

WORLD DISTRESS—WHY?

THE REMEDY

Why Evil is Permitted
Who Made the Devil?
Prophecy & its Fulfilment
End of the World
Immortality
Where are the Dead?
A Ransom for All
Why does not God
Kill the Devil?

INTERNATIONAL BIBLE STUDENTS ASSOCIATION

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INTERNATIONAL BIBLE STUDENTS ASSOCIATION

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NINE TREATISES ON BIBLE SUBJECTS

by

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"The Harp of God"

"Can the Living Talk with the Dead?"

"Millions Now Living Will Never Die!"

etc., etc.

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Why is Evil Permitted?

THE earth is full of sorrow; and every one has more or less human ailments, pains and weaknesses. Crime is prevalent in every land; hatred, ill will and malice are manifested without limit; and the question frequently comes to the mind of the one who is asked to consider the divine arrangement: Why should a just and wise and loving God permit evil to be in the world and afflict the people so long?

Evil is that which produces unhappiness; and anything which either directly or indirectly causes suffering may be classed as evil. The question is asked: Why did God permit Satan to tempt our first parents and cause them to violate his law? Could he not have prevented all this trouble, the fall of man, and the thousands of years of suffering that have been upon humankind? The statement that Jehovah is all-powerful at once leads to the conclusion that he could have prevented it had his wisdom dictated that he should do so. The fact that he did not do so is sufficient proof that he permitted it for some wise and good purpose. When we see and understand the outworking of his great plan, his wisdom is manifest in all that he has permitted, and his love is ever manifest in the method provided for the restoration and blessing of mankind.

Can Man be Made Good through Evil?

God created the first man perfect, mentally, morally, and physically. As suggested in a discussion of this subject in Volume 1, *STUDIES IN THE SCRIPTURES*, Page 119:

"God could have made mankind devoid of ability to discern between right and wrong, or able only to discern and to do right; but to have made him so would have been to

make merely a living machine, and certainly not a mental image of his Creator. Or he might have made man perfect and a free agent, as he did, and have guarded him from Satan's temptation."

In no other way could man ultimately be brought to everlasting happiness. He must be free to exercise his own will; and he must learn to exercise that in harmony with the divine will, and to so exercise it voluntarily in order for complete happiness to continue.

God created everything for his own pleasure. (Revelation 4: 11) God has no pleasure in wickedness. (Psalm 5: 4) There is no way, therefore, that he could so well teach his subjects the baneful effects of wrong-doing and the good effects of right-doing as by permitting them to experience these very things. Jehovah created man to be above all other earthly creatures, and endowed him with moral sense of discerning good and evil. Had his experience been limited to good alone by his being protected and shielded from evil influences, then man would never have gained by experience a knowledge of the baneful effects of evil; but it would have required constant guarding of man at all times, which would have destroyed his free moral agency. The moral sense and the power to discern right and wrong, and the liberty to use this sense possessed by Adam, were important in making him the likeness of the Lord.

God's Object in Permitting Evil

It is manifest from the revealed plan of God that he saw an actual experience with evil would be the surest and best and most lasting way to serve man eternally; and for that reason he did not prevent evil, but permitted man to come in contact with it. While God created the first man perfect in his organism, yet the man was without experience; and experience can be obtained only by passing through certain conditions. The Scriptures,

however, inform us that when the activity of evil has been permitted long enough to give man a full and complete lesson of its baneful effects, then it will cease to be active; for all of God's subjects will be willingly submissive to him and will follow love and justice.—1 Corinthians 15: 25, 26; Hebrews 2: 14.

Why Man Suffers For Adam's Sin

But it may be asked: If the Lord would permit evil to come to one man, Adam, why should he permit Adam's offspring for thousands of years to feel the effects of it? When we discern God's plan we can see the economy of it and that wisdom and love prompted his action. Adam was put on trial in Eden while he was perfect; and while in that condition he begat no children. After he had violated the law and had been sentenced to death and driven from Eden, then he begat children, who were born and lived on the earth. God arranged that this judgment of condemnation should affect all of Adam's offspring, so that one redemptive price would benefit *all* men. Imperfect because of sin, Adam could beget only imperfect children. The Psalmist tells us: "Behold, I was shapen in iniquity; and in sin did my mother conceive me." (Psalm 51: 5) "Wherefore, as by one man sin entered into the world, and death by sin; and so death passed upon all men, for that all have sinned." (Romans 5: 12) God provided redemption of mankind by the sacrifice of another perfect one. Had the judgment resulting from Adam's violation affected him alone, then if ever Adam got life at any time thereafter he must be redeemed by the death of another perfect being, and every one of his offspring who would get life would likewise have to be redeemed. If each one was required to have a separate and distinct trial, then there would have to be a separate and distinct redeemer for each one. Therefore God included them

all in one judgment, in order that one Redeemer might purchase them all.

It was Jehovah's purpose before the foundation of the world to redeem man from the condition of death and give him a fair and impartial trial for life after he had received his full experience with the baneful effects of sin. And when the world is put on trial, each one will know sin and the results of yielding to it; whereas Adam, when first tried, had not experienced these things. We can properly say that when Adam violated God's law the entire human race was in his loins, unproduced. The Lord, then, could make provision for the satisfying of the judgment against Adam and all of his offspring by another equal to Adam going voluntarily into death. The Lord made this promise through the Prophet: "I will ransom them from the power of the grave; I will redeem them from death: O death, I will be thy plagues; O grave, I will be thy destruction: repentance shall be hid from mine eyes." (Hosea 13:14) The only way this redemption could be accomplished was by the death of a perfect man, and in all the earth there was not one. "None of them can by any means redeem his brother, nor give to God a ransom for him."—Psalm 49:7.

Then it was that Jesus was transferred from the spirit plane to the human, being born as a man, but not begotten by any of Adam's offspring. When he grew to manhood's estate he was perfect, mentally, morally and physically, had none of the contaminations of the Adamic stock in him, and was the exact counterpart of the perfect man Adam, who stood in Eden, unscathed or unmarked by sin. Jesus had come now for the very purpose of redeeming mankind, as he states: "The Son of man came not to be ministered unto, but to minister, and to give his life a ransom for many." "I am come that they might have life, and that they might have it more abundantly."—Matthew 20:28; John 10:10.

End of Evil after Earth is Populated

The permission of the reign of sin and death these many years gave sufficient time for enough people to be born into the earth ultimately to fill the earth when they are restored to perfect human condition and afforded ample time and opportunity for the grown up ones to acquire an experience with the baneful effects of sin. All those who have died in infancy will get their experience during the thousand-year reign of Christ, during which they will be uplifted. They will acquire knowledge by learning what happened to others and by seeing the effect upon others in addition to their own experience. The death of Jesus was for the benefit of all. We read: "We see Jesus, who was made a little lower than the angels for the suffering of death, crowned with glory and honor; that he by the grace of God should taste death for every man," (Hebrews 2:9) Thus we observe it was the purpose of God that the death of Jesus and his resurrection should provide a price sufficient to redeem the entire human family—Adam and all of his offspring. This is in harmony with St. Paul's statement: "This is good and acceptable in the sight of God our Savior; who will have all men to be saved, and to come unto the knowledge of the truth. For there is one God, and one mediator between God and men, the man Christ Jesus; who gave himself a ransom for all, to be testified in due time." (1 Timothy 2:3-6) The order here named is that first mankind shall be saved from the Adamic curse by the death of Jesus and the presentation of the merit of his sacrifice to Divine Justice, and that subsequently all mankind must be brought to a knowledge of the truth and given one fair and impartial trial for life.

A very Few to Go to Heaven

Another reason why Jehovah permitted evil was that it afforded the opportunity of developing from amongst mankind a NEW CREATION, which will be the highest and most exalted amongst all of his creation. Jesus is the Head of this new creation; the church constitutes his body members; and these, associated together in glory, will be the instrument through which Jehovah will minister restoration blessings to all the human family. It has pleased the heavenly Father to develop this new creation through suffering. (Hebrews 2:10, 11) Jesus left the courts of glory, where he enjoyed happiness supreme in his association with the great Jehovah God. He was made flesh and dwelt amongst men. He grew up as a tender plant. Perfect in organism, he was a beautiful creature. For thirty-three and one half years he associated with sinners. He did not refuse to eat bread with publicans and sinners. He came in contact with these because they were members of the Adamic race, and one of the purposes of his experiences on earth was to acquire a knowledge of the sufferings which sin had brought upon mankind, in order that he might be fully sympathetic in dealing with mankind in the time of trial. Of him the Prophet says: "He was wounded for our transgressions, he was bruised for our iniquities: the chastisement of our peace was upon him, and with his stripes we are healed. He was oppressed, and he was afflicted" (Isaiah 53:5-7)—all for the sake of being prepared to deal properly with humankind during his glorious reign.

It has pleased the heavenly Father to develop the members of the body of Christ through experiences of suffering, and that is why St. Paul says: "If we suffer, we shall also reign with him." (2 Timothy 2:12) And again he states that we are joint-heirs with Christ Jesus, "if so be that we suffer with him." (Romans

8:16, 17) This new creation, when completed and glorified together, shall be the special pride and joy of the Lord. The Scriptures speak of this new creation as Zion, concerning which the Psalmist wrote: "For the Lord hath chosen Zion; he hath desired it for his habitation." (Psalm 132:13) In other words, the new creation will be the meeting place between God and man. It will constitute the great Mediator, Priest and King, of which Jesus is the Head and *Chief One*. It will be the representative of Jehovah and the representative of man, mediating between God and man, bringing man back into harmony with Jehovah. This is the class that will be rewarded with a heavenly home and glory forever with the Lord.—Revelation 2:10.

Teaching All Who Ever Lived Righteousness

"Out of Zion, the perfection of beauty, God hath shined." (Psalm 50:2) Then this Zion class, or new creation, of which Jesus is the chief one, will teach all the people the truth; first those living on earth at the time of the establishment of the kingdom. They will be taught what to eat and what to wear, how to act and how to think, and above all, the principles and laws of righteousness; and having had such a long experience with evil, those who hate evil and love righteousness will gradually be brought back by restitution process to perfection of body and mind and heart. And this restitution process will continue for a period of a thousand years, viz., the period of the reign of Messiah, during which time every one of Adam's stock, including Adam himself, will have a fair and impartial trial for life under favorable conditions. It will then be discovered that death has been a great enemy; but that while the people have been dead, no one of the dead has been suffering. The experience has been gained and now the blessings of life have come; and the restored popula-

tion, seeing this, will give praise to God and his Christ for ever and ever.

Thus we see there are three primary reasons why God permits evil: (1) To give mankind a full and complete lesson in the baneful effects of evil doing; (2) for a sufficient length of time to afford opportunity to fill the earth with people who get their experience before their final trial for life; and (3) to afford opportunity for the development of a new creation, to constitute the instrument through which the Lord Jehovah will minister blessings to mankind, and who thereafter shall be the pride and glory of Jehovah. Because of the last it is said: "In the ages to come he [will] show the exceeding riches of his grace in his kindness toward us through Christ Jesus."—Eph. 2: 7.

In view of the great plan of redemption and the consequent restitution of all things through Christ, we can see that blessings result through the permission of evil which could not have been so fully realized in any other way. Not only are men benefited to all eternity by the experience gained, and angels by their observation of man's experiences, but all are further advantaged by becoming fully acquainted with God's character, as manifested in his plan. They will thus behold his perfect poise and balance—his wisdom, justice, love and power, working in exact harmony.

World's Judgment Now

But why all the war, famine, strife and Bolshevism, and other unspeakable crimes that the peoples of earth are now witnessing? Briefly answered, this is the reason: Satan the evil one is designated in the Bible as the "god of this world." (2 Corinthians 4: 4) He has been in control of the nations for many centuries. God foretold the day of judgment and vengeance upon Satan's empire and the nations of earth. We have now come to

the time of Jehovah's judgment day of vengeance upon the evil systems of the earth. This trouble in earth is approaching a great climax, which must take place just before the beginning of the restoration blessings. Mankind is now in that period of history foretold by the Lord Jesus, setting forth the conditions that would exist in the last days just before the blessing of mankind. The first world passed away in a great flood. Now the present evil world is passing away in a great fiery time of trouble, God's indignation upon the evil systems, to be followed by a new order of things wherein dwelleth righteousness.—2 Peter 3:13.

The Future Earth

Of this time Volume 1, "The Divine Plan of the Ages," STUDIES IN THE SCRIPTURES, pages 191 and 192, speaks:

"Close your eyes for a moment to the scenes of misery and woe, degradation and sorrow that yet prevail on account of sin; and picture before your mental vision the glory of the perfect earth. Not a stain of sin mars the harmony and peace of a perfect society; not a bitter thought, not an unkind look or word; love, welling up from every heart, meets a kindred response in every other heart, and benevolence marks every act. There sickness shall be no more; not an ache nor a pain, nor any evidence of decay—not even the fear of such things. Think of all the pictures of comparative health and beauty of human form and feature that you have ever seen, and know that perfect humanity will be of still surpassing loveliness. The inward purity and mental and moral perfection will stamp and glorify every radiant countenance. Such will earth's society be; and weeping bereaved ones will have their tears all wiped away, when thus they realize the resurrection work complete."

Who Made the Devil?

"Thou art worthy, O Lord, to receive glory and honor and power; for thou hast created all things, and for thy pleasure they are and were created."—Revelation 4: 11.

SINCE we read in the Bible that all things were created by the Lord and that all of his works are perfect (Deuteronomy 32: 4); and since we know that the devil is the evil one, we feel sure that God would not create such a wicked one. Therefore we ask: Who created the devil?

All intelligent creatures must be free moral agents, with privileges of choosing good or evil; otherwise the creature would be merely a machine, compelled to do that for which he was created and nothing else. Since free moral agency leaves it to the creature to choose the right or the wrongful course, it is easy to be seen how a creature may be perfect at the beginning and by choosing an evil course become a very wicked one.

Lucifer Not Always the Devil

Among the wonderfully beautiful creatures created by Jehovah was Lucifer. The word Lucifer means a bright and shining one, the morning star. Job records the fact that Lucifer was present when God laid the foundation of the earth, and joined in praise unto the great Creator. (Job 38: 7) From the description given of him by God's prophet he must have been a very wonderful and beautiful creature, glorious in his apparel. The Prophet says: "Thou hast been in Eden the garden of God; every precious stone was thy covering, the sardius, topaz, and the diamond, the beryl, the onyx, and the jasper, the sapphire, the emerald, and the car-

buncle, and gold: the workmanship of thy tabrets and of thy pipes was prepared in thee in the day that thou wast created. Thou art the anointed cherub that covereth; and I have set thee so: thou wast upon the holy mountain of God; thou hast walked up and down in the midst of the stones of fire. Thou wast perfect in thy ways from the day that thou wast created, till iniquity was found in thee."—Ezekiel 28: 13-15.

When Lucifer Became the Devil

Thus we see that Lucifer was created perfect. He is called the anointed cherub, which means one having authority over others. This scripture states that he was in Eden, and this together with other scriptures indicates that he was made overseer of Adam and Eve when they were created and put into Eden. When God created man he gave Adam dominion over the things of the earth. While Lucifer was very great and beautiful he did not possess a dominion. He had ambition in his heart to have a dominion, and he set about to acquire such. To accomplish this he deceived mother Eve by deliberately lying to her. In substance he told Eve that Jehovah was trying to keep her and her husband in ignorance. To accomplish his purpose he operated through the serpent, one of the beasts in Eden; and speaking through this beast he said to Eve: "Yea, hath God said, Ye shall not eat of every tree of the garden?" And Eve replied: "Of the fruit of the tree which is in the midst of the garden, God hath said, Ye shall not eat of it, neither shall ye touch it, lest ye die." And to this the reply was made: "Ye shall not surely die; for God doth know that in the day ye eat thereof, then your eyes shall be opened, and ye shall be as gods, knowing good and evil."—Genesis 3: 1-5.

The evident purpose here was to cause Eve to be disloyal to God and through her to get control of her hus-

band; and Adam and Eve having the power to produce children and populate the earth, Lucifer intended in this way to get control of the human race and establish a dominion of his own. This was an evil course. It was disloyalty on his part to Jehovah; and for this reason he fell from God's favor.

Satan, the Ruler of the Earth

The Prophet describes him and his fall thus: "How art thou fallen from heaven, O Lucifer, son of the morning! how art thou cut down to the ground, which didst weaken the nations! For thou hast said in thine heart, I will ascend into heaven, I will exalt my throne above the stars of God: I will sit also upon the mount of the congregation in the sides of the north: I will ascend above the heights of the clouds; I will be like the most High. Yet thou shalt be brought down to hell, to the sides of the pit."—Isaiah 14: 12-15.

Jesus said of Lucifer: "I beheld Satan as lightning fall from heaven." (Luke 10: 18) He fell from God's favor. He was degraded and his name was changed; and thereafter he is known in the Scriptures as the dragon, the old serpent, the devil and Satan.

Why Evil Prospers

Every creature named by Jehovah is named for a purpose, and the name signifies much. The word Satan means opposer. In Eden he was the opposer of God and has been ever since, and the opposer of everything that is righteous. He opposed Jesus when our Lord was on earth, operating through various agencies, and has opposed the followers of Jesus ever since, causing them to be persecuted. When God expelled Adam and Eve from Eden he stated: "I will put enmity between thee and the woman, and between thy seed and her seed:

and it shall bruise thy head and thou shalt bruise his heel." The seed means the offspring; and thereafter Satan and his emissaries or offspring have persecuted all those who have followed righteousness. The seed of the woman here pictured the seed emanating from the Abrahamic covenant, which seed is the Christ. (Galatians 3: 16, 27, 29) Satan has always opposed this seed, and this explains why true Christians are persecuted.

The name serpent means deceiver; and one of Satan's favorite methods at all times has been deceit, practised upon the people. By means of fraud and deceit he has gotten false doctrines into the minds of the people, blinding them to God's true Word.—2 Corinthians 4: 3, 4.

The word dragon means devourer. Satan has sought to devour everything that is righteous. He caused the prophets to be persecuted and killed. He instigated the persecution of Jesus at the hands of the Pharisees; and his attempt is to devour everything that is righteous.

The name devil means slanderer. Satan slandered God in the garden of Eden; and all the malicious, slanderous accusations against the Lord and his followers from then until now have emanated from this evil one. Jesus speaking of him says that he is a liar and the father of lies.—John 8: 44.

False Religions Stain God's Character

God established with the nation of Israel the true religion, commanding that they should worship him as the true God. Satan the opposer established with the heathen nations round about the false religion, causing the people to worship him, images and demons; and from this source spring all the false religions. The Lord established the true Christian religion, and Satan thereafter established the mystery of iniquity, the faithless religion, claiming to worship God and at the same time misrepresenting him and misrepresenting the Lord Jesus

Christ. Thus the Scriptures prove that God did not create Satan. He created Lucifer, a perfect being, who afterward became Satan because of his own wicked course.

Angels That Joined Satan

From Adam until the flood God permitted the angels of heaven to have supervision over man. Satan seduced many of these angels and caused them to debauch the human race and turn them all to wickedness; and so terrible did the wickedness become in the earth that all aside from Noah and his family were steeped in crime and wrong-doing. Every imagination of their thoughts was evil continually. Jehovah brought the great deluge upon the earth and destroyed all the human race except Noah and his family, who found favor in God's sight and were carried over in the ark. These evil angels that Satan had seduced God restrained until the judgment of the great day. (Jude 6; 2 Peter 2:4) After the flood the Lord began to people the earth again through Noah; and in due time formed the nation of Israel as God's chosen people. Satan opposed at all times.

Explaining the machinations of these evil spirits since the flood, Volume 6, "The New Creation," STUDIES IN THE SCRIPTURES, page 620, says:

"While chained, or imprisoned, in the sense of being unable longer to appear amongst men in fleshly bodies, they soon found in the depraved race those who were willing to submit themselves as their agents, or mediums, and they operated through the bodies of these instead of bodies of their own. Such 'mediums' were human channels of communication between the demons and mankind."

Impersonators of the Dead

These evil angels or evil spirits that had been restrained and were no longer permitted to materialize amongst men under Satan's direction established communication

with willing ones of the human race on earth through the instrumentality of mediums. The Lord provided in his law that the Jews should keep aloof from those who attempted to communicate with the evil ones; and provided in his law that all spiritist mediums should be put to death. But the nation of Israel fell into temptation time and time again; and finally Satan was the cause of their overthrow. He caused the prophets of Israel to be put to death. He has caused the wars and famines and trouble and strife that have filled the earth from then until now.

Why Does not God Kill the Devil ?

Seeing that Satan is the author of evil and the instigator of wickedness in the earth, why does God permit him to live? Why does not God kill the devil?

Here we give a brief answer. God purposed that every one of his intelligent creatures should have experience with the baneful effects of evil, and that they might choose between good and evil. He decreed long centuries ago that Satan should be put to death, but he has withheld the execution of this sentence until a sufficient number of the human race has been brought forth to fill the earth; and these are given experience with sin to see the results thereof, in order that when being brought to a full knowledge of the truth and with a full opportunity to do right, they will choose righteousness and live. God in his wisdom has provided this means of teaching the human family that ambition, selfishness, and wrongdoing lead to degradation; and that humble obedience to the Lord and following after righteousness lead to exaltation.

In no other way could God have so thoroughly demonstrated this lesson than by permitting Satan to carry on his nefarious work. The two characters that are contrasted in God's great plan are Satan and the Lord

Jesus. Satan meditated a usurpation of God's authority, was degraded, lost his high position, has become the very personification of evil, and demonstrates to what extent a totally depraved character can go into wickedness; and he will in due time be destroyed.

Satan Restrained for One Thousand Years

After considering the subject at length, *STUDIES IN THE SCRIPTURES*, Volume 4, page 519, says:

"Satan will be bound—his every deceptive and misleading influence will be restrained—so that evil shall not longer appear to men to be good, nor good appear undesirable, evil; truth shall no longer appear to men untrue nor falsehoods be caused to appear true." "Not only will the kingdom be established with force, and be a power that men cannot resist, but it will so continue throughout the entire Millennial age; for the entire reign is for the specific purpose of vanquishing the enemies of righteousness."

Satan and Cohorts Destroyed - Evil Ended

The apostle Paul plainly says that Jesus partook of flesh and blood that through death he might destroy him that hath the power of death, that is, the devil. (Hebrews 2:14) After all the human family have been given a full opportunity to know good and evil and to choose the right course, then the author of evil, the devil, and all who choose to follow him in unrighteousness will be completely and forever destroyed. In this we see the manifold wisdom of Jehovah and his lovingkindness toward those who love righteousness.

Prophecy and its Fulfilment

THE Bible abounds with prophetic statements. These are called dark sayings, because not understandable by man at the time when written. Prophecy means the foretelling of events that are expected to happen in the future. When these events do occur and are recorded, we call it fulfilled prophecy or history.

No human mind could clearly discern what the future will bring forth. Hence we must conclude that prophecy proceeds from God and is written for man's instruction, to be understood by him in God's due time. The Apostle states: "For prophecy came not in old time by the will of man; but holy men of God spake as they were moved by the holy spirit." (2 Peter 1:21) These men really acted as the mouthpieces or amanuenses of the Lord, to speak or record prophetic sayings.

The fact that prophecy proceeds from Jehovah is proof conclusive that a time must come when that prophecy would have fulfilment, for the reason that the great, all-wise God would do nothing for an idle purpose. That we might be sure of this, Jehovah caused his prophet to write: "So shall my word be that goeth forth out of my mouth: it shall not return unto me void, but it shall accomplish that which I please, and it shall prosper in the thing whereto I sent it."—Isaiah 55:11.

World Events That Were Prophesied

To illustrate this point we give some examples of prophecy and their fulfilment. Through his holy prophet God foretold the redemption of man. (Hosea 13:14) He foretold that this mighty One who would come to earth would be born a Jew. (Deuteronomy 18:15) He

specified the place where he would be born. (Micah 5:2) He foretold that he would come to his own people; that they would not receive him, but would despise and reject him; and that he would be a man of sorrows and acquainted with grief. (Isaiah 53:1-3) He foretold his triumphant entry into Jerusalem, offering himself as King to the Jews. (Zechariah 9:9) He foretold his betrayal (Zechariah 11:12), and that he would die, but not for himself (Daniel 9:26); that there would be no just cause for his death, but notwithstanding he would be numbered with the transgressors. (Isaiah 53:8,9) He foretold that he would die a violent death, and yet not a bone of his body would be broken.

Every student of the Bible knows that Jesus fulfilled all of these prophetic statements caused to be written by the Lord Jehovah; that Moses was a type of him; that Jesus was born a Jew; that he was born at Bethlehem, as foretold; that he came to the Jews and offered himself as King, which fulfilment is specifically recorded in Matthew 21:1-9; that he was rejected and crucified; and that he became man's Redeemer.

Jews' National Overthrow Foretold

Through Moses God foretold the overthrow of the nation of Israel. (Leviticus 26:18, 31, 32) Again he foretold Israel's overthrow through the prophets Ezekiel and Jeremiah. These prophecies were fulfilled exactly on time, and the Jews expelled from Palestine.

God foretold through the prophets the "time of the end." Particularly through Daniel he said: "But thou, O Daniel, shut up the words, and seal the book, even to the time of the end; many shall run to and fro, and knowledge shall be increased." (Daniel 12:4) This we now see in course of fulfilment.

Railroad Trains Foretold by Nahum

It is interesting to know that many centuries ago the Lord through his prophet Nahum foretold and gave a description of a railway train in full operation, showing that that would take place at a certain time. This prophecy has now been fulfilled.—See Nahum 2: 3-6.

Volume 7, "The Finished Mystery," *STUDIES IN THE SCRIPTURES*, page 93, descriptively interprets the symbolic language employed by Nahum, even to the jostling of the passengers in the aisles and to the conductor collecting tickets.

The airship, now generally in use amongst the nations and peoples of earth, God's prophet foretold many centuries ago. The wireless telegraph, which now is used throughout the earth in proclaiming messages, God's prophet likewise foretold many centuries ago.—Isaiah 60: 8; Job 38: 35.

1914, Date Foretold for World War

There are many other prophetic utterances in the Bible, many of which are now in course of fulfilment. Important among these is the World War, which was predicted in Volume 2, "The Time is at Hand," *STUDIES IN THE SCRIPTURES* (written in 1889), to begin in 1914. We quote from pages 73 and 79:

"The 'Times of the Gentiles' was applied by our Lord to that interval of earth's history between the removal of the typical kingdom of God, the kingdom of Israel, and the introduction and establishment of its antitype, the true kingdom of God."

"The Bible evidence is clear and strong that the 'Times of the Gentiles' is a period of 2520 years, from the year B. C. 606 to and including A. D. 1914."

Others which may now be discerned by the student of the Bible are: The end of the world, the second coming of Christ, the distress of the nations, the battle of Armageddon, the new world beginning, etc. Thus we

may see that God foretold the history of the world long ago; and the careful student of prophecy now, in the light of history and events that are daily transpiring, can have a clear vision of the meaning of these things.

The Bible is the most wonderful book written. It is the least understood. There is now really no excuse for not understanding the Scriptures. Every home should be supplied with Bibles and Bible helps. All the children, from the time they begin to read, should be encouraged to study the Bible; for it holds a plain statement of God's plan of salvation that will bring life, health and happiness to the human race, and there is no other means whereby they can get it. The prophets foretold the time when the Bible would be better understood. We have now come to that time. All parents should therefore inform themselves concerning the Bible and should perform their obligation toward their children to properly teach them its great truths. There is nothing that constitutes such a safeguard against the many evils of the present day as a knowledge of God's Word of truth and his means of blessing mankind. The very purpose of the **STUDIES IN THE SCRIPTURES**, **THE HARP OF GOD**, and similar literature published by the International Bible Students Association, is to enable the people to instruct themselves concerning God's Word.

End of the World

FOR almost nineteen hundred years Christians have been looking for the coming end of the world. Long before that time the Jews had expected the world to end; for their prophets had taught them thus. Many have been erroneously taught that when the world comes to an end the earth itself and all that is in it will be burned up. This belief is due to a lack of knowledge of God's Word. It would seem unreasonable that Jehovah would create a great earth like this, and cause it to be improved, merely to destroy it. If there could be any doubt in one's mind the Lord has settled that through his prophet when he said: "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) "The earth abideth forever."—Ecclesiastes 1:4.

World, not Earth, to End

By the word *world* as used in the Scriptures is meant the order of society, which is sometimes called civilization. It means the order of things visible, as relates to man, his method of government, etc. The Bible speaks of three worlds: (1) The world that was, which being overflowed with water perished (2 Peter 3:6); (2) the present evil world, which also is to be destroyed (Galatians 1:4; 2 Peter 3:7); and (3) the "world to come." (Hebrews 2:5) The first world or order began with the creation of man and ended with the deluge or flood. It was administered by angels, as the Scriptures state. With the ending of the flood began the second world. This has indeed been, and is, an evil world. It is the end of the "present evil world" with which the Jews

were concerned and which Christians have been anticipating for many centuries. The "world to come," "wherein dwelleth righteousness," is the order of things in which Messiah the Christ reigns in righteousness.—Isaiah 45:17; 2 Peter 3:13.

Christ left no doubt in the mind of any one that his kingdom does not come during the present evil world; for when he stood before Pilate he said: "My kingdom is not of this world." Again he spoke of Satan as the "prince of this world"; and the apostle Paul refers to Satan as the "god of this world."

During the existence of this present evil world honest men have struggled to establish a righteous government on earth and to bring about man's long desire; namely, life, liberty and happiness. There has been much good in this world; for many men have striven for righteousness and truth. Evil has prevailed, however. During this time the proud have been set up, and might has been made right by man.—Malachi 3:15.

"Thy Will be Done on Earth" - "Lord's Prayer"

The Jews were interested in the end of the present evil world because they expected Messiah's kingdom then to be established and the people to receive a blessing. The Christians have looked for it because Jesus taught them to pray: "Thy kingdom come, thy will be done on earth as it is done in heaven." (Matthew 6:10) Naturally, then, the true students of the Scriptures would be watching and waiting for the coming end of the evil world and the inauguration of the new. Jesus indicated what would occur at that time. He spoke in prophetic language in answer to a question propounded to him.

Our Lord's disciples approached him and said: "Master, tell us what shall be the proof of thy presence and of the end of the world?" (Matthew 24:3) Jesus

answered this question in prophetic language—that is to say, his answer foretold what would occur when the world should end; and for this reason his answer is particularly interesting in the light of present-day events. Before noticing his answer let us consider briefly some chronological features of God's prophetic statements to show about when it might be expected that the world would end.

Clues to Prophetic Dates - Times, Years, etc.

The Jews were God's typical people; that is to say, he chose that people and organized them into a nation, gave them his law, and used them to foreshadow events to transpire. (Hebrews 10:1; 1 Corinthians 10:11) Because the Jews violated his law, God time and again warned them that he would cast them off and permit the Gentiles to take them captive and establish a world empire; and that their punishment thereafter should be for a period of seven symbolic times. These seven symbolic times and the period of time in years is explained by Volume 2, "The Time is at Hand," STUDIES IN THE SCRIPTURES, page 89:

"In the Bible a 'time' is used in the sense of a year. . . . Consequently, . . . seven 'times' represent 2520 . . . literal years."

The Scriptures plainly show that this decree of Jehovah was enforced against Israel in the year 606 B. C., and that there Nebuchadnezzar became universal gentile ruler. Counting 2,520 years thereafter would bring us to 1914 A. D.; and calculating exactly, according to Bible chronology, the gentile times would end August 1, 1914. That date, then, would mark the end of the world, when events should begin to occur, thus indicating its end. Jesus foretold what would happen then by saying that the nations would become angry and God's wrath would come.—Revelation 11:15-18.

August 1, 1914 - Events Since ?

Now mark the fulfilment of the answer of Jesus to this question: "How may we know when we have come to the end of the world?" "Nation shall rise against nation, and kingdom against kingdom." The World War began exactly on August 1, 1914, the end of the gentile times, which marks the end of the old order. Jesus said in this connection: "And there shall be famines, and pestilences, and earthquakes, in divers places. All these are the beginning of sorrows." By this we understand that the events just described would mark the beginning of the sorrows upon the peoples of earth, which would culminate in greater trouble later. Otherwise stated, August 1, 1914, marked the beginning of the ouster proceedings; and the Lord is proceeding in his own majestic way in destroying the evil things of this world to make way for the establishment of his kingdom of righteousness.

Events Happening Because Prophesied

The World War was followed by famines in many parts of Europe, Asia, and Africa. It was followed by the great pestilence of the influenza, which killed more people in one year than the war did in four. There have been more natural earthquakes in the earth in the last four years than in any previous period of earth's history. And since earthquakes symbolically represent revolutions, these likewise have marked this period, many nations having been overthrown by revolution.

The Lord foretold through his Word that God's favor would return to the Jews at the end of the world, and that they would be regathered to Palestine; and this prophecy we now see in course of fulfilment.

Furthermore, the Lord showed that there would be a great falling away from the faith in Christ Jesus, and

that so-called Christians would be turning to things other than the Word of God. And thus we see this in fulfilment, as well as many other things that the Master mentioned in this wonderful prophecy, which space will not permit us here to discuss at length. The Lord foretold general troubles, labor troubles, strikes, lockouts, profiteering, Bolshevism, and anarchy, as further evidences of the passing away of the old order, preparing for the new. These general signs which are apparent on every hand are substantiated by their occurrence in the year predicted. Volume 2, **STUDIES IN THE SCRIPTURES**, "The Time is at Hand," deals in Bible chronology and makes today's events doubly significant because of their occurrence in the year predicted. It is further substantiated in the measurements of the Great Pyramid of Gizeh in Egypt. This is dealt with fully in Volume 3, "Thy Kingdom Come," **STUDIES IN THE SCRIPTURES**.

Immortality

WHAT is meant by immortality? Does every person possess an immortal soul?

The best lexicographers define immortality thus: The quality or state of being immortal or exempt from death and annihilation; an unending existence. To be immortal means that one cannot die, but must live forever. It means that such an one has a never-ending existence. If every person has an immortal soul, it would mean, then, that the soul is ceaseless, perpetual, continual, imperishable, incorruptible, deathless, and not subject to death. The Scriptures agree with this definition of immortality.—Revelation 20:6; 1 Corinthians 15:54, 55.

From our youth we have been taught by our religious teachers that every man possesses an immortal soul. Is this true or not? The Bible is the only true source of knowledge upon this question. The theories of men are of no value unless they are based upon competent evidence coming from a truthful source. The Bible is God's Word of truth. (John 17:17) Any question that is answered contrary to the Bible cannot be a true answer, it matters not who gives it. The Scriptures state: "To the law and to the testimony: if they speak not according to this word it is because there is no light [truth] in them." (Isaiah 8:20) Again, we read: "Let God be true, but every man a liar." (Romans 3:4) Every honest person desires the truth. These questions, then, we should answer according to the truth, according to God's Word.

What is the Soul ?

Before we can determine whether or not man possesses an immortal soul we must first determine what is the

soul. The clergy say that the soul of man is the divine part of him which cannot die. They cite no Scriptural proof of this, however. The Scripture defines a soul as a being, a breathing creature. "The Lord God formed man of the dust of the ground, and breathed into his nostrils the breath of life; and man became a living soul."—Genesis 2:7.

It must be conceded that the dust of the ground out of which God formed man was without life or consciousness. The breath which he breathed into his nostrils was not conscious. But when Jehovah made the body out of the elements of the earth and then united with it the breath which living creatures breathe, this started animation. That put to work the machinery, and the result was a living, sentient, moving being, a soul. The words *soul* and *being* are synonymous terms.

Have you a Soul? Are you a Soul?

Every creature that breathes is a soul. No creature possesses a soul. Every animal is a soul. But no one would contend that an animal possesses a soul. The word *soul* God applied to lower animals long before the creation of man. (See Genesis 1:20, 30, margin) Again we read in God's Word: "Levy a tribute unto the Lord of the men of war which went out to battle: one soul of five hundred, both of the persons, and of the beeves, and of the asses, and of the sheep." (Numbers 31:28) The reason the Scriptures designate animals as souls is that they are all breathing creatures. Man is the highest order of animal.

The proper definition of soul is, then, any creature that breathes and possesses the senses of sight, smell, etc., and uses them. Man is a soul. Man does not possess a soul. For instance, we say that a man has a cow; but not that man is a cow. Man is a soul. Man does not possess a soul.

When creatures die, they all go to one place. The difference between man and the lower animals is that for the lower animals there is no hereafter; while God has provided by redemption and resurrection that man shall live again. The Scriptures state: "That which befalleth the sons of men befalleth beasts; even one thing befalleth them: as the one dieth, so dieth the other; yea, they have all one breath; so that a man hath no preëminence above a beast: for all is vanity. All go unto one place; all are of the dust, and all turn to dust again." (Ecclesiastes 3: 19, 20) God said to man when in Eden: "Of the tree of knowledge of good and evil, thou shalt not eat of it: for in the day that thou eatest thereof thou shalt surely die." (Genesis 2: 17) It was the man, the soul, the being, to whom God addressed these words. If man has an immortal soul, then God's words do not mean what they say. But we know that God does mean what he says.

The Soul that Dies

The clergy who have taught that the soul is the spiritual thing which was not sentenced to death, and which cannot die, are flatly contradicted by the Scriptures. We read: "The soul that sinneth, it shall die." (Ezekiel 18: 4) "What man is he that liveth, and shall not see death? shall he deliver his soul from the hand of the grave?" (Psalm 89: 48) These scriptures prove that the soul dies. If it dies, then of course it cannot be immortal. Man is a soul. Man was sentenced to death. Man dies. The soul dies. Therefore man does not possess an immortal soul.

There is a distinction between living forever and immortality. A creature that would be always obedient to God and in harmony with him might be permitted to live forever. If a creature is immortal, not even God could put him to death. The Scriptures show that God

possesses the power to destroy the soul. Jesus said: "Fear him who is able to destroy both soul and body" (Matthew 10:28); that is to say, God possesses the power to destroy man's body and his very existence, that he may never live again. This disproves the immortality theory.

There is not one scripture in the Bible that declares man is inherently immortal. If any one tells you that the Bible teaches that all men have immortal souls, ask him to cite one scripture that so states. Volume 5, STUDIES IN THE SCRIPTURES, page 334, says:

"Examining these standard works, what do we find? This: that the Hebrew word *nesh-phesh*, which is generally rendered 'soul', . . . is translated in thirty-six different ways. . . . The Greek word *psuche* [sentient being], of the New Testament . . . is translated 'soul' fifty-six times; is also translated 'mind' three times; 'heart' once; and 'life' forty-one times."

✓ Satan's Lie Foundation of Doctrine

If the Bible, then, teaches that man is mortal and not immortal, from whence did this doctrine of inherent immortality originate? The answer is: Satan the devil originated it, and it is the first lie ever told; and from this great lie all other false doctrines have sprung, the doctrine originating in the following manner:

Adam and Eve were in Eden, having been given dominion over the things of Eden. They had the right to live if they remained obedient to God. God said to Adam: "In the day that thou eatest [of the tree of knowledge of good and evil] thou shalt surely die." (Genesis 2:17) Satan practised a fraud upon mother Eve. He induced her to believe that God was withholding from her and her husband knowledge that they would gain by eating of this fruit. He said to her: "Why do you not eat of this fruit?" And Eve replied: "God hath said, Ye shall not eat of it, neither shall ye touch it, lest ye die." To

this Satan replied: "Ye shall not surely die; for God doth know that in the day ye eat thereof, then your eyes shall be opened, and ye shall be [as wise] as gods, knowing good and evil." (Genesis 3:1-5) This was a lie, because a direct contradiction of what Jehovah had told them. Referring to it Jesus said concerning Satan: "He was a murderer from the beginning, and abode not in the truth, because there is no truth in him. When he speaketh a lie he speaketh of his own; for he is a liar, and the father of it."—John 8:44.

From that day until now Satan has blinded the minds of men by inducing them to believe that the soul of man is immortal and that man cannot die. St. Paul says of him that he blinds the minds of men lest the truth shine into their lives.—2 Corinthians 4:4.

Who is Immortal?

Since immortality means that which is not subject to death, who then is immortal? The Scriptures answer: "God only hath immortality." (1 Timothy 6:16) God is the Self-existing One, from everlasting. When Jesus was on earth, he was not immortal; but immortality was granted to him as a great reward at his resurrection. He said: "As the Father hath life in himself, so hath he given to the Son to have life in himself." (John 5:26) When he arose from the dead he said: "I am he that liveth, and was dead; and, behold, I am alive for evermore."—Revelation 1:18.

The devil himself is not immortal; for the Scriptures plainly state that in God's due time he will destroy the devil.—Hebrews 2:14.

Immortality is a great reward offered only to those who are overcoming, faithful Christians, and who participate with Christ Jesus in his resurrection; and it will be possessed only by them. There is a wide distinction between men in general and those who become

the footstep followers of Jesus. All men are mortal; therefore subject to death. The apostle Paul plainly says: "In Adam all die." (1 Corinthians 15:22) Then the Apostle plainly points out that immortality is a reward for faithfulness. He encourages the Christian to seek immortality. (Romans 2:7) If a person inherently possessed a thing he would not be seeking it. The apostle Paul, then, addressing himself to the consecrated Christians who prove their faithfulness unto death and whose reward is promised to be heavenly, says: "The dead shall be raised incorruptible, . . . for this corruptible must put on incorruption, and this mortal must put on immortality. So when this corruptible shall have put on incorruption, and this mortal shall have put on immortality, then shall be brought to pass the saying that is written, Death is swallowed up in victory." (1 Corinthians 15:52-54) It must be manifest to every reasonable mind that if every man possessed inherent immortality, then this statement of St. Paul could not be true. We know that it is true; for he wrote under inspiration. He shows that immortality is given as the greatest reward.

These words of St. Paul are addressed not to the world but only to the consecrated Christians. To such Jesus said: "Be thou faithful unto death and I will give thee a crown of life." (Revelation 2:10) The crown of life means the highest state of life; hence the state of immortality, that which is not subject to death. Again Jesus said of those who partake in the first resurrection, the chief resurrection, that over such the second death shall have no power.—Revelation 20:6.

God has always been immortal. Jesus and his church are granted immortality; and no other creatures in the universe will ever be immortal.

All Men Mortal

The word *perish* is defined by Webster and other lexicographers as follows: To be destroyed; to pass away; to become nothing. Jesus said: "God so loved the world, that he gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in him should not PERISH, but have everlasting life." (John 3:16) Plainly the condition here is that everlasting life depends upon faith in the Lord Jesus, and that all others do perish. They could not perish if immortal. Again Jesus said concerning his coming: "I am come that they might have life, and that they might have it more abundantly." (John 10:10) If a soul is immortal, then of necessity it would possess life, and the coming of Jesus and his death and resurrection would not be necessary to give them life. Hence it is seen that the theory of inherent immortality is a direct and positive denial of the great ransom sacrifice. Satan desires to blind the people to this great truth; for there is no other name save that of Jesus whereby men can be saved.

The Resurrection

Nothing is more clearly taught by the Scriptures than the resurrection of the dead. If man is inherently immortal it would mean that he cannot die. And if he is not dead there could be no such thing as a resurrection. Resurrection means a restanding to life, or a recreation, or a bringing back to life. The scriptures above cited show that all men came under the condemnation of death; and that it is the soul, the being, the creature, that dies. Referring to the dead, Jesus said: "Marvel not at this: for the hour is coming, in the which all that are in the graves shall hear his voice [of the Son of man], and shall come forth." (John 5:28, 29) To this St. Paul adds: "There shall be a resurrection of the dead, both of the just and the unjust."—Acts 24:15.

Jesus died and rose again from the dead. He so stated himself. (Revelation 1:18) His resurrection is a guarantee that all the dead shall be awakened out of death. If immortal, this would be impossible, because already alive. For this reason many deny the resurrection. To meet their argument St. Paul said: "If there be no resurrection of the dead, then is Christ not risen; and if Christ be not risen, then is our preaching vain, and your faith is also vain. . . . Then they also which are fallen asleep in Christ are perished." (1 Corinthians 15: 13-18) Mark here that that which perishes cannot be immortal. Hence the Apostle plainly says that except for the resurrection all have perished. Then he proceeds to show that the resurrection of Jesus is a guarantee that all the dead shall be brought forth from the grave again. "But now is Christ risen from the dead, and become the firstfruits of them that slept. For since by man came death, by man came also the resurrection of the dead. For as in Adam all die, even so in Christ shall all be made alive."—1 Corinthians 15: 20-22.

What is Resurrected ?

In order further to fasten upon mankind his lie of inherent immortality, Satan induces his representatives to teach a further false doctrine concerning the resurrection—namely, that it is the body that is resurrected; that all the time from death until resurrection the soul is alive; that the Lord merely brings up the body to unite it with the soul. The Lord anticipated this attack of the devil and caused St. Paul to write under inspiration concerning it thus: "But some will say, How are the dead raised up? and with what body do they come? Thou fool, that which thou sowest is not quickened, except it die: and that which thou sowest, thou sowest not that body that shall be, . . . but God giveth it a body as it hath pleased him."—1 Corinthians 15: 35-38.

Thus we see that the body which dies is not the one raised from the dead. To illustrate: John Jones is a soul, a being, a creature, a man. When the breath is taken away from him he dies. Therefore John Jones, the soul, the man, ceases to exist. In God's due time he is resurrected. God had power to make a body out of the elements of the earth in the first instance. The same power is still existing, and will be exercised toward the resurrection of man. So when John Jones is brought forth, the Lord creates for him a body as it pleases the Lord.

Those who go to heaven will of necessity have a spiritual body; for Jesus declared: "A spirit hath not flesh and bones." And St. Paul states: "Flesh and blood cannot inherit the kingdom of God." In his argument to make plain the resurrection, and that the resurrection refers to the person, the being, the creature, St. Paul says concerning the one who inherits the heavenly kingdom: "It is sown in corruption, it is raised in incorruption." The *it* here refers to the person, the being, the creature, *the soul*. Again he adds: "It is sown a natural body; it is raised a spiritual body. There is a natural body, and there is a spiritual body."

Based upon the falsehood of inherently immortal souls, there is taught to the people the erroneous doctrine of conscious eternal torture; also the false doctrine that the living can communicate with the dead. And these false doctrines deny the great ransom sacrifice, which is the only means for the salvation of the human race. It is easy to be seen, then, that the one who would be particularly busy in keeping this falsehood before the people would be, and is, Satan, that old serpent, the devil.

STUDIES IN THE SCRIPTURES, THE HARP OF GOD, "What Say the Scriptures about Hell?" and "Can the Living Talk with the Dead?" discuss this subject at full length.

Where are the Dead?

DEATH has invaded almost every home, claiming some loved ones. The perplexing question presents itself to the mind of those left behind: Where are our beloved dead? This question is of too much importance to rest upon any theory, but must be supported by God's Word of truth. The truth when had, and understood brings hope in God and his plan of salvation; and those who have this hope, says St. Paul, sorrow not concerning their dead as those who have not the hope. Every honest person, then, should want to get God's Word of truth on this subject, that his sorrowful heart might be comforted.

The creeds of men and man-made institutions teach concerning the state of the dead as follows: The faithful, good church member goes to heaven when he dies; the others, not so faithful, to purgatory, out of which condition of purgation they may be removed by the aid of prayers and masses said by priests. "The Manual of the Purgatorian Society" quotes the words of Liguori thus:

"The practice of recommending to God the souls in Purgatory that he may mitigate the great pains which they suffer, and that he may soon bring them to his glory, is most pleasing to the Lord and most profitable to us."

The same authority further states:

"Flowers should be used at funerals of children only; circumstances may at times justify a deviation from this rule, but, at all events, it is unpardonable if the expense connected with this display deprives the soul departed of any spiritual assistance. Let all perform these last services for their departed, and thereby relieve their own sorrow; but let them show greater zeal, care and generosity in succoring the souls of the departed by masses, prayers and

alms. . . . But what could more forcibly elicit our charity and gratitude than to behold our loved ones and our benefactors in extreme distress, while we have the means of alleviating their suffering! That person does not possess a spark of Christian charity who, from neglect or indolence, suffers the souls of his friends to be tormented in the flames of Purgatory."—"Manual of the Purgatorian Society," pages 37-40.

If man does not possess an immortal soul, and if he is not conscious after death, then the above practice is not only fraudulent, but is the obtaining of money under false pretenses and the taking of advantage of the sorrows of the bereaved in order to extract money from them. For this reason it is important to see whether or not the theory is supported by the Bible.

The Protestant clergy teach their parishioners that the soul is immortal; that the dead are conscious, the good dead in heaven, the wicked dead in eternal torture.

The Scriptural Proof

God sentenced man to death, not to a place of conscious torture. Death means the absence of life. The sentence plainly reads: "For out of the dust wast thou taken; for dust thou art, and unto dust shalt thou return." (Genesis 3:19) It is the soul, the being, the man, that dies. "The soul that sinneth, it shall die." (Ezekiel 18:4) "What man is he that liveth, and shall not see death? shall he deliver his soul from the power of the grave?" (Psalm 89:48) If the dead are in a state of consciousness, either in bliss or in torture, the Scriptures ought so to state. On the contrary, the Scriptures plainly say: "The dead praise not the Lord, neither any that go down into silence." (Psalm 115:17) Otherwise stated, death is a condition of silence, where none can praise the Lord; and hence none can suffer.

Again we read: "Man's breath goeth forth, he returneth to his earth; in that very day his thoughts

perish." (Psalm 146:4) If a creature in death cannot think, then surely he could not be conscious; and it would be impossible for him to be either in the state of purgatory, suffering, or in a state of bliss, while dead.

Again we read: "The living know that they shall die; but the dead know not anything." (Ecclesiastes 9:5) This utterly disproves the man-made theory, induced by the devil himself, that the dead are conscious and need the prayers and financial assistance of their friends who are alive.

Again says the Scripture: "Their love, and their hatred, and their envy, is now perished." This statement is a further proof of an unconscious condition. Furthermore, adds the Scripture: "Whatsoever thy hand findeth to do, do it with thy might; for there is no work, nor device, nor knowledge, nor wisdom, in the grave, whither thou goest." (Ecclesiastes 9:6,10) Why should the people pay men to say prayers for their dead ones who have no knowledge nor wisdom, and who cannot even think in the condition where they are?

Again says the Scripture: "In death there is no remembrance of thee: in the grave who shall give thee thanks?"—Psalm 6:5.

The Dead in Hell

To further carry out the false theory of the conscious state of the dead, Satan induced men to teach that the evil dead are in hell, that hell is a place of conscious torture, and that God has provided such a place. The doctrine of eternal torment cannot be true for many reasons: (1) Because it is unreasonable; (2) because it is repugnant to justice; (3) because it is contrary to the principle of love; and (4) because it is wholly unscriptural.

What reason could be assigned for Jehovah's eternally tormenting of any creature? What good could be ac-

complished? It would not be reasonably possible to do this unless the creature were immortal and could not be destroyed; and the Scriptures conclusively prove that man is not immortal. A child is born into the world under conditions over which it has no control. Many are born idiots, many habitual criminals. They die in this condition. It seems absolutely unreasonable that the Creator would cause such to be eternally tortured. It is unreasonable, and it is a defamation of his holy character. It is the doctrine of Satan.

Justice is the foundation of Jehovah's throne. (Psalm 89:14) God sentenced man to die, to return to the dust from which he was taken. To thereafter change the penalty and cause him to suffer torture eternally would be absolutely unjust.

Eternal torture is void of the principle of love. "God is love." A Creator that would torture his creatures eternally would be a fiend, and not a God of love. If incorrigible, love would dictate the destruction of the creature and not the torture. On the contrary, we see that God's love is so great that he has made provision for the redemption and salvation of mankind.

Hell of Torment not Bible Hell

Eternal torture is unsupported by a single text of the Scriptures. Some passages, highly symbolic—such as the rich man in hell and Lazarus in Abraham's bosom—have been twisted to teach eternal torture; whereas they teach anything but that. Examination of this parable in Volume 5, *STUDIES IN THE SCRIPTURES*, "The Atonement," page 376, concludes:

"This is the only passage of the Scriptures in which there is the slightest intimation of the possibility of thought, feeling, torture, or happiness in *hades* or *sheol*. . . . The rich man who went into oblivion and yet was tortured while in oblivion is the Jewish nation. Israel certainly has gone into oblivion; as a nation it is dead. Yet as a people scat-

tered amongst the nations, Israel lives and has suffered torments since the rejection of Messiah."

In this parable Lazarus represented the gentiles. Everlasting punishment does not mean everlasting torment. The laws of the land punish a burglar by imprisonment, a murderer by death. The punishment of the burglar lasts a few years. The punishment of the murderer is everlasting. The death penalty that God pronounced upon man is everlasting, and can be relieved only because of his plan of redemption. But when each one is brought in full contact with God's loving provision for life and refuses it, then the punishment is death, from which there is no resurrection; therefore everlasting.

Prophets who Prayed to be Sent to Hell

The *hell* of the Bible means the tomb, the condition of death, oblivion, the grave. The only word in the original Hebrew translated *hell* is *sheol*; and it is translated *grave* as many times as it is translated *hell*. A few samples we observe here:

Jacob, weighed down with grief because of the supposed death of his beloved son Joseph, exclaimed: "I will go down into *sheol* [hell] unto my son mourning!" (Genesis 37:35) Later, when requested to send Benjamin to Egypt, he said: "My son, Benjamin, shall not go down with you; for . . . if evil befall him, then ye shall bring down my gray hairs with sorrow to *sheol* [hell]." (Genesis 42:38) Gray hairs would last but a short time in a place of fire and brimstone.

Job was a good and godly man. He suffered the loss of his earthly possessions and his family, even his wife becoming his enemy. His neighbors taunted him; his body became putrid from running sores; and while in this condition he prayed that God would send him to hell. "Oh, that thou wouldst hide me in *sheol* [hell]

until thy wrath be past." Surely no sane person would understand that Job would pray to go to a place of torment. He then makes clear the condition of hell when he says: "If I wait, hell is mine house: I have made my bed in the darkness. . . . Our rest is in the dust." (Job 17:13-16) If dark, there could be no fire there. Job states that it is a condition of rest in the dust, from which man is taken.

Again Job said that man's "sons come to honor, and he knoweth it not; and they are brought low, but he perceiveth it not of them" (Job 14:21); thus showing that hell is not a place of consciousness.

Jesus went to hell when he died. Concerning this the Prophet wrote: "Thou wilt not leave my soul in hell." (Psalm 16:10) This text is quoted by the Apostle in Acts 2:27, thus plainly showing that the *hell* of the Old and New Testaments are the same, the condition of non-existence. The word *hades* in the Greek means the same as *sheol* in Hebrew. The revisers of the Bible do not translate these words at all, but leave them in the original, thus showing that modern scholars know that the hell of the Bible does not mean a place of torture.

Hades, Gehenna, Translated "Hell"

In the New Testament appears the word *hell* again, translated from the Greek *gehenna*. *Hades* represents that condition of death from which God has promised a resurrection; while *gehenna* represents that condition of death from which there is no resurrection. Jesus said: "And if thine eye offend thee, pluck it out; it is better for thee to enter into the kingdom of God with one eye, than, having two eyes, to be cast into hell fire; where their worm dieth not, and the fire is not quenched." (Mark 9:47, 48) This is a favorite text with those who advocate eternal torture. They attempt to teach the people that the worms represent human

beings that are held over the flames and scorched continually and eternally. It must be apparent that the language in the above text is highly symbolic.

We know that Jesus did not literally mean that the disciples should remove their eyes and by that process expect to enter heaven. Jesus was here speaking in dark sayings or parabolic language. "And without a parable spake he not unto them." (Matthew 13:34) The word *gehenna*, as above stated, represents a condition of death from which there is no resurrection. Jesus was here telling his hearers in substance that no earthly thing, regardless of how dear to them, should be permitted to prevent them from entering God's kingdom. If even ever so dear, it should be plucked out and cast away; for it would be better to enter the kingdom without such than to have the same (as pictured by the eyes) and to be cast into *gehenna* and suffer eternal destruction.

Punishment of the Wicked

The punishment that God will inflict upon the wicked is destruction. These "shall be punished with everlasting destruction." (2 Thessalonians 1:9) "I will early destroy all the wicked of the land; that I may cut off all wicked doers from the city of the Lord." (Psalm 101:8) "Whoso despiseth the word shall be destroyed." (Prov. 13:13) "The Lord preserveth all them that love him; but all the wicked will he destroy."—Psa. 145:20.

After a thorough examination of the subject, Volume 5, *STUDIES IN THE SCRIPTURES*, page 381, concludes:

"We have now examined every text of Scripture containing the words *sheol* and *hades*, and have ascertained that . . . [death is] a state or condition and not a place, although sometimes figuratively spoken of as a place, a prison-house from which all prisoners shall come forth in the resurrection morning."

A Ransom for All

"For there is one God, and one mediator between God and men, the man Christ Jesus; who gave himself a ransom for all, to be testified in due time."—1 Timothy 2: 5, 6.

IN ALL of the thirty denominations composing the Interchurch World Movement, surely there are many consecrated Christians. To these it must seem exceedingly strange that the clergy of these denominations would agree amongst themselves to ignore the doctrines of the Word of God. In a bulletin issued by the Interchurch World Movement some months ago it is expressly stated that they have agreed to ignore the doctrines and unite in action; and since their actions are limited to the collection of an enormous amount of money, we take it for granted that they mean to be understood that everything is ignored except action for money and the getting of members. Upon what do they expect to feed the hungry flock of God if the doctrines are ignored?

We venture the assertion that not one minister out of a thousand in recent years has explained to his congregation the philosophy of the ransom sacrifice. It might with modesty be suggested that few of them understand this great truth. Whether that be the reason or not, any man who assumes to teach the Bible or preach the Word of God should be able to instruct his congregation upon this doctrine. Is the ransom sacrifice a doctrine? Indeed, it is the pivotal doctrine of all of God's arrangements concerning mankind. It is the one doctrine from which radiate all other truths. It is the square by which the truth or falsity of all other doctrines is measured, and one not understanding the philosophy of the ransom

sacrifice is unable clearly to understand the other great truths of the Bible. The poet has beautifully said:

"In the cross of Christ I glory,
Towering o'er the wrecks of time;
All the light of sacred story
Gathers round its head sublime."

In the providing of the ransom sacrifice is the most marvelous exhibition of love ever made or recorded. Briefly here we consider the subject.

Man Created to Enjoy Life

God created man and woman, Adam and Eve. He made them perfect in organism, gave them a perfect home, endowed them with the faculties incident to a perfect creature, and gave them the right to the dominion over the earth and the enjoyment of life, liberty and happiness. Upon the enjoyment of these blessings no limitation was placed, only that they were required to be obedient to the divine law. Satan, ambitious for a dominion of his own, and observing that Jehovah had endowed this perfect pair with the power to produce a race that would populate the earth, conceived in his heart the determination to get them under his control and establish a dominion of his own. (Isaiah 14: 12-14) He resorted to fraud and deceit to induce Eve to violate the law, saying to her in substance, 'God is keeping you in ignorance, and as soon as you partake of this food you will be as wise as God. He has told you that you will die, but that is false; ye shall not surely die.'

Eve yielded to the seductive powers of the adversary, and violated the law. Adam, observing what had happened and knowing the result, rather than be deprived of his perfect wife and her companionship, himself violated the law that he might die. He was a suicide. The judgment of Jehovah was enforced by expelling

man from his perfect home, Eden, and erecting a barrier to prevent him from further partaking of the tree of life.—Genesis 3:17-24.

All Sentenced in Adam

Out into an unfinished earth Adam and his wife went. The poisonous elements contained in the imperfect food they were now compelled to eat caused them sickness, suffering, and ultimately death. For nine hundred and thirty years they passed through that trying ordeal before life was extinct. During that period their children were born, and by the law of inheritance were born imperfect, unrighteous, therefore disapproved and condemned before Jehovah; for no imperfect thing has a standing before God. (Romans 5:12; Psalm 51:5; Romans 5:18) Some will insist that it was unjust on God's part to permit the children of Adam to suffer from the results of the father's wrong-doing. Not so, however. The father, imperfect and dying, could not possibly produce a perfect thing. Therefore, by inheritance Adam's children all are imperfect, all sold under sin, all become the slaves of sin.

God is consistent; he cannot be otherwise. His judgment therefore must stand; it cannot be reversed. He can with consistency, however, make arrangement for its satisfaction; and this he did. He made a promise that he would ransom mankind from death, saying, "I will ransom them from the power of the grave; I will redeem them from death: O death, I will be thy plagues; O grave, I will be thy destruction: repentance shall be hid from mine eyes."—Hosea 13:14.

If a judgment of a court calls for the payment by one of a thousand dollars, nothing short of a thousand dollars would satisfy that judgment. Man, Adam, had sinned; and the judgment or sentence of Jehovah, duly made and entered, required the death of the perfect

man. Nothing short of the life of a perfect man, given up in death, would satisfy that judgment. If A is in jail because of his inability to pay a thousand-dollar judgment against him, and if B desires to pay it for him, sells his property, reduces it to cash in order to get the thousand dollars with which to pay, and then does pay over to the court the thousand dollars for which A is held in custody, A would be released and B would therefore become his redeemer, or ransom. Ransom literally means to purchase at the forum. By the same process of analysis we can see that nothing could redeem Adam short of a perfect human life voluntarily laid down in death.

All the human race, being descendants of Adam, were imperfect; therefore not one possessed the ability to redeem Adam. The Psalmist thus states it: "None of them can by any means redeem his brother, nor give to God a ransom for him." (Psalm 49:7) Behold, then, an undone race, with a brief space of life and a little enjoyment, going into certain death. Behold a whole race marching down the broad way to destruction.

Love of God Manifest

God provided in his plan that he would arrest this downward course of man and perfect him. "For God so loved the world that he gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have everlasting life. For God sent not his Son into the world to condemn the world; but that the world through him might be saved."—John 3:16, 17.

The first step in the program, Volume 5, *STUDIES IN THE SCRIPTURES*, "The Atonement," page 427, points out is this:

"We see Jesus, made a little lower than the angels for the suffering of death, crowned with glory and honor [the perfection of human nature] that he by the grace of God

should taste death for every man [and thus make possible human restitution]. We see the work of man's salvation thus begun by Jehovah, in providing a suitable ransom price for our redemption . . . and upon a plane of absolute justice. . . . Thus the sacrifice which our Lord Jesus gave for man's sin was not a spiritual one, which would not have been a proper, acceptable sacrifice because it would not have been a corresponding price—in every particular the exact ransom price for Adam."

Restoring Life Adam Lost

Jesus was the beginning of God's creation. (John 1:2) Jehovah caused the life of the Logos (Jesus) to be transferred from spirit to human. He was begotten by the invisible power of Jehovah. (Matthew 1:20) He was born on the human plane, holy, harmless, undefiled, separate from sinners. (Hebrews 7:26) When Jesus was on earth he was not of the angelic order, but he was made lower than the angels. (Hebrews 2:7,9) He was made flesh, and dwelt among men. (John 1:14) He was flesh and blood. (Hebrews 2:14) Why was Jesus made lower than the angels? Why made a man? St. Paul answers: "We see Jesus, who was made a little lower than the angels for the suffering of death, crowned with glory and honor, that he by the grace of God should taste death for every man." (Hebrews 2:9) He grew to manhood's estate; and when he had reached the age of thirty years he was perfect as a man, physically, mentally, morally; and at the age required to officiate as a priest he was in every respect the exact counterpart of the perfect man, Adam, when he stood in Eden, surrounded by all the glory and beauty of that place.

Why had Jesus come thus to the earth? He answers: "The Son of man came not to be ministered unto, but to minister, and to give his life a ransom." (Matthew 20:28) Again, "I am come that they might have life, and that they might have it more abundantly." (John 10:

10) Jesus had come for the express purpose of providing a way of life to the human race. Furthermore, he said: "I lay down my life, that I might take it again."—John 10:17.

So, as Volume 5, *STUDIES IN THE SCRIPTURES*, "The Atonement," points out, page 441:

"Our Lord did not go to everlasting torment, hence we have this indisputable testimony that everlasting torment is not the wages of sin."

Adam, the perfect man, had sinned; and Jehovah had entered the judgment against him, requiring his life, which judgment had been entered in heaven. That which would be required to satisfy the judgment against Adam, and indirectly against his offspring, must be the equivalent of a perfect human life, *presented in heaven*. No man could ascend into heaven. Jesus, the perfect man, therefore, must die and arise from the dead and ascend on high, and there present to Divine Justice the value of his perfect human life. This is why he said: "I lay down my life that I might take it again"; that is to say, take it to be used in harmony with the divine purpose. At the age of thirty years Jesus presented himself in full consecration to do the Father's will. It was the will of God that he should lay down his life. (John 10:17-19) Three and one-half years thereafter he died upon the cross. Three days later he arose from the dead. Forty days thereafter he ascended into heaven.

Man Guaranteed Life on Earth

Adam had forfeited his right to human life because of his violation of the law. Jesus, the perfect man, voluntarily laid down his human life, but did not part with the legal right to it. Therefore, when God raised him out of death a divine creature, Jesus possessed the right to the perfect human life, which we call merit or value. In other phrase, as B had reduced his property

to cash in order to redeem his brother A, so Jesus had reduced his humanity to that value which was necessary to present to Divine Justice in heaven. And so, when he arose from the dead and ascended on high, he possessed the value or equivalent to what Adam had forfeited, and the presentation of it to Jehovah for that purpose would release Adam from the judgment of death; and when done, God's plan is that the dead shall come forth and have an opportunity to live.

But more than eighteen hundred years have elapsed since the death and resurrection of Jesus, and Adam is still dead, and his children are dead and dying. Was there some defect in the Lord's arrangement? Would it not follow that if this ransom or purchase price was paid over to Divine Justice, Adam and his offspring should immediately have the right to life? Such seems to be the correct thought. Jesus could have presented the value of his sacrificed human life to Divine Justice immediately when he ascended on high, which would remove the legal disability under which the race has been; and the process of restoration, that is to say, bringing back the race to the perfect condition in body and mind and life, would have begun. Why did he not do it? The proper answer to this question again makes manifest the love of Jehovah and the Lord Jesus in providing some other wonderful things of which mankind has been invited to partake; namely, the development of the church and the work which the church will have to do after once developed.

Death Taints to be Eliminated

The great ransom sacrifice is a guarantee of the redemption and deliverance of the church, which is the body of Christ (Colossians 1:18), to be followed by a full and complete trial of all mankind for life, and is a guarantee that all men shall have one trial. (Acts 17:

31) Those who are obedient to righteousness under that trial shall live forever on the earth. The time must therefore come when it can be truly said "millions now living will never die." That time is now here.

Summing up the conclusions of arguments from many viewpoints, Volume 5, *STUDIES IN THE SCRIPTURES*, "The Atonement," page 472, says:

"We see, too, that the work of the Savior is not accomplished merely in purchasing the race, but that after purchasing them it is necessary that he should be the Great Physician, to heal them of sin-sickness, and to restore them to life and to all the perfections of their nature; and thus eventually, through the processes of restitution during the thousand years of his reign, to make ready as many as will obey him . . . in absolute perfection."

World Distress and Perplexity—Why?

ALL the nations of earth are embarrassed. The statesmen and politicians are much perplexed. The laboring people are restless. There are constant difficulties between labor and capital. Profiteers continue to gouge the people. Bolshevism, like a hideous monster, has appeared and destroyed some nations and is knocking at the door of many others. Calamities too numerous here to mention are overtaking the inhabitants of the earth. The real cause of these troubles and the adequate remedy few seem to understand.

The Bible gives a clear answer, showing why these conditions exist. In reply to the question as to what would be the conditions in the earth at the time of the end of the world, Jesus said: "On the earth anguish of nations in embarrassment, sea and surge surrounding, men fainting from fear and expectation of the things overtaking the inhabited earth." (Luke 21:25, 26, *Rotherham*) This prophetic utterance of the Lord now everybody sees in course of fulfilment. There is distress and perplexity everywhere, and this is on the increase. What is the real cause?

Increased Perplexity Opens Prophecies Not Understood

No one can get the proper answer to this question without a knowledge of the divine plan. There never was a time so important for man to understand God's purposes as now. This plan is set forth in the Bible, and it is now due to be understood. We have reached the time of the end, the time when the Lord said that "the wise shall understand." (Daniel 12:10) The "wise" within the meaning of this scripture are those who honestly,

diligently and sincerely seek the truth in God's Word; and who fearlessly put aside the teachings of men, and follow the Lord and his teachings only.

Briefly stated the answer is this: God created man perfect, and gave him a perfect home in Eden. Man violated God's law, after having been warned that a violation would result in his destruction and the sentence of himself to death. Adam, the perfect man, under sentence of death, now expelled from Eden, began to die, which death process continued for a period of nine hundred and thirty years, during which period of time all the children that he begat were born. These were brought forth in the earth as imperfect, because their father was under condemnation of death. This is what is meant by the Prophet's statement: "Behold, I was shapen in iniquity, and in sin did my mother conceive me." (Psalm 51:5) All were born sinners for this reason. (Romans 5:12) Jehovah made a promise to redeem man from death and to restore him to his original condition if obedient to God's law. The carrying out of this plan has required a long period of time. In the course of time God sent into the earth his beloved Son, to provide the ransom sacrifice, and through this the redemption of man. Jesus came that men might have life and have it more abundantly. (John 10:10; Matthew 20:28) He died upon the cross and arose from the dead; and his death and resurrection provided for the opening of the way to all men to come back into harmony with God in his due time.—Hebrews 2:9; 1 Corinthians 15:12-22.

Work of Past 1900 Years

During the past nineteen hundred years our Lord has been preparing his bride, the church. When he went away he promised to return for the church (John 14:1-4), and said that with his coming would come the end of

the world, the dashing to pieces of the old order, the setting up of his kingdom and the blessing of mankind.

During this period of preparation Satan has been the god of the evil world, ruling in the minds and hearts of mankind, causing evil and violence on earth. It is God's purpose to restrain Satan, that he may deceive the nations no more. (Revelation 20:1-4) Seeing that his empire is about to be taken from him, Satan is causing great trouble in the world, inducing the people to war, strife, hatred, murder, profiteering, in order to blind them to God's real purposes. The Lord foreknew this and foretold that when the time was here there would be distress of nations with perplexity, and vain attempts on the part of men and organizations to patch up the old order.

All Human Agencies a Failure

But all these efforts of men to reform the present order will be of no avail. The relief of mankind lies in the Messianic kingdom, which is now being established. Then will the Lord rule in righteousness. The Prophet speaking of this time says: "God will shake all nations, and [then] the desire of all nations shall come." (Haggai 2:7) The desire of the nations is peace, prosperity, life, liberty and happiness. This can come only through the Messianic kingdom; and the present distress and perplexity is only a forerunner of the coming days of blessing. The evidence is conclusive from the Scriptures that we are in the last days of the old order, and that it is dying out. The prophet Daniel referring to that time says: "In the days of these kings shall the God of heaven set up a kingdom, which shall never be destroyed; and the kingdom shall not be left to other people, but it shall break in pieces and consume all these kingdoms, and it shall stand for ever."—Daniel 2:44.

For explanation of such scriptures as are confusing

to some and yet contain a depth of meaning in symbolic phrase, one but needs to refer to Volume 1, *STUDIES IN THE SCRIPTURES*, "The Divine Plan," and look up the Scripture texts in the index in the rear of the book, this being a complete index of every text used or cited in the seven volumes of *STUDIES IN THE SCRIPTURES*. There we find that this prophecy of Daniel is fully dealt with in Volume 1, "The Divine Plan of the Ages," pages 253 to 256, even identifying the nations represented in the Prophet's description by the head of fine gold, breast and arms of silver, belly and thighs of brass, legs of iron, and feet part of iron and part clay.

The Desire of All Nations

The Lord promises, then, that in the last days, meaning the end of the old order, the kingdom of righteousness shall be established: "And many nations shall come, and say, Come, and let us go up to the mountain of the Lord, and to the house of the God of Jacob; and he will teach us of his ways, and we will walk in his paths; for the law shall go forth of Zion, and the word of the Lord from Jerusalem. And he shall judge among many people, and rebuke strong nations afar off; and they shall beat their swords into plowshares, and their spears into pruninghooks; nation shall not lift up a sword against nation, neither shall they learn war any more. But they shall sit every man under his vine and under his fig tree; and none shall make them afraid; for the mouth of the Lord of hosts hath spoken it."—Micah 4: 2-4.

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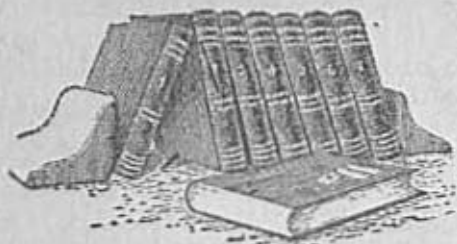
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