A BUILDING OF OUR OWN

THE COST

was ever acquired. During the past three years the Society’s head office, the site since 1893, has been two small rooms in a house on Ross Street—hopelessly inadequate either to house all the library or to transact the volume of business done by the Society. Our National President, Dr. R. M. Petrie of Victoria, in his recent letter to members summed our needs: “Our present quarters are quite inadequate and Council will be satisfied until we have a home which is worthy of the size and prestige of our National Astronomical Society.”

In January of this year, after consultation with competent business advice, the Property Committee of the National Council recommended the purchase of a house at 252 College Street near University of Toronto. An offer to purchase, signed by the National Treasurer on January 12th, was accepted. This house provides, without alteration, four rooms well suited for the Society’s office and library and four small suites for rental. For the first time we will have office space “worthy of the size and prestige” of our National Society.

The total cost of the property is $32,500. A minimum initial payment of $12,500 must be made by March 1st. The Society can obtain a mortgage for the balance with the privilege of reducing the principal at any time without notice or bond.
From the reserve and operating funds of the National Society we can muster $13,000.

We believe that this new venture offers us an opportunity and a challenge to expand the services to the Centres—to unify and revitalize the Society. Should we not begin this new era with our headquarters completely paid for and furnished? To do so we will need $22,000. We feel that we can obtain as much as $10,000 from government sources and from foundations. But we must demonstrate to these groups that we are solidly behind the Society; we can do this only by contributing ourselves.

Let us therefore set our own sights at $12,000. Already donations of $2,000 and $100 have been made by two generous members of the Society. Can we count on you to help too? Will you let your contribution reflect your means and your interest in this important undertaking? Will you send your contribution to the Treasurer before moving day, May 1st?

All contributions to the Royal Astronomical Society of Canada may be claimed as Canadian income tax deductions.
DEDICATION

This booklet is dedicated to our aspiring youth who feel that the present interpretations of these important items are not sufficiently modern.

---.---.0.--.--

INTRODUCTION

To some who read this booklet for the first time there may be a little hesitation about accepting some of the ideas expressed because of their modern aspect, but to those who are acquainted with the theological trends of modern science and the scientific trends of modern theology, there should be no serious difficulty.

The harmony of science and theology is being made a subject of close study by both sides because of much agitation regarding their unnecessary differences. Both have made assumptions whose dogmatism and weakness have made it necessary to change or discard them. We must keep an open mind to recognize the clearer harmony. It must be scientifically sound and theologically sane.

The purpose, therefore, in this booklet is to present prayerfully considered interpretations which will do no injustice to the biblical record and yet will give modern science a fair deal. And we ask that no reader indulge in snap judgments on problems so vital as these without some knowledge of the literature on both sides of the subject.

The above has reference to the problems in PART ONE. PART TWO deals with closely related matters, and PART THREE considers several practical questions that have been subjects of much discussion in recent years. We hope our answers will be found satisfactory to some of our readers, but we also fully expect many suggested changes regarding their form and wording.

W. G. C.
PART ONE

Problems in Genesis

CONTENTS

1. WHAT ABOUT CREATION?
The Creator, God; The Son of God; The Spirit of God.

2. WHAT ABOUT THE SOLAR SYSTEM?
Sol, the Sun; Tellus, the Earth; Luna, the Moon.

3. WHAT ABOUT LIFE?
Its origin; Life eternal and everlasting; Some words.

4. WHAT ABOUT MAN?
What is he? His relation to God; Six days of creation.

5. WHAT ABOUT TEMPTATION?
The Garden of Eden; Eve's temptation; What are angels?

6. WHAT ABOUT SIN?
Its nature; How are sinners lost? What is conversion?

7. WHAT ABOUT SALVATION?
Three great words: Redemption; Regeneration; Salvation.

8. WHAT ABOUT DEATH?
Its causes; What follows death? What are heaven and hell?

9. WHAT ABOUT THE WORLD'S END?
End of world; Resurrection & Judgment; The Second coming.

10. WHAT ABOUT THREE EVENTS?
Noah's Flood; The tower of Babel; The Red Sea crossing.

11. WHAT ABOUT DIVINE JUDGMENTS?
Their causes; On the Hebrew people; On the Heathen.

12. WHAT ABOUT DIVINE CHOICES?
Their reasons; Are they predestined? Are they irrevocable?

PART TWO

Some further problems

1. WHAT ABOUT THE BIBLE?
What it is; What are its contents? Its inspiration.

2. WHAT ABOUT ITS CRITICISM?
Archaeology; Higher criticism; New versions & revisions.

3. WHAT ABOUT MIRACLES?
In the Old Testament; In the New Testament; Modern.

4. WHAT ABOUT THE CHURCH?
Its organization; Its ministry; Its mission.

5. WHAT ABOUT SACRAMENTS?
Their nature and number; The Lord's Supper; Baptism.

6. WHAT ABOUT PRAYER?
The Lord's Prayer; Our prayers; Faith and works.

7. WHAT ABOUT DIVINE HEALING?
The proper atmosphere; The proper method; After care.

8. WHAT ABOUT WORSHIP?
Its plan and program; Its performance; Its function.
9. WHAT ABOUT SUNDAY?
The Lord's Day (SUNDAY); How to observe it; Its value.
10. WHAT ABOUT OTHER RELIGIONS?
Historical statement; Pagan religions; Civilized forms.
11. WHAT ABOUT THE SECTS?
Their history and causes; Fundamentalism; Modernism.
12. WHAT ABOUT UNBELIEF?
Three states of mind; Infidelity, Agnosticism, Atheism.

--- PART THREE ---
Some social problems

1. WHAT ABOUT MARRIAGE?
Trial marriages; False marriages; True marriages.
2. WHAT ABOUT DIVORCE?
Real and flimsy reasons; The legal aspect; The children.
3. WHAT ABOUT SOCIAL VICE?
Illicit relations; Contraceptives; Polyandry & Bigamy.
4. WHAT ABOUT GAMBLING?
For fun or stakes; Horses, dogs, games; Abolish or control?
5. WHAT ABOUT THE DRUG HABIT?
Popular palliatives; Stimulants; Narcotics & Tobacco.
6. WHAT ABOUT ALCOHOLIC BEVERAGES?
Intemperance; Abstinence or Prohibition; Limited license.
7. WHAT ABOUT USURY?
In the Old Testament; In the New Testament; Modern practise.
8. WHAT ABOUT LYING?
Does it pay? Does it backfire? When is it permissible?
9. WHAT ABOUT GOD'S NAME?
A Commandment; Is binding today; How about unbelievers?
10. WHAT ABOUT WAR?
Is it right? What of Pacifism? When is victory a solution?
11. WHAT ABOUT EVANGELISM?
Personal & Specific; Group & Public; Mass and General?
12. WHAT ABOUT CHRISTIANITY?
Its amazing story; Its unique methods; Its achievements.

MORE QUESTIONS PLEASE
1. WHAT ABOUT CREATION?

Before the Beginning, mentioned in the Book of Genesis, the Universe was an infinite space filled with tenuous gases. It was not created but coexisted with God through all eternity. Now, because of Creation performed by the divine will, it contains all things, seen or unseen, except God, but is not full, and the process of evolution cannot fill it because it is without boundaries.

Since the three Persons of the Trinity are very prominent in the work of creation we shall discuss briefly:

1. GOD THE CREATOR.

God is the Supreme Being, the only uncreated One, without beginning and without end, and possessing in perfect measure all the attributes we associate with moral Deity. He is a divine Person who manifests himself as Father, as Son and as Spirit. He is the all-wise all-powerful Creator who, in the Beginning, by the creative power of his thought and will, caused the atomic constituents of the universe to become physically and chemically active and to take the forms of the Original Stars and of all the Original Distinctive Racial Types of Flora and Fauna on this planet, including our Original first parents. To the Flora or vegetation He gave unconscious life, to the Fauna or lower animals conscious life, and to our first parents self-conscious and God-conscious life, together with personality and moral and spiritual faculties. All living types were endowed with inventive and reproductive powers. This concluded Creation Proper, and was the beginning of God's kingdom on Earth. It also set in motion the universal process of Evolution.

2. THE SON OF GOD.

Jesus Christ is the sinless Son of God under whose supervision all the Types mentioned above, and their necessary laws of operation were organized, so that evolution might properly work out the varied and wonderful ideas of God. As the centuries passed, men became sinful and it was necessary for God to institute some plan by which to help them to regain their lost estate. Then it was, in the fulness of time, that, at the call of God, His Son offered to be the victim to suffer the punishment for the sins of men that they might go free and be reinstated in the family of God. Jesus thus bore our guilt on the cross and provided what is called Redemption for every member of the human race through his vicarious death on that Cross. Men were not consulted regarding this method nor its purpose; it is a free gift of God which must be accepted by faith. The birth of Jesus, about twenty centuries ago, has for many years been thought of as a supernatural event, but whether supernatural or otherwise, the HOW is of little importance compared with the FACT of his life, teaching and resurrection. The method of his birth is not a tenet of belief for our salvation. Since He returned to heaven He has been our advocate and has associated himself with his Father in the maintenance of all creation in the space falsely called the sky, and on the Earth where everything is undergoing and enjoying the remarkable process of Evolution.
THE SPIRIT OF GOD.

The Holy Spirit is now God's chief agent in this world and was sent here to fulfill the departing promise of Jesus to his disciples when He returned to heaven. Jesus said that He would be another comforter who would guide men to the truth. The Spirit, like God, is everywhere and is always engaged in many forms of service for God and man. In special ways He stirs our consciences, guides our thinking and comforts all who trustfully yield to His holy influence. He also urges sinners toward right conduct as well as faith in God and Christ. In the New Testament we read, "He will reprove the world of sin, righteousness and judgment." Which probably means that He will remind men of the very serious nature of these things.

For those who are not aware of the failure of three once-popular scientific theories about creation and its duration, we shall discuss briefly:

1. THE THEORY OF EVOLUTION.

During the centuries that have followed creation, myriads of different species have developed by the operation of natural law from all the original types, and they are what we see around us in the universe today. They were not created but have evolved. This clearly distinguishes between creation and evolution while it favors the biblical record and the findings of science. Evolution is not creative at all but only procreative with variations, but this ability to produce variations has never resulted in anything approaching the higher attributes of man. There is therefore no adequate evidence that man evolved from any lower animal. The missing link is still missing.

2. THE MECHANISTIC THEORY.

Some years ago a group of notable scientists thought the universe was an intricate machine which had come into being by chance. This limited view, which could have no place for the higher gifts of man, has been abandoned by science which suggested it. Sir James Jeans said, "The Mechanistic Theory has already shot its bolt and has failed dismally on both the scientific and the philosophic sides." And Professor Max Planck, originator of the Quantum Theory said, "We have gone this far without God, but we cannot proceed without Him." Many modern mathematicians and most astronomers as well as several outstanding geologists agree.

3. THE HEAT-DEATH THEORY.

Until recent years this theory, also known as the Increase of Entropy or the Second Law of Thermodynamics, held that the constant expenditure of mass in the form of radiation by the Sun and stars would finally produce a condition of universal cold which would end all life. That so-called law, however, has been superseded by the new knowledge that such radiation is produced by the change of Hydrogen into Helium as demonstrated by Professor Bethe in his Carbon Cycle at Cornell University. The supply of hydrogen in the universe is so vast that no one can conceive of its last atom. Heat-Death had nothing to do with creation but only with its slow destruction, which, however, seems to be a mistaken assumption.
Since the Sun, Earth and Moon are prominent in the biblical account of creation we shall discuss briefly:

2. SOL, THE SUN.

The Sun is one of the Original created stars which has proceeded and controls a planetary family of its own. Its diameter is eight hundred sixty-four thousand miles, its distance ninety-three millions of miles. It is the nearest star to this earth and all life here is wholly dependent upon its almost changeless light, heat, and energy. Other Original stars are no doubt acting in a similar manner, but we cannot see their families with our largest telescopes. The belief that stars are being evolved by the action of other stars, the dust and gases in some areas of space. The light of the Sun about three octillion candle-power, and it weighs four million tons per second. Its heat per second amounts to about 500 sextillion calories and its energy to five hundred sextillion horsepower, and its own weight is two and a half octillion tons. But our own star is only medium in size, in the depths of space there are any others which are millions of times larger than it.

3. TELLUS, THE EARTH.

The Earth is one of the nine planets which revolve around the Sun. It is of small size, being only seven thousand nine hundred miles in diameter, and less than a millith of the Sun’s size. It is the home of all the families of plants and animals that have emerged from the original types established here by the will of God; they could not exist on any other planet because those nearer to the Sun are too hot, while those farther away are too cold. As we have stated under 6. This Earth is no doubt the result of a long period of evolution based in the Sun, and all life here has developed by the same divine agency. There are several theories regarding the possible origin of the Earth but they all come short in certain respects. One may make a temporary choice but they are only guesses while the one stated above seems far better than any of them.

4. LUNA, THE MOON.

The Moon is also a product of evolution based in the Earth, according to some scientists, may have been thrown off by the Earth when it was rotating much faster in an early stage of its development. Some think that perhaps its place was immediately filled by the surrounding waters to form the Pacific Ocean and thus leave the continents bare for habitation. This process of evolution with regard to the Earth and the Moon would seem to do away with God as their creator since the writer of Genesis says that God created the Earth but if we interpret this as meaning that the Earth was part of the sun, and the Moon part of the Earth, there is no great difficulty. Evolution does not begin until after creation which is not a process in time like evolution, nevertheless both are Divine methods.
3. WHAT ABOUT LIFE?

2. Its Origin.

We have already answered this question on page one. Life is a gift from God when he caused the Original created things to live, and since it is not a material thing, it cannot be discovered. If one wants to fix its beginning on a certain date in the unknown past he will have to wait until some mathematical genius solves the riddle by calendar reversal. The dates in some of our Bibles, in so far as creation is concerned, are completely erroneous when compared with the results of our present careful chronological data. They were suggested by an Anglican bishop three hundred years ago, and are not used in modern Bibles. Any biological students of the past have claimed that they had recovered the source and beginnings of life, but when their work was tested, it was found to fall far short of that long sought-for end. No reputable scientist today believes in their results.

4. LIFE ETERNAL, LIFE EVERLASTING.

This question requires a good Greek lexicon in which we discover that the word for eternal is AION which means AGE or a limited period of time and is therefore not equivalent to the word AIONIOS which means EVERLASTING. In some dictionaries they are said to be synonyms, which is evidently a mistake. And several translators of the Scriptures have made the same error so that the punishment of incorrigible sinners is pictured as lasting forever, which is entirely unlike the teaching of Jesus. Indeed it is difficult to believe that God, whose great love and mercy redeemed all men, would keep sinners alive as long as He himself shall exist for the purpose of exacting justice. That surely cannot be.

Everlasting Life is very different from Eternal Life as we have seen. It is God's gift to the faithful in the form of a supremely happy existence for all who, by their fine quality of faith and service, have reached heaven. It is vastly more than eternal because there is no end to its duration. We must remember that we are responsible to God for the way we use his gifts and that our use of them will determine whether we shall enjoy that privilege or not. We are glad beyond measure that we know God is just AND merciful, but we must not presume upon his mercy.

Some Words To Watch.

They are eternal, everlasting, made, created, and some verbs. We have just discussed the first two, and now we shall discuss the second two a little further. In the biblical story about creation made and created are used as synonyms, which, in our opinion, is improper since made means to form or construct by hand, but create means to cause by divine will from the uncreated atomic material of the universe. God did not make anything, much less form it out of nothing; He simply willed that it should be. The claim that creation is still going on is not established, but the idea that divine evolution is responsible for all forms and species which are in the world now, is quite credible. The third group is composed of some verbs which are then ascribed to God by the writers of Genesis. They say He AID, SAW, CALLED, DIVIDED, MADE, FORMED, PLANTED, COMMANDED, But we must not think of God as a great manlike being.
4. WHAT ABOUT MAN.

WHAT IS HE?

Man, as we know him, is no doubt the product of a long period of evolution from our Original Parents. We believe that the human family is an entirely different group from all the families of the lower animals. The animals have instincts but man has minds, ambitions and aspirations as well as a desire to worship. When man was created he was endowed with conscience, personality and moral and spiritual capacities. Having been created in the image of God, he has attributes like those of his divine Parent. In God they are perfect, but in man their degree is a measure of his likeness to God. Man is a free moral being who can do as he likes, but God has warned him about doing wrong. According to the much discussed writings of Huxley there is an enormous gulf, almost infinite, between the lowest man and the highest beast. And when we turn to the New Testament we find that there are three conditions of man: natural, old, new. The natural may become old or new. The old is sinful, the new is loveful. They cannot live together except in a hypocrite.

WHAT IS MAN'S RELATION TO GOD?

The relation of man to God is very close because both are persons and, through man's vital connection with his original parents, he is necessarily a child of God. Since he has been freely redeemed by the unmerited gift of God in Jesus Christ's death on the cross, he belongs to God, and as an obedient child, he is expected to recognize that divine ownership. However, most men have not done so and still continue in sin instead of seeking forgiveness and enjoying the release of reconciliation. This has made it necessary for God to institute a world-wide effort by his church to win them back to himself. If, notwithstanding, man refuses to seek and obtain forgiveness, his refusal will result in the loss of the benefits of redemption, the joy of pardon, and the privileges of fellowship in the church of God. Moreover, if one dies still unrepentant he faces the greatest possible loss the human soul can suffer, namely, ETERNAL punishment. As we have already seen, this will be a definite period of time, the length of which will be determined by the nature of his sin.

WHAT IS MEANT BY SIX DAYS?

Since it is said that man was created on the sixth day, let us discuss it for a few minutes. According to some writers the six so-called days of creation were long periods of time bounded by a beginning and an end. But it is not unscientific to think that they may have been regular periods of daylight and darkness such as we have now. Why do some think that God needed more than six such days to accomplish his task? He is all-wise and all-mighty and could do it, if he chose, in a single day. It, for Him, was not a time and energy consuming task. And so we run counter to reason when we try to fit the Creator into our time scale. We shall show wisdom whenever we refuse to try and time the activities of God.

6. WHAT IS MEANT BY LITURGICAL DAYS?
5. WHAT ABOUT TEMPTATION?

A. THE GARDEN OF EDEN

Several distinguished authors have tried to give us a vivid picture of the location and appearance of that garden in all its fabulous wonder, but it has never been discovered. One particular, has tried to show, at great length, that it was situated near the geographical North Pole because some fossils of plants similar to our tropical flora have been found there. In Genesis its location is somewhere in the rich valley south of Babylon. Now it was in this garden that we are told that the evil, in the form of a serpent, tempted Eve so that she took the forbidden fruit and ate it and also gave some to Adam who should have known better than to eat it, but he did and together they disobeyed God and thus sin came into the world. In the New Testament we read that the wages of sin is death so sin and death were caused by Satan the great deceiver.

B. TEMPTATION

We know from the teaching of Jesus that Satan is an abominable lying creature who is chief of the evil spirits which constantly tempt mankind by misrepresentation and falsehood. That some folks do not believe in his existence does not do away with him but only reduces the clarity of the disbeliever's mind. The source of GOOD is God, the source of EVIL is Satan. "Yield not to temptation for yielding is sin, and keep in mind the biblical statement that hell was prepared for the devil and his angels. It was not made for man, but sinful people, by their sin, make it necessary for God to send them there. But we should remember that sinners may be forgiven if they will earnestly seek it with full determination to turn from their sinful ways, "Ask and it shall be given you, seek and ye shall find." Surely nothing could be more reasonable.

C. WHAT ARE ANGELS?

This question is easily asked but it is not so easily answered. Nevertheless, when we read about them in the words of Jesus and his disciples there seems good reason to believe that they exist and are the messenger-spirits of God in heaven and on earth. They are said to be endowed with power to appear in human form and we find that both God and men are reported as having appeared in angelic form. Besides these spiritually exalted servants of God, there are evil angels who are said to have fallen from their pristine purity, when Satan was cast out of heaven, and together were consigned to hell from which they constantly tempt mankind. That will be their headquarters until they either repent of destroyed in what is called the second death, when all evil will be annihilated. Then besides the two kinds of angels there are the demons that are often called devils, which are able to enter and control both man and beast. We are told they are unclean spirits that often cause much harm such as physical disease and mental disorders. In the New Testament we read that they can be cast out and that Jesus often exorcised them. Apparently they are aware of the nature of their future punishment.
6. WHAT ABOUT SIN?

A. ITS NATURE

Sin is disobedience to the will and law of God and must be punished in a measure commensurate with the offence. It is a matter in which free choice has consciously accepted the wrong way and is called transgression because it proceeds across or against the right, even in the presence of the right. The Jews said that it was a missing of the mark, thus indicating that to do good demands not only wise judgment but also fine skill. Sin is its source and therefore it is enmity against God who was graciously offered to help us make the right choice. To actively and consciously commit sin against God or man, by thought or deed, requires that one turn a deaf ear to the voice of the Holy Spirit and turn a listening ear to the false argument of Satan. It amounts to a refusal to do what one knows to be right, and a willing obedience to do what one knows to be wrong. All have sinned but all may be forgiven. Some one has said, "To err is human, to forgive, divine."

B. WHY ARE SINNERS SAID TO BE LOST?

Because they have allowed themselves to be deceived by Satan into choosing the wrong way of life. Like the prodigal, they have gone into a far country and, while they are away, they are lost from the kingdom of God. But God patiently waits for them to return, and Jesus said He came to seek and to save the lost. In John we read that God so loved the world of mankind that He gave His only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in Him should not perish, but have everlasting life. Many ask if there may be another chance to repent and believe after death, and the answer is, there are several passages in Scripture which seem to favor such a possibility, but there is no certainty nor guarantee of it. It is very unwise to take such a meagre chance when one's future destiny is at stake. Especially since we have a sure way provided by God in Jesus Christ.

C. WHAT IS CONVERSION?

Conversion means a determined refusal to continue in sin, combined with an equally determined espousal of a pure way of life. And this can be accomplished only through faith in Christ. To put it in another way, the question, "What must I do to be saved?" can be answered in the following form: --- SEVEN GOLDEN STEPS:---

YOU must accept God's free gift of REDEMPTION by faith.
YOU must fully CONFESS, REPENT and SURRENDER to God.
YOU must RENOUNCE COMPLETELY your sinful way of life.
YOU must MAKE RESTITUTION for wrongs done to others.
YOU must ADMIT GOD'S OWNERSHIP and YOUR OWN STEWARDSHIP.
YOU must PROVE your conversion by your HIGH QUALITY of life.
YOU must become DEVOTED to GOD and his KINGDOM.

May we then advise our readers who are not now satisfied to go along year after year undecided regarding their Christian life to study very carefully the above seven golden steps.
 WHAT IS REDemption?

Redemption is a free gift of God to all mankind and was possible, as we have said, by the vicarious death of Jesus. However, if it is to be of any value to man it must be accepted by faith and the individual's heart and life must be fully surrendered to God. Then he will proceed to work out his own salvation, meantime giving what aid he can to others. The Greek word for redeem is AGORADZO which means BUY and indicates that the soul of each member of the human race was purchased by the death of Jesus, thus making all of us debtors to him. In other words, we all belong to God, and are expected to take advantage of his gracious plan as a first step toward our final salvation. Don't be a Prodigal except in returning to your Father.

WHAT IS REGENERATION?

It is obtained through the acceptance of redemption and one's whole-hearted surrender and glad obedience to the will of God. The word regeneration is from the Greek PALIGENESIA which means BORN AGAIN and therefore the rebirth of one's dormant spirit together with all its divine faculties. It is a divine miracle wrought by an invisible process but its result can be easily seen in the changed life of the individual. This change is a fundamental and is a MUST for all who desire to become Christians. You will recall the words of Christ to Nicodemus, "Ye MUST be born again". If it was a necessity for one steeped in religious tradition, it is a MUST for us and we should realize its paramount importance. To obtain this wonderful experience takes but a moment but it may last for ever. Since we must have it, let us wisely seek it.

WHAT THEN IS SALVATION?

We come now to consider the relation of three more great words which need to be differentiated - they are redemption, regeneration and salvation. The meaning of the first two is quite clear from our discussion above, but the relation of the third to the two others is not always well defined. In the minds of some they seem always confused so we need to look carefully for the fundamental meaning of salvation. In Greek it is SOTERIA which is closely related to SOTER which means Saviour, and since Jesus has returned to heaven, it must refer to his office and work in our behalf after the resurrection. Therefore this word must not be confused with the others which have to do with our lives on Earth. Salvation is the final status of the Christian which ends in heaven. Even then we do not stop our advance toward perfection of the soul. To those who have thought through these problems, salvation is a life-long character-building activity, not an impersonal process like evolution. Don't fail to take Paul's advice, to work out your own salvation. And may we add one further thought which rises from what we have said, namely, that it seems that Jesus is not our saviour, strictly speaking, until after the judgment. We are not completely saved until that final hour.
WHAT IS DEATH?

The nature of death has been defined in various ways and one of the best was stated by Dr. Henry Drummond who said that death is the cessation of all correspondences, that is, one fails to react to any stimulus. Others claim that death occurs when God withdraws his spirit from man. Still others would have us believe that death ends all because the spirit dies with the body. But we hold a more reasonable view, namely, that the spirit does not die with the body but is, no doubt, kept in an unconscious condition until the resurrection when it will receive a spirit body and move on to judgment. The spirit while resting will not be aware of the passing of time.

WHAT HAPPENS AFTER DEATH?

We have already touched upon this problem but since it is a matter of much speculation we shall consider some other guesses. Some say that both body and spirit remain in the grave until the resurrection. They admit that the body will disintegrate while the spirit will continue its existence in a dormant state until that time when God will cause the various members of the body and each atom of their structure together with the reawakened spirit to assemble for judgment. After that a spirit body will be supplied to each one. Others think that the body goes to the grave and is never resurrected while the spirit goes immediately into Paradise to await the resurrection summons and a spirit body. But since Paradise is thought of as part of heaven we are at a loss to understand their point of view since we know spirits cannot go to heaven until after the judgment. We think that our bodies will not be used in judgment because they can serve no purpose in a spirit realm, but the deeds done in these bodies will be the basis of the awards that day and will determine whether we shall suffer eternal punishment or enjoy everlasting life.

WHAT ARE HEAVEN AND HELL?

These are the places mentioned in the Bible to which we will be assigned after the great assise with Jesus as judge.

Heaven is the highest possible spiritual state, condition and place that man at his best can reach. Jesus said he was going there to prepare a place for all who were becoming his followers. The dictionaries tell us that the origin of the word is unknown but that it comes from the same root from which our English word heave came and therefore it refers to that which is high up. It is the abode of Deity and thus quite beyond all superlatives.

Hell is the state, condition and place of all the evil agencies that beset mankind. As we have noted it was prepared not for man but for the Devil and his angels, but unforgiven sinners will have to go there. Punishment there will be eternal in duration not everlasting and will end in the second death when it and all evil are to be destroyed. It is the abode of the lost.
9. WHAT ABOUT THE WORLD'S END?

2. THE END OF THE WORLD.

This phrase is almost meaningless because it is impossible to give an adequate answer. The claims put forward by those who think it will explode or burn or be drowned by its oceans are too flimsy to merit any protracted research. This world is not going to end, but the age will end because that is the way with ages, they come and go, they have their day and leave their achievements and relics behind for future ages to examine and appraise. The Earth will remain intact as the home of the human and other creatures that may be developed during its long period of evolution. There can be no need nor value in its unnecessary destruction. It will be here, age after age after age because it is an essential part of the Solar System which is an essential part of the Galaxy which is an essential part of the universe of God.

3. RESURRECTION AND JUDGMENT.

According to the Bible and the best theological writers, Resurrection is the rising into a new life by the departed spirits and it is to occur at some point in time that will fit in with God's general plan for the completing stages of his grand redemptive program. As we have remarked, the bodies of the departed will not be brought from their graves because they have disintegrated and they will not be needed since the record of each one is fully known by the judge. Then judgment will follow closely after the resurrection and it will be consummated by Christ himself and include every member of the human race from the beginning. Some say there will be two resurrections, one for saints and another for sinners, and a judgment-day for each, but they will be separated by a period of one thousand years. We, however, cannot see the need for two since Matthew reports that Jesus said that on the last day he would set the sheep (saints) on his right hand, but the goats on his left. And then the sentence will be pronounced. In reference to the saints it is said that they will go away into life everlasting, but the wicked into eternal punishment.

4. WHAT OF THE SECOND COMING?

Regarding the second advent of Jesus we wish to make four statements to aid in its understanding.

FIRST - We think that since the common expectation of the early Church was not fulfilled during that time, and since it has not yet occurred, that those who still persist in this belief must also be in error in this matter.

SECOND - We hold that if those people had been good students of the gospel of John they would have seen how he spiritualized Christ's second coming in their own time, and they would have prevented the error from worrying most people until now.

THIRD - We feel that all who still try to believe that Christ will come again in physical form should cease to cling to the ancient error and join with us who are watching for his silent emergence in the hearts and minds of his people.

FOURTH - We therefore declare that we cannot longer accept the idea of his coming in physical form, nor of a reign for a thousand years on Earth, nor of a judgment-day on the Earth.
10. WHAT ABOUT THREE EVENTS?

Noah's Flood

That a very great deluge did really occur is now accepted as an historical fact, not only because the story is found in the Bible but also because mid-eastern peoples have left similar records of a similar great catastrophe. But it is difficult to know for sure whether they were careless copies of Noah's inundation dressed up in oriental fashion, or bonafide records of their own.

In recent years it has been reported that parts of an ark were found somewhere on the Ararat mountains, and that some keen archaeologists, digging in ancient Babylonian cities, uncovered a broad layer of sand and silt which must have been deposited by such a flood of water. But geophysicists have not been able to determine how much land surface stood above the surrounding ocean of the eastern hemisphere in Noah's day, and therefore the extent of the flood is beyond computation. It was not world-wide, because even a cloud-burst for forty days could not rise above Mt. Everest.

Tower of Babel

That a great tower was commenced in the Valley of Shinar in Babylonia is also received as an historical fact, not only because the Bible says so but also because archaeologists have found its ruins. The word Babel means Gate to God because this tribe was set on having it reach 'unto heaven', and this would be a rallying place for keeping the tribe together. But the Divine plan for them was that they should be scattered so that the true worship of Jehovah, the one God, (Monotheism) should spread over the then known earth. To obtain this result it was necessary for some unusual event to transpire that would cause them to separate and travel to other parts. A confusion of their language is said to have been the remarkable method used by God, and some scholars claim that BABEL comes from BALAL which means CONFUSION, but we wait for much more conclusive evidence on which to build a satisfactory explanation of this age-long problem.

The Red Sea Crossing

This, at first thought, seems more difficult to explain because the actual place of crossing is not mentioned, and the Red Sea itself is one hundred or more miles across and two thousand feet deep. No doubt then they sought a much narrower place where they could hope to escape the Egyptian armies. Turning northward they came to the Gulf of Suez which is one hundred and seventy miles long, twenty-five miles across and two hundred feet deep. As they moved along the shore they discovered a narrower place with shallower water and at once pitched camp, and what a camp, there were thousands of soldiers, tens of thousands of people and hundreds of tons of baggage, provisions and pack and food animals. But they were not to stay long. A rushing wind began to blow the water from that shallow, as it does today, and soon a passage appeared and Moses gave the order to break camp and they were on their way.
11. WHAT ABOUT DIVINE JUDGMENTS?

Their causes

Acts of God are difficult to appraise. We may be sure, however, that the records in the Bible are true when they list the causes of divine punishment as disobedience, immorality, inhumanity and selfish ambition. These are some of the apparent causes and there are others which are not apparent but just as real. Sometimes when we see or read of inhuman acts of cruelty perpetrated on a large scale we wonder why God does not cause judgment to fall immediately upon the guilty sinners. Perhaps we are in a too great hurry to see justice done, while God waits for the offenders to confess or uses the unseen scourge to punish, or at least, to shame the unrepentant criminals. One thing is sure, Divine justice will be perfectly fair and wisely done, so that we will not have to ask Abraham's question, "Shall not the Judge of all the earth do right?"

Judgments on the Hebrews

According to the Bible the progenitors of the Hebrew people felt the first fall stroke of Divine judgment when Adam and Eve were driven from the Garden of Eden on account of their disobedience. They confessed their sin but didn't ask for pardon and went out into the world to labor and suffer under a curse. The judgment of the Flood was also caused by the sins of the people who were the descendants of the so-called Sons of God who took the daughters of men as wives and reared a tribe of giants whose ability to engage in sin of all kinds soon caused God to destroy all life in that part of the world. No known natural cause can be assigned to it.

The judgment in the Confusion of language at Babel is upon the sin of trying to circumvent the purpose of God. The people sought centralization, God wished to scatter them over the earth to insure the spread of Monotheism.

Judgments on the Heathens

Here we find three outstanding occasions: curiously enough it may be said that we have a tale of two cities and two tales of one city. The two cities were Sodom and Gomorrah while the one was the capital of Egypt whose Pharoah was Merneptah at about 1300 B.C. As we all remember the story of the destruction of the two cities of the plain by fire from heaven we need not tell it. The two tales include the ten plagues visited upon the Egyptian people and the signal destruction of their armies in the returning waters of the Red Sea. The ten plagues were sent because the king would not let the Hebrews go but continued to keep them as slaves; but when they finally freed them they sent their army to bring them back. But by the Divine direction through Moses they succeeded in a never-to-be-forgotten escape.
12. WHAT ABOUT DIVINE CHOICES?

THERY REASONS

In offering this brief discussion may we say again that the acts of God are difficult to appraise, and this because we do not possess the wisdom nor the perspective to fully understand and express the spiritual elements involved. Again, not all the reasons are apparent and therefore we must, with our limited insight, try to perceive what is essentially basic in the Divine purpose. This will be found, in the first instance, in man, and then in God. Some of the reasons which God sees in man, either as an individual or a group or race, are the personality and character which include honesty, integrity and dependability. These are not visible in man but they are very real, and when added to the Divine attributes become a perfect basis for God's choices.

ARE THEY PREDESTINED?

No, nothing on this level is predestined because men is a free agent and fate is little more than an intellectual ghost. We admit that there is a place for chance but not for such a meaningless vagary as fate. Predestination would do away with freedom and foster fatalism which would destroy God's finest gift to man. When God calls or chooses any individual or group of persons for a particular task he does so with all the details of the case before him, and this means that he will not, arbitrarily, ignore nor supersede his prior commitments. No, God's choices are not, and cannot be considered as predestined, they may be predetermined.

ARE THEY IRREVOCABLE?

No, nothing at the human level is fixed for all time. Sometimes people suggest that it would have been better if we had been made so that we could not sin, but that would have made us mere pawns or pawns of fate. We shall not barter our glorious freedom for anything. Nor shall we allow it to be filched by anyone. Divine choices are revocable by their maker as has been shown by his dealings with various peoples.

END OF FIRST PART
1. WHAT ABOUT THE BIBLE?

The Bible is the most important collection of books in the world and is the only written record of God's progressive self-revelation to man. It was produced through many years by many men whose unusual religious experience marked them as divinely inspired reporters of the revelation of God and his message to mankind. It is similar to all other sacred books in that it portrays the highest moral and spiritual ideals of its religion, but it is different from all other sacred books in the exalted range of its ideals. Indeed there is no proper comparison between them but only a wide contrast which has been noted for generations. If any reader desires to look further into this matter he can find great satisfaction in many excellent books on the world's religions.

WHAT IS IT?

In setting forth this revelation it has utilized many sources of information and various mediums of literary and scientific presentation. The facts and events portrayed cover the fields of history, law, poetry, prophecy and biography so that the ideas recorded may have the best possible background and trustworthiness. According to these inspired writers the furnishing of the pre-existing universe with all its original racial types was brought into being by the will of God. Man, the highest and most important of these types became sinful by obeying Satan rather than God, so that the Bible is largely a detailed presentation of his ignoble activities. They tell the tremendously important news that in the fulness of time, when the Roman power was greatest and the Greek language was in common use in the then known world, and the methods of communication were most highly developed, that then God decided to make a way of escape for mankind from the consequences of his sin through the willing vicarious death of Jesus on the cross. There is also the inspiring story of Jesus with his wonderful teaching and of the choice of his disciples who turned the world upside down, and of the remarkable conversion of the apostle Paul and his subsequent activities, as well as the marvelous resurrection of Jesus. With this redemptive scheme both the Old and the New Testaments are in full accord, while the history of the Christian Church of that time contains the classic story of the supernatural achievements in the hearts and lives of thousands of people.

WHAT IS INSPIRATION?

The inspiration of the biblical writers was, no doubt, a special gift of God bestowed on certain men to enable them to discover the basic truth in, and the proper interpretation of, the events and instructions which they recorded. It is still a gift of God to those who seek it for his glory, and it is mediated through the Holy Spirit as indicated under 5 of article 1. Some claim that these men became mere tools of the Spirit, but we think that would make the Spirit of God responsible for what errors are found in their work.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Item</th>
<th>Price</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Naves Topical Bible Digest</td>
<td>1.50</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Matthew Henry's Commentary (6 Vols.)</td>
<td>9.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Encyclopedia Brittoniana (25 Vols.)</td>
<td>12.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Index to First Thirty Volumes</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Holistic Review (All Well Bound) (34 Vols)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

For the Lord's Table

- John, Daniel, Jenkins
- Rev. Meares, K. E.
- Poole's Bible Notes (5 Vols.)
- Classic Text of the Bible (Job to Psalm 22)
- Classic Text of the Bible (English Edition), Gen. to Numbers
- Classics & Colossians

Honours Commentary on 2 Vols.

- Matthew Henry's Commentary (6 Vols.)
- Naves Topical Bible Digest

for the Lord's Table

- Tractarian, John, Daniel, Jenkins
- Rev. Meares, K. E.
- Poole's Bible Notes (5 Vols.)
- Classic Text of the Bible (Job to Psalm 22)
- Classic Text of the Bible (English Edition), Gen. to Numbers
- Classics & Colossians

Honours Commentary on 2 Vols.

- Matthew Henry's Commentary (6 Vols.)
- Naves Topical Bible Digest