

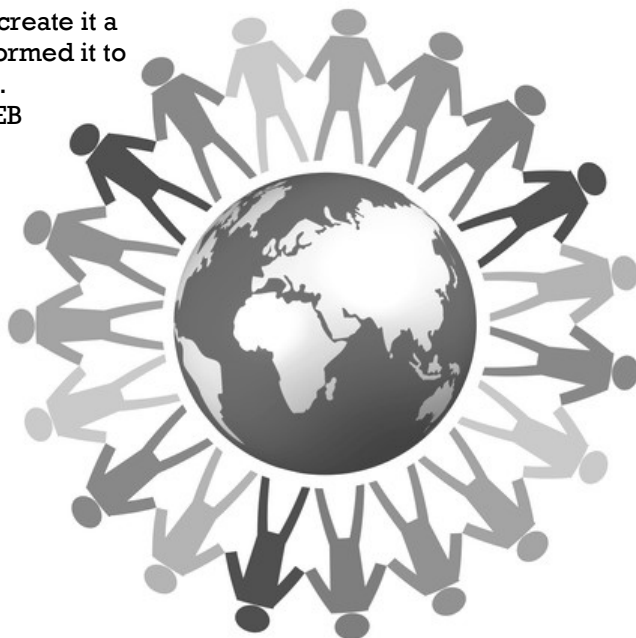
# BIBLE STUDY MONTHLY

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For Yahweh who created  
the heavens, the God who  
formed the earth and  
made it, who established  
it and didn't create it a  
waste, who formed it to  
be inhabited.

Isa. 45:18 WEB



## Contents

Thought for the Month	202
Fear Not	204
Ten Visions of Christ Triumphant—Pt. 1	208
Eldad and Medad	214
The Bible's Song of Love—Foreword	218
God's Poem	219
Hark! the Herald Angels Sing—A hymn	222
At the End of the Years	224
The Gathering Home of Saints—Pt. 9	228
The Highway of Holiness	231
Where Will Everyone Live?	236
Notices	239
Index	240

# BIBLE STUDY MONTHLY

FOUNDED 1924

The Bible Study Monthly, published to promote knowledge of the Bible, sees the Scriptures as a true record of God's dealings with the human race, needing to be understood in our generation. It stands for the pre-millennial advent of our Lord, and His reign of peace and justice on the earth.

*"Speaking the truth in love, we must grow up in every way into him who is the head, into Christ."* (Ephesians 4:15 NRSV)

The Bible Study Monthly is sent free of charge on request to all who are genuinely interested. It should never be sold for money.  
Secretary & Treasurer: Nicholas Charcharos

## THOUGHT FOR THE MONTH

*"For Yahweh who created the heavens, the God who formed the earth and made it, who established it and didn't create it a waste, who formed it to be inhabited."* (Isa. 45:18 WEB)

God formed the earth to be inhabited is a promise that the Creator has left for us to acknowledge now. He also said the earth abides forever. (Eccl. 1:4) At this time we are seeing fires on the west coast of America. The BBC says "four million acres have gone up in flames across the west coast." This has left major cities like Portland, Oregon and San Francisco covered by smog for days and residents living with hazardous levels of air quality. The Amazon forest has gone up in fire again this year during the dry season. Last year, according to the BBC "Brazil's biggest city, Sao Paulo went dark because of the smoke." Australia had fires last winter which were unprecedented. However we have God's promises that the earth will not be destroyed.

There are many other promises for all humankind, for all the inhabitants of the world. Like to Abraham that in his seed would all the families of the earth be blessed. (Gen. 12:3) There is a wideness in God's mercy that covers the whole of our planet and at the time of Jesus' birth simple men and women like Anna, Elizabeth, Mary and Simeon knew it and some even looked for it.

Many events had to happen from the results of Christ's First Advent before the Lord could return to earth to complete the work of world

conversion and reconciliation that God should be all in all in due time. (1 Cor. 15:28)

The angels singing at the birth of the Lord Jesus was the inspiration for the hymn, “Hark the herald angels sing.” That hymn concludes with the idea of a “second birth” and brings to mind the psalmist who wrote that everything that hath breath will praise God. (Psalm 150:6)

In the fullness of time, when the last member of the church has left this present world for their heavenly home, a highway of holiness will be made open for a time of peace and good health, where nothing shall hurt nor destroy (Isa. 35:8; 11:9) and the remainder of the ransomed in the Kingdom will begin their way to mount Zion and harmony with their Creator on this planet which has been specially formed to be inhabited and be once again declared “very good.”



### THY KINGDOM COME

We have learned it, we have sung it,  
We have prayed it o'er and o'er,  
We believe it, nations need it,  
Let us ask it more and more.  
    May thy Kingdom come!

A new tomorrow without sorrow,  
Christ shall rule in righteousness.  
Wars all ceasing, peace increasing,  
All his name shall then confess.  
    May thy kingdom come!

Need we wonder? Need we ponder?  
“Faith can trust him, come what may.”  
Jesus taught it, all have sought it,  
Yes, that bright Millennial day.  
    May thy Kingdom come!

Keep on hoping, keep on praying  
For that Kingdom promised long.  
Age of gladness, no more sadness,  
Right shall rule instead of wrong.  
    When thy Kingdom come!



*Poems of The Way*

Magazine content; What is published is believed to have a wide interest, but everything printed may not necessarily be the opinion of the editor and his colleagues.

## FEAR NOT

Reflections for Christmas and the New Year

*“Do not be afraid, Mary, for you have found favour with God.”*  
(Luke 1:30 RSV)

There can be few people in the world who would not find being confronted by an angel rather terrifying. Mary, Jesus’ mother, seems to have been very disturbed although this may have been caused by what the angel said as well as his actual presence there with her. So came those words used to others in a similar situation *“Fear not.”* Zechariah was another who found the words and presence of the celestial visitor very strange and was told to “fear not.” Joseph responded similarly to Mary and whatever the exact cause of the reaction he was told not to fear. Even after Pentecost, Peter had a feeling of confusion when the angel led him out of the prison. These reactions were not altogether surprising since angels did not assume a physical form very frequently during the history of Israel, and there had been prophetic silence during the past four hundred years. In that period of silence God had not been inactive and there were still godly men and women in Israel. That at least is clear from the presence in the Temple of the aged Anna and Simeon when Jesus was presented with His mother. There were those in Jerusalem who looked for God’s deliverance and with whom God had maintained contact. There had just not been any outward dramatic appearances of messengers from heaven. It is a point to ponder that they do not become visible very often in our human world. They were usually sent to those men and women whose hearts and lives demonstrated they were ready to receive and listen to them. Yet the devout followers of the Lord Jesus by and large have missed out on this privilege. Were an angel to appear in our lives, most of us would go into deep shock; terrified like the shepherds out on the Judaeon hill the night Jesus was born. The angel would say to us as he did to those now famous shepherds, “fear not.”

Gabriel was not an ordinary angel. He was one who stood in the presence of God and was therefore one who went on very special missions and this was a special mission! This was the greatest and most extraordinary event in the lives of men and women on the earth. It was the great turning point in history when the Son of God entered the world of men, to begin the long awaited process to eradicate sin from the earth and reconcile all mankind to their Creator. The more we ponder the thought, the more stupendous it becomes. Yet Mary would have been looking forward to a time when God would make Himself known to His people and rescue them from their plight. Perhaps like Simeon, she knew that God would

eventually bring light to the nations and remembered the promise to Abraham that his descendants would bless “all families of the earth.” Mary was not only a daughter of Abraham, she was also a descendant of David. Through the centuries the believing souls in Israel knew about the messianic promises from God and that some day He would place a king of David’s line on the throne. However great the longing for such an event, when faced with the reality, it came as a surprise. Mary was not living in a palace as a princess. She was engaged to a lowly carpenter, a ‘tekton’—more likely to have been the local craftsman and builder. They would live in a very small house, flat roofed and with a stairway at the side. Their one room would probably be shared with their few animals and it was quite usual to have a manger in a peasant’s home. Was it into such a place that the mighty angel from the presence of the eternal God greeted Mary? It was rather dark, for there were not many windows and only small, smelly oil lamps. How bright the heavenly visitor would be; dazzling in fact. Gabriel would speak Hebrew, of course, or would it be Aramaic, the language of the ordinary folk? What really mattered was that the angel had come to Mary, a lass who was little more than a girl and of humble background. Why out of all Israel, of all the people of the Roman world, of all peoples that had ever lived on earth, had the Almighty Creator chosen this honoured servant. What a fantastic privilege! God doesn’t make mistakes and nothing is too hard for Him. He had found just the one who could fill a unique place in His purpose and who would not be spoiled by it. That Mary was the one with the right attitude is clear from the wonderful song that she sang to her cousin Elizabeth. She knew that it was God’s principle, to select for His work, those who would be obedient and not usually those who had riches and worldly honour. The great ones of the world just haven’t enough time to listen to God. They are so busy with their little schemes for running the world.

Mary would never forget that encounter with Gabriel through all the years that were to follow. After the visit to Judaea to see Elizabeth, there would be the long journey to Bethlehem and then on to Egypt. There was the return to Nazareth and the long years of Jesus growing up. He was not like other boys, just as He was not going to be like other men. It’s not always easy for a mother to take that kind of thing. There were more of these visits of messengers from the heavenly courts telling Joseph and Mary of their next move. When angels were no longer necessary Mary learned to rely upon her son, just as we have to do. Jesus told his disciples several times not to fear.

The word ‘fear’ is not in itself a bad word and as William Barclay

explains in his book *New Testament Words*, it is a neutral word which can have either a good or a bad meaning depending on its context and the way it is used. There is a fear that is akin to panic and makes us want to run away. This is how the disciples felt in the boat during the storm. They also felt afraid in the presence of the power of God when Jesus did miracles. There is a fear which stands in awe of something wonderful and powerful. Our attitude to water illustrates this. Water is a most wonderful substance in all kinds of ways and makes our planet a suitable home for life. The majority of the Earth's surface is covered with water. It forms the major part of living organisms and we can't survive long without it. Most children discover early that water is fun, yet it can destroy life very readily and it has immense force when it is moving. An example of attitudes to water can be shown in a child who very capably handles a canoe without fear. That confidence rapidly disappears beneath the fearsome force of Niagara Falls. Yet such fear is not a bad thing but a sensible warning to the child not to take liberties with power beyond its ability. We stand in awe of the mighty forces of nature.

*"Perfect love banishes fear"* (1 John 4:18 NEB) wrote the Apostle John because as love develops and matures there is no fear of God's punishment and judgment. What was wrong with Zechariah's attitude and how did he differ from Mary? The priest's problem was unbelief. It wasn't just awe that he expressed as he listened to the angel from heaven. He still needed to take the first steps of faith in spite of his exalted office. Mary's fear was due to the awesome and majestic figure of Gabriel as he stood before her. The happening was outside her previous experience. Nevertheless she believed Gabriel and readily accepted what he told to her. It is easier for some folk to do that than for others. We have such complicated minds and lives that something new from God is sometimes hard to accept.

*"If our love were but more simple,  
We should take Him at His Word  
And our lives would be all sunshine  
In the sweetness of our Lord."*

To remember the coming of the Son of God to earth as a baby, should give us courage. We look forward to meeting Him face to face for the first time. The consequences of that meeting should not make us fearful. He will see to it that we are ready for the meeting. There need be no fear for our own well-being and safety. They are in the hands of the Lord who once was cradled in Mary's arms and while dying was concerned for that mother's welfare. There need be no fear for our loved ones, however hard

the parting, because they too are in the hands of Jesus who once stretched out his hands in death to give us life. Christmas has a message of hope and joy and peace. Let us not be afraid as we enter another year however momentous it may prove to be. It will be another year for Him and with Him wherever we spend it.

*DN*

**THERE'S a wideness in God's mercy,**  
Like the wideness of the sea;  
There's a kindness in His justice,  
Though severe His judgments be,  
Search the Scriptures, search and see  
Wisdom's wondrous harmony.

There's no place where earthly sorrows  
Are more felt than up in Heaven;  
There's no place where earthly failings  
Have such kindly judgment given.  
Search the Scriptures, search and see,  
God in mercy judgeth thee.

For the love of God is broader  
Than the measure of man's mind;  
And the heart of the Eternal  
Is most wonderfully kind.  
Search the Scriptures, search and see,  
God's great kindness unto thee.

But men make His love too narrow  
By false limits of their own,  
And they magnify His vengeance  
With a zeal He will not own.  
Search the Scriptures, search and see  
God's grand law of equity.

If our faith is true and simple,  
We will take Him at His word,  
And our lives will be all sunshine  
In the sweetness of our Lord.  
Search the Scriptures, search and see,  
Let their records gladden thee.

*Bible Students Hymnal*



## TEN VISIONS OF CHRIST TRIUMPHANT

### Part 1 The Ascension

The ten visions of Christ triumphant are contained within the scope of that mystic allegory penned by John the Apostle under inspiration of the Holy Spirit and entitled the “*Apokalupsis*”—the unveiling or the Revelation. The Book as a whole depicts the conflict between good and evil, between the powers of Heaven and the powers of this world, between Christ the Lord and Satan the Adversary, commencing from the time of our Lord’s First Advent and culminating at the end of the Millennial Age when evil has been forever banished and “every thing that hath breath (shall) praise the LORD.” (Psa. 150:6) Within this whole assemblage of vivid pictures and highly coloured scenes there shine out like jewels these ten tableaux, each delineating the characteristics of one or another aspect of our Lord’s office and work during this period. Five of the pictures relate to the results of his First Advent and five to those of his Second. Between them all they afford an absorbing presentation of what happened, is happening, and will happen in the unseen world after Christ had risen from the dead and ascended into the presence of the Father, throughout this present Age, and until his promised return is fully accomplished and He is the acknowledged King and Shepherd of our terrestrial creation for the purpose of reconciling all, of all generations, who can be reconciled, to the Father, that God may be all in all. (1 Cor. 15:28)

The writer to the Hebrews was inspired to a rare level of insight when he penned the immortal words “*We see Jesus.*” (Heb. 2:9) He was not talking of the physical. The disciples before him had seen Jesus physically for three and a half years, and standing on Olivet they saw him still, ascending visibly before their eyes until the cloud received him out of their sight and they saw him no more. They never set eyes upon him again; yet they continued to see him to the end of their days. We who live now, who have never seen him in the flesh, see him by the eye of the mind, and we see him, not so much in manlike form as was his appearance in the towns and villages of Judea and Galilee, but in the guise of his activities and his work, his ministration, and execution of the Father’s purposes, as they are revealed to us in the Scriptures. “*Though we have known Christ after the flesh, yet now we know him so no more.*” (2 Cor. 5:16 ASV) And therefore these pictures in the Book of Revelation reveal to us Christ, not as He was, but as He is, and as He will be.

So we come to **Vision One**, which starts at the beginning and tells of the death and resurrection of Christ. But not as those momentous events were



seen by man. That aspect had already been recorded by men who were there at the time, set down as sober history in plain, unvarnished words. When we read those narratives we do so against the scenery and background of this material world and we can visualise the scenes very much as they would appear before our own natural eyes were we also witnesses. Here in the Revelation the story is related from the viewpoint of an observer on the other side of the veil, and for that reason has to be described in the guise of symbol and allegory so that we can understand.

*“There appeared a great wonder in heaven; a woman clothed with the sun, and the moon under her feet, and upon her head a crown of twelve stars.”* (Rev. 12:1) A woman, standing resplendent in the full radiance of the sun behind and around her, her feet resting upon the moon, and twelve stars of heaven woven together to form a scintillating crown set upon her head. Here is fulfilment of prophecy and a clear exposition of Scripture doctrine. The promise to Eve in Eden was that the seed of the woman should bruise the serpent’s head. Here in Rev. 12 we have the opening scene of the enthralling drama the culmination of which is the achievement of that promise. Here are the Woman, the Seed, and the Serpent.

This twelfth chapter is set at the time of the First Advent. The Woman is Israel; not the hard-hearted, unbelieving apostate generation which was inhabiting Judea and Galilee when Jesus lived on earth, but the ideal Israel of which the prophets had spoken, the faithful “remnant” which God had promised to preserve throughout the generations until Christ should come. That remnant was represented in Jesus’ day by all those “that looked for redemption (deliverance) in Jerusalem” (Luke 2:38), and it was of this “remnant,” the true Israel, that the seed which is Christ (Gal. 3:16), the Messiah, came. So, in Rev. 12, the Woman, the true Israel, in the fulness of time gave birth to the Man-child who is destined, in his Millennial reign, to rule all nations with a “rod of iron” (literally, to shepherd all nations with a shepherding club; the Eastern shepherd carried a *shebet*, an iron club with which to beat a way for the flock through undergrowth and to defend the sheep from the attacks of wild beasts).

But the serpent was waiting. The great red dragon stood before the Woman to devour her child as soon as it was born. The serpent-dragon is a symbol of Satan, the archenemy of God and man. (It should be noted that in mediaeval English of the time that the A.V. was produced “serpent” and “dragon” were synonymous words and either in the A.V. has the same meaning.) The idea of the dragon as the embodiment of the prince of evil goes back to very ancient times—even to the story of the

Garden of Eden. The pagan temple of Marduk in Babylon was guarded by eight gigantic *sirussu*, dragons made of burnished copper (the ruddy colour of which gives rise to the “red” dragon here). The power of Satan at the time of our Lord’s birth was manifested through the force of paganism, for Rome ruled the world and Rome was wedded to paganism, the worship of false gods. All the enemies of the man-child were pagan or supporters of pagan Rome—Pilate, the priests, Herod—they all served Caesar and Caesar was the embodiment and representative of paganism. It was this pagan power which accomplished the death of the “then Christ Jesus.”

But the seed was not destroyed! *“The dragon stood before the woman...to devour her child as soon as it was born...and her child was caught up unto God, and to his throne.”* (Rev. 12:4-5) How much there is in Scripture to tell us of that great truth! Peter, speaking on the Day of Pentecost, boldly declared *“Therefore let all the house of Israel know assuredly, that God hath made that same Jesus, whom ye have crucified, both Lord and Christ.”* (Acts 2:36) The fundamental requirement of God’s redemptive Plan had been satisfied—the seed of the Woman according to Edenic promise, the seed of Abraham according to promise, the scion (heir) of the house of David according to promise, the Lion of the tribe of Judah according to promise, all have been fulfilled in the person and in the triumphant resurrection of the Lord Christ. The dragon had been frustrated and henceforth, though still active, his ultimate destiny was sealed. Christ had ascended to the right hand of God, there to wait, as the writer to the Hebrews says, until the time comes for his enemies to be made his footstool.

From this point the vision of Rev. 12 goes on to speak of other things, of the efforts put forth by the Dragon to retain his power and inflict grievous harm upon those who in after days would become servants of and followers of the man-child. Not until the end of the Book of Revelation is the Dragon finally disposed of and by that time the whole of the Ten Visions have appeared and given their testimony and run their course.

**Vision Two** shows something of what happened after the man-child had been caught up unto the throne of God. It reveals the scene in Heaven itself when the triumphant Redeemer returned to the heavenly sphere after his sojourn on earth. *“It became him”* says the writer to the Hebrews in Heb. 2:10 *“to make the captain of their salvation perfect through sufferings.”* That is the basis of the heavenly acclamation which greeted the Lord of glory on his entry into his spiritual home. *“Thou art worthy”*

they sang *“thou wast slain, and hast redeemed us to God by thy blood out of every kindred, and tongue, and people, and nation.”* (Rev. 5:9) The whole of Revelation chapters 4 to 6 enshrines what is known as the Throne scene, in which the Almighty himself is depicted holding high court in Heaven to receive and applaud the victorious Christ returning from earth, having triumphed over death and the grave. And because of this triumph he is pronounced worthy to open the book of the future and break the seven seals which kept closed its pages, that He might become the Executor of the Divine Plan and go forth to set in motion and control those forces which are to influence and direct the events of the ensuing world-age. *“The Lion of the Tribe of Juda, the Root of David,”* one of the elders sang *“hath prevailed, to open the book, and to loose the seven seals thereof.”* (Rev. 5:5) And angels to the number of millions of myriads answered back *“Worthy is the Lamb that was slain to receive power, and riches, and wisdom, and strength, and honour, and glory, and blessing.”* (Rev. 5:12)

So the triumphant Lord took the Book of the Future out of the hand of the Almighty seated upon the Throne, and began to break the seals, one after another. That book was the prophetic record of the Gospel Age, then about to open, an advance written history of events which had not yet taken place. Herein was depicted all those things—wars, famines, pestilences; evangelism, martyrdom and finally world judgment—which the Lord had mercifully hidden from the minds of his disciples during that memorable conversation on the Mount of Olives when they had asked him for the signs of his return. *“Ye shall hear of wars and rumours of wars”* He had said, *“and there shall be famines, and pestilences, and earthquakes...but the end is not yet.”* (Matt. 24:6-7) Long years afterward when John, sitting on the rocky shore of Patmos, beheld this vision, he may have understood more clearly what those words portended. Here in Rev. 5, at any rate, we have a clear picture of the triumphant Lord taking the book and breaking the seals in succession, revealing the hidden pictures inside, pictures delineating things which must surely come to pass during that long term of years which in the wisdom of God must elapse before the Lord could return to earth to complete the work of world conversion and reconciliation.

Do we see in this vision of the progressively opening book with all its varied scenes a kind of heavenly conference in which all that was destined to come to pass was as it were laid out in detail and discussed, and the time scale determined, that the Lord might know exactly what was to intervene before He must leave the celestial realm for the second time to

come to earth. Jesus did plainly tell his disciples just before his death that *“of that day and that hour knoweth no man, no, not the angels...in heaven, neither the Son, but the Father.”* (Mark 13:32) Was it at this supreme heavenly session that the secret was imparted to our Lord and that with this book in his hand, He knew, at last, both the day and the hour?

The opening of the book was at least a revelation to the bystander, for John, beholding the vision, was also able to see what was in the book and what he saw is recorded in his sixth chapter. The events and the order of the events followed very closely, albeit perhaps in greater detail, the outline Jesus gave his disciples when giving them the signs betokening his Advent, prior to his death. First came the rider on the white horse with crown and bow, the primitive evangelism of the infant church going out in the power of its commission to teach all nations, and its conquest of paganism three centuries later; then the red horse of war, followed by the black horse of famine and the ghastly horse of pestilence—war, famine, pestilence, the three devastating forces of the Age predicted by Jesus. After that the cries of the martyrs, suffering for their faithfulness to the cause of Christ, and finally the great earthquake and universal confusion of the cataclysmic conclusion to the Age when the rule of man utterly collapses and the way is open for the Son of Man to appear and take the Kingdom. All that, and perhaps more, was shown in the pictures revealed by the opening of the sealed book and perhaps it was from the time of this heavenly session at which such momentous happenings were foreseen that it can be said the history of the Gospel Age actually began.

What does this vision teach us? Does it not make plain that the events of this Gospel Age are under the control of the Son of Man himself? “The Father judgeth no man, but hath committed all judgment unto the Son.” (John 5:22) “All power is given unto me in heaven and in earth.” (Matt. 28:18) The work of the Lord is with the development of his Church during this Age. We know that. The Age is set aside for the calling out and the perfecting of this “people for God’s Name” (Acts 15:14) and until that work is finished the Lord’s work on behalf of mankind in general cannot commence. We know that also, and since all this is in the hands of the Son, and He is our High Priest and our Shepherd, it would seem from this chapter that He has control over the course of the Age and the events of the Age and all that has to do with the Age, that He might bend all things in this Age and in this world to serve the one great purpose of this Age—the development and perfecting of the Church. That seems to be the spiritual meaning behind this vision of the sealed book. The Lord controls the sending out of the white horse of evangelism,

the red horse of war, the black horse of famine, and the ghastly horse of pestilence. He watches over the souls of the martyrs and holds them safely in the sleep of death until the time for their resurrection, and He so overrules earth’s political and social affairs that the time of judgment that is to conclude the Age comes to its climax neither too soon nor too late, but just at the time fore-ordained by God. No wonder the angels sang “*Worthy is the Lamb...to receive power, and riches, and wisdom, and strength, and honour, and glory, and blessing.*” (Rev. 5:12)

This then is the scene in heaven, enduring through the Gospel Age as the Lamb breaks one seal after another, revealing to angels and men alike what is to come next. To the extent that these mystic happenings can be related to mankind’s ideas of time all this has to be placed during the ten days intervening between the Ascension and the coming of the Holy Spirit at Pentecost, for at that latter time the next vision in sequence takes the stage, the office of our Lord as High Priest, Counsellor, Shepherd, Guide and Helper to the Church from beyond the veil. The third vision, that of our Lord among the lampstands, recorded in Revelation chapters 1 to 3 and picturing his Age-enduring care for his Church, pictures this.

Vision 1      Rev. 12:1-6  
 Vision 2      Rev. 5:5-14  
 Vision 3      Rev. 1:10-3:22

*To be continued*

*Next time—Vision 3  
 AOH*



### A BALLAD OF TREES AND THE MASTER

Into the woods my Master went,  
 Clean forspent, forspent.  
 Into the woods my Master came,  
 Forspent with love and shame.  
 But the olives they were not blind to him,  
 The little gray leaves were kind to him:  
 The thorn-tree had a mind to him  
     When into the woods he came.

Out of the woods my Master went,  
 And he was well content.  
 Out of the woods my Master came,  
 Content with death and shame.  
 When death and shame would woo him last,  
 From under the trees they drew him last:  
 ’Twas on a tree they slew him—last  
     When out of the woods he came.



*Sidney Lanier*

## ELDAD AND MEDAD

Eldad and Medad had been slaves in Egypt. Born slaves of a nation of slaves, they hardly dared hope that deliverance would come in their own lifetime, until Moses came their way. The name of Moses had been familiar for many years to all their friends and acquaintances in the slave village which was their home. He was a great man and lived at the King's Palace, and was reputedly the son of the King's daughter. Eldad and Medad knew better; it was whispered from mouth to mouth, when the Egyptian taskmasters were looking the other way, that Moses was in reality one of themselves. Some of their own kindred had seen and spoken with his father and mother. Miriam his sister, and Aaron his brother, were slaves like themselves. There was a reason, too, for Moses being at the King's Palace. He was learning all the wisdom of the Egyptians so that one day he could lead the slaves out of their bondage into a land where they could live as free men. Eldad and Medad, young men both, straightened their backs and their eyes glowed with pride and hope as they talked about that. They had been brought up by godly parents and although very few of their fellow-slaves believed in God or had any hope that He might one day deliver, Eldad and Medad had been well instructed in the ancient stories of their ancestors and they knew of God's promise to their forefather Abraham, that after many years in Egypt He would cause them to be delivered. There was no outward evidence that the time had yet come or was anywhere near, nevertheless there were days when they hoped, and talked with brighter eyes and fast-beating hearts.

Then came the bitter disappointment when Moses left the King's Palace and disappeared—none knew where. There was talk of some trouble; an Egyptian overseer had been killed and Moses was concerned in it; no one seemed to know much about the details but one thing was definite—Moses was no longer their hoped-for champion. Eldad and Medad conversed about it at times but for the most part they kept their thoughts to themselves, even yet hoping against hope that in some wonderful way God might remember them and fulfil his promise.

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They had waited a long time—forty years since the disappearance of Moses and in all that long period no sign that God either knew or cared. Eldad and Medad were no longer young men now; they had both passed their three score years and began to find the daily task of brickmaking strangely arduous, much more so than of yore. But there were compensations. To the little circle of slaves that, unlike the majority of their fellows,

refused to worship the gods of Egypt but held fast to the dim traditions of Abraham and the promise, Eldad and Medad had become pillars of strength. They still believed, strong in faith, and looked daily for the coming of the Deliverer. Somehow there was in them the workings of a Spirit, telling them that the time would not be much longer delayed...

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He came with breathless haste, that young man, so zealous for the honour of his master and leader, the great Moses. From the centre of the camp of Israel he had run, across the level sand shimmering in the blinding glare of the noon-day sun, to where Moses stood at the gate of the Tabernacle. The seventy elders, grave, dignified sons of Israel, supremely conscious of their position of ministers to the Lord's people, made way somewhat reluctantly to give him access to the Leader. Joshua, taut and rigid in his soldier's attire, stepped forward a half pace, hand on sword, almost as if to challenge the newcomer's progress. Only Moses remained calm, unruffled.

The runner halted, panting. He was almost out of breath, but not so much that he could not turn and point, with not altogether steady finger, to the dense crowd of men and women which could be discerned, even at this distance, in the great space at the centre of the black goatskin tents. He spoke, hurriedly, his voice one in which subservience and indignation were strangely mingled, and as he spoke the enquiring eyes of the listening elders sought the face of Moses and remained fixed on him. "*Eldad and Medad do prophesy in the camp!*" (Num. 11:26-27)

It was true! While the rest of the elders of Israel had gathered at the Tabernacle to hear the instructions of God at the mouth of Moses, the Divine Spirit had rested upon those two who had remained back there in the Camp and now they were telling them of the things of God, without any mandate or permission from Moses the Leader. Disapproval showed itself on each countenance; resentment that these two men should apparently have appointed themselves to proclaim and teach the truth of God without waiting for or seeking an ordination from Moses the accepted leader of the people in things relating to their covenant with God. A whispering began, a shaking of heads; these two men were surely slighting the company of the elders, setting up their own judgment as against the judgment of the majority. This independence of thought and action ought to be stopped; the Lord surely had already shown that his favour was with the organised body of elders and the priesthood in whose care reposed the Tabernacle and all its ceremonies. What right had these

two, owning responsibility to no influential company in Israel, subject to no kind of control from priest or prince, to assert for themselves the privilege of preaching to the people? Surely Moses would quickly put a stop to this incipient heresy. He had been in the mountain with God and had spoken with God and God had given him the Law which he had written with his own finger; Moses would surely very soon put these upstarts in their proper place. The elders turned towards him expectantly, still burning with indignation at this audacity. "*Eldad and Medad do prophesy in the camp.*"

Joshua had sprung forward, his youthful features alive with fiery zeal. The hand grasping the sword twitched nervously. There was outraged loyalty and hot jealousy for his Leader's honour in his tone, as he cried impetuously "My lord Moses, forbid them!" (Num. 11:28)

The magnificent figure of Moses stood motionless, his clear eyes piercing into the distance straight to those two dynamic forms in the middle of the crowd, moving from side to side and gesturing with hand and arm as they addressed the multitude. Long did he gaze, and slowly withdrew his eyes from viewing that distant scene to turn them upon those who now crowded around him so closely. He looked upon the runner, waiting before him, so secure in his knowledge of duty well done; upon the righteous elders, every movement of their robes betokening the quivering of outraged dignity; upon Joshua, standing there in wrathful indignation; and as he looked, the keen eyes suddenly softened, the stern lips, almost hidden by the shaggy beard, parted in a half smile and in an indulgent, almost fatherly tone, he asked them "*Enviest thou for my sake?*" (Num. 11:29) The strong hands moved suddenly in a gesture of entreaty; the fine eyes looked upward with an expression of unutterable longing. "*WOULD GOD*" cried the great Prophet of Israel "*WOULD (TO) GOD THAT ALL THE LORD'S PEOPLE WERE PROPHETS, AND THAT THE LORD WOULD PUT HIS SPIRIT UPON THEM!*" (v.29)

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More than three thousand years have passed since that memorable day. We have not learned the lesson yet. We, many of us, still circle around our favourite leader, our favourite organisation, our favourite avenue of service, and refuse to admit to ourselves the supreme truth that God, Who has all the resources of all his creation at his command, all the heart's devotion and life's endeavour of all who have given their lives to him on which to call, is not limited to one means of expression or one channel of revelation in the world of men. The One Who "hath made every thing



beautiful in his time:” (Eccl. 3:11) Who has evolved the flowers and the trees, the insects and the birds, the mountains and the valleys, into a thousand different forms and has never made any one sunset exactly like another must surely be pleased to beautify his truth with the same variety of expression and diversity of ministration. The Apostle Paul tells us as much. Does he not say “*there are diversities of gifts, but the same Spirit. And there are differences of administrations, but the same Lord. And there are diversities of operations, but it is the same God which worketh all in all...all these worketh that one and the selfsame Spirit, dividing to every man severally as he will*” (1 Cor. 12. 4-11)? We must needs be positive in our own beliefs in Divine Truth and zealous in the discharge of the work that has been committed to our hands; that does not entitle us to assume that there can be no other acceptable service for our Lord nor that none who have not received their ordination to ministry through our own channel can share in the overshadowing of the Holy Spirit. No single well can give forth all the stored waters of the earth and no one river can carry all the rainfall from the heavens; neither can any one of us comprehend, far less expound and minister, more than the veriest fraction of the accumulated treasures of wisdom and knowledge that are gathered up within God’s holy Word.

Let us then in our own service and ministry bear this great truth in mind and look with sympathetic brotherliness upon all who are serving with their talents our gracious Master. Let us seek to find true fellowship wherever the Spirit of Christ is manifest and let us, in our own allegiance to the things we ourselves have received, try to help, rather than hinder, those who are labouring in a different corner of the vineyard. The disciples tried once to restrain one who “followed not (with) us,” and Jesus reproved them. “*Forbid him not*” He said, “*for there is no man that shall do a miracle in my name, that can lightly speak evil of me.*” (Mark 9:38-40) When Peter, more concerned about the Lord’s intentions for others than for himself, asked “Lord, what shall this man do?” (John 21:21) he was told, very kindly but none the less plainly, to mind his own business and see to the execution of his own commission. “*Go thou and preach the gospel.*” So with us; we enter most into the spiritual presence of our Lord if we realise that He is conducting a great work here on earth in this our day; that to each one of us is committed some very small and yet some very definite and very important part of that work; that we individually are not permitted to view the whole work in its entirety and indeed could not do so, but that our Master has all the threads in his own strong hands and will bring all together in one harmonious pattern in his own due time. Meanwhile we do well to pray and labour for the increase

of the number of those who will serve the Lord. *“Pray ye...the Lord of the harvest, that He will send forth labourers into his harvest.”* (Matt. 9:38) The need is great, there is room and yet room for all who will come and serve our Lord. Would to God, let this be our prayer, would to God that *all* the Lord’s people were prophets, and that the Lord would put his Spirit upon them!

*AOH*

### **THE BIBLE’S SONG OF LOVE**

Verse by verse through the “Song of Songs”

There are many passages of Scripture which portray human love and the married state (chaste or violated) as illustrations of the relationship between God and His people. Man was created in the image of God and within him there is still some faint reflection of Divine love. This, the noblest quality of Christian character, is the theme on which the Song is based. It is the song of Christ’s love for His Church and of hers for Him.

The Apostle Paul describes the sacred relationship between Christ and His Church as “a great mystery” or secret (Eph. 5:32) and we should not be surprised to find this recorded in veiled language in the Scriptures of the Old Testament which Jesus said “bear witness of Me.”

Next to the Psalms the Song was the favourite book of the Bible with the early Fathers of the Church. Origen’s commentary on it ran to ten volumes, and St. Bernard is reported to have written 86 sermons on the Song and only reached the first verse of Chapter 3. Davidson wrote that “There is reason to believe that the Psalms and the Song of Solomon formed the principal devotional books of our Lord.” Adelaide Newton, writing over 100 years ago, described the book as being “full of Jesus...Jesus as our Bridegroom...and one of the Book’s most outstanding characteristics is that the person of Christ is dwelt on rather than His work and offices. He is loved, so to speak, for His own sake.”

In brief, this is a book of pictures of the relationship of the true Church to her Beloved rather than a connected narrative. It describes poetically the various experiences which arise in the relationship of Christ and the Church during her earthly pilgrimage. It is a parable which teaches us through the simile of human love how we should love Christ.

The Book divides into six parts—First 1:2-2:7; Second 2:8-3:5; Third 3:6-5:1; Fourth 5:2-6:9; Fifth 6:10-8:4; Sixth 8:5-end.

*To be continued*  
*EAA / LB*

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## GOD'S POEM

An inspiring thought is observed in the A.V. rendering of Eph. 2:10. "*For we are his workmanship.*" "Workmanship" is used as a translation of the Greek word "*poiema.*" It is from this word that the word "poem" is derived. It occurs but twice in the New Testament, the other occasion being in Rom. 1:20, there translated "things that are made." "*Poiema*" is from the basic root "*poieo*" which occurs many times, and is translated no less than 353 times by the word "do." A variety of other words are also used to translate it, but all contain the same idea as the word "do." According to its general usage, "*poiema*" does not necessarily mean "poem," but the fact that the Greek word has been transferred into our language by the word "poem" and that the English word is definite and precise in its meaning invests its Greek equivalent with an inspiring thought. Very truly "the Christ" is God's workmanship, and as such it must be a sublime and beautiful work. Even to think of God's handiwork as the creation of a Temple, it must be of beautiful workmanship. But there is something exquisitely beautiful in the thought that the Church is "God's Poem"—God's noblest thought couched in its loveliest form.

Among men who use words as the bricks and mortar of their creative work the poet uses them with the greatest charm. He is like the man who, taking clay, makes it into exquisite china. Like common earthenware, it is made of baked clay, but the moulding is more chaste and delicate, and the finished product more pleasing to the eye. Every word the poet weaves into his creation is at the disposal of every pen but not all brains are invested with poetic power. It is not the mere knowledge of words, nor the ability to choose appropriate words, that makes the poet. Each word must be the right one, it must be in the right place; word must balance word; line must balance line; stanza must balance stanza, and the whole thing must flow in rhythmic cadence smooth as a limpid stream. The thought which it is intended to express must be distributed evenly throughout, and leave its impression clear and complete until the last word is reached. There is a difference between the technique of the good essayist and the poet. Each in his own way makes the right choice of words to express what he has to say, but it may probably be that more people would respond to a noble thought expressed in beautiful verse than in elegant prose. It is not unusual for the impressionable individual to find his soul pulsating more rapidly to the rhythm of a graceful and well-proportioned poem than to the cadence of a well-written essay. The rhythm of the poem grips and impels the senses along, somewhat like the marching tap of the drum or the strong accent of the dance.

When the poem has been born of the deep experience of a child of God, it becomes a living thing. It may reveal a Jordan consecration, a Gethsemane-agony, or a Pentecostal-visitation come to life. It may tell of a secret vitalising contact between the Spirit of the living God with the fervent soul which fused together the glowing words. It is a creation of something more than a string of words or of lovely sounds—something more the rhythm or rhyme of cadence or metre. Behind it is a Divine thought—a living expression of the Spirit of God brought down into this realm of time and sense. Pause for a moment to think of some of the lovely gems of thought which have been forged into living things to enrich the hearts of men. Think of blind George Matheson's "*O Love that wilt not let me go;*" of dying H. F. Lyte's "*Abide with Me; fast falls the eventide;*" of Charles Wesley's\* "*Rock of Ages, cleft for me;*" of Miss Havergal's "*Take my life, and let it be,*" and a hundred other kindred expressions of praise and prayer and worship, every one gushing forth as living waters springing up from the deep places of the soul! Here is something deeper and more compelling than words. To recite all these words one by one from the pages of a dictionary would leave no such soul-stirring influence behind. They are all there for any scribe to pick out and assemble as he will. But it requires more than picking and assembling to make them live. Every poem that leaves its mark upon men must be written first in blood—tracings of the heart's blood on the page of experience of every child of God, as he seeks for, and finds, fellowship with the Holiest of all, before it can be wrought into shape for the printer's page. It must be the outcome of agony and suspense, or throb of pleasure and delight in the secret chambers of "the inner Man," before it can take ordered expression for some other's benefit. It must have grown out of a deep spiritual hunger and tell how that hunger was fully satisfied by supplies of grace, before it can feed another hungry soul. There is always a price to pay before the poet's words can live as vehicles of grace for supplying another life's necessities.

A sublime privilege it is for such gifted singers to become the instruments of Providence. Taking the basic principles of Divine care and Christian experience as stated in the Holy Book, adapting and resetting them to satisfy the modern Christian pilgrim's need so that they serve the ends of Providence in throwing new light on the Way, and distilling new Wine into the Cup for the believer's benefit; all this in the most choice and helpful words which humankind possesses. It is indeed a great honour to be used to express the living thoughts of the Living God to living men. And yet, though the poet sings the sweetest song in the most charming words, there is more behind the words than there is within. The realities

are greater far than the phrase which sets them forth, for the contact of the believer with his Father in the sphere of the “higher life” are things that must be “felt, not told” as the Scotsmen say, things that enter not into the natural heart of man. The natural mind may read and sing the poet’s words without entering this sanctum of holy experience, or realising that another world—a higher world—lies beyond the range of the poet’s song, that only the anointed eye can see and only the spirit begotten mind can understand. Today it is impossible for the natural mind to comprehend the mysteries of the Spirit of God. But in another, better day God intends that men shall understand, in part, if not in full, enough to win and chain his heart to the Throne of God. To that end God is writing the story of His love and travail in the experiences of the Christian Church. He created His greatest work. He is composing a great Poem, every word of which is the right word, a chosen word; every word of which is in its right place; every word of which will tell of the deep passion of His Soul. Every word of this Divine Poem is a living soul, bought out of sin and death at a great price, chosen by the Creator of Holiness, then balanced and adjusted soul with soul, to rhyme and harmonise with the Divine Poet’s thought, so that the whole company shall be perfect in its cadence, spirit, rhythm and metre.

Every child of God is placed “in the Body” today as it has pleased God to place him, but this is only the temporary draft of the poem. The human poet may have need to change or revise his first choice of words, or vary their place in the line or stanza before he is satisfied. The Divine Poet may have need to change His words, or revise their positions before His masterpiece is complete. But He will set them at last in the Body celestial in the position where they will best manifest His thought and purpose. They will together constitute the greatest living manifestation of the Spirit of their Creator, a revelation for all time of the sacrificing love of God during the dark ages while sin reigned supreme, and a gracious Creator worked and waited for the return to righteousness of His erring human sons. This patient; long-suffering Spirit of the Eternal God will be written deep into the very constitution of His Elect, and will tell to the countless myriads of this world, and of other worlds; to come, the deep sense of loss experienced in the heart of God, and of the great things He was constrained and prepared to do to win back the sinner from his evil way. Every soul, therefore, in that exalted Christ—that is, every word in his then finished Poem—must express with emphasis the very truth, all that the Divine poet has ever felt towards His fallen sons, and toward the destructive and abhorrent principle of sin. Every word must ring true to the intent of the Divine Heart, and say to the wide circles of both heaven and earth, and to many worlds yet unborn, exactly what the deeply-yearning Love of God would have it say.

## HARK! THE HERALD ANGELS SING—A HYMN

HARK! the herald angels sing  
 Glory to the new-born king;  
 Peace on earth, and mercy mild,  
 God and sinners reconciled.  
 Joyful, all ye nations rise;  
 Join the triumph of the skies;  
 With the angelic host proclaim,  
 Christ is born in Bethlehem.

Chorus-  
*Hark! the herald an-  
 gels sing  
 Glory to the new-born  
 King.*



Christ by highest heaven adored,  
 Christ the everlasting Lord,

Late in time behold Him come,  
 Offspring of a Virgin's womb:  
 There in flesh the Saviour see;  
 Hail His spotless purity!  
 Pleased as Man with men to dwell,  
 Jesus our Emmanuel.

Hail the heaven-born Prince of  
 Peace!

Hail the Sun of Righteousness!  
 Light and life to all He brings,  
 Risen with healing in His wings:  
 Mild He lays His glory by,  
 Born that man no more may die;  
 Born to raise the sons of earth  
 Born to give them second birth.

Charles Wesley (1707-1788) wrote a poem that forms the basis of this hymn. It was in seven stanzas of four lines with no chorus or refrain. It was first published in 1739 in *Hymns and Sacred Poems*.

It was amended by George Whitefield in 1758. Whitefield was a preacher in the mould of those that were called “Methodists.” Further changes occurred over the years to some degree. During the period when it was written preachers and hymn leaders apparently, according to Andrew Gant, would alter hymns when they wanted to emphasise certain thoughts or points. Although it is reported that the Wesleys did not like people altering their hymns. Vaughan Williams tried to restore a word back to Wesley’s original words but congregations just laughed so the change was farcical.

The tune has a similar story. The basis for the tune that is known so well in the 21<sup>st</sup> century comes from German Jewish composer Mendelssohn who composed it in 1840. He was a superstar in that day according to Gant. The tune first published in 1856 was written by William Hayman Cummings who matched this tune to a version of Wesley’s poem. This tune is known as *Mendelssohn*.

Wherever the words are sung, at home, in a church building, outside or in a concert hall—no carol service would be complete without it.

Here are some Bible verses which are thought to have inspired the writer:  
Matthew 2:1-2 When Jesus was born in Bethlehem...there came wise men from the east...saying, Where is he that is born King of the Jews? for we have seen his star in the east, and are come to worship him.

Romans 5:8-11 (RSV) God shows his love for us in that while we were yet sinners Christ died for us. Since, therefore, we are now justified by his blood, much more shall we be saved by him...for...while we were enemies we were reconciled to God by the death of his Son.

Psalms 67:4 O let the nations be glad and sing for joy: for thou shalt judge the people righteously, and govern the nations upon earth. Selah.

Micah 5:2 Bethlehem Ephrathah...out of thee shall he come forth unto me that is to be ruler in Israel; whose goings forth have been from of old, from everlasting.

Isaiah 7:14 The Lord himself shall give you a sign; Behold, a virgin shall conceive, and bear a son, and shall call his name Immanuel.

Luke 2:9-14 The angel of the Lord came upon them, and the glory of the Lord shone round about them: and...the angel said unto them, Fear not: for, behold, I bring you good tidings of great joy, which shall be to all people. For unto you is born this day in the city of David a Saviour, which is Christ the Lord...And suddenly there was with the angel a multitude of the heavenly host praising God, and saying, Glory to God in the highest, and on earth peace, good will toward men.

Isaiah 9:6-7 For unto us a child is born, unto us a son is given...The Prince of Peace. Of the increase of his government and peace there shall be no end, upon the throne of David, and upon his kingdom.

Malachi 4:1-2 For, behold, the day cometh, that...shall the Sun of righteousness arise with healing in his wings; and ye shall go forth.

Luke 1:77-79 To give knowledge of salvation unto his people by the remission of their sins, through the tender mercy of our God; whereby the dayspring from on high hath visited us, to give light to them that sit in darkness and in the shadow of death.

John 8:12 Spake Jesus...I am the light of the world: he that followeth me shall not walk in darkness, but shall have the light of life.

John 11:25 Jesus said unto her, I am the resurrection, and the life.

Revelation 15:4 Who shall not fear thee, O Lord, and glorify thy name? for thou only art holy: for all nations shall come and worship before thee.

1 Corinthians 15:22 For as in Adam all die, even so in Christ shall all be made alive.

## AT THE END OF THE YEARS

*“O God, thou hast taught me from my youth: and hitherto have I declared thy wondrous works. Now also when I am old and greyheaded, O God, forsake me not; until I have shewed thy strength unto this generation, and thy power to every one that is to come.”* (Psa. 71:17-18)

There is a ring of mature faith in those stirring words, the mellow confidence of one who gave his heart to the Lord in the golden days of youth and now in the quietude of old age realises that his faith was not misplaced. The One Who gave him work to do in those early days of youthful zeal and enthusiasm has work yet for him to do. Even in old age he may still shew forth the strength of God’s righteousness to a new generation that the work of God may continue. Even while the shadows of death close around him he may still, with his last expiring breath, tell of God’s power and glory to those who are as yet babes in Christ. There is inspiration and encouragement here for those today—and there are many such—who look around on depleted numbers and a diminishing fellowship in which the tale of years is many and the signs of youthfulness almost absent. There is more than inspiration and encouragement, too, there is a call to action and service, a reminder that the labours of the consecrated do not finish short of death, that at all times during our sojourn this side the Vail we are capable of some service for our Lord and King, some means of declaring his strength to this generation and his power to that which is to come.

The Psalmist here admits physical weakness but refuses to admit any ageing of the spirit. As a young man and in the heyday of middle age he rejoiced to declare God’s wondrous works. That was to him the breath of life and without the joy of service life would not be worth living. The whole object and end of his existence was to give praise and honour to God in the sight of all people, to witness to the wonder of his Plan and the grandeur of his Promise to all who would listen. It needs physical vitality as well as mental alertness to do that; one cannot endure the heat and burden of Christian witness in the outward sense without a goodly measure of physical strength. Those not so favoured can and do serve in quieter ways, in the ministry of prayer, the ministry of comfort, the ministry of healing, and so on, but the active work of prosecuting (proclaiming) the Gospel requires the ability to be active in the physical sense. And that is an attribute of the young; it cannot be expected of those who have passed the prime of life and whose physical powers are failing. Such a time must come to all of us and it cannot be avoided. But there is no reason why the spirit should fail too.



This word comes as a reproof and chiding to all who have used advancing age as an excuse to lose interest in the work of God in this Age. It is an unhappy spectacle, and one that is all too common, that of one who has laboured mightily, spending and being spent, in the service of his Master, maybe from early youth, through the twenties and thirties and forties and fifties, and then lost heart. The apparent failure of fond expectations, the disappointments and disillusionments that the Christian life is bound to bring, instead of performing their intended work of making mature and mellow the Christian character, have been allowed to make virtual shipwreck of faith. For it is no good claiming that faith is retained if the works of faith have been relinquished. It is no good saying we still look for and expect the Kingdom if we no longer evince any outward sign of concern for its interests. Our consecration is unto death, and although it may be true that our outward man perish, yet it is equally true that our inward man is being renewed day by day, if so be that we are still faithful to our covenant. (2 Cor. 4:16)

There is another and more subtle delusion abroad also. It appeals especially to the elderly. It is the feeling that “the end” is so near and loss of faith in the world so general that the Lord would no longer have his faithful ones preach the Gospel to those who have not yet heard it but rather devote their remaining time and energies exclusively to their own calling and election and that of their consecrated brethren. It is not well to condemn such conclusion too hastily; it is a natural reaction to the rebuffs and failures and apparent lack of success of many long years’ active preaching and witnessing. But the attitude must be deprecated nevertheless. It is not a healthy one. It breeds egotism and self-righteousness and tends towards an exclusiveness and narrow-mindedness that is the very reverse of what the mature and mellow Christian should manifest. There was no such thought in the mind of the Psalmist when he wrote these words. He did not say, “Now also when I am old and greyheaded, O God, forsake me not while I abide in splendid isolation before thee, proclaiming no more thy glory to this generation and utterly ignoring every one that is to come.” Far from it. On the words once more. “*Now also when I am old and greyheaded, O God, forsake me not; until I have shewed thy strength unto this generation, and thy power to every one that is to come.*” So far from voicing a plea for a kind of “honourable retirement” from the work of evangelising, the Psalmist passionately beseeches that God will not forsake him in his old age until he has declared the message to yet another generation. He wants to labour to the end; he wants with his last expiring breath to declare the greatness of God to those who still know him not.

There is a certain ring of “up-to-date-ness” in the Psalmist’s words. He wants to declare God’s strength to “*this* generation.” He himself, old and greyheaded, belongs to a generation that is past. In many things the world has grown beyond him and the fashion of the world is strange to him. Customs, conventions, practices, which in his day were unknown or not accepted have now become commonplace. The very language in which the new generation talks is one that is fast becoming incomprehensible to him. The pace of life has quickened and those things on which he and his once set such value are now lightly esteemed. The temptation is ever present to withdraw from this strange new world and dwell in more comfortable seclusion with other greyheads of like mind until the call comes to “go home.” The world is no longer the understandable place that it was; it is better that we shut it out from our lives and beseech the Lord to take us away from it quickly.

Not so the Psalmist. It is this new and strange and in many ways uncouth generation to which he wished to declare the glory of God. He knows that the fashion of the world must needs change as the clock of time ticks on; he knows that restless man, ever exploring and seeking something new, must change with it, as generation follows generation. He knows, too, that faith will ebb lower and lower with each succeeding age so that the one who takes his stand on the words of God will appear to be more and more an outworn relic of a past era. He knows all this, and feels within himself that he is getting older and more out of tune with this modern way of life. He realises how easy it would be to accept what appears to be the inevitable, and give up the conflict, waiting for the end. He might reasonably anticipate the words of St. Paul and apply them to himself. “*I have fought a good fight, I have finished my course, I have kept the faith: henceforth there is laid up for me a crown of righteousness, which the Lord, the righteous judge, shall give me at that day.*” (2 Tim. 4:7-8)

He might do all this; but he does nothing of the kind! “*Now also when I am old and greyheaded, O God, forsake me not, until...*” What though this new generation has a new language? He will speak to them in that language! What though they adopt customs and conventions and practices which seem to him strange and even repellent? He will relate his message to those customs and conventions and show that generation how the truth of God is for them as well as for those of the past! What though their interpretations and ideas, yea, their very practice of the faith he tries to inculcate in them, show features undreamed of in his own youthful days and features that would have been roundly condemned in those days? He will seek to find in all this the evidences of younger hearts giving

themselves to the Lord and strive to give them wise guidance in the pathway that they must certainly tread for themselves and in their own way.

Our own position in this day, as life goes on and we find ourselves surrounded by a new generation whose accepted standards differ so much from ours, is to play the part of understanding counsellors and convinced witnesses. No matter what else changes, the truth of God stands the same. No matter how we must change the language in which it is preached, it remains the same message having the same power over all generations new and old. *“Jesus Christ is the same yesterday, today and forever.”* (Heb. 13:8 WEB) Our earthly powers may be failing and days of active evangelism be over, but there is always something we can do to declare God’s strength to this generation and his power to that which is to come. Aaron and Hur held up the hands of Moses while the battle raged; it was little enough they could do but it made all the difference to the outcome. (Exod. 17:12) When Israel went out to fight their enemies it was decreed that he who “tarry by the stuff,” and cared for the camp property should share equally with the warriors when it came to dividing the spoils. So it is with us; so many there are who must perform “tarry by the stuff,” but all the time they can be “holding up the hands” and contributing to the success of the Lord’s cause. Let those who still can, go forth into active service for the Lord and his Gospel; those who can do so no longer, wait upon him in prayer and supplication, perform the countless little services that mean so much to the warriors in the field, help with words of encouragement and confidence, evincing a ready sympathy with the progress of all that is going on, and in these and many other ways demonstrate their own unity in thought and action with the Church militant all over the world.

*AOH*

### “AND THAT WILL BE HEAVEN”

and that will be heaven

hum with an utter joy

seeing and knowing

and that will be heaven

at last in every particle

at last the first unclouded

seen and known and not turning

seeing

away

never turning away

to stand like the sunflower

again

turned full face to the sun drenched

in light in the still centre

held while the circling planets

*Evangeline Paterson*

## THE GATHERING HOME OF SAINTS

### Part 9 THE BREAKING OF DEATH'S POWERS

In glory there we see the saints at last prepared to share with Jesus in that work so vital to man's future here on earth "*The ministry of glory and the breaking of death's powers.*"

That moment now arrives to testify to God's redeeming power to all mankind. The ransom long provided now applied for Adam and in him the race, that precious blood of sprinkling yet must touch the lintels of each heart, that from death's powers each soul may then break free, not merely for one hour but for eternity. No simple task. It is well for us to grasp what God has shown, that process yet involved of loosening sin's hold from every soul.

Like the Niagara, sin comprehends each missing of the mark, ten million drops each moment of man's day, a mighty fall indeed. Vast energy is wasted, countless ages lost, the total of innumerable lives away from God, as blinded minds forsake creation's Source and plunge to that abyss oblivious of all meaning to life's course, for they deny its Cause. These on their swift descent, without relent, pursue their flight from things above, and yet cannot escape redeeming love.

When we survey the scene, that darkness tries to probe that fills this earth, we fail to sum the tears, assess the weight, the total burden tells of human grief, the legacy of sickness, pain, and loss, but man's Creator knows, and man's Redeemer took that load. Can it be turned, this tide? Can earth be cleansed of sin? Can countless myriads like the sand be washed? Can any change of heart thus wrought in man by any scheme, teaching of righteous ways, or course of holiness, the reaching of those deep emotions of man's heart, can any change of mind be achieved, change also that deceit of heart, that fickleness of loyalty and love, that trend to infidelity so deep ingrained within the human soul? Can this as well be changed?

We see no profit, though a thousand years be spent transforming guilty ways of man to innocence, unless each step along that upward path of holiness be one of permanence. The trend to sin that now controls man's path, a prison for man's ways, how humanly impossible to break through cold steel bars, those solid walls. Perhaps at time some soul may glimpse another world beyond it cannot reach, and powerless to attain falls back. As gravity decides the downward pull upon each body, so does sin, and from its hold none can break free.

Yet greater far the heavenly force the sun exerts upon this earth controlling in its course each planet that would wander from its path. Nor does it let go hold, or each would make its headlong plunge through depths of space. Such is the greater power than sin, that from its mighty Source above will grip this earth and draw each heart, each intellect, to influence all thought and overwhelm with love divine. When stars that “turn to righteousness” shall shine, their holy power will mightily combine to beam into this darkness with a grace reflected from the heavenly Father’s face, to captivate and thus forever hold each human mind, and reach the “blind,” the “deaf,” and loosen tongues now tied that cannot tell His praise. Oh may that joy be mine!

The baptism of water of the flood that overwhelmed and cleansed the ancient world in days of Noah was made an awing sign to all mankind, a future baptism to portray not now of water but the fire of that all-searching Spirit of a Holy God. And when the work is done destroying every trace of evil past, the dark refuge of lies will sweep aside, hypocrisy, deceit, and all that’s feigned. Then will His “*Peace, be still!*” re-echo from each heart of His redeemed, His Spirit, as a dove, go forth, the gospel of His peace to bear to weary souls, the olive branch, the helping hand that will enable sin-lamed feet to stand before the Saviour of the world. And then, shall I beside Him stand, those blessings of His peace to shower upon a weary land? And shall I have a part when grace has well refined my inward being, the last touch of the Potter’s hand, the furnace fire to fit the vessel for the service planned, shall I those deepest needs of man so understand? And will I be equipped to deal with leprosy of soul, each wound of sin to heal, each broken heart console?

How well the Master Craftsman first designs, and then prepares, refines with great precision for each future role the instruments of peace. These are the tools that He will use to shape mankind, to reach the deepest corners of the mind, to peel the scales from eyes now blind to heavenly love. These weapons He will use so wisely to defeat the giants of doubt, and penetrate the darkness and despair that have so long forbidden man’s approach to claim his heritage of promised rest. So long these mighty foes have darkened hope and come between those human longings of the soul for something better than this vanity of existence without God. And man has striven in vain to reach that blissful state of happiness that outlasts that weak momentary pleasure of sin. For in each path a dreaded giant has stood between him and his goal. The fear of death’s long shadow dims the sight of every forward step of man. So has it been since man began. Such giant obstacles impede all progress towards happiness

and rest, and yet no giant can withstand one pebble from the brook, that living Word of God, the stream that gladdens Zion today.

Before that conquering power of Truth can be unleashed against the enemies of man's peace with God, each man must learn again the innocence of childlike trust. It still must be for man a walk of faith while perfection of character the goal not yet achieved, yet then within man's grasp if with all heart and mind he is absorbed in Truth. The holy image of his God will then shine through, and brighter grow within His new-formed child, and holiness pursued will be attained, truth in the inward parts, the life of Jesus manifested in men who barely knew His Name.

How sweet the cloud of incense that will rise when lips long silent in His praise will yield the precious contents of each heart alive to God. And then that glory lifted from mankind at Adam's fall will yet again descend His dwelling place in human hearts to fill, and beautify each temple where it rests.

Could we conceive such ministry as this? And we have barely glimpsed the glory of this work that far exceeds all previous glories known, man's noblest works, and even the glory shown with shaking mount and stirring trumpet sound at Sinai. They all must pale before the sight of countless children of the Light that the call of Spirit and of Bride bring forth, the glory of a perfect earth. The Christ equipped for that great work stands poised. They wait the moment ready for command, the signal that will change the scene from darkness, dying, and despair. *"Let there be Light now, everywhere!"*

Oh brethren, how we haste the hour! How earnestly we long to lift that veil that hides from countless hearts of men that Light of Life that is the Lord. To watch those eyes then in surprise wide open to the feast prepared of God. Wine of the Spirit, how its warmth in every heart will gladden every scene. The fatness of abundant living satisfies the deep desires and appetites of perfect men who bear the image of their God. Within each heart a holy fire will testify a walk with God and He with them. If this is dear to our poor hearts, what must it mean to Him!

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*Great is the LORD, and greatly to be praised  
in the city of our God, in the mountain of his holiness.*

*Beautiful for situation, the joy of the whole earth,  
is mount Zion, on the sides of the north, the city of the great King. (Psalm 48:1-2)*

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## THE HIGHWAY OF HOLINESS

*“A highway shall be there, and a road, And it shall be called the Highway of Holiness. The unclean shall not pass over it, But it shall be for others. Whoever walks the road, although a fool, Shall not go astray.”*

(Isa. 35:8 NKJV)

Highways, motorways, or autobahns or whatever you call them have become part of the fabric of life since the 1930s when ordinary men and women began to drive cars. How my grandfather drove his first car from London home to Cardiff in the 1930s in the days before motorways and driving tests is a minor mystery. This verse however was written by Isaiah about 2,700 years ago. But what did he mean? In Babylon it is thought that there was a magnificent high road in the city from the Royal Palace straight to the Temple of Bel, the central seat of idol worship in that ancient land. It went through the Ishtar gate which had lions decorated on its walls and ran above the city, level and straight, broad, and wide. The nearest British equivalent may be “The Mall” which runs from Trafalgar Square with its museums, stations and statues of lions, through Admiralty Arch finishing at Buckingham Palace. At times of national celebration thousands of people have been swarming down the Mall at the end of the day.

There are other questions to be considered. What type of way is this highway of holiness in Isaiah? When is it to be open, how would it be travelled and by whom?

### **Wilderness to market garden**

The scene is set by the first verse which talks about the wilderness, the thirsty place and the desert being told to be glad and blossom. It is a scene of expectation for better days when drought and the fear of desertification becomes a concern of the past, when barren land becomes a watered garden.

Those barren places are contrasted with Lebanon, Carmel, and Sharon. Lebanon was famed for its cedar trees in the days of the Kings of Israel when David ordered cedar wood for Solomon to build the Temple in Jerusalem. Lebanon was famed for its forest and it was well-known for its trading ports such as Tyre and Sidon as well as its fishing being a coastal land. Even as late as the 1960s Lebanon was a prosperous place.

Similarly *The Complete Bible Commentary* describes the excellency of

Carmel and Sharon (v.2) as the “beautiful and fertile areas of the Promised Land.” The name “Carmel” means “garden land” and Sharon is described by H.V. Morton as a “low, green plain.” It will be like a watered garden. It’s clear they represent the agriculturally fruitful regions of what is now called Israel and the picture is of the wilderness, deserts and other barren places being made like Lebanon, Carmel or the plain of Sharon.

The opposite picture is used in Isaiah 33:9 to describe a period of loss and great concern when Lebanon is ashamed and decaying. The current crisis in Lebanon exacerbated by a financial crisis by political leaders who are ineffective and disorganised has led Beirut to look like a wasteland whose citizens despair in those who should work for them. Carmel is described as being unfruitful with leaves and fruit unseen and Sharon is labelled a “desert.” (Isa. 33:9 RVIC)

There we perceive a time, a world, not like it is now. It seems closer to the time of creation when Adam and Eve lived in the perfect garden that was the garden of Eden. Therefore it must be talking about a time that is yet future but to be expected.

### **Disability to full health**

“Then” commences verse 5, meaning when the lands become fruitful and productive. Now the language describes people in terms of their physical attributes. The blind, deaf, dumb, and lame will be cured and will see, hear, speak loudly and clearly or be able to run and jump. The physical problems will be no longer according to birth, illness, accident, or ageing. This will have a literal and spiritual meaning as Paul uses the language in Romans 11:25-26 to record the partial spiritual blindness of Israel. There is the current blinding work done by Satan, (2 Cor. 4:4) which is spiritual blindness. Our Lord Jesus said his disciples were blessed because they could perceive in that they had ears that heard and eyes that could see and therefore could seize upon the good news of the gospel when salvation came initially to the house of Israel.

### **Water**

After that Isaiah goes back to geographical matters. Water will spring up in the wilderness and seasonal streams like those which only appear in winter in the desert, unexpectedly in time and place water coming forth as a picture of renewal or new life. Verse 7 (NEB) says “the mirage becomes a pool.” A mirage is an optical illusion more common in a desert where travellers may desperately look for water. It often happens where the air is hotter on the ground than it is in the air and it bends the light from the sky



creating a type of shimmer which the eye can confuse with water for drinking. In terms of hope, the hope will match the expectation.

The vegetation will be grass, reeds and rushes in terms of marsh grass, papyrus and water plants where plants become adapted to excess amounts of water that the leaves have space or other ways to absorb. Somewhere you would not pitch a tent as it indicates the ground there is regularly sodden like the river bank.

At present in and around the Middle East there are deserts. There is the Arabian desert and places like Sudan have inadequate quantities of water and therefore declining numbers of wild animals, soil erosion, desertification, and periodic drought outside the Nile Valley. Drylands now occupy 40% of the earth's land area and one billion people live under threat of desertification. Lake Chad, meaning "large expanse of water" in West Africa has shrunk 90% since 1987 due to irrigation and reductions in annual rainfall. Hence the world is more than ever in need of water in these specific regions.

Water signifies life and truth. Jesus speaking to the Samaritan woman at the well said whoever drinks of the water he gives will never thirst and that water would be a well of water springing up to eternal life. (John 4:14) A promise given on that day. Jesus also said, "I am the way, the truth, and the life." (John 14:6) There will come a time when pure water, clear as crystal will come out of the throne of God and similarly that living water shall go out from Jerusalem. (Rev. 22:1; Zech. 14:8) An earlier prophet, Isaiah said the law would go out of Zion and the word of the Lord from Jerusalem when humankind will be taught his ways and walk in his way (Isa. 2:3) thus illustrating the connection between water, truth and life.

Without contamination in conditions where people are living an Eden-like habitat and time for teaching, they will all learn of the source of life in conditions which are not against them, absorb it and come to an appreciation of it.

### **Adversaries**

Lions and other large predatory animals will not be a danger. Humankind has a natural fear of large predators like lions, bears, tigers, wolves, and such like. It is no coincidence there are no large predatory mammals in Britain. Its thought the lynx disappeared about 1500 years ago, the brown bear about 1,000 years ago and the last wolf was seen around 1760. Men,

women, and children can only see them safely behind bars in a zoo or animal park. That fear and danger was real, which is why Daniel was placed in the lion's den and it was a miracle that he survived. It was for protection from dangerous animals that some disciples carried a sword in New Testament times in Israel. This illustrates the obstacles and dangers that will be removed for those travelling along the highway of holiness.

Symbolically Satan, the adversary, roams about like a lion seeking whom he may devour. (1 Pet. 5:8) He will be taken out of the way and bound for 1,000 years so as not to deceive the people. (Rev. 20:2) There are wicked people, like lions, who prey upon weaker humans and they will be prevented from using or abusing their fellows. (Psalm 10:9) Isa. 11:6-9 uses similar language with the wolf, leopard, young lion, bear and viper living safely with children, cows, lambs and so on before saying nothing shall hurt nor destroy. Symbolically no lion or dangerous animal will be there when travellers walk the highway of holiness, so people will go along safely.

### **Who walks up the highway of holiness?**

Isaiah 35 verse 10 tells us about the returned ransomed people. The redeemer or person who ransoms is straightforward to identify. It is our Lord Jesus (Matt. 20:28) who finished that part of his work by dying on the cross for the sins of the world. The apostle Paul is clear Jesus died a ransom for all to be testified, at the appointed time, for Christ came into the world to save the world, not to condemn the world. (John 3:17; 1 Tim. 2:3-6) Therefore those ransomed are *all* those who have ever lived and have not found their way up the narrow way that is open for the "little flock" (Luke 12:32) who are even now still finding their way up that difficult way during this present age.

Hence the travellers on this way can be a fool or as one translation puts it a "dimwit" and they will not lose their way although they will need to be clean and reform. This further shows it is simple and there are no traps or distractions for the traveller and leads straight to the desired destination if they stay on it.

### **Destination**

Zion seems to be indicated as the desirable destination. Mount Zion is an important hill in Jerusalem, that capital city in Israel in the centre of the world, being between Africa, Asia, and Europe. It is where King David reigned and built his royal palace after he captured Jerusalem. For Jerusalem was not initially taken from the Jebusites as it should have been by the tribe of Benjamin after the entrance to the land of promise. (Judges

1:21; 19:10-14) Zion pictures heavenly Jerusalem, the centre of Christ's reign and the spiritual aspect of the Kingdom when individuals are in harmony with God. (Isa. 2:3; Isa. 52:7; Heb.12:22; Rev. 14:1) It will be the central place of blessing from where the reign takes place and from where a beautiful campaign of education and reform will emerge for those who have not found their way to Zion previously. In fact individuals will seek it out.

Verses three and four are words of encouragement for the reader then and now, who may feel weak but they will be strengthened. They are a reminder that salvation in full is on its way although at present humankind is waiting but in the future God's kingdom will be a reality.

All in all it can be said that the highway of holiness is a special way that is a safe, easy way for those who travel when conditions in the world and for humankind are free from the current problems of sin, greed and ignorance under the influence of Satan. This is in contrast with the present world which is dealing with a health emergency that is leading most nations toward an economic recession in a background of concerns about the climate change among other serious matters such as injustice and inequality. A time is coming when, during the millennial reign of Christ and the church, people that are healthy physically and mentally, will travel up this highway of holiness.

It will be a way for all humankind, not a way for the few but the many in contrast to this Christian era when only the narrow way leads to Zion, the spiritual kingdom of God and the throne of God.

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## THORNS AND THISTLES

*“Thorns also and thistles shall it bring forth to thee; and thou shalt eat the herb of the field.” (Gen. 3:18)*

This was God's punishment of Adam for eating of the forbidden fruit. Thorns and thistles are mentioned very often in the Bible and there is no sure way of identifying them. Adam's thorns and thistles may have been the spotted golden thistle *Scolymus maculatus*, or the star thistle, *Centaurea calcitrapa*, both frequent weeds in the hot and rocky regions of the Holy Land.

*The Flowers and Fruits of the Bible*  
John Chancellor

## WHERE WILL EVERYONE LIVE?

*“For thus saith the LORD that created the heavens; God himself that formed the earth and made it; He hath established it, He created it not in vain, He formed it to be inhabited.” (Isaiah 45:18)*

After Jesus’ return, all the dead (except those who receive heavenly life) will eventually return to human life on earth in the Millennial Kingdom plus the then-living generation already on earth.

### **Where will all these people live, and grow food?**

This is often the first objection raised when one hears about the Millennial Kingdom and the resurrection of the dead. A little calculation may serve to ease some minds on this matter.

The “World Almanac” gives these figures for the state of Texas (USA):-  
 Size - 268,581 square miles (including water areas)  
 Land - 261,797 square miles

One square mile (5,280 feet on each side) contains 27,878,400 square feet (ft<sup>2</sup>). Multiply this by the land area of Texas and you get 7,298,481,484,800 ft<sup>2</sup>.

Then we ask, “How many people have lived on earth since Adam and Eve including the current 7 billion?” Well, no one knows for certain, but estimates range from 35-50 billion. The population was apparently small until about 1,000 A.D., and since then it has grown rapidly, even exponentially. The plagues, including the Black Death etc., famines, and the various wars, have hardly made a dent in this increase. At some point population growth must cease.

So, let us assume 50 billion humans for the total population that has ever lived.

Dividing the land area of Texas (7,298,481,484,800 ft<sup>2</sup>) by 50 billion gives us 145.97 ft<sup>2</sup> for each person, or a space of about *12 feet x 12 feet* for each. Of course, no one could live on such a small space, but it shows how much of earth’s surface is theoretically available for all the people to live on, and to grow their food.

There are many inspiring prophecies in God’s Word that foretell of the restoration of the earth to its Edenic condition during the times of restoration. (Acts 3:21)

Most likely, humans will again eat fruits, vegetables, nuts, berries, grains, etc., as originally intended (Genesis 1:29-30; 2:16), and not animal meats; only after the Flood was consumption of animal meat allowed. (Gen. 9:2-3)

For those who might still like a juicy steak or burger, in 2020 there are being produced, but not yet available for sale, “lab-grown” or “cultured” meats where no animals need be slaughtered. This is real meat, grown from a sample of muscle tissue! Note this, from “Scientific American” magazine in the Sept. 14, 2018 issue:

“Imagine biting into a juicy burger that was produced without killing animals. Meat grown in a laboratory from cultured cells is turning that vision into a reality. Several start-ups are developing lab-grown beef, pork, poultry and seafood...”

And there are plant-based substitutes for meat that are currently more-or-less satisfactory.

Thus, large grasslands and pasture-lands may be available for other uses. The land will no longer be polluted or depleted of nutrients such as vitamins and minerals; the water will be pure; the people will not need to eat as much food to get all the nutrition they need. And, as people progress towards perfection, they will digest and assimilate foods more efficiently, and with less waste.

Climate extremes will be moderated; patterns of rainfall will possibly change; extreme storms, earthquakes, floods, etc., will be minimized or eliminated. These favorable conditions will tend toward larger, more dependable, crops.

*“Then shall the earth yield her increase; and God, even our own God, shall bless us.” (Psalm 67:6)*

Eventually, there will be no more weeds, plant diseases, or destructive insects. All creatures need to eat but perhaps birds and animals will have their instincts, or DNA, changed to eat only grasses and seeds. Gen. 1:30 seems to indicate it was originally so designed, or perhaps to eat only in certain areas, to eat efficiently and not to cause so much needless destruction and waste. The dental structures and digestive systems will apparently be changed for those that were once carnivores merely by a change in the DNA of mature animals, and their offspring (to the surprise of their parents!) will eat plants, as originally designed in Eden. For *“The wolf and the lamb shall feed together, and the lion shall eat straw like the*

ox...” (Isa. 65:25; 11:7)

### **But what if humans still need more space?**

Humans now live on only a portion of the earth, mostly because of extreme climates and lack of water. If that could be remedied (and it will be), there would be plenty of room for people. Land that is useless now, such as salt flats, open-pit mines, contaminated dump sites, garbage landfills, paved-over areas, etc..., will be reclaimed and made productive. Mountainous areas not suitable for dwellings can be terraced and many useful plants grown such as grapes, olives, tea, coffee and berries. The earth will become like the “Garden of Eden.”

We should note that there is much empty space just in the western U.S.A. a staggering 47% of the country remains unoccupied. There are also many lightly-populated lands in other areas, such as Canada and Russia, the deserts (Sahara, Gobi, Australian Outback, and others) cover about 33% of earth’s surface. Then there are tropical forests such as the Amazon as well as those in Africa.

Or more islands could arise from the ocean. Or the shallow continental shelf around most land-masses could be exposed. The continental shelf is geologically part of the continental crust, but now covered by water and continental shelves make up about 8 percent of the entire area covered by oceans.

If still more land is needed, the ice covering Antarctica could be melted and an entirely new continent would be available—in size roughly comparable to the USA and Mexico combined, nearly the size of Europe, and nearly twice the size of Australia.

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“Once before, the land under the ice caps was suitable for vegetation. Why not again? Rear Admiral Richard E. Byrd, the explorer, brought back from the South Pole region samples of tropical plants found under the ice. And we know that the same warm climate which could grow such tropical flora in the Antarctic also was present in the Arctic circle.

“There have been found in Siberia complete mastodons embedded in ice, and, in the same general area, were discovered tons of elephant tusks. Although differing somewhat from our present-day elephant, these extinct mastodons, in order to live, required the same warm climate and lush vegetable growth. And, of great interest, is the fact

that these animals, found embedded in ice, had undigested food (such as buttercups) in their stomachs and un-masticated grass in their mouths. This shows that the change of temperature at the poles was virtually instantaneous, causing the beasts to be overtaken in a crushing fall of snow while feeding.”

“Dawn” magazine, April 1952

Coal, from once-abundant plants, has also been found in Antarctica.

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Many Scriptures reassure us that all will be well in the Kingdom, under the beneficent rule of Jesus Messiah and his Bride:

*“The wilderness and the wasteland shall be glad for them, and the desert shall rejoice and blossom as the rose.”* (Isa. 35:1 NKJV)

*“The tree of the field shall yield her fruit, and the earth shall yield her increase, and they shall be safe in their land, and shall know that I am the LORD, when I have broken the bands of their yoke, and delivered them out of the hand of those that served themselves of them.”* (Ezekiel 34:27)

God the Almighty, and His Son Jesus Messiah, are fully capable of meeting every need of humanity, now, and forever.

*“Oh the depth of the wealth both of the wisdom and knowledge of God! How inscrutable His judgements, how trackless His footsteps! ‘Who has known the mind of the LORD, or shared his counsels?’ Who has first given God anything, and thus earned a recompense? For all proceeds from Him, and exists by Him and for Him. To Him be glory for ever!”* (Romans 11:33-36 Weymouth)

*“While the earth remains, seedtime and harvest, cold and heat, winter and summer, and day and night shall not cease.”* (Gen. 8:22 NKJV)

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## NOTICES

BIBLE STUDENTS FELLOWSHIP CONFERENCE  
HIGH LEIGH CONFERENCE CENTRE, HODDESDON  
11-15 AUGUST 2021 DV

**Gone from us**  
Ivy Binns (Chesham)  
Audrey Johnston (Brighton)

## INDEX 2020

ARTICLE	PAGE	ARTICLE	PAGE
Animal Sacrifices in the Millennium	112	Note on the Time of the End, A	9
Anointing at Bethany, The	51	Philemon—The Change From Within	169
At the End of the Years	224	Plowman shall overtake the Reaper, The	175
Atonement	190	Power and the Glory, The	61
Bible's Song of Love—Foreword, The	218	Resurrection—What is it?	76
Come all ye Saints to Pisgah's Mountain—A hymn	188	Sanctification—Pt. 1	93
Day of the Lord, The	27	Sanctification—Pt. 2	135
Eldad and Medad	214	Sands of Time are sinking—A hymn, The	32
Fear Not	204	Ten Visions of Christ Triumphant—Pt. 1	208
From Every Stormy Wind that Blows—A Hymn	106	Thought for the Month	2
Gathering Home of Saints—Pt. 5	23	Thought for the Month	42
Gathering Home of Saints—Pt. 6	108	Thought for the Month	82
Gathering Home of Saints—Pt. 7	149	Thought for the Month	122
Gathering Home of Saints—Pt. 8	195	Thought for the Month	162
Gathering Home of Saints—Pt. 9	228	Thought for the month	202
God's Poem	219	Three Women, Three Covenants	152
God's Will	55	Times of Restitution of All Things	10
God's Wonderful Time Clock	35	Tree Planted by a River, A	181
Habakkuk—A booklet	105	Trees of Righteousness	164
Hark the Herald Angels Sing—A hymn	222	Viruses, Wars and Threats of Extinction	125
Highway of Holiness, The	231	Waiting	14
Hold Thou my hand!—A Hymn	159	Way of an Eagle in the Air, The	84
If I Be Lifted Up	44	We Will All Fall Asleep	198
John Knox and the Reformation in Britain	118	Where Will Everyone Live?	236
John The Baptist—Pt. 1	4	Zechariah—Pt. 13	15
John The Baptist—Pt. 2	90	Zechariah—Pt. 14	68
John The Baptist—Pt. 3	130	Zechariah—Pt. 15	97
Kingdom of Heaven is at Hand, The	114	Zechariah—Pt. 16	142
Ministry of Reconciliation	124	Zechariah—Pt. 17	165
Note on the "Times of the Gentiles", A	8		