

The PLAIN TRUTH

A magazine of understanding

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EASTER *is pagan!*

The Resurrection was not on Easter Sunday! Easter is not a Christian name, but the title of the idolatrous "queen of heaven." Here's the true origin and meaning of Lent, Easter eggs, hot cross buns!

WHY DO you believe the things you believe, do the things you do? The chances are you never stopped to ask yourself that question. You have been taught since childhood to accept Easter as the chief of the Christian holidays.

You have supposed it is part of the true Christian religion to observe Lent, "Holy Week," "Good Friday," to buy hot-cross buns at the bakery, to have colored Easter eggs, to dress up and go to Church Easter Sunday—perhaps to attend an Easter sunrise service!

Because of the "sheep" instinct in humans most of us believe a lot of things that are not true. Most of us do a lot of things that are *wrong*, supposing these things to be right, or even sacred!

Ishtar, the Pagan Goddess

What is the *meaning* of the name "Easter?" You have been led to suppose the word means "resurrection of Christ." For 1600 years the western world has been taught that Christ rose from the dead on Sunday morning. But that is merely one of the *fables* the apostle Paul warned readers of the New Testament to expect. The resurrection did not occur on Sunday! For the astonishing proof setting forth the exact time of the Resurrection, write for our free booklet, "The TRUTH About EASTER."

The name "Easter" is merely the slightly changed English spelling of the name of the ancient Assyrian goddess Ishtar, pronounced by the Assyrians exactly as we pronounce "Easter." The

Babylonian name of this goddess was Astarte, consort of Baal, the Sun-god, whose worship is denounced by the Almighty in the Bible as the most idolatrous of all pagan idolatry.

Look up the word "Easter" in Webster's dictionary. You will find: "AS. (Anglo-Saxon), from name of old Teutonic goddess of spring."

In the large 5-volume Hasting Bible Dictionary, only six brief lines are given to the name "Easter," because it occurs only once in the Bible—and that only in the King James translation. Says Hastings: "Easter, used in Authorized Version as the translation of 'Pascha' in Acts 12:4, 'intending after Easter to bring him forth from the people.' Revised Version has substituted correctly 'the Passover.'"

Apostles Observed Passover

The World Almanac, 1950 edition, page 704, says: "In the second century, A.D., Easter Day was, among Christians in Asia Minor" (that is, in the Churches at Ephesus, Galatia, etc.,—the so-called "Gentile" churches raised up by the Apostle Paul) "the 14th of Nisan, the seventh month of the Jewish calendar." In other words, the 14th day of the first month of the sacred calendar, and it was not then called by the name of the pagan deity "Easter," but by the BIBLE name "PASSOVER."

Passover, the days of unleavened bread, Pentecost, and the holy days God had ordained *forever* were all observed by Jesus, and the early apostles, and the

converted Gentile Christians (Acts 2:1; 12:3; 20:6; 18:21; I Cor. 5:7-8; Acts 20:16; I Cor. 16:8). Passover is a memorial of the crucifixion of Christ. Passover, observed by the early true Church, occurred not on Sunday or any fixed day of the week, but a calendar day of the year. The day of the week varies from year to year.

Easter is one of the pagan days Paul warned Gentile converts they must not return to observing.

How, then, did this pagan festival enter into and fasten itself up on a professing Christianity? That is a surprising story—but first, notice the true origin and nature of Easter.

Its Chaldean Origin

Easter, as Hislop says ("The Two Babylons,") "bears its Chaldean origin on its very forehead. Easter is nothing else than Astarte, one of the titles of Beltis, the 'queen of heaven,' whose name, as pronounced by the people of Nineveh, was evidently identical with that now in common use in this country."

The ancient gods of the pagans had many different names. While this goddess was called Astarte in Babylon, it appears on Assyrian monuments found by Layard in excavations at Nineveh as Ishtar (Layard's *Nineveh and Babylon*, page 629). Both were pronounced "Easter." Likewise, Beltis, or Bel (referred to in the Old Testament) also was called Moloch. It was for sacrificing to Moloch (I Kings 11:1-11, especially

verse 7, where Moloch is called an abomination) and other pagan gods that The Eternal condemned Solomon, and rended away the Kingdom of Israel from his son.

In the ancient Chaldean idolatrous Sun-worship, Baal was the Sun-god, As-tarte his consort, or wife. And Astarte is the same as Ishtar, or the English Easter.

Says Hislop: "The festival, of which we read in church history, under the name of Easter, in the third or fourth centuries, was quite a different festival from that now observed in the Romish (and Protestant) church, and at that time was not known by any such name as Easter. IT WAS CALLED PASS-OVER, and was very early observed by Christians . . . That festival agreed originally with the time of the Jewish Passover, when Christ was crucified. . . . That festival was not idolatrous, and was preceded by no Lent."

Where Did We Get LENT?

"It ought to be known," wrote Cas-sianus in the fifth century, "that the observance of the forty days (Lent) had no existence, so long as the perfection of that primitive Church remained inviolate."

Jesus observed no Lent. The apostles and the early true Church of God observed no Lenten season. Then how did this observance originate?

"The forty days' abstinence of Lent was directly borrowed from the worshippers of the Babylonian goddess. Such a Lent of forty days, 'in the spring of the year,' is still observed by the Yezidis or pagan Devil-worshippers of Koordistan, who have inherited it from their early masters, the Babylonians. Such a Lent was held by the pagan Mexicans, in honor of the sun. . . . Such a Lent was observed in Egypt (Wilkinson's *Egyptians*). This Egyptian Lent of forty days was held expressly in commemoration of Adonis or Osiris, the great mediatorial god." (*The Two Babylons*, by Hislop, pages 104 and 105, and *Sabean Researches*, by Landseer, p. 112).

Do you realize what has happened? God Almighty commanded His people to observe the PASSOVER forever! (Ex. 12:24). This command was given while the Israelites were still in Egypt, prior to the Old Covenant, or the Law of Moses! It pictured, before the Crucifixion, Christ's death for the remission of our sins, as a type looking forward to it. At His last Passover, Jesus *changed* the emblems used from the blood of a lamb and eating its roasted body to the bread and the wine.

Jesus did not abolish Passover—He merely CHANGED the emblems, or symbols used. All the apostles of Christ, and true Christians of the first century true Church observed it, on the 14th day

of the first month of the sacred calendar. It is now a MEMORIAL of Christ's death, reaffirming, year by year on its anniversary, the true Christian's FAITH in the blood of Christ for the remission of his sins, and the broken body of Christ for his physical healing.

But what has happened? DO YOU REALIZE IT? All western nations have been deceived into dropping the festival God ordained forever to commemorate the death of the true Saviour for our sins, and substituting in its place the PAGAN festival in commemoration of the counterfeit "saviour" and mediator of Baal the SUN GOD, named after the mythical Ishtar, his wife—actually none other than the ancient Semiramus, who palmed herself off as the wife of the sun-god, the idolatrous "QUEEN OF HEAVEN."

THIS is not Christian! IT IS PAGAN TO THE CORE!

Yet scores of millions of Americans are deceived into observing this form of heathen idolatry, under the delusion they are honoring Jesus Christ the Son of the Creator GOD!

Easter does not honor Christ! And yet, have you not been, like a blind sheep, following the other millions in this custom? "The times of this ignorance God winked at, but now commandeth to come to repentance."

Hot Cross Buns and Dyed Eggs

But did you know the hot cross buns, and dyed Easter eggs also figured in the idolatrous Chaldean rites, just as they do in Easter observance today?

Yes, these are pagan, too. The "buns," known by that identical name, were used in the worship of the "queen of heaven," the goddess Easter, as early as the days of Cecrops, the founder of Athens, 1500 years before Christ. (*The Two Babylons*, pgs. 107-108).

"One species of sacred bread," says Bryant, in *Mythology*, Vol. 1, p. 373, "which used to be offered to the gods, was of great antiquity, and called Boun."

It will astonish you, but it's true—one of the reasons God drove the Jews into Babylonian captivity was this very idolatry—their whole families joined in this idolatrous worship, in making and offering HOT CROSS BUNS!

Read the entire 7th chapter of Jeremiah. Here is God's stern sentence upon Judah, thru Jeremiah the prophet. "If you really amend your life and *doings*," God warns them, "I will allow you to remain in this place (Palestine) for all time." But they would not listen. Then "I will cast you out of my sight," says God to Judah. And to Jeremiah He says, "Seest thou not what they do in the cities of Judah . . . ?

"The children gather wood, and the fathers kindle the fire, and the women knead their dough, TO MAKE CAKES

TO THE QUEEN OF HEAVEN . . . that they may provoke me to anger. . . . Therefore thus saith the Eternal God: Behold, mine anger and my fury shall be poured out upon this place, upon man, upon beast . . . and it shall burn, and shall not be quenched." (Verses 18-20).

The Hebrew word for "cakes" as Jeremiah originally wrote it is "kavvan," and really means "BUNS." The word "bun" seems, says Hislop, to have been derived from this word. This Hebrew word is used nowhere else in the Bible, except Jer. 44:19, where again the same idolatrous worship to the queen of heaven by these hot cross buns is mentioned. Every other place in the Bible where the English word "cakes" is used, a different Hebrew word was used in the original.

Jeremiah was referring to HOT CROSS BUNS—exactly the same kind hundreds of you who read this have been buying and eating this "Easter season!"

The origin of the Easter egg is just as clear. It is recorded in Davies' *Druids*, p. 208, that the ancient Druids bore an egg as the sacred emblem of their idolatrous order. On p. 207, same history, it is recorded that in the mysteries of Bacchus, as celebrated in Athens, part of the idolatrous ceremony consisted in the consecration of an egg. Hindoo fables celebrate their mundane egg as of a golden color. It has been ancient custom in Japan to make their sacred egg a hard brazen color. In China dyed or painted eggs are used on "sacred" heathen festivals. In the idolatry of ancient Egypt and Greece eggs were used in their religious rites.

WHY do Americans who believe themselves to be Christians dye eggs at Easter? Do they suppose the BIBLE ordained, or commands, this heathen custom? THERE IS NOT A WORD OF IT IN THE NEW TESTAMENT. Certainly Christ did not start it, and the apostles and early Christians did none of it!

Then WHY SHOULD YOU DO IT TODAY? Why follow heathenism and try to convince yourself you are a Christian? God calls such things ABOMINATION!

How Easter Crept into the Church

Such is the origin and early history of Easter.

How, then, was this pagan festival injected into the professing Christian religion, as a substitute for an ordinance of God?

Before revealing briefly the astonishing account of this great deception, two facts must be firmly fixed in mind.

First, Jesus and the apostles foretold, not a universal, wide-spread popular growth of the true New Testament

Church, but A FALLING AWAY FROM THE TRUTH on the part of the great majority. Prophesying a popular, universal FALLING AWAY from the faith once delivered, to the Thessalonians Paul stated "the mystery of iniquity doth already work," only some 30 years after the Church began! He referred to the very "Chaldean Mysteries," of which Easter and Christmas were the two chief festivals!

Second, although Jesus said the gates of hell would never prevail against *His* Church, yet it is everywhere prophesied thru the New Testament as the "Little Flock"—never as a great, large, popular universal church.

This is the very fact the world does not realize today!

TWO Churches—One False, One True
In New Testament prophecy TWO CHURCHES are described.

One, the great and powerful and universal church, a *part* of the world, actually ruling in its politics over many nations, and united with the "Holy Roman Empire," brought to a concrete focus in Rev. 17.

This church is pictured with great pomp, ritual and display, decked in purple, scarlet and gold—proud, worldly, boastful. She is pictured as a universal DECEIVER—the whole western world spiritually DRUNK on her false doctrines, their spiritual perception so blurred by her paganized teachings and practices they are unable to clearly distinguish TRUTH! She boasts she is the true Church, yet she is drunken on the blood of the saints she has caused to be martyred!

But how could she have deceived the whole world, as foretold in God's Word? Surely the Protestant world isn't deceived!

O, *but it is!* Notice, verse 5, she is a MOTHER church! Her daughters are also churches who have come out of her, even in protest, calling themselves Protestant—but they are fundamentally of her family in pagan doctrines and practices! They, too, make themselves a *part* of this world, taking active part in its politics—the very act which made a "whore" out of their MOTHER!

The entire apostate family—Mother, and more than 500 daughter denominations, all divided against each other and in CONFUSION of doctrines, yet all united in the chief pagan doctrines and festivals—has a family NAME! They call themselves "Christian," but God calls them something else! — "MYSTERY, BABYLON THE GREAT!"

"Babylon" means confusion! God always names people and things by calling them *what they are!* And here is the same identical ancient BABYLONIAN MYSTERIES now wrapped in the false

cloak labeled "Christianity"—but in fact it is the same old "CHALDEAN MYSTERIES!" THUS GOD NAMES THIS RELIGIOUS SYSTEM!

TRUE Church Small—Scattered

But where, then, was the TRUE Church?

Did the true Church of God, of which Jesus Christ is the Living, Directing Head, become perverted—did it merely apostatize into the system described above?

NO! The gates of hell have never prevailed against the true Church of God, and never will! The true Church has never fallen! It has never ceased!

But the true Church of God is pictured in prophecy as the "Little Flock!" The New Testament describes this Church as continually persecuted, despised by the large popular churches because it is not *OF* this world or its politics, but has kept itself unspotted *from* the world! It has always kept the Commandments of God and the Faith of Jesus. It has kept God's festivals, not the pagan holidays. It has been empowered with the Spirit of God!

That Church *never* degenerated into the great popular church at Rome, as the protestant world supposes! That Church always has existed, and it exists today!

Then *where did it go?* Where was it during the middle ages?

First, remember this Church was never large, never politically powerful, or a world-known ORGANIZATION OF MEN. It is a SPIRITUAL ORGANISM, not a political organization. It is composed of all whose hearts and lives have been CHANGED by the Spirit of God, whether visibly together, or individually scattered.

Under the lash of continual persecution and opposition of the organized forces of this world, it is difficult for such a people to remain UNITED and ORGANIZED together.

Daniel prophesied the true people of God would be scattered (Dan. 12:7). Ezekiel foretold it (34:5-12). Jeremiah, too, (23:1-2). Jesus foretold it (Mat. 26:31). The apostolic church was soon scattered by persecution (Acts 8:1). James addresses his letter to Christians *scattered* abroad (Jas. 1:1).

Ignored by Most Histories

You don't read much of *this* true Body of Christ in the secular histories of this world! No, the world little notes, nor long remembers, the activities of this "LITTLE FLOCK," hated and despised by the world, driven to the wilderness by persecution, always opposed, usually scattered! But there are enough references to it in authentic histories to show that it has continued thru every century to now!

The prophecies bring this Church into

concrete focus in the 12th chapter of Revelation. There she is shown spiritually, in the glory and splendor of the Spirit of God, but visibly in the world as a persecuted, Commandment-keeping Church *driven into the wilderness*, for 1260 years, thru the middle ages!

Even in Paul's day, many among those attending at Antioch, at Jerusalem, at Ephesus, at Corinth, and other places, began to apostatize and turn away from the truth. Divisions sprang up. Those individuals, unconverted or turned from God's TRUTH and WAY OF LIFE, were *no part of God's true Church*, tho visibly assembling with those who were. The "mystery of iniquity" was already working, *INSIDE* these visible churches. This apostasy *increased!* By the year 125 A.D. the majority in most churches, especially those Gentile-born, were continuing in many of their old pagan beliefs and practices, tho *professing* to be Christian! Gradually, a smaller and smaller portion of the VISIBLE churches going by the name "Christian" remained truly yielded to God and His Truth, and led of His Spirit. After Constantine took virtual control of the visible, professing Church in the early fourth century, this visible organization became almost wholly pagan, and began excommunicating and persecuting all who held to the true WORD OF GOD! Finally, it became necessary for real Christians who, even as a scattered people, *alone* composed the TRUE Christian Church, to FLEE from the jurisdiction of Rome in order truly to worship God! Thus, the visible, organized Church which rose to power was the FALSE Church—the "Great Whore" of Rev. 17.

Injected into the Church

Nothing illustrates this very fact more vividly than the actual history of the injecting of Easter into the western Church.

Here is the quick, brief history of it, from the Encyclopedia Britannica, 11th edition, article on "EASTER:"

"There is no indication of the observance of the Easter festival in the New Testament, or in the writings of the Apostolic Fathers. . . . The first Christians" (the original TRUE Church) "continued to observe the Jewish" (that is GOD'S) "festivals, though in a new spirit, as commemorations of events which those festivals had foreshadowed. Thus the Passover, with a new conception added to it, of Christ as the true Paschal Lamb and the first fruits from the dead, continued to be observed.

"Although the observance of Easter was at a very early period the practice of the Christian Church, a serious difference as to the day for its observance soon

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Heart to Heart Talk With the Editor

NOTICE: The PLAIN TRUTH continues in this number, of necessity, to be half size, 8 pages. Again only enough copies can be printed to send co-workers. For each one of you who receive this issue, some ten others who have requested it must be deprived of reading it because many co-workers have become lax.

Two months ago I announced in these columns a definite policy for 1950: to issue The PLAIN TRUTH regularly every month, even though to do so it is necessary to cut it to half size and print only enough copies for our co-workers. We are adhering faithfully to that policy. I did feel that this would rouse hundreds of half-dormant co-workers to open their hearts—and their pocket-books and check-books more liberally and more regularly—for God's great Cause!

Thank God, many loyal co-workers—and may YOU be one of them—are giving generously to God's Work as often as possible, even at real personal sacrifice. But too many others have been guilty of doing like the one who said; "I used to send in all I could, sometimes as much as \$20 every week, because I was afraid I wouldn't get to hear the broadcast any more, or receive The PLAIN TRUTH. But I learned I could hear the program and get The PLAIN TRUTH for nothing, so now I let the other co-workers make the sacrifice and I send in only a dollar or two about three times a year."

God gives salvation FREE—but how much do you suppose God will give to one with such a selfish heart? The true Christian way is GIVING, not getting! God has all power, and easily could finance His great work some other way—

but for *your* good God provides you the opportunity to GIVE—liberally, generously. It is for *your* good that God has provided the way of paying faithfully His tithe and *your* generous GIVING of free-will offerings as His method of financing His work.

You can't afford to let your heart shrivel up and die! Let God OPEN your hearts wide, in the generosity and blessedness of GIVING—that scores of thousands of others *who have requested it* may read The PLAIN TRUTH, too! How much better you'll feel when you know you have made it possible to SHARE these Truths of God with so many others? What a shame the glorious Truths in this number must be withheld from so many thousands who have asked for it!

Why not, if you are one of those who has grown slack, go now and PRAY about it, and let God open your heart wide—and give you more zeal for HIS cause in these closing days of this age, and begin now to send in larger amounts (according as God makes possible, of course) and more often and more regularly?

AT THIS moment, as I write in the early morning outdoors on the sun-warmed desert, the lead article on "Easter" is still unfinished. But as I was washing and combing my hair, just after arising, intending to get immediately to my typewriter to finish that article, thoughts came to my mind.

I feel they were so important I must

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immediately have a real heart to heart talk with my family of readers and co-workers, sharing with you what was placed in my mind—while it's still fresh and vivid.

It concerns the *most important* thing in life and eternity for *you*. But at the moment, I was thinking about myself. Every person—yes, even you—is his own worst enemy. All my life I have been impelled to fight my worst enemy—that troublesome inner *self*, which by nature is desperately wicked. I was not born with a mild, submissive, weak-willed inner *self*. Had I been, I probably never could have been used as God's instrument in bearing His message to you. My mother, now well into her eighties, will tell you I was a very strong-willed boy, and while I was still young enough to be under parental discipline I caused her and my father no end of trouble. Since growing into the age of self-discipline, this same evil, determined inner self has caused *me* no end of trouble. And I should add that since I gave that self over to God, it surely must have tried His patience!

That brings us to the point. The thought that came into my mind concerned this very troublesome inner *self*. HOW, came the question, can I myself ever become finally *saved*, and inherit eternal life in the Kingdom of God, with such a powerful, seemingly irresistible inner force of evil constantly pulling the other way? When God says "there shall in no wise enter into it (the Kingdom of God) anything that defileth, neither whatsoever worketh abomination, or maketh a lie," (Rev. 21:27), it surely seemed impossible that I should be able to "overcome," and "endure unto the end."

But the same instant the answer flashed to mind—GOD will save me! I can't save myself. When I look at this troublesome, naturally evil self, so human and full of faults and weaknesses, so beset by temptations of pride and the flesh, with all its limitations and shortcomings, knowing that to be finally saved I must GROW in grace and God's knowledge—must develop in righteous holy character—must overcome this *self* and temptations and weaknesses—and must *endure* thru trial and test and opposition and discouragement unto the end,—well when I look at it that way, it seems utterly HOPELESS to expect ever to be saved.

And I wondered, as this thought flashed thru my mind, how many of my readers and co-workers are tempted to look at it the same way—to feel a sense of futility and helplessness—perhaps to become discouraged and lose faith?

Ah, *that's* the key word—FAITH!

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Who is MELCHISEDEC?

ONE of the mysteries of the Bible is the identity of Melchisedec. *Who is he?* We read, in Hebrews 6:19-20, that Jesus Christ, after His resurrection, was High Priest "after the order of Melchisedec." Or, in the plainer English of the Moffatt translation, "with the rank of"—equal status with, Melchisedec.

First, Melchisedec was God's Priest. During a war between a number of ancient city-states, Abraham's nephew, Lot, had been captured and he and his family and goods carried off. One of their number escaped and told Abraham, who armed 318 of his own servants, pursued them clear to Dan and beyond, and rescued Lot and his family and returned them and their goods. On Abraham's return, he was ministered to by Melchisedec:

"And Melchisedec king of Salem brought forth bread and wine: and he was the priest of the most high God. And he blessed him (Abraham), and said, Blessed be Abram of the most high God, possessor of heaven and earth: and blessed be the most high God, which hath delivered thine enemies into thy hand. And he (Abraham) gave him (Melchisedec) tithes of all." (Gen. 14:18-20).

Notice, Melchisedec was king of Salem—later changed to Jerusalem. Now Hebrew names have meaning. The meaning of the name "Melchisedec" is "King of Righteousness." In other words, translated into English, this priest's name was "King of Righteousness." And "Salem" means "PEACE." So He also was King of PEACE. And it is stated He was the PRIEST of the most high God.

Melchisedec is mentioned again in Psalms 110:4. Speaking prophetically of

Christ, it is stated: "The Eternal hath sworn, and will not repent, 'Thou art a priest forever after the order of Melchisedec.'" This is quoted in Heb. 5:6, 10.

Then coming to Hebrews 7, we find Melchisedec identified.

"For this Melchisedec, king of Salem, priest of the most high God, who met Abraham returning from the slaughter of the kings, and blessed him; to whom also Abraham gave a tenth part of all; first, being by interpretation King of Righteousness, and after that also King of Salem, which is King of PEACE." (Heb. 7:1-2).

Since God names people what they are, that, then, is what this man is: "KING OF RIGHTEOUSNESS."

Think of it! KING of Righteousness. Jesus Himself said, "there is none good but one, that is, God." Human self-righteousness is, before God, as filthy rags. None can be Righteous, but God—or one made righteous by God's power—Christ in him! And certainly none but One of the Godhead could be KING of RIGHTEOUSNESS! Such an expression, applied to any but God would be blasphemous! No human could be King of Righteousness, for all humans have sinned!

And note, too, this man was King of PEACE. Salem, from which Jerusalem was named, means "Peace." And remember, Jesus is called the Prince of Peace! No human could be KING of Peace.

Notice further: Melchisedec was "without father, without mother, without descent." He was not born, as humans are. He had no descent from another, but is self-existent—"having

neither beginning of days nor end of life"; therefore He has always existed—from eternity to eternity! He was not even created, like angels, but is eternally self-existing! And that is true only of GOD!

Yet Melchisedec cannot be God the Father. He is the "priest of the most high God." Scripture says no man has ever seen the Father, but Abraham saw Melchisedec. He cannot be God the Father, but rather, "made like unto the SON of God, abideth a priest continually."

And there it is! In the days of Abraham, He was not the SON of God, for He had not yet been BORN of the virgin Mary—but he was made like unto the SON of God.

Notice again: Melchisedec, this Scripture reveals, ABIDES—that is, remains, permanently, continuously, a PRIEST. God the Father is not the Priest of God, but Christ the Son is! Yet, in the days when the apostle Paul lived and wrote, shortly after Jesus ascended to heaven as High Priest, the Scripture states that even then Melchisedec "abideth"—which means does now abide—"a priest continually." The Moffatt translation states it: "continues to be priest permanently." Even while Jesus is High Priest! And so Melchisedec is still High Priest today, and will be forever! And at the same time CHRIST was then, is today, and shall be forever, High Priest!

Are there two High Priests? No! IMPOSSIBLE! The conclusion is inescapable! Contrary to many a cherished man-thought-out idea, Melchisedec and Christ are ONE AND THE SAME!

Continue, verse 4: "Now consider HOW GREAT THIS MAN WAS."

Heart to Heart Talk

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Our plight isn't hopeless at all!

Of course, of ourselves, it is impossible to be saved. But with GOD it is certain—if we yield to Him and TRUST Him. We shall be saved, not by our own power to overcome and develop perfect characters, but thru FAITH IN GOD'S POWER!

But right here is where 999 out of 1,000 become deceived by the fables of this time. And when the blind lead the blind, they both fall into the ditch!

Because we can't save ourselves—we can't master the evil inner self—we can't always resist every temptation—we can't keep God's holy Law perfectly—and, of ourselves, we would fail to overcome, to grow in spiritual character, and to endure to the end, the false

teaching is going out that JESUS DID THESE THINGS FOR US—that we don't need to do them. Millions today believe that God imputes Jesus' righteousness to us, counting us as righteous when we are not!

There couldn't be a more soul-damning delusion of the devil!

No, Jesus didn't live a good life for you, in your stead! You are not excused from keeping God's commandments, living a righteous holy life, overcoming, growing in spiritual character, and enduring in spite of all opposition, persecution, trial and test unto the end. YOU and I must actually do these things in order to be saved!

Here is the great mystery! Since we must do these things to be saved, yet are utterly unable to do them, it is natural to conclude either that God sent Jesus to do it for us and excuse us from

accomplishing it, or else to become discouraged and be tempted to quit trying.

The true answer is the KEY to salvation!

We can't save ourselves. GOD will save us! But how?

Not by saving us in our sins—not by deceiving Himself into counting us righteous by imputing Jesus' righteousness to us while we remain unrighteous—BUT BY SAVING US FROM OUR SINS, by giving us His very own Spirit—His POWER to overcome these cantankerous selves, His LOVE to actually fulfil His law, His PEACE to avoid strife with enemies and resentment and bitterness at their injustices, His PATIENCE to endure!

We can't save ourselves—GOD must save us! But He does it by changing us, thru His indwelling divine supernatural

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TWO DEFINITIONS of *sin*

I. The World's Definition

The way to act and live that gives those who dare to do it increased pleasure, fun, good time, enjoyment. The "forbidden fruit" that is sweeter, more desirable.

The concept, though unrealized, is that God is unjust and unfair, forbidding us really to enjoy life. As a consequence, sin is the desirable way forbidden, or at least frowned on, by respectable society under religious influence. If sin is to be enjoyed, it must be in secret unless one is to defy society or be branded with disgrace—or so it used to be, though society today is becoming broader minded, more tolerant of sin, permitting more and more what previous generations forbade.

This concept was aptly illustrated by the death-bed confession of an atheist. His daughter came to his bed-side and asked:

"Father, now that you know you are going to die, tell me the truth. Which do you *now* think is best—your atheism or Mother's Christianity?"

"Well daughter," the dying man replied. "I still believe my way is the best way to *live* by, but I'll have to confess at last that your mother's religion is the best to *die* in."

There's the common conception. People unthinkingly have a picture of a God who is unfair—who expects people to give up the worth-while things of life, deny one's self enjoying life, and live a life of unhappiness in order to be "saved." And according to this view the way to cheat God is to live in sin and enjoy life, then squeeze through at the last minute by a death-bed confession!

This concept is Satan's masterpiece delusion, fastened on an unthinking world! It pictures the god of Herbert Spencer's distorted imagination—a monster, who "saves" people through FEAR of penalties unless they forsake more desirable ways for his narrow and unhappy way. It hides God's love, turns God's law of love into an evil thing, cheats human beings of the happiness, peace, success and joy that could be theirs through a discernment of the TRUE values!

II. The Bible Definition

"Sin," defines the Bible, "is the transgression of the law." (1 John 3:4). "The law is spiritual," Rom. 7:14). "The law is holy, just, and good." (Rom. 7:12). "LOVE is the fulfilling of the law." (Rom. 13:10).

What is *righteousness*? "All thy commandments are righteousness." (Ps. 119:172). Sin is the transgressing of LIVING LAWS God has set in motion. Those laws are ALIVE. They are eternal, immutable, inexorable! (Ps. 111:7-8).

When we transgress them, there is a penalty. There is NO ESCAPE from the penalty! That is why God gave His only Son to *pay* that penalty for all who will accept it, in our stead. The LAW has been set in motion, and it is the most powerful, irresistible thing in all the universe! Relentlessly, it moves on, always claiming its penalty without fail! That law is SO STRONG—so *irresistible*—so immutable—it took even the life of Jesus, the very Son of the living GOD! It was STRONGER than He! It claimed His life, when HE took on Himself your sins and mine! When those sins of *ours* were upon Him—those "sweet" but forbidden fruits!—He came under the penalty in our stead; and then not even the life of Jesus Christ was strong enough to prevent that inexorable law from claiming its penalty—DEATH!

Jesus did not do away with the law. The law did away with HIM—with His physical, earthly life! It is only because God raised Him from the dead by a resurrection that He now lives! He didn't end the LAW—no, the law ended His life! And the law will end *yours*, unless your sins are all on Jesus! The law is eternal, immutable—it moves irresistibly on!

Yet, the law of God is not evil, but GOOD! It is LOVE! It is the way to peace, to happiness, to joy! Keep it, and you are happy. Break it, and you suffer! It is God's greatest gift to mankind—given to make man happy, to lead him into the full, abundant life, to *protect* his happiness and give him eternal life! Yes, eternal life comes through *keeping* the law! But you and I have broken the law—sinned—and death is the penalty. The blood of Jesus pays the penalty—takes away the past sin, reconciles us to God. Then God gives us His HOLY SPIRIT—the Spirit of LOVE—the "love of God shed abroad in our hearts by the Holy Ghost." And *this* is the spiritual love, in us, which *alone* can fulfill, or keep, God's law! It is *only* those who keep the law—through the indwelling of the Holy Spirit—who can be saved—inheriting eternal life! All others are sinners, and the penalty is death! It is *only* those thus keeping the law who know peace, happiness, JOY!

Finally, the Bible reveals sin as the way that *seems* RIGHT to men! The way that appears attractive, enjoyable, desirable! But it's a snare and a delusion! Humans seek fun, pleasure, enjoyment. Sin usually gives a *temporary* sensation of pleasure, or exhilaration. But it's false as hell itself! Because always there's a kick-back! Sometimes it's the headache of the "morning after." It exacts an exorbitant PRICE always collected later—but it's a relentless collector! And its final price is DEATH! It's a mighty poor bargain!

Do most so-called Christians really *repent* of sin? How can they, when today's religion teaches God's law is done away—teaches sin is merely the transgression of human *conscience*! One's *conscience* troubles him only when he does what he *believes* is wrong! As long as he believes God's law is harsh, unjust, and abolished in Christ—as long as he believes the way that *seems* right is right—as long as he believes the world's definition of sin, HOW CAN HE REPENT OF REAL SIN—THE TRANSGRESSION OF GOD'S LAW? How can he repent of what looks RIGHT to him—of that which appears *attractive, alluring*?

Ancient Israel did what THEY thought was right. They continually did that which was evil in the sight of the Eternal, but it seemed right to them. And so the world continues today. Deceived as to right and wrong, it does wrong, and then wonders why it is so unhappy—why there's so much *suffering* in the world today!

GOD HELP US TO DISCERN THE TRUE VALUES FROM THE FALSE! God has revealed the right and the TRUE way! David loved that way, meditated upon it all the day! Paul said it was spiritual, holy, just and good! You'll find that way in God's LAW. It's the only way that will lead to peace, justice, success, happiness, joy—and life eternal!

Heart to Heart Talk

Continued from Page 5

power, from what we have been into the holy, righteous characters He wills to make of us! He does it by forgiving past sins not only, but *cleansing* us from sinning now and in the future!

God does not look upon our hopeless plight—our evil natures, our weaknesses and inabilities—and say "Poor, helpless humans! Since they are unable to master and overcome their evil natures, to keep my Law, to endure trial

and test and temptation, and to grow into holy characters, I'll be merciful and have my Son do it for them, and save them just as they are in all their sins."

Instead, God who knows our every weakness, and who Himself is *responsible* for this human nature in every one of us, sent His Son into the world to proclaim HIS MESSAGE to us that we must yield to GOD'S government over our lives—that we must REPENT and turn *from* our filth of the flesh and pride of mind and heart; He sent His Son into the world to be tempted in all points as we are—human as we are—to prove that a human *can*, with the help of the Spirit of God, live without sin—TO SET AN EXAMPLE FOR US THAT WE SHOULD FOLLOW HIS STEPS and live also without sinning! He sent His Son into the world to *die for us*,—not living a good life in our stead, but paying the penalty of our past sins in our stead—that we might be reconciled to God, so that we might receive His Spirit, begetting us as His SONS, so that God thru the power of His Spirit may CHANGE us from mortal sinners into immortal holy sons of God!

Some hotels and restaurants, catering to tourists who may be in old clothes and dirty from traveling, post a sign, "COME AS YOU ARE!"

The favorite "invitation" or "altar-call" hymn sung by the popular denominations in revival or evangelistic services is "JUST AS I AM."

But *be not deceived*—GOD WON'T RECEIVE YOU JUST AS YOU ARE! You can't sit down at His immaculate holy table with your wrinkled, soiled clothes and dirty hands, which symbolically represent the human sinning condition. No, you must be first WASHED in the blood of the Lamb Jesus Christ—and before Jesus as your Saviour and Mediator with God can wash you of the filth of your sins, YOU MUST FIRST REPENT OF TRANSGRESSING GOD'S HOLY LAW, WHICH MEANS TO BE SO SORRY THAT YOU FORSAKE YOUR WAY AND THE WORLD'S WAY, AND TURN TO A LIFE OF OBEDIENCE TO GOD'S LAWS AND WAYS!

Of course you'll have to come *as you are* to Christ for CLEANSING from the filth of your past life—but *confessing* your filthy, sinful condition, asking Him to cleanse you and wash you in His blood, because you can't cleanse yourself—so that He may present you chaste and pure and spiritually clean to His Father, that you may then receive the indwelling POWER of God *which will enable you to overcome*, and keep God's law, and live as His sons ought to live!

Jesus showed by his life that we *can*,

if we rely upon God in faith for the power to do so, live the way of God's will as expressed in His Spiritual Law! Of Himself, even Jesus said He could not do it—"the Father that dwelleth in me," He said, "HE doeth the works." And again, "The works that I do shall ye do also."

And so it was that, almost the same instant the temptation to doubt the final result came to my mind as I thought of my own weaknesses, faults, and limitations, the answer flashed strong and firm, "GOD WON'T LET ME FALL! He may punish me more yet to chasten and teach me and make me righteous, but He won't let me fail—He will impute His very own righteousness *by implanting it into my life* until, thru His power energizing me, *I'm really living it—ETERNALLY!*"

And that comforting and definite ASSURANCE of the final result, based on God's own unbreakable PROMISES, just warmed my heart and made me reel good clear thru—and so I had to come out here immediately to the typewriter to share this glorious assurance with all of YOU! Read Jude 24, and 2 Peter 1:10.

Easter is pagan!

Continued from Page 3

arose between the Christians of Jewish and those of Gentile descent, which led to a long and bitter controversy. With the Jewish Christians . . . the fast ended . . . on the 14th day of the moon at evening . . . without regard to the day of the week. The Gentile Christians on the other hand" (that is, the beginning of the Catholic church, now substituting pagan for true Christian doctrines) . . . identified the first day of the week with the resurrection, and kept the preceding Friday as the commemoration of the crucifixion, irrespective of the day of the month.

"Generally speaking, the Western Churches" (Catholic) "kept Easter on the 1st day of the week, while the Eastern Churches" (containing most of those who remained as part of the TRUE Christian church) "followed the Jewish rule." (That is, observing Passover on the 14th of the first sacred month instead of the pagan Easter).

"Polycarp, the disciple of John the Evangelist, and bishop of Smyrna, visited Rome in 159 to confer with Anicetus, the bishop of that see, on the subject, and urged the tradition *which he had received from the apostle* of observing the 14th day. Anicetus, however, declined. About forty years later" (197), "the question was discussed in a very different spirit between Victor, bishop of

Rome, and Polycrates, metropolitan of proconsular Asia" (the territory of the Churches at Ephesus, Galatia, Antioch, Philadelphia, and all those mentioned in Rev. 2 and 3—the churches established thru the apostle Paul). "That province was the only portion of Christendom which still adhered to the Jewish" (the writer should have used the words "true Christian" instead of "Jewish") "usage. Victor demanded that *all* should adopt the usage prevailing at Rome. This Polycrates firmly refused to agree to, and urged many weighty reasons to the contrary, whereupon Victor proceeded to excommunicate Polycrates and the Christians who continued the Eastern usage" (that is, who continued in GOD'S way, as Jesus, Peter, Paul, and all the early true Church had done). "He was, however, restrained" (by other bishops) "from actually proceeding to enforce the decree of excommunication. . . and the Asiatic churches retained their usage unmolested. We find the Jewish" (true Christian Passover) "usage from time to time reasserting itself after this, but it never prevailed to any large extent.

"A final settlement of the dispute was one among the other reasons which led Constantine to summon the council at Nicaea in 325. At that time the Syrians and Antiochenes were the solitary champions of the observance of the 14th day. The decision of the council was unanimous that Easter was to be kept on Sunday, and on the same Sunday throughout the world, and that 'none hereafter should follow the blindness of the Jews.'" (That is, in plain language, the Catholic church now decreed that none should be allowed to follow the ways of CHRIST—of the TRUE Christian church!)

" . . . The few who afterwards separated themselves from the unity of the church" (Roman church), "and continued to keep the 14th day, were named '*Quarto-decimani*,' and the dispute itself is known as the '*Quarto-deciman* controversy.'"

Thus you see how the politically organized church at Rome grew to great size and power by adopting popular pagan practices; how she gradually stamped out the true teachings, doctrines, and practices of CHRIST, and the true Church, so far as any collective practice is concerned.

It was only by violence and bloodshed, at last, says Hislop, (*The Two Babylons*, P 107) that the idolatrous festival of the Chaldean goddess Easter came to supersede that which God had ordained to be observed forever!

True Christians Kept PASSOVER

The New Testament reveals that Jesus, the apostles, and the New Testament Church, both Jewish and Gentile-born,

observed God's Sabbaths, and God's festivals—weekly and annually! Take your Bible and carefully read Acts 2:1; 12:3-4 (the word "Easter" here is a flagrant false translation in "King James" version—originally inspired "Passover," and so corrected in the Revised version); Acts 18:21; 20:6; 20:16; I Cor. 16:8.

Eusebius, historian of the early centuries of the Church, speaks of the true Christians observing Passover on the 14th of Nisan, first month of the sacred calendar.

The historian Gieseler wrote that "the Gentile Christians observed also the Sabbath and the Passover," during the latter half of the first century.

But as the false paganized Church grew in size and political power, decrees were passed by 363 A.D. imposing the death sentence upon Christians found keeping God's Sabbath, or God's festivals. Finally, in order to keep the true Way of God, a large portion of the true Christians (composing the true Church) "fled into the wilderness," as foretold in Rev. 12:6, where they were fed on the pure Word of God 1260 long years!

But another large portion of the TRUE Church of God, failing to flee, yet remaining true to God's Truth, paid with their lives in martyrdom (Rev. 6:9; 13:15; 17:6; 18:24). History records that more than 50 million were martyred!

They loved obedience to God more than their lives! DO YOU?

But through all generations, thru every century, though persecuted, scattered, unrecognized by the world, many true Christians have kept alive the TRUE CHURCH OF GOD—the Church composed of those Satan cannot deceive! (Mat. 24:24.)

Easter Sun-Rise Services

You think Easter sun-rise services beautiful? LISTEN! God was showing the prophet Ezekiel the sins of His people in a vision—a prophecy for today! "Turn thee yet again," said God, "and thou shalt see greater abominations than these" (Ezekiel had just been shown, in vision, idol-worship among professing people of God). "And he brought me (in vision) into the inner court of the Eternal's house, and behold . . . between the porch and the altar were about five and twenty men, with . . . *their faces toward the east; and they worshipped the sun toward the east.* Then he said unto me, Hast thou seen this, O son of man? *Is it a light thing . . .* that they commit the ABOMINATIONS which they commit here? . . . Therefore will I deal IN FURY: mine eye shall not spare, neither will I have pity: and though they cry in mine ears with a loud voice, yet *will I not hear them!*" (Jer. 8:15-18.)

Do you grasp what this *most abominable thing* is?

It is the same identical thing millions are doing every Easter Sunday morning—the sun-rise service—standing with *their faces toward the east*, as the SUN is rising, in a service of worship which honors the SUN and his mythical idolatrous consort goddess Easter. Yes, deceived into believing this is *Christian*, millions practice every Easter the identical form of the ancient SUN-WORSHIP of the Sun-god BAAL! Throughout the Bible this is revealed as THE MOST ABOMINABLE of all idolatry in the sight of the Eternal Creator!

Do you think this makes no difference, today? *It makes all the difference between life and death—between being SAVED, and LOST!*

It is a serious thing to write to you, my readers, these truths—for now you have the KNOWLEDGE of the TRUTH! And "if we sin willfully after we have received the knowledge of the truth, there remaineth no more sacrifice for sins, but a CERTAIN fearful looking for of judgment and fiery indignation, which shall devour the adversaries!" (Heb. 10:26-27.)

Yes, it makes a difference! Thousands had to flee the jurisdiction of "civilization" to keep God's ways! Other thousands paid with their lives for obeying God—but they shall LIVE forever, in the Resurrection!

This world's ways have brought only sorrow, suffering, chaos, death! GOD'S WAYS are the only ways that lead to Peace, lasting Prosperity, Happiness, Joy, Eternal Life! If Baal be god, then go serve him; but if The ETERNAL is your God, then SERVE HIM!

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!

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