsoever I have commanded you" (Mat. 28:19).

The Apostles' Teaching

The apostle Paul taught the same way of life that Jesus did, and he recognized that way as being what "Christianity" is! He speaks of having formerly persecuted the Christians as follows: "And I persecuted this WAY unto the death, binding and delivering into prisons both men and women" (Acts 22:4).

In Paul's day, Christianity was recognized as a way of life.

Of exactly what does this way of life consist?

The apostle Peter answers, "For even hereunto were ye called: because Christ also suffered for us, leaving us an example, that ye should follow his steps: who did no sin, neither was guile found in his mouth" (I Pet. 2:21-22). Jesus gave up His own will and suffered for us. He did no sin. He set us an example that we should follow His steps. This, Peter says, is our "calling."

In Galatians 2:20, Paul explains this even further. "I am crucified with Christ," he writes, "yet I live; yet not I, but Christ liveth in me: and the life which I now live in the flesh I live by the faith of the Son of God, who loved me, and gave himself for me."

Could anything be plainer?

Paul wrote that he had crucified his

own will, and that CHRIST was living in him—totally directing his life. He was not only living by faith in, but by the very faith of, the Son of God.

How to be a Christian

No human being can naturally and normally yield himself to obey God and follow Christ's example as he must.

As Paul explains, this is so, "Because the carnal mind is enmity against God: for it is not subject to the law of God, neither indeed can be. So then they that are in the flesh cannot please God. But ye are not in the flesh but in the Spirit, if so be that the Spirit of God dwell in you. Now if any man have not the Spirit of Christ, he is none of his" (Rom. 8:7-9).

We must have Christ's Spirit within us—guiding our every thought and action—to be recognized as His. How may we receive God's Spirit?

When God's church first began on the day of Pentecost, Peter gave the answer to this question. "REPENT and BE BAPTIZED every one of you in the name of Jesus Christ for the remission of sins, and ye shall receive the gift of the Holy Spirit" (Acts 2:38).

We have to realize our own ways are wrong, that they have brought on this war and suffering about us, and be willing to repent and completely turn from our former ways and let God rule our lives. Then we should be baptized, which Paul explains in Romans 6:1-6 is the outward sign of our willingness to completely bury our old self in a watery grave and come up to walk in newness of life—following Jesus' example.

Then we are promised the "gift" of the Holy Spirit to guide us in obeying and following Christ—our real Lord and Master.

God's Spirit is a part of His own character placed within us to enable us to live as we should. Paul explains that, "the love of God is shed abroad in our hearts by the Holy Spirit which is given unto us" (Rom. 5:5).

There are many human ideas about how we should express this love every Christian should have. But God Himself tells us clearly in His Word.

"For this is the love of God, THAT WE KEEP HIS COMMANDMENTS: and his commandments are not grievous" (I John 5:3).

Yes, God's love will always lead us to obey Him, to follow Jesus' example, and thus to be a real Christian.

Perhaps the best definition of a "Christian" contained in any one verse of the Bible is found in I John 2:6. The Weymouth translation makes the intended meaning more clear than older King James wording. It reads: "He

(Please continue on page 16)

In this Atomic Age . . . is the *BIBLE* out-of-date?

***This world is sick! People are fearful of the future! Do
we need a NEW approach to spiritual problems?***

by Herman L. Hoeh

NEARLY everywhere we hear men declare that a "new concept of God and morality" is *necessary*. The Bible, they say, is impractical. It is filled with superstition and errors.

Indeed, *something* IS *necessary* to change this world's plunge to doom.

But can the world be changed by *throwing away* the Holy Scripture? What would take its place?

The World in CONFUSION!

We live in an educated age, an age of tremendous technological advancement. But instead of peace and security, we are reaping the fruits of fear and of war! Everyone seems to be crying out for SECURITY! Governments promise security from the cradle to the grave—BUT WHO WILL MAKE THE GOVERNMENTS SECURE?

The great and the near-great of our era have been predominantly *agnostic*. Many publicly admit they don't know that God exists or what life is all about. Think of it. In an age of increasing knowledge—or is it *misknowledge*?—many of the greatest men plead ignorance to the most important problems. Those who ought to have a solution to this world's ills have no solution at all!

These men are fully persuaded that the Bible is old-fashioned and quite out of date for this swiftly moving age. "We have outgrown it," they contend. "It was suitable for a period of superstition and ignorance when religion predominated. But we do not live in a religious age. We have created a scientifically minded world."

Almost everywhere the Bible account of astronomy, of geography, of the origin of life and the human family is considered so primitive that it is not worth our study. Even its spiritual principles of human conduct—which the world calls "morals"—are regarded as narrow-minded.

Jesus, it is true, uttered noble platitudes. But His teachings are considered quite impractical for today's needs. After all, how could Jesus know what was good for the world? He lived in a small section of the world at a time when

travel was slow—when the world was *not* threatened with human annihilation! Today things are different. We need to be practical and face realities. And so the Bible is declared out-of-date—impractical.

Beside all this, we are told the Bible is filled with errors and contradictions. Ask almost anyone about Bible contradictions and he is likely to reply that the Book abounds with them. Ask him where they are, and he will probably respond: "Well, I don't know where one is at the moment. I just don't bother to study the Bible—but I know there are contradictions in it!"

"You can prove anything by the Bible," is another common expression. Surely you can prove anything by the Bible—*if you twist its meaning and turn its truth upside down* as hundreds of church denominations have been doing. If the Bible has proof for every kind of conflicting doctrine, then it is no proof at all! Why use it in the first place?

WHY Bible is Rejected!

A strange paradox exists today. After nearly 6000 years of human history, noted men now admit that they do not know what life is all about. They have *not found the path to understanding the purpose of human existence*.

And *why* haven't they?

In our enlightened era, the masses are being swayed to *take for granted* that the Bible has been outgrown—that it has served its purpose. Of course, it is still used in taking oaths. It is read from the pulpits. It is translated anew as though it were merely ancient literature—BUT ITS TEACHINGS HAVE BEEN REJECTED! Its *solution* of the world's ills has been repudiated without being tested!

Why?

Because people have TAKEN FOR GRANTED what the churches say about the Bible. They have *assumed* that the Bible teaches what hundreds of conflicting and disputing sects claim it does. But they have not really examined it themselves *with an open mind* to

learn what it does say. If they did, they would be mighty surprised. It does not teach what is commonly supposed!

The Bible is indeed the Book that almost nobody knows. And no wonder! Most ministers have strayed far from its teachings. Malachi said that the people ought to go to the ministers for an understanding of the LAW of God, but what has happened? "Ye are departed out of the way; ye have caused many to stumble *at the LAW* . . ." (Malachi 2:8). The churches have invented their own traditions and altered the *law of God*—the same as did the Jews in the time of Jesus Christ.

What Ministers Say about the Bible

You would probably be shocked if you knew what many leading ministers *personally* think about the Bible. Here is what Harry Emerson Fosdick, a noted American minister in New York, wrote in his book *The Modern Use of the Bible*: "We know now that every idea in the Bible started from *primitive* and *childlike* origins . . ." and that it is an "impossible attempt to harmonize the Bible with itself, to make it speak with unanimous voice, to resolve its conflicts and contradictions . . ." (pp. 11, 24).

Of the early writings of the Bible he says: "But we do not need to apologize for their *crudities* . . . Their lack is a lack of *maturity* . . ." (p. 28).

The Bible to him is primitive, childlike, crude, immature. He has no real proof, only *human reason*, to substantiate his claims.

Dr. James Moffatt, who produced a famous English translation of the Bible, says in his introduction that many of the books of the prophets are "notes by disciples, worked up into literary papers which have been repeatedly edited, sometimes by pious collectors." The early portions of the Bible stemmed from "the *natural* desire to gather up the primitive *traditions* of the people."

Notice! Here is one of the most famous Biblical scholars declaring that the Bible has a *natural origin in human traditions*. Is it any wonder scientific men

ASSUME that the Bible is fit only for an age of religious superstition? Is it any wonder that they reject its DIVINE AUTHORITY?

Now read what Dr. Edgar J. Goodspeed, who also translated the Bible, says about Scripture in his book *How to Read the Bible*. If you study the Scripture, he says you should remember this about the first twelve books: "It is *man's first attempt* to organize *his* knowledge of *his* past into what we would call an outline of history" (p. 36). When you read Genesis, Dr. Goodspeed says you should bear this in mind: "Genesis is a great encyclopedia of *Hebrew thought*, and *its solutions* of the great problems that confront the human mind. Its great achievement was that it unified it all, moral and material, *as* the work of one supreme being . . ." (p. 39).

The Bible is not God's thoughts communicated to man, but man's solutions to great problems cleverly arranged so as to appear as the work of a "supreme being"! says Dr. Goodspeed. The law given by God to regulate human life is not really from God at all, he says. It only "perpetuates old legal practices taken over from the Canaanites after the conquest . . ." and represents ". . . various stages of primitive legislation . . ." (pp. 41, 43).

As far as the remainder of the Bible, "The Book of Joshua is the *legendary story* of the conquest of Canaan" (p. 49). The Book of Ruth "belongs to Israel's *fiction*, rather than to its history, and should be among its tales and stories" (p. 51).

Sincere, but Ignorant

Undoubtedly these gentlemen are perfectly sincere in their HUMAN REASON.

To their natural minds the Bible is merely a book of tales, stories and human solutions. This is the common approach in the world and even in most churches today! The Bible, according to these men, was fraudulently written by men who claimed DIVINE AUTHORITY for merely human utterances. The Bible thus becomes man's effort to create and define God instead of GOD's *revelation* TO MAN of essential knowledge that we need to know, but which we could not discover for ourselves.

It is the religious leaders who are responsible for souring the average man-on-the-street against the Bible. What else can the average person believe, if the great intellects say: "I don't know if God exists, or what life is all about"?

Then look at the sincerely religious people who will argue about the Bible on a moment's notice—though they themselves don't know what the Bible says. They simply take for granted and

without proof what they learned in church during childhood.

What the Bible Really Is

Now let us understand what the Bible really is.

The Bible is the written revelation of God to mankind, containing the vital knowledge that everyone needs to understand, but which could not be discovered by any natural means. The Bible, then, possesses SUPREME AUTHORITY over our lives, since it comes from the Creator God. In the Bible, God speaks with authority to us through its writers. The Bible repeats hundreds of times: "Thus says the Lord." In Scripture God speaks in the first person—"I"—and challenges us to test Him to prove whether he speaks the TRUTH. (Malachi 3:10; Isaiah 44:6-9).

Without the Bible we could never understand the lessons of the past, the meaning of the present, or the predestined events of the FUTURE.

Scripture has the only rational explanation of the causes of today's ills. It explains exactly *why* this world has wars, sicknesses and suffering. These problems are the *penalty* of the wrong way of life. There are hundreds of religious, political and economic "cures" in the world, but none of them reaches the CAUSE of earth's problems. None but the Bible explain the laws that eternally regulate human life and human affairs—laws which, when violated, bring the penalty of war and death.

ONLY THE BIBLE IS ABLE TO POINT THE WAY OUT OF IMPENDING CHAOS!

Yet men *reject* its solution as out of date. What has the God of the Old Testament got to do with the *important* affairs of this world!

It is time we wake up to realize that war is a PENALTY. Too many people and nations have been assuming that war is only *natural*. The only reason it seems natural is that men have been violating laws *from the BEGINNING* and hence have always had to suffer the penalty of war. This penalty can never be removed unless we first remove the cause of war.

A Controversy with the Nations

In Jeremiah 25:31 we read that "the Lord has a controversy with the nations." Ever since the beginning of human life upon earth, God has had a controversy with the nations, because they have always refused to follow His way of life. We human beings think our ways are better. We seem to assume that we know more than God.

The Bible—and all history, for that matter—contains one continuous record of human beings trying to rule themselves apart from, and in defiance of, the essential revelation of God's knowledge. The world to this day refuses to ac-

knowledge the SUPERIOR AUTHORITY of God's government or His law. It has always *seemed* wiser to human beings to rule themselves. Yes, "there is a way that seems right to a man, but the end thereof are the ways of death" (Proverbs 14:12).

Our first parents defied the authority of God's command. Again, after the deluge, the people organized themselves under Nimrod, the "first human despot" (Genesis 10:8-9 and 11:1-9). The entire book of Judges was written to convey the sufferings that resulted when "there was no king in Israel: and every man did that which was right *in his own eyes*" (Judges 21:25).

When Israel asked for a human king, God told the prophet Samuel: "They have not rejected thee, but they have REJECTED ME, THAT I SHOULD NOT *reign over them*" (I Samuel 8:7). The House of Israel was ultimately destroyed in the war because they rejected the laws of God and substituted "the statutes of the heathen . . . and of the kings of Israel, which they had made. And the children of Israel did secretly those things that were NOT right against the Eternal their God" (II Kings 17:8-9). They did what *seemed* right to them, but it ended in war and destruction.

King Nebuchadnezzar of Babylon suffered greatly to learn the lesson that "the most High rules in the kingdom of men, and gives it to whomsoever he will, and sets up over it the basest of men" (Daniel 4:17). God is the SUPREME RULER, though men seem to have forgotten Him. But He has been permitting men to rule themselves for nearly 6000 years that humanity might learn its lesson—that God's law is right and that we need to come under His authority.

Human beings have not yet learned the lesson and they don't know why. But Moses told us why in Deuteronomy 29:4: "Yet the Lord has not given you a heart to perceive, and eyes to see, and ears to hear, unto this day." The *natural* human being simply does not grasp the TRUTH. The confused and divided world is ample proof of that!

The ONLY Cure

Thus far, God has let humanity reap the consequences of rejecting His rule. Soon, if God would allow humanity free reign, this world would bring such a terrible penalty upon itself that NO HUMAN LIFE WOULD ESCAPE DESTRUCTION. Jesus said so! Read it for yourself in Mark 13:19-20.

We hear a great deal of talk about peace—but there is no peace! Why? Because "the way of peace they know not" (Isaiah 59:8 and Romans 3:17). Our world leaders do not know the way
(Please continue on page 15)

THE BIBLE ANSWERS

Short Questions

FROM OUR READERS

HERE are the *Bible* answers to questions which can be answered briefly in short space. *Send in your questions.* While we cannot promise that all questions will find space for answer in this department, we shall try to answer all that are vital and in the general interest of our readers.

Where Did Cain Get His WIFE?

This is one of the most common questions we receive. If Adam was the first man, directly created by God, and Eve the first woman, also a direct creation, and only three sons are mentioned—Cain, Abel, and Seth, it is but natural that many ask, "Where then, did Cain get his wife?"

Did Cain have a wife? Yes, it is written in Gen. 4:17: "And Cain knew his wife; and she conceived, and bare Enoch."

Cain had a wife, and a son.

For that matter, where did Seth get a wife? Seth is a direct ancestor of Noah, of Abraham, of David, and of Christ. So Seth, as well as Cain, must have had a wife.

The answer is found in the genealogy of Adam, in Genesis 5. It is written in verse 4, "And the days of Adam after he had begotten Seth were eight hundred years: and he begat sons and daughters: and all the days that Adam lived were nine hundred and thirty years: and he died."

There is the answer. Adam begat sons AND DAUGHTERS. God had blessed Adam and Eve, and said unto them: "Be fruitful, and multiply, and replenish the earth." All human life started from them. How could they be fruitful and multiply, unless they had BOTH sons and daughters, and their sons married the daughters?

The answer is simple. Both Cain and Seth married their sisters. There undoubtedly were many of them even before the birth of Seth.

Adam and Eve, as God had proposed, were *fruitful!* After the birth of Seth, Adam lived EIGHT HUNDRED YEARS, and "he begat sons and daughters." The sense of the passage is that he *continued* begetting sons and daughters. That is a long time—as long as though some man and his wife living back in the middle ages—way back in the year 1154—

had continued to live and continually bear children ever since, clear up to now—1954! Adam was 130 years of age when Seth was born (Gen. 5:3). After that—*after* he was 130 years of age—Adam continued begetting sons and daughters eight hundred years!

It's almost impossible for our minds to grasp, in this fast-moving short-lived world of one or two children to a family, how many children Adam and Eve probably had during their great span of life, nearly a thousand years. It's hard for us to realize that Adam lived almost ONE-SIXTH of all the time from his creation until now. Yes, there must have been *plenty* of young women for wives for Cain, and Seth, and all their many other brothers, as the hundreds of years dragged along!

Let us also remember that it was *not* wrong to marry a sister or a brother in the beginning. No physical harm would result. Over two thousand years later—in the days of Abraham—a man could still marry a half-sister. It was not until the days of Moses that God forbade brothers to marry their half sisters (Lev. 18:6, 11).

Back in those antediluvian days, when people lived seven, eight, and nine hundred years, they did not age as we do today. They were able to continue bearing children, undoubtedly, for hundreds of years. After the flood, due to human dissipation and living contrary to God's revealed right laws of living, the life-span of man became shortened.

By the time of Abraham, Sarah was considered too old to bear children at age 90, and Abraham thought it impossible for him to become a father again at the age of 100 (see Gen. 17:17). Isaac was born as a direct miracle. But back before the flood, and in the days of Adam, it was different—and would be today, had not men departed from the laws of living revealed by God. May God help us to STUDY to learn those laws and start living by them today.

When Will the UNCONVERTED Be Resurrected?

Jesus Christ is coming again *to rule* this world. When He returns, Paul tells us that *only* those who have become truly converted Christians will be resurrected—"they that *are Christ's* at his coming" (I Cor. 15:23). John calls this the "*first resurrection*" (Rev. 20:5).

Those who have part in the first resurrection rule with Christ over the nations for 1000 years. "But the rest of the dead lived not again until the thousand years were finished" (Rev. 20:5). So the UNCONVERTED—the rest of the dead—do not live again until the millennium is over!

Then what happens? At the *end* of the thousand years, there will be another resurrection—a second resurrection. John describes it in Revelation 20:12: "And I saw the dead, small and great, stand before God." And notice also that the *book of life* is opened (verse 12). It is a time of salvation!

Now turn to Matthew 13, verses 24 through 30 and verses 36 through 42. This is the parable of the tares describing the final HARVEST of human beings.

Note verse 39: ". . . the *harvest* is the end of the world . . ." or, as it should be properly translated, the CONSUMMATION OF THE AGE. This is the time of harvest completing or consummating 6000 years of human self-rule in defiance of God. This harvest lasts through the millennium and into the time of RESURRECTION *which will follow*. Matthew 25:31-34 describes these same events which occur *after* the first resurrection.

Of course, this is not what you have been taught. But it is WHAT YOUR OWN BIBLE TELLS YOU *if* YOU WILL READ IT!

Most of you have been told ever since childhood that if anyone is NOT SAVED IN THE PRESENT LIFE, then he is eternally lost! But what about all those MILLIONS AND MILLIONS OF PEOPLE who were born *before Christ's time* WHO NEVER HAD THE CHANCE OF SALVATION because CHRIST had not yet come to MAKE IT AVAILABLE?

REMEMBER that the BIBLE says "IF *the spirit* (the Holy Spirit) of him (God the Father) that raised up Jesus from the dead dwell in you, he that raised up Christ shall also quicken your mortal bodies by *His Spirit* (the Holy Spirit) that dwelleth in you." BUT—THE HOLY SPIRIT from the Father was NOT AVAILABLE to people on the earth *until after* Christ ascended!

Christ *had* to ascend into heaven *first!* Christ said in John 16:7: "For if I go not away the Comforter (the Holy Spirit) will not come unto you; but if I depart, I will send him unto you." The *Holy Spirit* FIRST CAME TO THIS EARTH (Please continue on page 16)

Today's Religious Doctrines...

how did they begin?

by Dr. C. Paul Meredith

PART IV

IN THE first three articles of this series we learned that the teachings of Christ's apostles were cleverly *changed* by the secret introduction of *similar* pagan customs. We traced these pagan customs back to their origin. We found they commenced at the tower of Babel, over 4,000 years ago.

At Babel, Nimrod founded CIVILIZATION, based on a false way of life—man's rule *without* God (Genesis 11). After his death, his wife Semiramis, for purposes of prestige and power, developed a false RELIGIOUS system which has deceived the world to this day! Knowing that the Savior was to come, she counterfeited Christ by pretending to be the virgin mother who miraculously conceived and brought forth the "son of God" or "Savior."

Using one of her own *illegitimate* sons for this purpose, she claimed that her dead hero husband (Nimrod) was thus miraculously reborn! From this original deception have stemmed the *counterfeit* customs that permeate the churches today—customs which you can find nowhere in the Bible.

Semiramis of BABYLON Originated COUNTERFEITS

As we have seen, Semiramis possessed the knowledge of *true* salvation. It was known because of Noah, the preacher of righteousness (2 Pet. 2:5).

Queen Semiramis of ancient Babylon deified herself, her son, and her dead husband, Nimrod, by introducing various types of images, titles and rituals (Rom. 1:21-23). She circulated stories of actual or imagined events which had, or were *supposed* to have, occurred in their lives. The stories made them appear as liberators, heroes, emancipators and saviors—delivering men from the rule of God.

These innovations MADE HER AND HER SON APPEAR AS THE WOMAN AND HER PROMISED "SEED" THROUGH WHICH SALVATION WAS TO COME. This promise was foretold by God in the garden of Eden (Genesis 3:15).

Holidays were set apart on which the new divinities were to be worshipped. Almost all the principal Bible teachings of salvation were *counterfeited* by this

system—an *evil* twist being given to them. These "*Mysteries*" or ceremonies appealed to the physical senses—to the carnal nature with which man is born (Rom. 7:14). They became very popular.

What better way could the Devil play upon human lusts and desires! Thus men accepted a *false* purpose and a counterfeit way of salvation. Fables smothered God's *true* way to salvation by *confusing* the people.

Eternal life was promised through the *false messiah*. The people of the earth gladly gave the rule of their lives on this earth over to him. The mother and son promised security and guaranteed eternal life through rituals and penance. The extremely ambitious and unprincipled Semiramis saw her opportunity. Using all the might of her great empire to back her *lie*, she enforced her claim to be the mother of this great Savior (her illegitimate son Tammuz, whom she knew she could control).

Thus, SHE BECAME THE ORIGINAL RELIGIOUS RULER OVER THE KINGS OF THE EARTH (Rev. 17:1-2). Both her own and Satan's desires were fulfilled! She ruled the earth and Satan obscured the *rule* of God which alone can bring life everlasting.

Idolatry Spreads Everywhere

BABYLON WAS THE PRIMEVAL SOURCE FROM WHICH ALL SYSTEMS OF IDOLATRY FLOWED (Herodotus' *History*, lib. ii p. 109). Layard, in his *Nineveh and Its Remains*, vol. ii, p. 440, speaks of this Babylonian system of worship. He writes that we have the united testimony of sacred and profane history that idolatry originated in the Assyrian (Babylonian) area and is believed to be the *most ancient of religious* systems!

This was the *first* Babylon. TODAY, THE WORLD IS STILL IN BABYLON THE GREAT! (Rev. 17:5). Isaiah 47:1 describes the *system which rules* the earth today as the DAUGHTER OF THE ORIGINAL BABYLON and Revelation 18:3 says ALL NATIONS have drunk of the wine of her spiritual fornication or false doctrine!

As the language in each country was different, naturally the *names* of Nim-

rod, Semiramis, and Semiramis' illegitimate son, Tammuz—the false Messiah whom she palmed off as the resurrected Nimrod—were *different*.

The Devil continued to twist God's word and the truth which the early inhabitants of the earth had known. Semiramis, inspired by Satan, duplicated all things which were revealed by God. She credited her family with divine attributes to enhance her earthly power and prestige. Among these was her counterfeit of the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit.

Truth About God CHANGED

One of the pagan concepts originating with Semiramis is the false idea of a "Trinity." How does this compare with what the *Bible* reveals to us? Let us examine Genesis 1:1-2: "In the beginning God created the heaven and the earth . . . and the Spirit of God moved upon the face of the waters." The Hebrew word for "God" here is "Elohiym," which is plural. The Father and He who was to become the Son are here referred to (John 1:1). The word "Spirit" means the Holy Spirit of God—that *divine force* by which so much good is accomplished and which resides in *both* Father and Son.

Genesis 1:1 says that during the creation period "The *Spirit* of God moved upon the face of the waters." It is this *same* spirit which God says he will *pour out* on all flesh in the future: "It shall come to pass afterward, that I will *pour out* my *spirit* upon all flesh and your sons and your daughters shall prophesy." (Joel 2:28) The *same* Hebrew word "ruwach" is used in both cases for "spirit."

Actually, GOD IS A FAMILY, NOT A TRINITY OF PERSONS. GOD IS A FAMILY COMPOSED OF TWO BEINGS WITH A COMMON SPIRIT. It is into this divine family that we may be born (John 3). Note now that the pagans made the Holy Spirit a *Being* such as the Father and Son. They wrongly *made a Trinity*. SATAN WAS CONFUSING MANKIND.

An examination of the triune *emblem* of the supreme Assyrian divinity clearly shows a knowledge of the *original* truth. The emblem had the head of the old man (the Father). Next there is the

zero or circle, which stood in the Chaldean (Babylonian) language for "a circle" or "seed" (the Savior). Lastly, the wings and tail of the dove (the Holy Spirit, which Semiramis soon supplanted).

This concept of God preceded the counterfeit of Semiramis which was soon introduced.

At that very early period, an important change took place in regard to the divinity: the Spirit of God, according to the harlot-queen Semiramis, became incarnate in a *human mother*, and the Divine Son became the fruit of that incarnation (*Hislop*, p. 18).

Semiramis, through her mysteries, hundreds of years before Christ's birth, duplicated the truly miraculous event! Her own illegitimate son Tammuz was the "Savior"! HOW BAFFLING IT MUST HAVE BEEN FOR THE PAGANS, WHO HAD ONCE KNOWN GOD, TO NOW PERCEIVE THE TRUTH!

Semiramis identified herself as this Spirit and ascribed to herself the power of aiding in the creation of the world. Through her method of deification, she taught her followers that *she*, in one of her forms, had been the *dove*—a symbol of the Spirit that "moved upon the face of the waters" at creation. She moved or "fluttered" . . . "on the face of the waters" (Gen. 1:2). *Hislop*, p. 303. She claimed to be one of the "Trinity." She had become "as the Gods."

Please recall that it was the *dove* that lighted on Christ's shoulder at his baptism. *Far in the future*, in the day of Christ, this identical symbol—the dove—pictured the descent of the *Holy Spirit* on Christ! (John 1:32.) It is becoming clear, isn't it, that there was a *plan* behind these pagan similarities!

Same Pagan Ideas in Today's World

To symbolize the "Trinity" doctrine, the equilateral triangle was used, just as the Church uses it today (*Layard's Babylon and Ninevah*, p. 605). Some churches in Madrid have an image of a Triune God with three heads on one body (Parkhurst's *Hebrew Lexicon*, p. 605). Thus we see the *origin* of the *false doctrine* of the "Trinity"!

Here again is seen the influence of the Babylonian Mysteries on religion as it is being carried on *today*!

"The recognition of a Trinity was universal in all the ancient nations of the world, proving how deep-rooted in the human race was the primeval doctrine on this subject, which comes out so distinctly in Genesis." (*Hislop*, p. 18.) In Japan the great divinity Buddha has one body and three heads (Gullespie's *Sinim*, p. 60), and *Japet*, p. 184, shows that the pagans of Siberia worshipped a god with a similar body.

Later the Father was overlooked. As

the Great Invisible, taking no immediate concern in human affairs, He was to be worshipped through silence alone (Jamblichus' *On the Mysteries*, sect. viii. chap. iii). Today, in some churches we hear much about the Mother and Child (Christ being depicted as being *dependent* on his mother), but little about God the Father. A HUMAN woman is thus made supreme!

Family of God Counterfeited

The true teaching of the Bible is that the Father and Son comprise the *One Kingdom* or Family of God. The Holy Spirit is the common nature, mind, and force of God (Gen. 1:2, John 1:1). Jesus said, "God is Spirit" (John 4:24). "God" is a divine family composed of Spirit, not material flesh. As we have seen above, at present only *two* persons—Father and Son, comprise this family. But *we* can become members of that family!

Is there a mention of the pagan *counterfeit* of God in the Bible? Yes. It is spoken of in Isaiah 66:17. In the King James Version you will find the ambiguous words, "behind one tree in the midst." The proper translation should be: "after the rites of the Only One." The concept of the false Triune God!

The proper reading then is, "They that sanctify and purify themselves . . . after the rites of the *Only One*, eating swines flesh . . . shall be consumed." (*Hislop's The Two Babylons*, p. 16.)

The ancient pagan deity "Only One" was the triune counterfeit of God. Those who take part in the rites of this counterfeit god shall be destroyed!

The Devil's Part in the Counterfeits

We have found how Semiramis used the God-kingdom, spoken of in Genesis 1:1-2, to fit into her mysteries. But how did she fit the Serpent or devil (Rev. 20:2) into these? We shall now see!

Plutarch's *De Iside*, vol. ii. p. 362, 364, says of the serpent (Genesis 3:1): "First Tammuz (Nimrod as the resurrected 'Savior') was worshipped as the bruiser of the serpent's head, meaning thereby that he was the appointed *destroyer* of Satan's kingdom. Then the dragon himself, or Satan, came to receive a certain measure of worship, to 'console him,' as the pagans said, 'for the loss of his power,' and to prevent him from hurting them; and last of all the dragon, or Teitan or SATAN, BECAME THE SUPREME OBJECT OF WORSHIP, the Titania, or rites of Teitan, occupying a prominent place in the Egyptian *Mysteries*." The same is true of the *Mysteries of Greece* (Potter's *Antiquities*, vol. i., p. 400).

What is the real significance of all this? Remember that it was for sup-

porting the rites of serpent worship and sun worship that Nimrod was killed by Shem. So, first, Semiramis *cautiously* introduced Tammuz, her illegitimate son, as the *bruiser* of the serpent's head.

But as soon as the way was paved, she *cautiously re-introduced* a certain measure of the *serpent worship* which Nimrod had first introduced. The serpent (dragon), Teitan, or Satan, became the *supreme* object of worship.

Semiramis now changed her position in her Mysteries. She claimed to be the wife of Pluto, the god of hell, or the *serpent* in order to fit her *new position* as sponsor of serpent or Devil worship. "Under the name of the 'Dove' she was worshipped as the Incarnation of the spirit of God . . . and WAS KNOWN HERSELF AS THE 'VIRGIN' MOTHER . . . Under the name of Proserpine she was celebrated as the mother of the first Bacchus, and known as 'Pluto's honored wife!'" (*Hislop*, p. 126.)

Pagan Hades a Myth

Where did the idea of hades or purgatory originate?

Bacchus, as we have seen, was the Grecian god who represented Tammuz. Pluto represented Satan. Now consider the following: "How vitally important was the place that Teitan or Satan occupied, may be judged from the fact that *Pluto*, the god of Hell, was looked up to as the great god on whom the destinies of mankind in the eternal world did mainly depend; for it was said that TO PLUTO IT BELONGED TO 'PURIFY THE SOUL AFTER DEATH.'" (Taylor's *Pausanias*, vol. iii, p. 321.) Pluto was the Greek name for the Babylonian god Kronos.

Semiramis, as was her custom in forming her "Mysteries," *linked her deified family with notable characters*, whether they were good or bad. She used whichever one best fitted the times. She soon found it helpful to identify her deified husband as Kronos or Saturn—the Devil himself! Scattered notices of antiquity say that the name of the first *deified* king of Babylon was Kronos or Saturn (*Hislop*, p. 31). She had been guided by the Devil in order that the Devil might be worshipped!

The Bible says that the wages of sin is death—*eternal* death (Rom. 6:23). And 2 Peter 3:10-11, and Revelation 20:12 indicate that eternal death will be caused by this whole earth burning up and causing the destruction of all who have not become spirit beings in the Kingdom of God. NOWHERE DOES THE BIBLE TEACH THERE IS A PLACE UNDER THE GROUND WHERE PEOPLE ARE TORMENTED BY FIRE. This is another of the false conceptions handed

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Prophesied to Happen to UNITED STATES

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material resources, national greatness and world power!

Not only had God promised a world-dominant nation and a company, or commonwealth of nations whose populations descended from Abraham would be as the sand of the sea-shore—as the stars for multitude; not only did He promise they should possess the "GATES" of enemy nations, which alone signifies world dominance and power; but the Birthright finally included vast material wealth and unlimited national resources. That was made plain in the blessing given to Jacob, as we shall soon see.

The Birthright Denied to Ishmael

Unless by divine interference, which occurred three times, the inheritance of the Birthright fell automatically to the eldest son in each generation.

Isaac was chosen by the Eternal to inherit both the Sceptre and the Birthright. Abraham had other sons. Ishmael was the eldest. But God chose Isaac, and "Abraham gave all that he had unto Isaac." (Gen. 25:5). Isaac, however, was Abraham's first-born *lawful* son. Ishmael was the son of Hagar, Sarah's hand-maid.

Abraham loved Ishmael, his eldest son, and desired for him to have the Birthright.

"And Abraham said unto God, 'O that Ishmael might live before thee.'" (Gen. 17:18). Sarah his wife was barren.

"And God said, 'Sarah thy wife shall bear thee a son indeed; and thou shalt call his name Isaac: and I will establish my covenant with him for an everlasting covenant, and with his seed after him. And as for Ishmael, I . . . will make him fruitful, and will multiply him exceedingly . . . and I will make him a great nation.'" (Gen. 17:19-20).

Regarding the future nation to spring from Ishmael, the angel of the Eternal had said to Hagar, "he will be a wild man; his hand will be against every man, and every man's hand against him; and he shall dwell to the east of all his brethren." (Gen. 16:12).

Two clues are given here: 1) Ishmael's descendants were to become a great nation but the Birthright nations were to be greater; and 2) they were to dwell to the east of their brethren—that is, of Isaac's descendants who had the Birthright. The children of Ishmael have become the Arabs of today. The nation and company of nations who hold the Birthright must, therefore, be larger, wealthier, more powerful, and

must be found geographically WEST of Saudi Arabia.

Abraham was the human type of God the Father, and Isaac of Christ. There are many parallels. Space prohibits expounding them here, except to note that if we are Christ's we are Abraham's children (Gal. 3:29), and Abraham is the "FATHER" of the faithful (Gal. 3:7); that Abraham was called on to be willing to sacrifice his only (legitimate) son (Gen. 22:2) even as God GAVE His only begotten Son, Jesus Christ, for the sins of the world; that Isaac's wife Rebekah is a type of the Church, and she had to fall in love with him and accept him as her husband before she SAW him with her eyes; and the fact Isaac was born BY PROMISE, and by a miracle from God, even as Jesus was miraculously born of the virgin Mary.

Isaac had twin sons, Esau and Jacob. Esau was the first-born, and therefore the legal inheritor of the Birthright. But Esau undervalued it and sold it to Jacob.

Esau Sells the Birthright

God had chosen Jacob to possess these promises before the twins were born. But Jacob, influenced by his mother, instead of waiting on The Eternal, resorted to deception and took it from Esau.

The Eternal had said to Rebekah, regarding Esau and Jacob, that they were the beginning of two nations—"two manner of people."

"The one people shall be stronger than the other people:" said God, "and the elder shall serve the younger" (Gen. 25:23).

Their descendants, then, were to become two different manner of people. Esau was hairy and red, but Jacob was white (Verse 25). The story of Jacob's premature and deceptive acquisition of the Birthright continues, in Genesis 25:26-34:

"And the boys grew: and Esau was a cunning hunter, a man of the field; and Jacob was a plain man, dwelling in tents. And Isaac loved Esau, because he did eat of his venison: but Rebekah loved Jacob.

"And Jacob sod pottage (boiled porridge—Fenton's translation); and Esau came from the field, and he was faint: and Esau said to Jacob, Feed me, I pray thee, with that same red pottage; for I am faint: therefore was his name called *Edom*."

"Edom" means, literally, "Red Soup,"

and is so translated in the Fenton version. It will prove another "key" to Bible understanding for the reader to carefully fasten in his memory the fact that "Edom" refers to ESAU. Many prophecies pertaining to the present and future employ the name Edom. They cannot be understood unless it is realized that they refer to the descendants of Esau, the Turkish nation today.

"And Jacob said, Sell me this day thy birthright. And Esau said, Behold I am at the point to die: and what profit shall this birthright do to me? And Jacob said, Swear to me this day; and he swore unto him: and he sold his birthright unto Jacob. Then Jacob gave Esau bread and pottage of lentils; and he did eat and drink, and rose up, and went his way: thus Esau despised his birthright." (Gen. 25:27-34).

Later, Jacob subtly took from Esau his blessing. The story of this deception is found in the 27th chapter of Genesis.

Jacob's Deception

It was at a time when Isaac was old, his eyesight dimmed with age. Nearing the end of his life, he called Esau and requested that he go to the field and hunt for venison, prepare it and bring it to him. He would then bestow the blessing confirming the birthright.

But Rebekah overheard, and sent Jacob quickly for two kids of the goats. These she prepared in the same tempting way that Isaac loved his venison. Then she took some of Esau's clothes and put them on Jacob. Now Esau was very hairy, while Jacob was smooth, so Rebekah carefully placed the skins of the two kids upon Jacob's hands, arms, and smooth part of his neck.

And so in this disguise, with his imitation venison, Jacob went in to receive his father's blessing.

"And Jacob said unto his father, I am Esau thy firstborn." (Gen. 27:19).

Isaac was surprised he had found the venison so quickly, and became suspicious. Jacob lied again, asserting the Eternal had brought the venison to him. Isaac detected the voice was that of Jacob.

"And Isaac said unto Jacob, Come near, I pray thee, that I may feel thee, my son, whether thou be my very son Esau or not. And Jacob went near unto Isaac his father; and he felt him, and said, The voice is Jacob's voice, but the hands are the hands of Esau. And he discerned him not, because his hands were hairy, as his brother Esau's hands, so he blessed him." (Gen. 27:21-23).

What the Birthright Included

And now notice carefully what that blessing included!

"And his father Isaac said unto him, Come near now, and kiss me, my son.

And he came near, and kissed him: and he smelled the smell of his raiment, and blessed him, and said, See, the smell of my son is as the smell of a field which the Eternal hath blessed: *Therefore God give thee of the dew of heaven, and the fatness of the earth, and plenty of corn and wine:* (Fenton's translation: *increase and possession*). *Let people serve thee, and nations bow down to thee: be lord over thy brethren, and let thy mother's sons bow down to thee: cursed be everyone that curseth thee, and blessed be he that blesseth thee.*" (Verses 26-29).

Note it! Materialistic promises, NATIONAL in nature, every one! Not one of them pertaining to salvation. None having to do with the life after death. Nothing spiritual here! All pertaining purely to this present fleshly life!

Note it! NATIONAL prosperity—rain-fall, plenty of corn and wine, the fatness of the earth, or, as the margin reads, the fat PLACES of the earth—*increase and possession*. "NATIONS shall bow down to thee!" "Let people serve thee."

When Esau returned and found how Jacob had supplanted him, he was very bitter. He pleaded for a blessing, too. But Isaac could not retract the blessing given to Jacob. So he passed on to Esau the following prophetic blessing:

"Behold, thy dwelling shall be the fatness of the earth, and of the dew of heaven from above; and *by thy sword shalt thou live, and shalt serve thy brother; and it shall come to pass when thou shalt have dominion, that thou shalt break his yoke from off thy neck.*" (Gen. 27:39-40).

"And Esau hated Jacob." (Verse 41).

Prophecy for Turkey

The sparse records of history, with other proofs, show that the Turks are the descendants of Esau. Therefore we must remember that all prophecies pertaining to the latter days, referring to Edom, or Esau, refer to the Turkish nation.

In Isaac's dying prophecy, he foretold that Esau's descendants would come to a time when they should have dominion, and then break the yoke of the Israelites from off their necks. That has happened. The Children of Israel, thru sin, were driven out of the promised land that belonged with the Birthright. The Turks came to power and dominion, and for many centuries possessed that land. Esau's descendants always have lusted for that land, central promise of the Birthright! The Turks have truly lived by the sword!

The Lesson for Us

But to return to our story. Before Jacob was born, God had spoken to his

mother and revealed to her that Jacob should receive the Birthright. Instead, however, of waiting on the Eternal to bring this about in His own way, she schemed with Jacob to take it by lying and deception. There is a lesson here for us today.

Sometimes we become too much in a hurry. We ask the Almighty for things He has promised in His Word. Then we try to dictate to Him just HOW, and WHEN it shall be accomplished! We need to learn to "wait upon the Lord." He always does things in HIS way, and in His own time. And He distinctly tells us that His ways are not our ways! Once we commit a thing to the Almighty, let us have not only the trust, but the respect for One so great, that we will LEAVE the matter in His hands.

Had Jacob trusted the Eternal, instead of taking this into his own hands in a wrong way, the Birthright would have come to him more honorably. Under the circumstances, Jacob, which name means "supplanter," had far more difficulty securing God's blessing upon the precious possession than his predecessors.

But after years of trial and test—after finally wrestling all night thru with the angel—after confessing his name as "Supplanter"—God bestowed His blessing upon Jacob, took away his reproachful name, and gave him a new, untainted name, "ISRAEL,"—which means "prevailer," or "overcomer."

And thus we see that thru Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, the promises were handed down to one man at a time. There was no branching out, toward national growth, *until* the days of Jacob. For three generations it had been a "one-man nation." But Jacob had twelve sons, and thru them the future *great nation and company of nations* was started on its way.

The third installment will appear in the April number.

Millennium— where will it be spent?

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ever to the thousand years, or to the whole earth, but the land of Palestine ONLY, and during the sieges of Nebuchadnezzar, 604 to 586 B.C. The original Hebrew word for "land" in this chapter is the *same* word which is wrongly translated "earth." Jeremiah was speaking of the whole *land*!

JOHN 14:1-3: This text is also used as a proof-text for going to heaven. Jesus said "If I go, I WILL COME AGAIN, and receive you unto myself." He receives us unto Himself WHEN HE WILL HAVE COME AGAIN—right here in the

earth. We are to meet Him IN THE CLOUDS, and airplanes fly higher than that every day. That same day we come on down WITH HIM upon the Mount of Olives (Zech. 14:4, 5). "That where I am, THERE ye may be also." After Jesus receives us unto Himself, He will remain here on this earth. We shall ever BE with Him. We shall sit with Him IN HIS THRONE—which is the throne of David ON THIS EARTH. The places prepared are positions of responsibility in the KINGDOM He went to receive (Luke 19:12 and Mat. 25:3—note the kingdom is PREPARED, and its PLACE is the earth!). The place will also be the CAPITAL of that kingdom, the NEW JERUSALEM, which comes down FROM GOD, *out of heaven*, down to this earth, PREPARED (Rev. 21:2). What glorious Good News—WE SHALL REIGN ON THE EARTH DURING THE MILLENNIUM! (4 Rev. 5:10).

Today's Religious Doctrines

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down by Semiramis. Satan has the people of the earth so confused today that they actually do not know whether they are coming into the true knowledge which will lead to the eternal life or actually going the way which will lead to eternal death. Only the inspired word of God—the Bible—*closely* studied, shows us the right way and the *actual* destinations of the sinner and the saved!

Here we see that Pluto (the Greek name for their god representing Nimrod), or Kronos (the Babylonian name for their god representing Nimrod),—merely different names for the Devil or serpent, instead of burning people up, was *purifying* them by fire after death!

Devil Worship Reaches Rome

Purgatory in Paganism was the grand hinge of priestcraft and superstition. "The serpents were the supreme of all the gods and princes of the universe." . . . No wonder that it came at last to be firmly believed that the Messiah, on whom the hopes of the world depended, was Himself the "seed of the serpent"! (Eusebius *Proeparatio Evang.* vol. i. p. 50.)

"This was manifestly the case in Greece; for the current story there came to be, that the first Bacchus (the Grecian name of Tammuz) was brought forth in consequence of a connection on the part of his mother with the father of the gods, in the form of a 'speckled snake.' Thus the (devil) . . . got himself almost everywhere recognized as in every deed 'the god of this world.'" (Ibid.) The devil, through one

form or another, obtained the worship of this world!

Let us note the message of God to His true churches over 60 years after Christ's time. What did He reveal through Christ in Revelation regarding pagan worship of Satan? God addressed His message to the church at Pergamos. It was the true seat of Babylonian devil worship after Belshazzar's time (*Hislop*, p. 240).

In Rev. 2:13-14, Christ, speaking to the church of Pergamos, says, "I know thy works, *even where Satan's seat is . . . thou hast there them that hold the doctrine of Balaam.*" In Pergamos, which was outstandingly "Satan's seat," the SUN-DIVINITY BAAL—Balaam's doctrine was idolatrous sun worship (Num. 25: 1-3; 31:16)—WAS WORSHIPPED UNDER THE FORM OF A SERPENT and under the name of Aesculapius, "the man instructing serpent" (Macrobius Saturnalia, lib. 1, p. 650.) In Satan's seat, over 60 years after Christ's time, the main worship was sun and serpent!

This sun and devil worship was TRANSFERRED to Rome when Pergamos became a part of the Roman Empire.

According to the fundamental doctrine of the *Mysteries*, as brought from Pergamos to Rome, THE SUN WAS THE ONLY GOD. In Pergamos the sun had been worshipped as a Serpent!

Counterfeit of Adam's and Eve's Disobedience

In Genesis, chapters 2 and 3, God has given us an account of the deception by Satan of Adam and Eve.

We have already seen the importance to mankind of understanding this event. It furnishes a clue as to how mankind has been misled by the Devil and as to the ultimate result.

Also, we have seen that mankind at first did know the significance of this event in Eden. Would the Devil leave this warning to the people stand, or would he, through human means, counterfeit it and keep mankind under his control? Would he let man remember how he deceived Eve? We shall see.

Let us remember the following: Eve sinned because she saw that the tree appeared to be good. She gazed. The Pagans, knowing of this event, typified her in this position by their idols. They remembered this event and Satan's deception!

Throughout the world there are, in Paganism, many goddesses known as "gazing mothers" or gazing women. The Chinese goddess-mother, or "Queen of Heaven," in the province of Fuh-kien, is worshipped by seafaring people under the name of Ma Tsoopo which is believed to mean "gazing mother." (Gullespie's *Land of Sinim*, p. 64.) The name of the great Egyptian mother, Mut, in one of its vocabulary forms sig-

nifies "to look" or "gaze" (*Bunsen's Vocabulary*, vol. i. p. 471.)

The Egyptian goddess-mother Mu or Mut was symbolized by either a vulture, or an eye surrounded by vulture's wings (*Wilkinson*, vol. v. p. 203). The vulture is noted for its sharp sight, and the great mother of the gods (recall that Semiramis was the "mother of gods") in Egypt had been known as "The Gazer." The Athenian Minerva wore a helmet with two eyes or eye holes in its front (*Vaux's Antiquities*, p. 186).

What have these similar Pagan deities to do with the lesson God wanted mankind to learn at Eden? It was believed by the Babylonians that Rhea (Eve) conceived by Kronos (Satan), and brought forth a child called Muth or Death (*Sanchuniathon*, pp. 16-19).

Sanchuniathon shows that this is in accord with Genesis, for Eve's lust, inspired by Satan, "when it had conceived did bring forth Death." "When lust hath conceived, it bringeth forth death." (James 1:15.)

How did the devil remove this lesson of his deception and even turn it to his advantage?

Again, we find the answer in the goddess queen of Babylon. The goddess queen of Babylon held a pomegranate in her hand. Astarte or Cybele (Syrian and Roman names, respectively, for their goddesses corresponding to Semiramis) was also called "Idaia Mater" which signifies "the mother of Knowledge"—in other words our mother Eve, who first coveted the "knowledge of good and evil." The pomegranate was represented as the fruit of the forbidden tree (*Hislop*, pp. 110-113).

Notice the clever deception! Men were taught to look upon Semiramis as their grand benefactress, as gaining knowledge which they might otherwise have sought in vain! SATAN THUS TAUGHT GOOD CAME TO MANKIND BY EVE'S DISOBEDIENCE TO THE ETERNAL AND OBEDIENCE TO HIM! According to the classic pagan story, it was God who was the snake that would not let man eat of the desirable tree of knowledge of good and evil. The false Messiah Tammuz (as Hercules) slew it (*Hislop*, p. 112).

This, then, is a classical example of how Satan twists the teachings that God holds so dear! IT IS CERTAIN THAT AS HE WAS PERVERTING THE TRUTH SO MIGHTILY THEN, HE HAS NOT STOPPED NOW.

We have now seen why the gospel that Christ proclaimed was counterfeited hundreds of years before Christ. From history it has been proved that these counterfeits do have their effect on religion today!

The next chapter will deal with counterfeits of true salvation doctrines and other deceptions which originated with

Semiramis—counterfeits which have been used to blind mankind and rob us of happiness now and eternal life later! Read of these in the next issue of the Plain Truth!

Bible out-of-date?

(Continued from page 9)

of peace, because they disregard the source of peace. "The ambassadors of peace shall weep bitterly" when they see the cities destroyed and the highways desolate (Isaiah 33:7).

But thank God that human beings won't be allowed to destroy themselves. God WILL INTERVENE in human affairs. "We give thee thanks, O Lord God Almighty . . . because thou hast taken to thee thy great power, and hast REIGNED" (Rev. 11:17). "Of the increase of his government and PEACE there shall be no end" (Isaiah 9:7).

The Bible is, indeed, the only guide to point the way in this present age of human trial. It has never been out of date. IT IS HUMAN BEINGS WHO ARE BEHIND THE TIME—MENTALLY AND MORALLY UNABLE TO KEEP PACE WITH INVENTIONS OF INDESCRIBABLE HORROR.

This world is never going to have peace until it recognizes the RULE and the LAW of God. But there is a way for YOU to have peace of mind within yourself—and freedom from FEAR—if you want it! But you will first have to recognize God's rule over your life and submit to it. Then you will come to see that the Bible is the only rational explanation of human existence—that it is meant not only for this Atomic Age, but for ALL AGES!

CORRECTION

In the January issue of THE PLAIN TRUTH the half-life of radium was incorrectly given as 2500 years. The latest given figure is 1590 years.

WHY THE PLAIN TRUTH HAS NO SUBSCRIPTION PRICE

So many ask: "How can you publish a magazine, without subscription price, and without advertising?"

The answer is simple. The GOSPEL must go to the whole world, and it must go FREE. It must not be sold like merchandise. "Freely ye have received," Jesus said to His disciples whom He was sending to proclaim the Gospel, "Freely GIVE." Without money and without price, is God's way. We proclaim a FREE salvation. Therefore, we cannot put a PRICE upon THE PLAIN TRUTH.

We have been called of God to conduct this work. It is not our work, but God's. We have set out to conduct God's work God's way. We rely, in FAITH, upon God's promises to supply every need.

God's way is the way of LOVE—and that is the way of giving, not getting. God expects every true child of His to GIVE of tithes and offerings that His work may go FREE—that His true ministers may GIVE the precious Gospel to others. We simply TRUST GOD to lay it on the minds and hearts of His people to give of their tithes and offerings that we may be enabled to GIVE the good things of God's Word to the hundreds of thousands who hear the Message over the air, and the scores of thousands who read THE PLAIN TRUTH.

Many times our faith has been severely tried, but God has never failed us. We must not fail HIM!

Are We Christians?

(Continued from page 7)

who says that he abides in him *is bound to live as he lived.*"

How many of today's professing "Christians" feel BOUND to live as Jesus did?

To really be *Christians*, we need to *study* the Bible as most of us never have before, noticing especially the example and teaching of Christ, and *repent* of our ways and surrender our lives to God in *baptism* that we may receive His Spirit to guide us.

This may seem strange to many who have only heard the broad and popular way of "Christianity" which men have concocted. But only God's Word contains the *truth*! Pray earnestly that God will show you *His will*, and enable you to understand *His Word* and to follow Jesus' teachings and example.

There are many individuals and organizations going by the *name* of Christ. But Jesus asks, "*Why* call ye me, Lord, Lord, and do not the things which I say?" (Luke 6:46).

When Will the UNCONVERTED Be Resurrected?

(Continued from page 10)

TO BE AVAILABLE TO ALL MEN *fifty-one days* after Christ was crucified! It came on the day of PENTECOST (Acts 2:1-4).

These MILLIONS are NOT LOST FOREVER!—They NEVER were called to be

saved! God is a JUST GOD and He has PROVIDED A WAY whereby they CAN BE SAVED!

Also, what about the great number since Christ's day who have shown very little interest in religion and have died? ARE THEY LOST FOREVER? No, because *they have never had a chance* to salvation. *They are blinded.* God is NOT trying to save many *now*. He has BLINDED them! Read Romans 11:5,7,8,25. Acts 7:42, Isaiah 28:13, Matthew 13:10,11, 13.

Now notice WHEN GOD IS GOING TO GIVE THESE PEOPLE THEIR FIRST CHANCE FOR SALVATION! *Note this carefully! You have probably NEVER heard it explained before in its TRUE meaning!*

"... Ye shall know I am the Eternal, when I have opened your graves . . . and shall put my spirit in you and ye shall live, and I shall place you in your own land . . ." (Ezekiel 37:13-14). This is speaking of *ancient Israel*—a people who have been scattered among the nations almost 150 years before this was written!

WHEN does this take place? It cannot take place before Christ returns to earth at His second coming, because that will bring about the FIRST RESURRECTION. IT WILL NOT take place until after *one thousand years* have elapsed from the time of the *first resurrection* because, as we have already seen, only the righteous will be RESURRECTED then!

Therefore, THERE ARE ONLY TWO CLASSES THIS RESURRECTION CAN POSSIBLY REFER TO—the *evil* dead who have

knowingly rejected the truth and the unconverted dead who *never had a chance*! The *evil* dead are those who DELIBERATELY DECIDED they did not want to be *ruled by God*. There is NO REASON to give them a *second chance* to attain immortality! *They had their chance and turned it down!*

Therefore, IT IS THE CLASS OF PEOPLE, THE VAST BLINDED MAJORITY, WHO NEVER REALLY HAD A FIRST CHANCE TO ACCEPT GOD'S WAY OF LIFE, WHO ARE RESURRECTED!

Read what Revelation 20:11-12 says about this RESURRECTION: ". . . and I saw a great white throne . . . and I saw the *dead*, small and great, *stand* before God . . ." these people are *STANDING*—A RESURRECTION—". . . and the *dead* were *judged* out of those things which were written in the books."

IT IS THE GREAT WHITE THRONE JUDGMENT!

Even the WORST of the sinners who never had a chance will be in this RESURRECTION, for even the inhabitants of SODOM will be there! "When thy daughters, Sodom and her daughters, shall return to their former estate, and Samaria and her daughters shall return to their former estate . . . then thou (Jerusalem) shall return to your former estate." (Ezekiel 16:55.)

Isaiah 65:20 indicates ALL will live to be a hundred years old in this age at this time. There will be no children born then. God *is indeed a just God* (Deut. 32:4) and ALL WILL HAVE THEIR CHANCE TO BE SAVED!

The PLAIN TRUTH

Printed in the U.S.A.

Box 111—Pasadena, California

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U. S. POSTAGE

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Pasadena, California