

VICTORY OUT OF CHAOS

Messages from, the Book of Revelation for-Today

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Victory Out Of Chaos

PREFACE

A MODERN play, "The Wingless Victory," presents the tragic story of intolerance as it existed in Puritan New England in the early nineteenth century. A Salem, Massachusetts, sea captain returned after years of voyaging, bringing with him his wife, a Malay princess, and their two children. Although the woman has accepted Christianity, she and her children are cruelly Abused, persecuted, and finally ostracized by the colony. Driven to despair, the mother cries out: "He came too soon, this Christ of peace. Men are not ready yet. . . . He came too soon! "

In the pitiless light of the present world tragedy these words take on new meaning. From the human viewpoint we would feel to cry out as did Oparre, the Malay princess, "He came too soon.. this Christ of peace. Men are not ready yet."

But Christ did not come too soon; instead, men have neglected His message too long. Chaos has come as we have forgotten God. We must rediscover the Son of God as a living Savior. He alone can bring victory and peace to the soul of man in this uncertain and perplexing age.

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HOPE FOR A BESIEGED WORLD

MOUNDS of broken bricks and smoke from burning embers marked what had once been a street of comfortable homes. Among the ruins were two children-big brother and little sister-who watched men gather up the broken furniture and load it on an old truck. When the work was done, the boy and the girl climbed on top of the load, and the truck started.

“I want to go home!” sobbed the baby sister, as tears came to tired eyes.

And from her brother-his thin face seemed already aged -looking straight ahead, came the reply, “We can’t go home, sis. Home’s gone with a bomb!”

Like the shattered dreams of the little refugee, the world we have known is disappearing in the explosions of war and the fires of revolution. We long for shelter and security from the fiery blasts; we want to go home and shut the door against the wanton destruction that overwhelms our world, but we cannot do it. Strong forces of evil that sweep across the earth compel us to alter our way of thinking and living. Death - dealing weapons in the hands of ambitious men have been turned in all their fury against our country.

“Blood, toil, sweat, and tears” are the ordeal of our generation. We see the toil of poverty, the sweat of tyranny and oppression, the blood of war, and the tears of heartbroken millions. We are called upon to make every sacrifice necessary to protect and maintain the democracy and freedom that is our inheritance.

Far more serious than the material destruction, however, is the peril that faces our moral and spiritual heritage. Race hatreds ‘flame into persecution and death, weaker nations bow to the yoke of slavery, religion is denied to worshippers, and freedom has vanished for millions.

The flag of freedom still flies over democracies that maintain freedom of worship. There is no state church. This flag waves over a people who have preserved the rights of free speech and a free press. Individual liberty has been cherished, for no man can be arrested without warrant, or sentenced for a crime without a jury. We have possessed these God-given rights for generations; but too often we have taken them for granted without thinking of their origin, or striving for their future preservation.

But today, the areas of earth where men and women may be free in their consciences, in their work, in their religion, in their ideals, become narrower and narrower. Our heritage of freedom is more precious than ever before, for never was it in greater danger than it is at the present time. We watched the lights flicker and go out one by one on the continent of Europe as the fierce blasts of modern warfare were turned against every institution of democracy. There was hope that all of the nations might not be drawn into the death-struggle; there was hope that some might remain strong to succor and restore the weak when peace should come. But today the entire world-every continent -trembles under the shock of battle. Civilization awaits the outcome of this titanic, struggle.

SEARCH FOR SECURITY

Never has the search for security been more disappointing than it is today. Treaties between nations are of even less value than they were in World War I when they were “scraps of paper”; countries that appeared strong have collapsed as fifth columns worked havoc within. Dr. James B. Conant, president of Harvard University, admits-

“We are living in a dark and uncertain hour of human history. Prophecy, as never before, is a risky enterprise.”

Physical courage looms large in a world torn by war. ‘Tales of heroism, ancient and modern, from Thermopyae to Dunkirk, thrill the hearts of young and old alike. In the supreme hour many humble men show the mettle of which they are made, and they face death with a smile on their lips.

In like manner there is a spiritual courage which rises within the heart of many a Christian as he faces the doubts and evils of a sin cursed earth. It is a courage that comes from knowing God. The Psalmist possessed unwavering faith when he said, “The Lord is my light and my salvation; whom shall I fear? The Lord is the strength of my life; of whom shall I be afraid?” Psalm 27: 1. Around us are forces which make men’s hearts afraid. We long for a voice to give us hope. “While round our ears the pillars fall and closer wheels the vulture.”

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The hour demands a courage that is rooted in the promises of the Bible. In a restless, despondent mood a girl once left her home, and the shadows of a great city swallowed her up. Her mother went after her and brought her back. It was dark when they reached the old home, and the girl stopped on the front steps. "Mother," she said, "I cannot go in. I cannot face father!"

"But your father is longing to see you," answered the mother. "He has been waiting for the day when you would come home."

The girl hesitated, afraid to face her father's gaze. "Mother, will you go in and turn down the lights?" she asked. And so in the darkness the reconciliation was made. If in the chaos of our days we are constrained to find peace with our God, the suffering and darkness will not have been in vain. From out of the past come experiences that show us the Almighty has heard the cry of humanity in every crisis.

When the tribes of Israel had been enslaved by Egyptian Pharaohs, God saw their suffering, He heard their cries, and promised to deliver the oppressed people from the bands of their enemies. To the captives who felt the lash of the taskmaster's whip, there seemed no way of escape. When they tried to leave the country, their enemies pursued them, mountains hemmed them in on the right and on the left, and the terrifying Red Sea lay ahead. Moses, their leader, found that human weapons were futile in this emergency, for he said to the people: "Fear you not, stand still, and see the salvation of the Lord, which He will show to you today. The Lord shall fight for you, and you shall hold your peace." Exodus 14: 13, 14. And this humble, unarmed nation was victorious over the mightiest empire of the world at that time. Out of despair God brought victory!

JESUS A REFUGEE

It is night in Palestine nineteen and a half centuries ago. Along the desert road leading to Egypt moves a man driving a humble beast of burden. On the mule is a mother and her infant son. They are fleeing from the decree of death made by a pagan dictator. This picture of the Christ-child stands as a symbol of universal suffering, of refugees in every generation who have been unmercifully treated by those who possessed power. Yes, Jesus was a refugee. "He came unto His own, and His own received Him not." John 1: 11. Sin had become a science, and vice was interwoven into religion; but out of this chaos God brought victory through His only begotten Son. That sinless life, that sacrificial death, and that triumphant resurrection made our redemption sure!

God has answered the cry of the helpless when the burdens seemed almost unbearable. Jacob, the refugee, fleeing from his home and family because of his crookedness, repented of his sin and pledged allegiance to God. As the years passed, the man overcame his miserable trait of deception; but, instead of finding peace, he continued to face conflict. One time he fought all night against an unknown adversary - an angel- and when the dawn approached, he was defeated in the wrestling match; but in that conflict Jacob won 'a new heart and a new name. Even so we may find our most glorious victories in hours of seeming defeat, if we allow God to speak to our hearts.

When a skilful gymnasium teacher was training a class of boys to turn somersaults, he saw one of the lads fall heavily, and he said to him: "You've got to know where you are even when you are upside down." Isn't that our greatest need today-to know where we stand, what we believe, and what God wants us to do when it seems that the heavens will fall and all the values we have trusted are swept away? Where can we find a certain message for an uncertain age?

"Thou knows not what a day may bring forth," wrote the wise Solomon (Proverbs 27: 1), and we can agree with the dictum as we view the fall of nations and the turn of fortunes in the world conflict. But where human wisdom ends, God's begins. The future is plainly discerned by the Eternal One. "I am God, and there is none like Me," He proclaims, "declaring the end from the beginning, and from ancient times the things that are not yet done." Isaiah 46: 9, 10. We can trust the Almighty in this dark hour, for "we have the Word of prophecy made more sure; whereunto you do well that you take heed, as unto a lamp shining in a dark place, until the day dawn, and the daystar arise in Your hearts," 2 Peter 1:19,

The Word of God must become for men in the twentieth century what it was for their Protestant fathers from the sixteenth through the nineteenth centuries - the safeguard of Christian living. Other generations shrank from no sacrifice to follow the message of the Bible. With the Scriptures as their weapon, they transformed a pagan world, one that glorified brute power and magnified tyranny. They

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placed the torch in our hands when theirs were failing. Our generation has let the light of the Word grow dim; it has displaced God's truth with human, superficial knowledge. It is for us again to find the mighty source of strength for living in the chaos and turmoil of these days. We are challenged anew by the sublime messages in the Book of books; we are called to study the prophecies God has entrusted to us.

"All Scripture is given by inspiration of God, and is profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness" (2 Timothy 3:16); but there are some portions that have a special significance and importance in certain times of crisis

GOD'S REVEALED WORD

The Book of Revelation offers many vital truths for modern man. Outlining the events of church history down through the ages, the prophecies explain those "things which must shortly come to pass."

"But is it possible to understand the Book of Revelation?" ask some. "We were always under the impression that this is a sealed book."

Would it not seem strange if God should place a panorama of the final controversy between good and evil in the Scriptures and then keep it from our understanding? No, the Book of Revelation is not sealed. John has given careful instructions: "Seal not the sayings of the prophecy of this book: for the time is at hand." Revelation 22:10. There is, in fact, a special blessing for those who study this book, for we read: "Blessed is he that reads, and they that hear the words of this prophecy, and keep those things which are written therein: for the time is at hand." Revelation 1:3.

As we read the twenty-two chapters, we see the ministrations of Jesus for His church until He comes again with power and glory. We are given a view of the mighty conflict between Christ and Satan, and the defeat of the enemy just before the King of kings ushers in the reign of eternal peace. We find special admonition for the church and for those who are searching for the faith of Jesus. With all of these treasures in the Word of God, should we not study the Revelation of Jesus Christ with diligence?

Three divine announcements, the last warnings to be given the world, are found in this book. When are these messages to be given to the world? Are we living at the time when these divine instructions are to be broadcast? Are they for a few select persons, or are they warnings to be given the whole world? Is it important for us to obey these divine commands?

These questions arise in the mind and deserve to be answered from the Bible. Let us diligently search the Scriptures, for "these sayings are faithful and true."

THE LUST FOR POWER

SEEDS of destruction are sown from the clouds in World War II, and no home, however secluded, is safe from the terror of the skies. Shadows of death lurk in the heavens as countless squadrons of bombing planes shuttle back and forth across the continents of our earth, with their cargoes of high explosives. The imaginative picture Lord Tennyson created a hundred years ago is all too true in modern warfare:-

"Saw the heavens fill with commerce, argosies of magic sails, Pilots of the purple twilight, dropping down with costly bales; Heard the heavens fill with shouting, and there rained a ghastly dew From the nations' airy navies grappling in the central blue."

In the early days of the conflict, nations used airplanes to shower leaflets upon the population of the enemy; but bombs were soon substituted for propaganda, and the message that comes from the "central blue" today is one of death and destruction. But centuries ago there came an announcement from the heavens that was the most glorious this earth had ever heard. It was in Palestine on a still night that a band of angels spoke to the shepherds from the starry sky: "Glory to God in the highest, and on earth peace, good will toward men." If humanity had listened to the angel chorus and had followed the teachings of the Son of God, whose birth the heavenly hosts announced, men would not know the sound of bombing planes or the whine of dropping bombs today. But the words of the Master have been forgotten, and once again God speaks to us in a powerful message which challenges sin.

John describes three angels flying swiftly across the sky with messages for a waiting world. Of the

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first herald he said: "I saw another angel fly in the midst of heaven, having the everlasting gospel to preach unto them that dwell on the earth, and to every nation, and kindred, and tongue, and people." Revelation 14: 6. When a swift flying herald comes from the throne of God, he must carry a solemn and important communication. Here, too, is a message of universal interest, for every nation is to hear it in its own language.

HISTORY IS HIS STORY

This angel, symbol of power and swiftness, brings "the everlasting gospel" to a world lost in sin. Christianity centers in the story of Jesus Christ-His life, death, and resurrection. The martyrs who died upon the fiery crosses in the Roman arenas, the Waldensian missionaries who were torn asunder on the rack, the godly pioneers of New England who were ostracized and tortured for their faith-all of these and a host of other noble men and women were sustained in their afflictions by the power of the gospel of Christ.

There is no human force that can withstand the cross of Jesus. Paul declares: "I am not ashamed of the gospel of Christ: for it is the power of God unto salvation to everyone that believes." Romans 1:16. This generation has lost the power of the gospel, the only way out of the chaos. We have sought human wisdom, prowess in arms, strategy in diplomacy, and codes of laws; but we have not had faith in Jesus Christ. When Christians allow the divine power to control their lives, there is no nation, no dictator, nor any other man-made force that can stand against them. As the pagan emperor bowed in submission to the onward march of Christianity with the words, "O Galilean, Thou has conquered!" so today there is no combination of strength that could withstand the arm of God, if men would only trust in it.

Miraculous changes take place in the character of men who are gripped by the gospel. It changed the vacillating fisherman, Peter, into a powerful evangelist for God. It transformed Paul from a destroyer to a builder. After the magnificent obsession had possessed him on the road to Damascus, he declared: "I can do all things through Christ which strengthens me." Phil. 4: 13. The gospel gives men a burning desire to save lost men. It sends a Livingstone to Africa, a Carey to India, or a Judson to Burma. It lifts a man from the pit of sin, and sets him on the road of loving service for his fellow men.

SEEKING TEMPORAL GLORY

Long ago the disciples of Jesus sought prestige and glory in the dream of a temporal kingdom where they might rule as princes. But their Master brushed these selfish aims aside with the words: "Ye shall receive power, after that the Holy Ghost is come upon you: and you shall be witnesses unto Me." Acts 1: 8. This was not the kind of power James and John or the other disciples longed to receive; but when it finally took possession of their hearts, the mighty Roman Empire could not stand against their message.

Into a life that is dedicated to God comes a power that cannot be overcome by the forces of evil. "The battle is the Lord's," cried David; and when Christians learn this in the conflicts of daily living, they will have victory. With Paul we can then say: "Most gladly therefore will I rather glory in my infirmities, that the power of Christ may rest upon me. For when I am weak, then am I strong." 2 Corinthians 12: 9, 10.

For the moment it seems that the forces of evil are stronger than the messengers of truth; but this cannot last, for savage, self-created power can only prepare its final ruin and collapse.

An example of the futility of human pomp and glory is related in a dramatic Bible episode. Herod, ruler of a Roman province, set himself in kingly splendor as the representative of the invincible empire. We read in the Acts of the Apostles how Herod sat upon his throne and spoke to the masses. The people were infatuated with his oration, and said: "It is the voice of a god, and not of a man." But the mad ruler held fame for only a moment; then, like the crest of a wave, his power broke and disappeared. A loathsome disease struck him, and he perished. In contrast with the frailty of man's strength, we read the twenty fourth verse: "But the Word of God grew and multiplied." See Acts 12: 22, 24.

Tyrants may rise and strut across the stage of history, but soon they fall and their conquests crumble to dust. The grandest lesson we can learn amid the 'Confusion of the contemporary scene is that "the grass withers, the flower fades: but the Word of our God shall stand forever." Isaiah 40:8. It is upon this foundation that we may build faith.

God appeals to all men to receive the gospel of Christ, which brings new concepts of living. Where else can we hear such messages as, "Blessed are the pure in heart. Blessed are the meek," "Love

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your enemies,” “Blessed are they which do hunger and thirst after righteousness”? This is the secret of the gospel’s power to change the heart.

Paul wrote to the Romans concerning the power of Christianity. He could offer them no imposing credentials, no testimonials, no degrees-nothing but the gospel. But’ to Paul it was everything! “I am sure that, when I come unto you,” he wrote, “I shall come in the fullness of the blessing of the gospel of Christ.” Romans 15: 29. Paul was the man of one subject! He knew nothing but Jesus Christ.

CHRIST IN THE HEART

An early American missionary to the North American Indians found the strength that centers in the life of Christ. In his “Journal” he wrote: “I never got away from Jesus, and Him crucified; and I found that when my people were gripped by this, I had no need to give them instructions about morality. I found that one followed as the sure and inevitable fruit of the other!” How true that is! When Jesus comes into the heart, there is a different atmosphere, there is a housecleaning, and the old order of things passes away.

Pride, selfishness, and rebellion against truth cannot be crushed by the gospel. They must be conquered. God will never force His gospel into the sanctuary of a human soul; but He pleads with the individual to reason the right or the wrong of his course of action. The Father offers salvation and victory to the heart that will stop fighting against truth. Through the love and sacrifice of Jesus, men may be restored to the family of heaven.

When the Father loves a lost world so much that He will send special messages of hope in a time of perplexity and peril, should we not heed His admonition? John is saying: “Here is an angel messenger with the glad tidings of salvation! It is the everlasting gospel calling men to be reconciled to God!” No wonder it is to be carried to the world swiftly! Like the runner Phidippides, bringing to Athens the news of the victory of Marathon, Christian men and women are carrying a message of a battle fought at Calvary, and a battle won!

“Christ died for us,” said H. G. Wells. “Do we care?” That is the challenge to every individual heart. It comes to me; it comes to you. What are we doing to accept His love, His message, and His victory? With the Spirit of God as our guide, we may diligently read the precious words written for our admonition and learning. We can find peace for our hearts if we heed the final messages that God is offering a doomed world.

Nineteen hundred years ago men sought the answer to the problems of life by turning to Jesus; and He gave them pointed advice in these words: “Search the Scriptures; for in them you think you have eternal life: and they are they which testify of Me.” John 5: 39. After His resurrection, Christ rebuked His disciples for failing to study and understand the Old Testament prophecies. He said: “O fools, and slow of heart to believe all that the prophets have spoken.” Luke 24: 25. These men had followed the Master, but they had been slow to accept the prophecies which would have interpreted clearly the events of their day. Jesus began with the books of Moses, and explained the predictions that had been given concerning His advent.

There are prophecies and messages in the Old and the New Testament which focus the light of truth upon the perplexing problems of our age. If we are to stand without excuse before God, we must study these divine words and heed the warnings that a loving Father gives to a prodigal world.

CAN MAN ESCAPE THE JUDGMENT?

RAGGED, cold, with the skin of their hands parched, shrunken, and dry, with stomachs that have known nothing but hunger for weeks-fifty little boys and girls hold out their arms for food that will never come.

Shattered walls, a broken doorway, a paneless window frame-these were all that remained of home. The peasant mother, weary from travel, sits among the ruins while the tiny child waits at the broken gate for her father who will never come.

Days, months, years - he has lost all track of time behind the gray walls and the ugly barbed wire, and his mind and body are dying by slow degrees. Because he was born of a hated race he must wait for

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freedom that will never come.

Is there to be a reckoning day when the hideous, unnecessary suffering which men have brought upon their fellow men will be punished? Will the bloodshed, famine, imprisonment, death, and destruction go unchallenged in our world? Why does God let it go on? How can the crimes against innocent souls be tolerated in the universe if there is a God of love?

These are questions that come to every thinking man and woman as we see a world in which “judgment is turned away backward, and justice stands afar off.” No fair minded person can believe that there is justice in the universe if the deeds of evil men are not punished. If there is to be a time of judgment when punishment or rewards are meted out, when will this take place? The Bible gives the only answer.

As John saw the first angel fly through the heavens with the gospel message, he also heard the words spoken in mighty tones: “Fear God, and give glory to Him; for the hour of His judgment is come: and worship Him that made heaven, and earth, and the sea ‘ and the fountains of waters!’ Revelation 14: 7. This mighty pronouncement, a portion of “the everlasting gospel,” reveals within itself the time when the call is to go to the world. The angel’s message is to be given when the hour of God’s “judgment is come!” Not until the tribunal of heaven is opened can this message be heralded with swiftness and power.

Jesus taught that there will be a final judgment when every man will receive a reward or punishment according to his deeds. Paul preached of a day of judgment in the future when he said: “Because He hath appointed a day, in the which He will judge the world in righteousness by that Man whom He hath ordained.” Acts 17:31. And John substantiates this teaching by describing the time when God’s mercy would no longer restrain judgment. “The nations were angry, and Thy wrath is come, and the time of the dead, that they should be judged, and that Thou should give reward unto Thy servants the prophets, and to the saints, and them that fear Thy name, small and great. And should destroy them which destroy the earth!” Revelation 11: 18.

JUDGMENT IN THE FUTURE

The Bible does not teach that the cases of men are decided as soon as they die; but it does plainly say that the judgment has been appointed at a definite time by the Eternal One, and that this event will take place near the close of earth’s history before Jesus Christ comes the second time.

“I beheld till the thrones were cast down,” writes the prophet Daniel, “and the Ancient of Days did sit, whose garment was white as snow, and the hair of His head like the pure wool: His throne was like the fiery flame, and His wheels as burning fire. A fiery stream issued and came forth from before Him: thousand thousands ministered unto Him, and ten thousand times ten thousand stood before Him: the judgment was set, and the books were opened.” Daniel 7: 9, 10. God is the Judge in the heavenly court; millions of angels are gathered at the momentous event, the records are opened in heaven, and every case is reviewed.

The long centuries of persecution and apostasy that centered in the Dark Ages were to close at “the time of the end.” if we know when this occurred, we shall find the age in which the prophecies of Daniel were to be studied with diligence, and we shall know when the judgment message would stir the minds of men. Bible students agree that the 1260 years marked out in symbolic time—a day for a year in prophetic blueprint (Numbers 14:34; Ezekiel 4:6) -were to come to an end AD 1798. When the church had suffered through the long era of darkness and error, it was eager to search for the light God had placed in His Word for this time. Therefore, since the judgment message is linked with Daniel, and that book was to be opened for study at “the time of the end,” we are sure that the hour of the heavenly tribunal must be after 1798.

When does this take place? The longest Bible prophecy, extending over 2300 literal years, ends with the cleansing of the sanctuary. Daniel 8: 14. Careful study of the Scriptures reveals that this long period of prophecy marks the time when Jesus should come as the Messiah, and when He should die on the cross. The final period of the prophecy extends to AD 1844, and at that time the sanctuary should be cleansed.

SANCTUARY IN ISRAEL

To understand the meaning of the cleansing of the sanctuary we must go back to the symbolic

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services of Israel, when God taught His people through rites and ceremonies. The priests were to carry on the worship of God in the sanctuary and later in the temple, and offer the many sacrifices as object lessons pointing forward to the death of Jesus. The priest was an intercessor for the sinner. When the Master returned to heaven, He began a service of intercession for every sinner.

“Christ is not entered into the holy places made with hands, which are the figures of the true; but into heaven itself, now to appear in the presence of God for us.” Hebrews 9: 24. And there He carried forward the work of redemption.

The regular ministry of the priest in the Hebrew sanctuary went on every day in the year except one—the day of atonement. A sinner would bring an offering to the house of worship, he would place his hands on the head of the animal sacrifice, confess his sin to show the transfer of the wrong from himself to the innocent lamb, and then he would slay the creature. The blood was carried by the priest into the holy place. All of this ritual symbolized the sacrifice for sin, which Jesus, the Lamb of God, would make in His death on the cross.

Once a year there was a special cleansing of the sanctuary—a day of judgment for Israel. At that time the high priest chose two goats. The first animal was slain as a sin offering for the people, and the blood was sprinkled in the innermost part of the sanctuary. Then the high priest placed his hands on the head of the live goat, confessed all the sins of Israel that had accumulated during the year, and sent the goat into the desert to die. This was symbolic of the cleansing of all the nation from all sins that had been confessed.

This ceremony was designed to impress upon the people the hatred that God has for sin. By this object lesson we are able to comprehend the work of Jesus, our High Priest, in the temple in heaven. When Jesus Christ ascended into heaven, He began His ministry, for “through His own blood, [He] entered in once for all into the holy place, having obtained eternal redemption.” Hebrews 9: 12, RV. The Savior pleaded before the Father in behalf of every sinner; He asked that His perfect life stand in place of man’s mistakes, and that His perfection hide the sinner’s weaknesses. This work continued until 1844, the hour appointed for Christ to begin the cleansing of the heavenly temple. As in Israel of old, all sins were removed or blotted out. But before the sins can be eradicated, there must be a just and complete examination of the records to find how every individual stands.

The cleansing of the sanctuary in heaven must, therefore, involve a work of investigation. When this work began, the hour of judgment appointed by the Father had come.

EVERY MAN MUST CHOOSE

Thus, the message of the angel herald is a solemn challenge to every human being. Every soul has been given life, and the power of choice between good and evil. He has been asked to choose; but, with his decision has come the warning: “You must give an account of your life in the time of judgment.”

Should we not know all that we can about this judgment? Should we not prepare our case to stand the searching investigation? “We shall all stand before the judgment seat of Christ.” Romans 14:10. Paul declares there is no method of escaping this court summons. Our record must be faced; our words, actions, and motives will be judged, for Jesus said: “Every idle word that men shall speak, they shall give account thereof in the day of judgment. For by thy words thou shall be justified, and by thy words thou shall be condemned.” Matthew 12: 36, 37.

Is it possible for God to keep a close and accurate record of our lives? Certainly that is not impossible when we consider the inventions that man has for recording the voice, and for photographing every action. God is a just magistrate; He will be sure that all the evidence is presented, whether it be good or bad.

What is the standard of judgment in this court? As we search for the answer, we find Paul saying: “As many as have sinned in the law shall be judged by the law; in the day when God shall judge the secrets of men by Jesus Christ.” Romans 2:12-16. The Apostle James agrees that God’s law is the rule of judgment, by declaring, “So speak you, and so do, as they that shall be judged by the law of liberty.” James 2: 12. If we live in harmony with God’s commandments, we shall have nothing to fear in the court of heaven.

“Why,” asks one, “is this called ‘the law of liberty’?” Because those who are obedient to its precepts are freed from the penalty of disobedience, and are without condemnation. The statutes on the

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books of law which refer to stealing have no condemnation for me if I have not broken them. I am free from the condemnation of such laws. In like manner the Christian is without guilt before the commands of God if he has obeyed them. He is free from their condemnation. David was thankful for this freedom, and exclaimed: "I will walk at liberty: for I seek Thy precepts." Psalm 119: 45.

The law cannot save any man in the day of judgment. It is only the test of character. The sinner who has confessed his sins and given his case into the care of Jesus, his Advocate, is saved by the sacrifice on the cross. No Christian keeps the law to be saved. He obeys the precepts of his God because he loves to do the will of his Maker; he honors the laws of the nation because he loves his fellow men. Therefore, the two pillars of obedience are love to God and love to man. "Love is the fulfilling of the law." Romans 13:10. Just as every loyal Australian loves his nation, and pledges to uphold the laws of the land, so the Christian loves his Creator, and pledges his obedience to the divine commands. Love is the motive Power behind true keeping of the Ten Commandments.

The law reveals sin, for "sin is the transgression of the law"; and "by the law is the knowledge of sin." 1 John 3: 4; Romans 3: 20. The power of the gospel of Christ is the only thing that can save us. We can never stand before the Judge as self-made individuals; if we attempt to do this, we are lost.

TRIBUNAL OF HEAVEN

In the court of heaven, which has been in session for almost a century, God is the Judge of all the earth, and Christ is the Advocate. "If any man sin, we have an Advocate with the Father, Jesus Christ the righteous." 1 John 2: 1. How precious it is to have an attorney who knows our case! The Master has been over the way before us; He was tempted in all points like as we are, and yet He did not sin. He has said: "Whosoever therefore shall confess Me before men, him will I confess also before My Father which is in heaven." Matthew 10: 32. His victory makes it possible for everyone who has accepted Jesus as his Savior to receive pardon for sin.

Our accuser in the court is Satan, for he has determined to destroy the souls of all men. Revelation 12: 10.

The books of record are opened, and every case is considered. If we have acknowledged our wrongs and asked forgiveness for our sins, they will have been blotted from our life record, and not charged against us. Jesus will have made intercession for us, and our case will be clear in the judgment. 1 John 1: 9. Only our love, our faith, our peace -the fruits of a true Christian life-will remain on the books. But if sins have not been confessed and renounced, they remain to condemn us. Christ cannot plead our case if we do not give it into His keeping. If we attempt to save ourselves, He is helpless to save us in the hour of judgment.

How solemn is the thought of the judgment! Can we reject the warning of the Eternal One to prepare for the hour when we must face the divine tribunal. Day after day the record of your life and mine is being written. When once we have spoken or acted, we can never recall our influence. Yet how carelessly we plunge on in our selfish plans, forgetting the call of Heaven! What will stir us from our lethargy?

Upon a night of revelry and festivity came judgment to the ancient kingdom of Babylon. The nation had squandered its resources in riotous living; it had refused to heed the message of the statesman who trusted in God. Darkness settled down over the palace, and in that hour a hand wrote upon the wall of the royal banquet hall. Now Daniel must tell the dissolute leaders that unalterable doom was near: "God hath numbered thy kingdom, and finished it." "Thou art weighed in the balances, and art found wanting." Daniel 5: 26, 27.

GRAPES OF WRATH

Amid the chaos of our world that plunges on in an orgy of hate, self-seeking, and pleasure hunting, there comes a call to judgment. "The hour of His [God's] judgment is come." Every human being has a case pending in the court. For centuries a merciful Father has held back the doom of sinners; but the cup of iniquity is almost full. The grapes of wrath are ripe unto harvest.

Daniel Webster once said that every man must face the great question, "What is my personal accountability to God?" In the judgment every man is responsible for his own record. As the sins of our life

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mount up before us, it seems that we are spiritually bankrupt and that the debt is hopeless. How shall the account be settled?

In the Middle Ages there was a trusted steward of a king who handled large sums of money for the government. One time the courtier was in dire circumstances, and he began to borrow from the king's funds that he had in keeping. A reckoning day was appointed for the steward to total up his accounts. He added up the huge sum that he owed to his beloved king, and faced the fact that there was no way for him to pay it. Long he worked over the figures in his office, and in his exhaustion he fell asleep at his desk.

While he slept the king came to his office, saw his courtier asleep, looked over the papers, and read the query, "Who is to pay this great debt?" Love filled the heart of the monarch, and with his pen he wrote on the paper, "The king."

This is what our Advocate, Jesus Christ, is willing and ready to do for us. He will absolve us of all our debts, or sins, against the law of God if we will only renounce them and stop making these mistakes.

"The hour of His judgment is come." According to the prophetic Word, the judgment has been going on in the courts of heaven for almost a hundred years. It will continue until the record of every person who has lived or is now living has been investigated. When the judgment is finished, then Christ will come. The pronouncement will go forth: "He that is unjust, let him be unjust still: and he which is filthy, let him be filthy still: and he that is righteous, let him be righteous still: and he that is holy, let him be holy still. And, behold, I come quickly; and My reward is with Me, to give every man according as his work shall be." Revelation 22: 11, 12.

"My child, come home."* With these appealing words, the Father calls the prodigals of earth to the eternal refuge before the final storm breaks upon an unprepared world. How precious is the promise: "He that overcomes, the same shall be clothed in white raiment; and I will not blot out his name out of the book of life, but I will confess his name before My Father, and before His angels"! Revelation 3: 5.

A MIGHTY FORTRESS IS OUR GOD

WITH the dawn of the nineteenth century, Protestantism advanced the torch of truth which Martin Luther, John Huss, Ulrich Zwingli, and a thousand other Reformers had borne aloft in times of darkness and persecution. From the momentous day when Luther, hero of the Protestant Reformation, nailed his theses on the church door at Wittenberg, men of God had pledged their lives to the discovery of new horizons of truth. The Bible was their spiritual weapon, and they cast aside the traditions of men for the power of the gospel of Christ.

Echoing from the great hall in the city of Worms, the words of Luther became the watchword of Christianity. He closed his defense with the words: "Here I stand, I can do no other; may God help me! Amen." That flame of faith was kindled in the hearts of devout church members in every corner of Europe, and they went everywhere calling men to follow God's Word.

All of the truth was not revealed to these leaders, however, for it has been God's purpose that constant advance shall be made by His church through the ages. The work that Luther began was given new life and additional Bible doctrine by Knox and Calvin. Later the Wesleyan movement added to the teachings of the Protestant faith. When one church became bound by creed, and refused to accept new light from the Scriptures, God selected other inspired leaders to hold high the torch.

When the Pilgrim Fathers sailed westward to the New World they were not only pioneers in a strange land, but they were seeking more knowledge of God's message to the church. Before they left Holland, John Robinson, a godly minister, gave this farewell admonition:-

"Brethren, we are now ere long to part asunder, and the Lord knows whether I shall live ever to see your faces more. But whether the Lord hath appointed it or not, I charge you before God and His blessed angels to follow me no farther than I have followed Christ. If God should reveal anything to you by any other instrument of His, be as ready to receive it as ever you were to receive any truth of my ministry; for I am very confident the Lord hath more truth and light yet to break forth out of His holy Word."

The devout preacher was right in believing that new precepts were to be given to the church. As - Christians were willing to accept the teachings of the Bible, a great awakening was seen among church members. The early nineteenth century found many ministers focusing their attention upon the prophecies of

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the second coming of Christ and this led them to the three messages of Revelation 14. Soon Christians in Europe and America heard the call “Fear God, and give glory to Him; for the hour of His judgment is come.” A revival of spiritual power sent zealous missionaries forth with the gospel story to heathen lands

“This Protestantism was characterized by an abounding vitality and a daring unequalled in Christian history.” writes Kenneth S. Latourette modern church historian “Through it for the first time plans were seriously elaborated for bringing the Christian message to all men and to make the life of all mankind conform to Christian ideals.” – “The Great Century,” page 44.

MESSAGE GRIPPED HEARTS

The message gripped the hearts of listeners, for it called every man to prepare to face the judgment and the second advent of Jesus. Thousands of men and women accepted the doctrines of the advent movement. For decades the churches were stirred by the hope that Christ would come in 1844. But when the prophetic period of twenty-three hundred days had ended and Jesus did not come, there was bitter disappointment for the majority of the believers, and a tragic decline of faith. However, a group of faithful Bible students continued to delve into the prophecies, and their search was rewarded. They found that the time of the prophecy was correct, but the event that was to take place in 1844 had been misunderstood. The cleansing of the sanctuary (Daniel 8:14) was not the end of the world; as they had supposed. It was the beginning of the investigative judgment in heaven, which we have considered in the previous chapter.

With new courage these Christians accepted the messages of the three angels, and preached the advent truth to the world. From this beginning there arose a new Protestant denomination, which accepted the Bible as its complete guide. The members of the Seventh-day Adventist Church came out of other evangelical churches in response to the call to prepare for the judgment and the coming of Jesus. They maintained a firm belief in the cardinal Bible doctrines, the heritage of Protestantism; and they also accepted the divine message for this generation.

About the middle of the nineteenth century the churches quite generally forsook the fundamentals of the Bible, and religious chaos came into the ranks. Forgetting the “sure Word of prophecy,” it was not long before clergymen were following “cunningly devised fables” of higher criticism and evolution. Pillars of truth which had stood the test of ages were pulled down by scholars who ridiculed the Genesis account of creation, the origin of sin, the virgin birth of Christ, and the divine atonement. The temple of faith collapsed as true religion was cast aside for the counterfeit.

In the midst of this apostasy it was time for the message to be heralded anew: “Fear God, and give glory to Him; and worship Him that made heaven, and earth, and the sea, and the fountains of waters.” The sincere follower of the Master is called back to the fundamentals of the Bible. Liberal theologians are frightened at the results of their teachings, for they see a modern paganism in many churches. ‘ The editor of a well-known church journal bemoans the situation in these words: “We now have a generation which when we preach the gospel hardly knows what we are talking about.” Who is to blame?

For more than two generations the world has attempted to forget the idea of sin. Scientific investigations tried to establish the fact that all life was progressing, and that sin was an old-fashioned superstition. Evolution ruled the thinking of the race.

THE TRAIL OF SIN

If endless evolution were true, then all that humanity needed was time, and every problem would be solved. God was not needed, science affirmed; and, as for sin, there was no need to worry about that. But something began to go awry in the theory. Man did not grow more perfect society became more unruly, and whether we wanted to face the facts or not we knew there was sin and evil in our world. “Sin, which had been so ceremoniously bowed out the front door,” says one minister, “slipped in at the basement window, and forthwith proceeded to tear up the premises. And what happened may be called ‘the tragic trail of sin.’

Protestantism stands at the parting of the ways; for as Dr. P. T. Forsythe says. “The modern ‘liberal’ assault upon Christianity is the most serious since the church’s first struggle with Gnosticism.” Which way will Protestants turn? Will they follow the fundamentals which made them separate from the corrupt teachings of the Middle Ages, or will they seek the fables of those who deny God and His Word?

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Skepticism took hold of the generation that lived through World War I. As one disillusioned writer said: "The benevolent Father God of pre-war Europe was the first fatality of that conflict." Faith turned into fear, and courage became cowardice when men had no supreme hope in a personal God. Dr. J. C. Hambro, Norwegian delegate to the League of Nations, wrote: "Here in Geneva we have every fear but the fear of God." Those years brought a collapse of all the values men held sacred, and now we reap the whirlwind.

AGE OF SKEPTICISM

"There is more skepticism in our times than in any prior age," declares George A. Buttrick. "Doubt heretofore has been a shallow pool, but in our day it is a flood which seems to have swept away all the landmarks of faith." ("The Christian Fact and Modern Doubt," page 69.) We are brought back to the words of Jesus concerning the skepticism and anti religion that would be in the earth before His second advent. He questioned: "When the Son of man comes, shall He find faith on the earth?" Luke 18: 8.

Without faith we cannot believe in God; and, if we lose God, we have no religion. When we pray "Our Father," we are acknowledging that we have a divine Creator. This calls us to the message of Revelation 14, where the angel declares: "Worship Him that made heaven, and earth, and the sea, and the fountains of waters." There is no room for evolution, pantheism, or deism in the mind of one who sincerely follows the Bible.

The first sentence of the Book of Genesis is the starting-point for faith in God. "In the beginning God created the heaven and the earth." At once we are introduced to a personal, infinite, all-wise Creator. He formed this earth, a place of beauty and perfection, for the abode of man. He created human beings in His own image, and asked them to love Him. In return for allegiance to Him, God gave them dominion over the earth and the lower animals. Man was endowed with freedom of choice; he could choose his own course of action. But he was also counseled to follow the right way, and was warned of the tragedy that would result from breaking divine laws. In the course of time Adam and Eve decided to go their own way and reject their Creator's plan. They bartered away their inheritance and happiness for the enticements of sin.

A RUINED HERITAGE

Their heritage was blighted. The ground brought forth thorns and weeds as well as fruit; the beasts refused to obey man; and nature lost much of its beauty. Death came into the world, for man had broken his allegiance to the Life-giver, and "the wages of sin is death!" Yet with all these judgments God sought to save man from eternal death. Along with the punishment came the promise of a Redeemer; and from the day that Adam and Eve left their home in Eden, the hope of humanity has been in Jesus Christ. "God so loved the world, that He gave His only begotten Son, that whosoever believes in Him should not perish, but have everlasting life." John 3: 16.

There is no place in the theory of evolution for the love of God to save human beings. According to this speculative view, the earth evolved to its present state through millions of years of change, and man pushed his way upward from lower forms of animal life. In such a concept there is no recognition of a personal God, whose design and purpose can be seen in nature and in human affairs. In place of an intelligent, beneficent Creator, the evolutionist substitutes blind, chaotic chance. When God is robbed of His personality, His attributes of love, righteousness, power, and justice, then the modern conception of God degenerates into pantheism.

Man has attempted to take the power of creation from the Creator, and spread it out through all the forms of nature; he has sought to eliminate the divine in creation, and substitute an "active force" which pervades all nature. Paul described the foibles of men in their attempt to do away with the fact of creation in these words: "When they knew God, they glorified Him not as God, neither were thankful; but became vain in their imaginations, and their foolish heart was darkened. Professing themselves to be wise, they became fools." They "worshipped and served the creature more than the Creator." Romans 1: 21-25.

If man did not come from the hands of God, then there is no foundation for Christianity, for a personal God is the cornerstone of our belief. If man evolved from lower forms of life, the Bible account of the origin of sin is not true, and evil does not exist. If there is no sin, then Christ's death was without

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purpose; and, if we have no Savior, where is man's hope? There is no comfort in an "all-pervading force"; there is no salvation in evolution.

We must return to our, mighty fortress. The call of heaven challenges us to "fear God, and give glory to Him." Like the prodigal son of the parable, we have left the loving Father. "We have neglected God and His laws," writes the archbishop of York. "Historians of the future will admire much of the nineteenth century and its products in the early decades of this century. But they will, I am sure, express a bewildered astonishment at the attitude to God and faith in God which increasingly prevailed in this period-I mean the attitude which regards God and faith in God as an optional extra, so to speak."

Listen to the conversation in the houses of business, the centers of pleasure, the halls of government, the schoolrooms, and on the streets, and you will be forced to admit that God is not the center of life. Instead of reverence for the name of the Almighty, men continually dishonor their Creator by blaspheming His name. Injustice, suffering, and needless slaughter curse our war-stricken generation, and many people are ready to blame God for these evils. Cynics declare that there is no God. But how pitiful is the mind of man without divine wisdom! "The fool hath said in his heart, There is no God," declared David. Psalm 14: 1.

A wise man looks at the starry heavens, the perfection in nature's handiwork, and he whispers, "God lives and reigns." When we look with the proper perspective, we see that we are in a world beset by sin because humanity has chosen a selfish, sinful career instead of obeying the commands of God. War is the result of greed, hatred, and pride. If men loved God and their brother man as Jesus taught, there would be no cancer of evil to eat the life out of our civilization.

RETURN OF THE PRODIGAL

There is no word which Jesus used more in speaking of God than "Father." He taught the disciples to pray: "Our Father which art in heaven, Hallowed be Thy name." Matthew 6: 9. All men are sons of the heavenly Father; therefore, all men are brothers.

If our eyes could be opened to the love of God, we would honor and reverence the Eternal One. Every human being has some time in his life turned away from, the Father's house. But in spite of our waywardness the Father is not embittered toward us. Oh, no! "Like as a father pities his children, so the Lord pities them that fear Him." Psalm 103:13. He waits with outstretched arms for the child who will return. Beautiful is the promise of Jesus: "In My Father's house are many mansions." John 14: 2. A loving God is calling men out of the chaos of sin to a new and perfect home, which He is preparing for those who love Him.

WHERE IS OUR FAITH?

We need a revival of reverence among Christians. We are called to "fear," or honor, God as the Creator. "All history lies in the hollow of His hand." When we have caught a vision of the glory, we shall be like Isaiah. The holiness, magnificence, and greatness of God were seen by the youthful prophet; he heard angels chanting, "Holy, holy, holy is the Lord of hosts." In that moment he realized his sinful condition and cried out: "Woe is me! For I am undone; because I am a man of unclean lips, and I dwell in the midst of a people of unclean lips: for mine eyes have seen the King, the Lord of hosts." Isaiah 6: 1-5.

In these days of terror we must search our own hearts. Have we a living faith in a personal God that will sustain us in the crisis that is encircling the world? Can we say with the great Reformation hero, "A mighty fortress is our God"? Have we learned that although the world may slip out of the control of men, it has not slipped out of the hands of our heavenly Father? "Nothing less than a mastering faith in a God who is as big as all the universe will be sufficient."

Never was a more important message sounded by the hosts of heaven than is the call: "Fear God, and give glory to Him." We are to worship Him, the Creator. We are to trust Him, for He who made the world can redeem it from chaos. He is our Father, and in love He gave His only Son to live and die in a rebellious world, that we might have an inheritance in the new world He is preparing for those who love Him, and to help us prepare for that eternal home.

With humble hearts we come, as Peter declares, committing our "souls in well doing unto a faithful Creator." 1 Peter 4: 19, RV. We are not orphans, for we have a Father who is faithful, who has

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loved us with an everlasting love. His heart is touched with our sorrow; He knows the dark, bewildering road that we travel. But ahead there is light. Beyond the chaos there is victory, for the Sun of Righteousness shall come with healing in His wings. There can be no victory, however, unless the heart has found the everlasting love, and has been constrained to follow the call of the Master. "This is the victory that overcomes the world, even our faith." 1 John 5: 4.

A Mighty Fortress

**A mighty fortress is our God,
A bulwark never failing;
Our helper He, amid the flood
Of mortal ills prevailing.
For still our ancient foe Does seek to work us woe;
His craft and power are great,
And armed with cruel hate;
On earth is not his equal.**

**Did we in our own strength confide,
Our striving would be losing,
Were not the right Man on our side,
The Man of God's own choosing.
Just ask who that may be? Christ Jesus, it is He!
Lord Sabbath His name, From age to age the same;
And He must win the battle.**

**And though this world, with devils filled,
Should threaten to undo us,
We will not fear, for God hath willed
His truth to triumph through us. The prince of darkness grim,
We tremble not for him; His rage we can endure,
For lo! his doom is sure, One little word shall fell him.**

**That word above all earthly powers,
No thanks to them, abides;
The Spirit and the gifts are ours
Through Him who with us sides; Let goods and kindred go,
This mortal life also; The body they may kill;
God's truth abides still, His kingdom is for ever.**

Martin Luther

IS PROTESTANTISM PASSING?

THERE stands in France a beautiful old church built like a robber baron's castle with a moat, drawbridge, peepholes, and every weapon necessary to protect itself against attack. This medieval house of worship well symbolizes the attempt Christianity made in that age to be strong through temporal power and the force of arms. But religion based upon human strength does not have the approval of God, and even as that stately edifice lies in ruins today, so the spiritual forces of any church are dissipated when it depends upon the might of men.

Modern Christianity, with all the warnings from history to guide it, puts on the armor of the world in an attempt to stand against the forces of evil. When the Christian churches cast aside "the sword of the Spirit, which is the Word of God," and seek the learning of men, the customs of paganism, and the pride of

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the world, they are compromising with eternal truth.

Every day it becomes clearer that the root of our problems is a religious one. Statesmen, business executives, teachers, doctors, tradesmen, all admit that we are in the throes of world revolution because we have failed to heed the voice of God. Say the editors of Fortune concerning our problem: "When we turn to the church today the message is not clear." As clergymen take an inventory of their forces, they admit with the editor of the Christian Advocate that "the church is not dominating the life of the world, or of the nations. Something vital has gone out of the life of the Christian church."

Can we find the cause of spiritual weakness within the church? What is God's answer to modern apostasy? One religious leader, in analyzing the plight of the church, says that Protestantism has declined because of "shallow naturalism" "degrading secularism," and "silly self-sufficiency."

A FORGOTTEN SAVIOUR

Each of these points must be fully explained and clarified. So-called "scientific naturalism" attempts to discredit the teachings of Jesus Christ. Under the pretence of being "scientific"! it brings evolution into the churches, with the result that man is esteemed little more than an animal. He is no longer a child of God, according to this philosophy for prayer, heaven, the divine Creator, and righteousness are derided. Naturalism teaches that there is nothing beyond this life, and if there is to be a "kingdom of God" it must be a man-made affair.

"Secularism," or worldliness, has assailed the church with many compromises during the past decades. A social gospel took precedence over the plain teachings of Jesus Christ. The church and the world began, walking so close together that many a Christian could not be distinguished from his unconverted neighbor as far as his daily actions, his business integrity, or his amusements were concerned. Moral education of youth in the church was displaced by shallow entertainment. "The serious work of the church- redemption of mankind from sin through the acceptance and following of Christ and His teaching- was smothered by more worldly activities," writes Charles A. Ellwood. "The tendency of the church to be 'conformed to this world' was aggravated by many theological and religious leaders, especially on the continent of Europe, asserting that the teachings of Christ were full of impossible social ideals." ("The World's Need of Christ," pages 97,98.) Such secular influences acting upon many church members have greatly enfeebled Christianity and helped to bring the present crisis.

Has the spirit of "self-sufficiency" crept into the ranks of Protestantism? Perhaps this can best be answered by considering the place the authority of the Bible has in modern thinking. The Protestant Reformation was established upon the principle that the Bible was the sole authority of Christians. As Harold P. Sloan looks back upon the church when it was strong, he affirms: "Protestant preaching was never the mere enunciation of human opinions. It was always the preaching of the Word of God." But that day has passed, and clergymen push the Scriptures aside for the theories of men. Dr. Charles A. Ellwood writes on this subject in these significant words: "Not only has the church adapted itself to the pagan customs of society, but much of historical Christianity has ignored the teachings of Christ and substituted for those teachings theological doctrines of which Christ said nothing." When churches take the traditions - of men in place of the Word of God, there is a dependence upon self and human authority.

The Apostle Paul foresaw the condition when the church would not give the Scripture the paramount position. He wrote: "The time will come when they will not endure sound doctrine; but after their own lusts shall they heap to themselves teachers, having itching ears; and they shall turn away their ears from the truth, and shall be turned unto fables." 2 Timothy 4: 3, 4. The apostle of Jesus Christ gives this direct admonition: "Preach the Word." Verse 2. If Christians had followed God's precepts, they would possess mighty power today, and the faith of Jesus would be the anchor of the soul when hurricanes of doubt and despair sweep over the earth.

But the human heart is proud, and often it seeks to solve the problems of life without divine counsel. Early in Biblical history this trait of character brought tragedy upon the inhabitants of earth who refused to obey God. In the years following the Flood many of the people forgot the Lord, and cast off the restraint of His law. A merciful Father had promised that the world would never again be destroyed by a deluge of water; but these self-sufficient men refused to accept God's covenant. They decided to build a city, and in it they would erect a tower of such stupendous height that they would have a way of escape if another flood came. It was their way of saying, "We can find a method of saving ourselves. We do not

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need God. We shall be strong in our own wisdom, and by our might we shall build a way up to heaven.”

When the Tower of Babel was partially completed, the Eternal One intervened by changing the language of the workmen so that they spoke in different tongues. Men could no longer work together when they could not understand one another. Therefore the work on the tower ceased. But a kingdom was established with the name Babylon, which means “confusion.”

PAGANISM IN BABYLON

Ancient Babylon became the center of revolt against God’s precepts, and a new religion was instituted by these people. Much of the worship was a counterfeit of true religion, for Satan desired to entice men away from the worship of the Eternal One, and he could do this by making the false religion resemble the worship of the true God. Paganism exalted itself against the power of God, and sought to win the hearts of men by allowing them to believe that they could gain salvation through deeds of merit.

Thousands of years passed; rulers died and kingdoms fell; but the paganism of old Babylon continued. When the mighty Babylonian Empire arose under King Nebuchadnezzar in the sixth century before Christ, we see the height of pride and egotism in the words of this king as he surveyed the golden city: “Is not this great Babylon, that I have built for the house of the kingdom by the might of my power, and for the honor of my majesty?” Daniel 4: 30. Nebuchadnezzar was not ignorant of the true God, for he had been taught by the prophet Daniel, and he had been warned of his sinful course through dreams and their interpretation. But he refused allegiance to the Almighty, and continued to glory in himself, therefore, the Lord humbled him by taking away his reason until he should know that “the Most High rules in the kingdom of men, and gives it to whomsoever He will.” See Daniel 4: 25-32.

When the Medes and Persians overthrew the empire of Babylon, they drove out the Chaldean pagan worship, and set up their own religion. The priests fled to Asia Minor, where they built their great temple and established their central college at Pergamos. John evidently refers to this stronghold of paganism when he writes of the church in Pergamos: “I know thy works, and where thou dwells, even where Satan’s seat is.” Revelation 2: 13. Gradually the rites and ceremonies of Babylonian sun worship became a part of pagan Rome.

As Christianity spread through the Roman Empire after Jesus ascended to heaven, the church had many conflicts with paganism. By the third century after Christ, church leaders were compromising the teachings of the Master, and paganism was blended into the practices of the church. In order to win the heathen to Christianity, the clergy allowed rites and ceremonies which originated in old Babylon to come into the Christian church. “Thus we trace what has been faithfully called the introduction of a baptized paganism,” declares one historian.

COMPROMISED CHRISTIANITY

As the early church grew in power, it preserved the ancient pagan practices, declaring that it was expedient to make such a compromise in order to win the world to Jesus Christ. Feast days, image worship, holy water, the mass, worship of saints, and a thousand other practices were baptized into Christendom from paganism, that counterfeit religion that had originated in old Babylon in defiance of the true God.

The Protestant Reformation called men to return to the unsullied truths of the Bible. The Reformers determined to allow no church, no ceremony, and no priest to stand between the sinner and his Savior. They preached from the Scriptures, and followed the commands of God. Every form of idolatry, every relic of pagan worship, every false doctrine, was challenged by the Word of truth.

But after three hundred years, the Protestant churches have allowed their faith to be compromised. Speaking of our moral confusion, E. Stanley Jones declares: ‘You are a split personality trying to put together pagan and Christian ends. This house of our national soul is divided against itself and it cannot stand.’ As Charles A. Ellwood affirms: “The continuance of pagan tradition in a great part of life gradually paganized the church itself.”

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WORLD-LOVING CHURCHES

We face such a crisis in modern Christianity. The pathway of old Babylon is being followed again in the twentieth century. Says one religious writer: "In the professedly Christian world, many turn away from the plain teachings of the Bible, and build up a creed from human speculations and pleasing fables; and they point to their tower as a way to climb up to heaven. . . . The existing confusion of conflicting creeds and sects is fitly represented by the term Babylon, which prophecy applies to the world loving churches of the last days."

God recognizes the need for a modern reformation that shall bring His people back to the Bible, to the simple faith of Jesus, and to the keeping of the Ten Commandments. The second angel's message of Revelation 14 is a direct call. "There followed another angel, saying, Babylon is fallen, is fallen, that great city, because she made all nations drink of the 4vine of the wrath of her fornication." Revelation 14: 8. This mighty message challenges men and women who love God to seek His Word, and to separate themselves from the corrupting influences and practices of the world.

Out of the darkness will come Christians who are seeking the straight, fundamental teachings of the Bible. False Babylon has endeavored to make all nations "drink of the wine of the wrath of her fornication." But God's Spirit is striving with this generation, and there are many who will reject error. If the apostles, Peter, Paul, and John, were alive today, what doctrines would they teach? As followers of their Master, they would surely accept the following doctrines:

The Bible is the only inspired guide for those who obey God, for "all Scripture is given by inspiration of God, and is profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness: that the man of God may be perfect, thoroughly furnished unto all good works." 2 Timothy 3: 16, 17. If the Scriptures can develop perfect character in human lives, what other teachings could men find that would give them-eternal life? Jesus plainly declared that the Word of God testified of Him and of His message. John 5: 39.

GOSPEL FOR TODAY

The everlasting gospel, "the power of God unto salvation," is to be preached to all the world. Jesus commissioned His church to carry the message to all nations. Matthew 28: 19, 20. When this gospel has been proclaimed to the world, Jesus declared the end of the reign of sin would come. Matthew 24: 14.

God is a personal, loving, all-powerful Father, who gave His Son to die that all men who would accept the sacrifice might have eternal life. John 3: 16; 1 John 4: 9; 1 Timothy 1: 15.

God is the creator of this earth and of all the life that is upon it. Man was created perfect in the image of God; but sin destroyed his original perfection and glory. Col. 1: 12-17.

Jesus Christ is the only begotten Son of the Father. He came into this world through a virgin birth, and after living a sinless life in the flesh, He gave His life for the sins of the human race. Man is saved by accepting the sacrifice of Christ. He was resurrected from the dead, and is ascended into heaven where He makes intercession for sinners. Luke 1: 27; John 3: 16; Romans 5: 10; Hebrews 2: 17; 4: 14.

The judgment message is essential Bible truth for these momentous times, for the hour of God's judgment is come, and every human being shall be judged according to the eternal law of God. Revelation 14: 7; James 2: 10-12.

The Ten Commandments are the eternal and unchangeable law of God, given to man to guide him in right conduct. It is essential for a God of love and justice to have such a code of right and wrong, and Christians keep the law because they love God and pledge allegiance to Him. 1 John 5:2; 3:4; Romans 3:20.

The second coming of Christ, a cardinal teaching of all the Scriptures, is the hope of the church. The Savior will come again in power and glory, and "every eye shall see Him." John 14: 1-3; 1 Thessalonians 4: 16,17; Revelation 1: 7.

Man does not possess immortality; it is a gift of God through Jesus Christ. When man sinned, the sentence of death was pronounced upon him. God only has immortality; but when Jesus gained the victory over death, eternal life was assured to every man who would accept salvation. Immortality is not given to human beings until the resurrection, for when a man dies he is in an unconscious sleep until Christ shall raise him from the dead at the time of the second coming, when "the dead in Christ shall rise first." Genesis 2: 17; 1 Timothy 1: 17; 2 Timothy 1: 10; Ecclesiastes 9: 5, 6, 10; 1 Thessalonians 4: 13-16.

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FIRM FOR THE BIBLE

These are monuments of Christian faith which Protestants once cherished, but which have been buried under the sophistries of men and the wisdom of the world. Wise is the counsel of Solomon as he wrote: "Remove not the ancient landmark, which thy fathers have set." Proverbs 22: 28. God calls His people out of Babylon, out of the chaos and confusion which have destroyed much of the spiritual power and fervor of the churches. He pleads With men and women to stand fast in the faith.

There are Protestants who still maintain these Bible doctrines. They accepted the three messages of the angel heralds, and established a church upon the Bible and the Bible only, and for a century have been proclaiming the cardinal truths of Christianity, including the second coming of Christ. They are firm believers in the simple gospel of Christ, and have accepted the commission to preach this gospel to all the world.

The prophet John saw a victorious people who love God and keep His commandments. They were a remnant, a small part of those who originally professed Christianity. Evil forces will fight against the truth of God, and against those who believe and teach these fundamental truths for the struggle is described in these words: "The dragon was wroth with the woman, and went to make war with the remnant of her seed, which keep the commandments of God, and have the testimony of Jesus Christ." Revelation 12: 17.

Out of the night of sin God is calling His children. Another warning is found in the eighteenth chapter of Revelation, where an angel is pictured coming down from heaven with great power, declaring: "Babylon the great is fallen, is fallen, and is become the habitation of devils, and the hold of every foul spirit, and a cage of every unclean and hateful bird." Another voice calls from heaven

"Come out of her, My people, that you be not partakers of her sins, and that you receive not .of her plagues!" Revelation 18: 1-6.

This is the last recorded Bible message to go to the world. It challenges every Christian to study the Bible for himself. Let us test our life and doctrines according to the light of God's inspired message. Let us listen to the voice of heaven, saying, "Come out of her, My people." Truth is the most precious heritage that any man may cherish. May we become "partakers of the inheritance of the saints in light," prepared to meet our God.

COUNTERFEIT OR GENUINE?

LAWLESSNESS, the black plague of the twentieth century, spreads across our nation and contaminates the whole world. Society is powerless to combat this disease, which weakens the moral fiber and corrupts the hearts of men. Every twenty-two seconds, minute in and minute out of the twenty-four hours of all the 365 days of the year, a major crime is committed in the United States. Murder, felonious assault, grand and petty theft, are on the increase in a nation already harassed by lawlessness. . The criminal army of America costs taxpayers 400 per cent more than they spend for education. This figures down to about £26 annually for every man, woman, and child.

This plague knows no international boundaries. It leaps from individual to family, from family to community, from the community to the nation, and from a nation to all the world. When have we seen such flagrant violations of international law as we witness today? The rights of small nations are scorned by those who possess power. Treaties are smashed, wealth belonging to others is confiscated, property is sei2ed, peaceful nations are attacked without warning-all because the virus of lawlessness does its deadly work in the human heart. Man has mastered physical nature in ways that seem almost impossible, but we are still faced with rebellious human nature. Science tells us that nature abides by law, that the 'universe knows perfect order and obedience; but human nature is lawless. What is the reason for our present chaotic state of affairs?

The conflict between good and evil is the oldest war ever waged, for it is as old as sin itself. Without the Bible, no man can explain the origin of evil or show why it exists in our world. But God presents the cause of our lawlessness, and reveals His final solution for it.

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A REBEL'S DREAM

From the day that Lucifer, an exalted angel of heaven, rebelled against the law of God, he has attempted to overthrow truth. This rebel dreamed of setting up a dominion where he would be a ruler like his Maker. To the angels he boasted: "I will ascend into heaven, I will exalt my throne above the stars of God: . . . I will be like the Most High." Isaiah 14: 13, 14.

Lawlessness produces war, and Lucifer's rebellion brought conflict in heaven. Finally, "the great dragon was cast out, that old serpent, called the devil, and Satan, which deceives the whole world: he was cast out ' into the earth, and his angels were cast out with him." Revelation 12: 9. God could have ended the revolt at this time by destroying Satan and his cohorts; but anarchy was a new thing in the universe, and other heavenly beings who remained loyal to their God must have the opportunity to see the results of this rebel's lawless career.

After he was expelled from the presence of God, Satan determined to corrupt the inhabitants of this earth. As he came to Adam and Eve, he spoke scornfully of the divine command. "Yea, hath God said, You shall not eat of every tree of the garden?" asked the serpent. Then he added the lie: "You shall be as gods!" Thus did the enemy of truth seek to set up his counterfeit system upon this earth, and man turned aside from the Creator's perfect plan to, follow cunningly devised fables.

When sin grew stronger in the world, human beings revolted against truth, and set up a false system of religion. Sun-worship and nature worship attempted to counterfeit God's commands, and men "worshipped and served the creature more than the Creator." Romans 1:25. The controversy between the genuine and the false was constantly waged through the centuries.

God's people rejected the divine warnings on several occasions, and turned to pagan rites and ceremonies. Ezekiel 8: 13-18. Every time that Israel fell into apostasy, the nation was severely punished for its lawbreaking.

LAWLESSNESS IN THE CHURCH

As the apostolic church advanced through the Roman Empire in the early centuries of the Christian Era, some of the leaders allowed paganism to blend with the teachings of the Master. By the fourth century after Christ a corrupt religion dominated the Roman Empire, and when the monarchy fell the bishops of Rome formed a religion-political system known as the Papacy. This form of Christianity brought in the pagan rites of sprinkling, holy days, worship of the dead, infant baptism, and Sunday observance. All of these doctrines and rites are without the authority of the Bible. Thus God's holy law was set aside, and the traditions of men accepted in its stead, and a spirit of lawlessness grew strong in the church as it forsook truth.

This revolt against the principles of Christianity is set forth in the prophecies of the Bible. Paul, the dynamic apostle, was inspired to give a striking picture of the church. in apostasy. He saw the time when "that man of sin" would be revealed, "the son of perdition. Who opposes and exalts himself above all that is called God, or that is worshipped; so that he as God sits in the temple of God, showing himself that he is God." 2 Thessalonians 2: 3, 4. "The son of perdition" has been translated by some authorities as "the son of lawlessness." This is a significant description of the ecclesiastical system that arose out of old paganism, which took its temporal power from pagan Rome and united it with the teachings of Christ and the traditions of men.

John, the beloved disciple, was given a prophetic picture of a leopard like beast, which represents this religious and political system that would defy the authority of God. Many nations in Scripture have been represented by animal figures, and it is a common practice today to symbolize nations as animals or birds. Therefore, John understood the divine message, and presented it with startling clarity. He saw a huge animal with the body of a leopard, the feet of a bear, and the mouth of a lion, What does this strange composite beast represent? To understand this prophecy of Revelation 13 we must turn back to the Book of Daniel, chapter seven, where we find a lion, a bear, and a leopard, representing respectively Babylon, Persia, and Greece. The beast of Revelation must have the characteristics of all these ancient empires, and the common heritage that these monarchies possessed was the great counterfeit system of religion-paganism. The Roman Empire and the Papacy, which grew out of it, had their roots in paganism. Therefore this beast must symbolize the papal power, which arose by blending the power of pagan Rome with Christianity.

RELIGIOUS ANARCHY

Lawlessness was to characterize this great system; for the prophet declared: “There was given unto him a mouth speaking great things and blasphemies.” Revelation 13: 5. According to the Bible’s own definition, blasphemy is the attempt of a man to make himself like God. It is a form of religious anarchy, or rebellion against the government of heaven. John 10: 33. The long history of the Papacy, the religion-political system represented by the beast of Revelation 13, reveals that it is “but the ghost of the deceased Roman Empire, sitting crowned upon the grave thereof.” It dared attempt to usurp the power that rightfully belongs to God alone.

The gospel of Christ was lost sight of during the Dark Ages, and church members were taught to look to the priest as their mediator instead of confessing their sins to God and seeking His forgiveness. Without regard for the plain teachings of Scripture ‘ the Papacy continues to claim the authority to forgive sins ‘ and to take the Place of God on earth. In a small brochure, entitled “Shall I Be a Priest?” by Revelation William Doyle, we read this declaration of a priest’s power: “Not content with humbly submitting Himself to the will of the, priest, God has given him the right to sit in judgment on the sins of men, and release them from the debt they owe to His offended majesty.” (Page 14.) This official declaration states that Rome has the power to sit in the place of God, and judge men; and that she has the authority to forgive sins. Such doctrine is in direct opposition to the commands of the Bible, and challenges the position of God Himself. . See Luke 5: 21; 1 John 1: 9.

Furthermore, the Papacy declares: “The Roman pontiff ... is the vicegerent on earth, not of mere men, but of the true God.” – “The Decretals of Pope Gregory IX,” bk. 1, tit. 7, chap. 3.

Thus does this ecclesiastical system claim infallibility. It affirms that it has never erred, and never will err. John saw that this power would persecute men and women who did not fall in with the counterfeit system. “It was given unto him to make war with the saints,” said the prophet, “and to overcome them: and power was given him over all kingdoms, and tongues, and nations.” Revelation 13: 7. Millions of souls paid with their lives for holding fast to the teachings of Jesus. Rome admits that she has persecuted in an attempt to wipe out all those who disagree with her doctrines. The annals of history reveal a bloody record of such tragedies as the slaughter of Protestants in the Netherlands, the Inquisition in Spain and Italy, and the Massacre of St. Bartholomew in France.

But not always was this ecclesiastical system to hold sway with a lawless rule; for the time would come, said the Scripture, when its strength would be broken. It would receive a “deadly wound.” In 1798 the temporal power of the Papacy was crushed, and the pope was taken captive by the French army. The Bible verdict had been fulfilled, “He that leads into captivity shall go into captivity.” Verse 10. Yet not for all time was the power destroyed, for God’s Word declared, “His deadly wound was healed: and all the world wondered after the beast.” Verse 3. Today we find the Papacy enthroned in temporal power. Political prestige is re-established in the Old World and in America. Government leaders in the United States are reaching their hands across the sea to join with the papal authorities in political schemes.

TAMPERING WITH THE LAW

This power has also attempted to change the law of God. The second commandment of the Decalogue, forbidding image worship, has been dropped from the law, and the fourth commandment has been altered so that it fails to identify the seventh day as the Sabbath. Of this act of rebellion against God, and the substitution of the old pagan day of worship, we read in the Bible: “He shall think to change the times and the law.” Can we not understand why Paul called this apostate system “the man of lawlessness”? Daniel 7: 25, RV; 2 Thessalonians 2: 3, RV, margin.

The Protestant Reformation saw sincere worshippers of God turn from false doctrines and pagan rites to seek the Bible and the Bible only. But that staunch fight for the faith is no longer waged by Protestants and today we witness a turning away from the law of God by the popular churches. Rites and ceremonies of ancient paganism, which were baptized into Roman Catholicism, are now accepted in many Protestant churches. Sprinkling, the celebration of pagan holy days, such as Christmas, Easter, and Lent, and the observance of Sunday -all are without the authority of the Bible, and yet Protestants are willingly accepting these counterfeits of truth.

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Why should we be amazed at the spectacle of lawlessness, that engulfs our generation when we see churches, Catholic and Protestant, refusing to hold fast to the commands of God? If modern religionists seek the traditions of men, why should not men preach a new code of morals? We reap the whirlwind of lawlessness and crime as men and churches scoff at God's Word. We need to pray as did the Psalmist, "It is time for Thee, Lord, to work: for they have made void Thy law." Psalm 119: 126.

Jesus saw the rebellion in the hearts of men in His generation as they sought to have their own way. The Jews claimed to be followers of God's commands; but the nation had substituted the traditions of rabbis for the Holy Scriptures. The Master said: "In vain they do worship Me, teaching for doctrines the commandments of men." Matthew 15:9. Again the world rejects the simple precepts of the Old and New Testaments; again men teach for doctrines the human traditions. As one religious writer declares: "No error accepted by the Christian world strikes more boldly against the authority of Heaven, none is more directly opposed to the dictates of reason, none is more pernicious in its results, than the modern doctrine, so rapidly gaining ground, that God's law is no longer obligatory upon men."

God's people are called to give their complete allegiance to their Creator. "If you love Me," Jesus told His disciples, "keep My commandments." John 14: 15. Those who are prepared to meet their God in the final day will bear His seal of approval. "I saw another angel ascending from the east," wrote John in Revelation 7: 2, 3, "having the seal of the living God: and he cried with a loud voice to the four angels, to whom it was given to hurt the earth and the sea, saying, Hurt not the earth, neither the sea, nor the trees, till we have sealed the servants of our God in their foreheads."

Those who follow the teachings of Jesus Christ and obey His commands will gain the victory over evil. God can never place His seal of approval upon rebellion, lawlessness, or evil. He cannot accept half-surrendered lives; He will not tolerate religion that attempts to counterfeit the gospel. Isaiah declares, "Bind up the testimony, seal the law I among My disciples." Isaiah 8: 16. If the law is to be sealed upon the children of God, they must possess the seal of the Eternal One.

SEAL OF VICTORY

Within the Decalogue is one commandment which gives the name of the Almighty, His office, His authority, and the proof of His power. These are all required in the seal of a great nation. The fourth commandment is the only one of the ten that has these essentials. It declares that "in six days the Lord made heaven and earth, the sea, and all that in them is." It further states that because He created the earth, He gave the seventh day as a memorial, for He "Blessed the Sabbath day, and hallowed it." Exodus 20: 8-11. The most conclusive reason why we should give our allegiance to God and honor His commands is that He is our Creator. By our obedience we reveal our love for God; as we honor His holy Sabbath we acknowledge Him as our Creator.

An eternal memorial of creation was established on the seventh day of creation week when God finished His work. The Sabbath was made for man, and it was the Father's purpose that all men should honor it each week as a day of thanksgiving and praise to the Creator. But after man sinned and the counterfeit system of worship took possession of wicked men, the "seal," or "sign," of genuine allegiance to the Creator was forgotten. Men worshipped on the first day of the week in honor of the sun-god, and from paganism this day was baptized into the Christian church. But God's command states explicitly that "the seventh day is the Sabbath of the Lord thy God." No other day can commemorate the work of creation, no other day receives the divine blessing.

PROCLAIMED AT SINAI

From Mount Sinai the Decalogue was given, and the fourth commandment proclaims the seventh day as the Sabbath, a holy day- which God's people are ever to remember. From that day to the present the knowledge of the Almighty's law has been preserved in the earth, and the fourth commandment proclaiming the seventh-day Sabbath has been kept. Although "the man of lawlessness" has endeavored to trample the truth of God and substitute another day in place of God's Sabbath, the memorial remains, and God's true followers will "come out" of Babylon, and obey the divine command.

The third angel's message of Revelation 14 has a direct warning for every human being. It is a call out of the lawlessness of the world; it is a warning of doom to those who refuse allegiance to God. The

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issue is plain: We must choose between the commandments of God and the traditions of men. "If any man worship the beast and his image, and receive his mark in his forehead, or in his hand, the same shall drink of the wine of the wrath of God, which is poured out without mixture into the cup of His indignation. And he shall be tormented with fire and brimstone in the presence of the holy angels, and in the presence of the Lamb." Revelation 14: 9-10.

This is a fearful threat of judgment; but when we consider that a merciful God has suffered a counterfeit system to reign for thousands of years, we realize that His mercy cannot continue forever. In justice to those who love Him, and to the sinless beings throughout the universe, He must destroy sin. No man can give his allegiance to two masters. Those who worship the true God cannot be allied with the counterfeit system; the Father calls them out of Babylon.

Now, as in former generations, the presentation of truth often calls for reproof of sin and error. The angel messenger often warns men away from false worship. We must all appear before the judgment bar of God to give an account of our deeds. If we have spurned the plain truth of the Bible, what shall be our answer before the Almighty?

In a lawless age, Christians are called back to the keeping of the divine law. The question of obeying the law and of keeping the seventh-day Sabbath is not to be taken lightly. Either we shall obey God or we shall follow the commands of men. We are called to "worship Him that made heaven, and earth." If we follow Jesus Christ, we shall be obedient to His precepts.

The command to keep the seventh-day Sabbath has never been changed; it is a part of God's eternal law. Jesus said: "Think not that I am come to destroy the law, or the prophets: I am not come to destroy, but to fulfil. For verily I say unto you, Till heaven and earth pass, one jot or one tittle shall in no wise pass from the law, till all be fulfilled!" Matthew 5: 17, 18.

The Master has set us an example in all things. Even as He was obedient to His Father's commandments, so He asks us to obey His words. He accepted the divine plan even though it took Him to Calvary, and He asks us to take up our cross and follow Him. Jesus kept the seventh-day Sabbath, and declared that "the Sabbath was made for man." Mark 2:27. As one Protestant authority frankly admits, Jesus "never repudiated the fourth commandment. He confirmed it by His example."

GENIUNE OR COUNTERFEIT?

Before us stand the genuine and the counterfeit. The enemy of man has attempted to substitute another law in place of God's law. He has attempted to blot out truth with the traditions of men. He has attempted to hide the fact of creation by causing men to substitute the first day of the week for the seventh-day Sabbath. The first day of the week is not holy, and has never been designated as the Sabbath in the Scriptures. It comes from ancient paganism and sun-worship into the Roman Catholic Church, and is accepted and observed by modern Protestantism. As a noted scholar of Oxford University declares: "The choice of Sunday was probably due in great part to the importance among the pagans of 'the venerable day of the sun,' as Constantine calls it; the influence, too, of Mithraism must not be excluded."-D. C. Simpson, "The Development of the Sabbath Ideal," page 12.

The seal of God can never be placed upon anyone who spurns the commands of heaven. If the worship of the Creator is supplanted by the worship of "the beast and "his image," it is rebellion against the government of heaven, and must be punished by a just God. No one shall enter the kingdom of heaven who has not declared his allegiance to the law of that country; for sin shall not be allowed to corrupt the universe a second time. The Almighty declares that no one shall enter the new earth who refuses to obey the commandments. No "fifth columnists" will be found in the kingdom of peace.

God is testing every individual's allegiance to His Word and to His law. He warns against the sinister counterfeit that is deceiving the world, and calls His people out of Babylon. Precious is the promise of the final chapter of the Bible: "Blessed are they that do His commandments, that they may have right to the tree of life, and may enter in through the gates into the city." Revelation 22: 14.

Out of a world confused and troubled by hate, war, and lawlessness, God is calling His people. He forces no man to decide to follow the cross of Christ; but to every individual, comes the moment to decide. "Behold, I stand at the door, and knock," says the Master; "if any man hear MY voice, and open the door, I will come in to him, and will sup with him, and he with Me." Revelation 3: 20.

There are many honest seekers for truth who will accept this invitation. There are many men and

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women of this generation who will listen to the messages of the three angels, and change the course of their lives. The most encouraging part of the third angel's message is yet to come. In the next chapter we shall see the result of God's call to a world in chaos. We shall see men and women triumphant over sin, lawlessness, and apostasy. Shall we be among those who stand victorious in that day?

THE CAPTAIN OF OUR SALVATION

SOLDIERS of the cross are called to an "all-out" war against the forces of evil that would destroy the soul. ' This is not a time when the Christian may be content with half-hearted measures for his spiritual defense, for, as the prophet of God warned, "the devil is come down unto you, having great wrath, because he knows that he hath but a short time!" Revelation 12: 12. In this decisive struggle, time is an important factor. For thousands of years the controversy between truth and error has centered on this earth. Jesus Christ lived a sinless life among men and overcame the power of the enemy, and He calls for volunteers to follow Him into the conflict for complete victory.

In his letters to the churches, Paul compared the Christian life to war as it was fought by the Roman armies. He urged his brethren: "Put on the whole armor of God, that you may be able to stand against the wiles of the devil. For we wrestle not against flesh and blood, but against principalities, against powers, against the rulers of the darkness of this world, against spiritual wickedness in high places. Wherefore take unto you the whole armor of God, that you may be able to withstand, in the evil day, and having-done all, to stand." Ephesians 6: 11-13.

If the valiant apostle had lived in the twentieth century, he might have likened the essentials of spiritual defense to the priorities demanded in modern war. Paul knew that non-essentials must be stripped away before battles could be won. "Let us lay aside every weight," urged the heroic apostle, "and the sin which does so easily beset us." Hebrews 12: 1. When this man of Tarsus accepted the call of the Master, he became a man of one idea. A magnificent obsession seized him, and he said: "I determined not to know anything among you, save Jesus Christ, and Him crucified." 1 Corinthians 2: 2.

The three divine messages of Revelation 14 have been sent to human beings for this hour of peril. The great conflict between good and evil is reaching the final climax, and God calls for complete allegiance from His people. As John heard the final words of the third message, he was shown the army of men and women who stood firm for God. "Here is the patience of the saints: here are they that keep the commandments of God, and the faith of Jesus." Revelation 14:12. This company not only possess patience, they not only obey the divine precepts, but they keep "the faith of Jesus."

One modern religious writer carefully points to this statement in these words: "They not only have faith in Jesus, they not only have Jesus as the object of their faith, but also, as Drs. Wordsworth and Bleek translate, and as is note in the Variorum Bible, they have 'the faith taught by Jesus.' " (M. L. Andreasen, "The Faith of Jesus and the Commandments of God," page 17.) Today the Captain of our salvation has issued the call for every soldier of the cross, and He asks every follower to believe in Him and accept His Word.

LOYALTY TO OUR LEADER

In the controversy between truth and error there can be no compromise, even as there can be no divided allegiance between our nation and an enemy in time of war. The disciples of Jesus must show their loyalty by obeying the commands of their Master. This principle is plainly set forth by John: "He that said, I know Him, and keeps not His commandments, is a liar, and the truth is not in him. But who so keeps His-Word, in him verily is the love of God perfected: hereby know we that we are in Him. He that said he abides in Him ought himself also so to walk, even as He walked." 1 John 2: 4-6.

If we accept the love of Jesus and claim His victory in our life, we shall seek to obey His words and follow His example. The Bible declares that the-Son of God came to this sin-cursed world to win the victory over evil. "For it became Him, for whom are all things, and by whom are all things, in bringing many sons unto glory, to make the Captain of their salvation perfect through sufferings." Hebrews 2: 10. Jesus has endured the hardships, the torture, and even death at the hands of the enemy. But in all this He

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was more than conqueror, and the men of God who heed the three messages of Revelation 14 will possess the faith taught by Jesus Christ. What is the instruction of our Captain that will help us face the crisis?

During the earthly ministry of our Savior He taught many divine truths. In the sermon on the mount Jesus gave a clear, concise statement concerning obedience to the law of God. "Think not that I am come to destroy the law, or the prophets: I am not come to destroy, but to fulfil." Matthew 6: 17. No, the Decalogue is eternal, and the Master proclaimed the permanence of the divine commands in the next sentence: "Verily I say unto you, Till heaven and earth pass, one jot or one tittle shall in no wise pass from the law, till all be fulfilled!" Verse 18.

This was an illustration that could be easily understood by His Jewish listeners. A "jot," or "yod," is the smallest letter in the Hebrew alphabet. More than sixty-six thousand "jots" are to be found in the Hebrew Bible, and the scribes were so very scrupulous in their copying that the slightest error of a tiny "jot" in the writing would make their copy of the manuscript useless. In this simple way Jesus showed the absolute perfection of His Father's law.

THE LAW IS TRUTH

Jesus Christ taught the necessity of keeping the Ten Commandments. On one occasion a rich young ruler approached the Man of Nazareth on the subject of eternal life, and he received this answer from the Master: "If thou wilt enter into life, keep the commandments." Matthew 19: 17.

When moderns would do away with the law of God, they must also do away with Jesus Christ and His mission to this world. 'I am the way, the truth, and the life,' was the Savior's declaration. John 14: 6. He likewise said, "Thy Word is truth." John 17: 17. And with these texts we also read, "Thy law is the truth." Psalm 119,142.

If we abolish the law of God, there remains no such thing as sin, for "whosoever commits sin transgresses also the law: for sin is the transgression of the law." 1 John 3: 4. Thus we must admit that if the law is abolished there can be no sin. If sin does not exist, then Jesus did not need to come to this earth to live a perfect life and die for the sins of the world, for the Bible states that His purpose in coming was to "save His people from their sins." Matthew 1: 21.

The true soldier of the cross will follow his Captain's command concerning the law of God's government, "If you love Me, keep My commandments." John 14: 15. No enemy of truth will be able to shake the faith of the Christian who possesses the faith of Jesus.

Within the Decalogue is the fourth commandment, which, calls men to "remember the Sabbath day, to keep it holy."

Jesus honored the seventh day Sabbath and taught His disciples to keep it. He said: "The Sabbath was made for man, and not man for the Sabbath: therefore the Son of man is Lord also of the Sabbath." Mark 2: 27, 28. Our Captain did tear down the Jewish traditions which had been heaped upon the holy day. The Sabbath had become a burden and a weary ritual to the Jews, and they found no delight or blessing in merely observing the letter of the law. Jesus Christ said: "Full well you reject the commandment of God, that you may keep your own tradition." Mark 7: 9. And that divine reproof might well be made in our day against those religionists who would substitute the traditions of men by keeping the first day of the week instead of obeying God's law and honoring the seventh-day Sabbath.

BEAUTY IN THE SABBATH

But Jesus showed the beauty of the Sabbath. Therefore on that day He healed the sick and cast out demons, declaring, "Wherefore it is lawful to do well on the Sabbath days." Matthew 12:12. During the three and a half years of His public ministry, as His custom was, He went into the synagogues and worshipped on the Sabbath. Luke 4: 16.

The teachings of Jesus Christ never gave command to honor any, rest-day but the seventh-day Sabbath. Dr. S. Parkes Cadman has said

"There is no specific New Testament command to observe the Lord's day [Sunday]. But the early church chose to do so because it was the day of Christ's resurrection." But the Son of God did not ask His disciples to honor the first day of the week because He rose from the grave on that day. Therefore we must repeat our previous conclusion: Sunday is a man-made institution. There is no scriptural authority for its

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observance in either the Old or the New Testament.

Towering above all the other promises of Jesus Christ are His words concerning His return to this earth. As He looked at His disciples, He saw their troubled hearts, their fears, and their perplexities. Christ gave them this pledge: "Let not your heart be troubled: you believe in God, believe also in Me. In My Father's house are many mansions: if, it were not so, I would have told you. I go to prepare a place for you. And if I go and prepare a place for you will come again, and receive you unto Myself; that where I am, there you may be also." John 14: 1-3.

The Captain of our salvation is to return! He has promised to come as Prince of Peace, as the true judge and lawgiver. John saw the faithful band of Christians who hold the faith of Jesus, and after that he saw the Son of man coming in the clouds of heaven. Revelation 14:14. The promise made nineteen hundred years ago is to be fulfilled. The pledge of God's only Son shall not be broken to the soldiers of the cross who wait for Him!

When Jesus comes He will judge the nations in righteousness, for Paul declares that God "hath appointed a day, in the which He will judge the world in righteousness by that Man whom He hath ordained." Acts 17: 31.

The oppression and tyranny of sin and sinners will be ended, for in that day "He shall judge the poor of the people, He shall save the children of the needy, and shall break in pieces the oppressor." Psalm 72: 4. God shall indeed avenge His own.

THE LORD IS COMING

From the graves will come forth the dead who have died in the hope of the resurrection. Jesus, "the resurrection, and the life," will call forth those who have been-sleeping. In His promise we find these words: "The hour is coming, in the which all that are in the graves shall hear His voice, and shall come forth; they that have done good, unto the resurrection of life; and they that have done evil, unto the resurrection of damnation." John 5: 28, 29.

Paul looks to that day, for he affirms that Jesus Christ "shall change our vile body, that it may be fashioned like unto His glorious body." Philippians 3: 21. All sickness, sorrow, and pain shall be for ever ended, and "the former things are passed away."

The followers of Jesus Christ who have long been separated from their homeland shall see their Redeemer face to face. The faithful of all ages shall stand in His presence, and they shall behold the glory of His countenance.

The question for every soldier of the cross to face is, "Am I prepared to meet my Captain in that day?" In this warfare there is one essential that must be placed above everything else. It is first on the list of priorities for spiritual defense. Jesus gave it in these straightforward words: "But seek you first the kingdom of God, and His righteousness; and all these things shall be added unto you." Matthew 6: 33. It is a conflict of essentials versus non-essentials, and in the fight of faith the kingdom of God must come first.

Sacrifices must be made by every man, woman, and child in a nation that is at war. In the Christian conflict, against sin there is no exception to this rule. We are at war against a great enemy, for Satan has put every resource he possesses into the attack against truth. He is waging an "all-out'y war.

Is it too much to make sacrifices for the cause of God that we love? Jesus put the question in these words: "For what is a man profited, if he shall gain the whole world, and lose his own soul? or what shall a man give in exchange for his soul?" Matthew 16: 26. Are we willing to allow the enemy of our soul to defeat us just because we will not renounce the pleasures of sin?

A SON IN THE SERVICE

God was willing to empty heaven when it was necessary to save lost humanity. He gave His only Son, the most precious gift that He possessed, in order that the victory might be ours. During the first World War a Christian father and mother received a telegram informing them that their only son had been wounded in France. The message brought sorrow and anxiety to the hearts of the parents. They were loyal, and they were willing to see their son die for their country if it were necessary, though deep love for him was in their hearts. When evening came the mother and father could not read or talk because of the burden upon their hearts. Finally they walked out into the night to seek some hope or consolation. The sky was

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overcast, but as they stood arm in arm there came a break in the clouds, wide enough for one bright star to shine through. The father spoke: "Mother, I guess we should be willing to make sacrifices. God has a Son in the service, too."

How precious is the message of love and hope amid the darkness and despair that enshrouds humanity! God has given His Son in the great fight for truth. The Lord is coming again, and coming soon. A message such as this should cheer our hearts. When our Captain comes the warfare will be ended. The victorious cry will have gone forth, "It is finished." Satan has been allowed to carry on his rebellion long enough; he must be stopped. There will be an end of the suffering, sorrow, and death which haunt our world. We are on the last battle-front. In our day Satan is centering every attack against the soldiers of the cross who obey the commands of God and follow the teachings of their Savior. Against the church of Christ are arrayed the hosts of evil determined "to make war with the remnant of her seed, which keep the commandments of God, and have the testimony of Jesus Christ." In, this crisis may God give us strength to endure, for "the battle is the Lord's."

**The church's one foundation
Is Jesus Christ her Lord;
She is His new creation
By water and the Word;
From heaven He came and sought her
To be His holy bride;
With His own blood He bought her,
And for her life He died.**

**Elect from every nation,
Yet one o'er all the earth,
Her charter of salvation
One Lord, one faith, one birth:
One holy name she blesses,
Partakes one holy food,
And to one hope she presses,
With every grace endued.**

**'Mid toil and tribulation,
And tumult of her war,
She Waits the consummation
Of peace for evermore;
Till with the vision glorious
Her longing eyes are blest,
And the great church victorious
Shall be the church at rest.
-Samuel J. Stone.**

STRENGTH TO ENDURE

TO WORK in the face of failure, to pray in the midst of defeat, to struggle onward when all seems lost-these are demonstrations of steadfastness and courage. A Man's character is measured not so much by what he begins as by what he completes. Anybody can start, but to carry on through darkness and disappointment until a successful conclusion is reached is the mark of a victorious life.

As John, the apostle of Christ, saw in vision the people of God who, amid the chaos of this generation, would obey the three divine messages, he heard the commendation of the angel, "Here is the patience of the saints." Revelation 14: 12. Every Christian must possess this vital attribute before he is prepared to meet his Lord.

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There is a much deeper meaning in the word “patience” than the idea that a person is able to control his temper. “Patience” comes from the Latin root meaning “to suffer.” Thus, when the true thought of the word is discovered, we find that it may be defined as the power to endure or suffer with fortitude. A patient man is one who can stand up to life. A patient man has been tested by suffering and trials, but he has endured.

The declaration of the angel, “Here is the patience of the saints,” acknowledges that there will be Christians living in the chaotic days before the return of Christ who can endure suffering, face persecution, and rise above despair. These are the men and women who know the promises of God’s Word, who have the stamina to stand for the right though the heavens fall.

How can we develop this steadfastness? The Apostle James answers: “My brethren, count it all joy when you fall into divers temptations; knowing this, that the trying of your faith works patience. But let patience have her perfect work, that you may be perfect and entire, wanting nothing.” James 1:2-4. The source of our endurance lies in the invisible forces of the spiritual realm. The Master lived with glorious steadfastness because He possessed complete faith in His Father.

Amid the maelstrom of war, God speaks in a mighty voice: “Cast not away therefore your confidence, which hath great recompense of reward. For you have need of patience, that, after you have done the will of God, you might receive the promise. For yet a little While, and He that shall come will come, and will not tarry?” Hebrews 10: 35-37. Moffatt’s translation gives this straight admonition: “Steady patience is what you need.” In these days we shall meet scoffers who refuse to believe the Bible message that Jesus Christ is coming again. 2 Peter 3: 3, 4. We shall find many who love pleasure more than they love God, those who are drawn away from the teachings of the Master by the lusts of the flesh. 2 Timothy 3: 4. But amid the skepticism and selfishness of the age, God’s warriors will stand undaunted and true, waiting for the Captain of their salvation.

FACING THE ENEMY

The worth of a soldier is revealed by the way in which he faces the enemy. He is not tested on the parade ground, but in the front-line trenches. In like manner the soldier of the cross receives, his most severe test in the final conflict against evil. And God has promised that His warriors shall have power to endure unto the end. The Savior has given us the assurance, “My grace is sufficient for thee.” 2 Corinthians 12: 9. He will bring victory to every trusting follower, for as the Apostle Paul states, “He which hath begun a good work in you will finish it until the day of Jesus Christ.” Phil. 1: 6, margin.

A complaining Christian once said to a friend: “I simply cannot stand all the sorrow that comes to me. I wish I had never been made!” To which the wise friend replied: “You aren’t made, my dear. You are only in the process of being made by all the experiences of life. That is how your character is developed,”

A LONG-SUFFERING GOD

How often we become impatient with the plan that God has for us! We refuse to allow Him to mould and fashion us as the potter forms the clay. But this is a necessary part of the process in creating character that shall endure the suffering and tragedy of the last conflict against evil. In the tense moments of life we must be willing to accept the words of the Father: “It is good that a man should both hope and quietly wait for the salvation of the Lord.” Lam. 3: 26. We would rush in and finish the work in our own way, forgetting that God has been longsuffering in the controversy between good and evil. He has been waiting for thousands of years for men to finish giving the gospel of Jesus Christ to a sin-wearied world. Can we not wait patiently for the victory?

In order for us to be waiting for the salvation of God we must “watch and be ready! There must be a preparation of heart, a change in the conduct of life, before a man is prepared to meet his Lord.

When a traveler makes preparation to go on a journey, he is not waiting for his train until he has purchased his ticket, checked his luggage, and completed every detail for leaving. Then, and only then, is he waiting for his train.

Isaiah presents the picture of those who have completed the preparation to meet their God, and who have endured until He comes. In that day they will say, “Lo, this is our God; we have waited for Him, and He will save us: this is the Lord; we have waited for Him, we will be glad and rejoice in His

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salvation.” Isaiah 25:9.

Courage and endurance are found in the divine power that is offered to every Christian. Our faith can be strong in the furnace of fiery trials, and in our hearts we can have the peace which the world cannot understand. In the heart of the bombed city of London, Dr. W. E. Sangster saw a little dog which chased the pigeons. The birds never seemed agitated or worried, for as danger approached they simply flew out of reach. Knowing they had wings they could well afford to be calm.

Do we not need wings of faith that shall lift our souls above the enemies that would destroy us? Do we not need endurance so that we shall not disappoint God in the crisis? Are there enough men of faith who will patiently endure and try again?

LIVING UNDER TENSION

Listen to God’s promise as spoken by the prophet of old: “He gives power to the faint; and to them that have no might He increases strength. Even the youths shall faint and be weary, and the young men shall utterly fall: but they that wait upon the Lord shall change their strength; they shall mount up with wings as eagles; they shall run, and not be weary; and they shall walk, and not faint.” Isaiah 40:29-31, margin.

The season of distress which faces this world will require a faith that can endure weariness, doubt, despair, and persecution. It must be a faith that will not give way although the tension be great. Wings of faith will help us to mount up as eagles. It may be that we shall wrestle against temptations; but like Jacob we are able to prevail. When waves of despair sweep over us, we can cling with unyielding faith to the promises of God.

One religious writer has caught the full meaning of God’s promises to His remnant church when He shall deliver them from chaos. We read: “The precious Savior will send help just when we need it. The way to heaven is consecrated by His footprints. Every thorn that wounds our feet has wounded His. Every cross that we are called to bear, He has borne before us. The Lord permits conflicts, to prepare the soul for peace.”

THE PATIENCE OF JESUS

Glorious will be the victory for those who have waited patiently for the coming of Jesus Christ. There is no other human hope. John writes: “Behold, He comes with clouds; and every eye shall see Him!” Revelation 1: 7. This was the hope of the beloved disciple who said: “I John, who also am your brother, and companion in tribulation, and in the kingdom and patience of Jesus Christ.” Verse 9. This warrior of the cross knew the patience that was necessary to hold on when dictators ruled, when darkness fell over the pagan world, and when the words of the Scriptures were the only light to guide his life. He was in a Roman concentration camp on the island of Patmos, but he lived with the vision of a new heaven and a new earth, which God had promised.

John knew the patience that had possessed his Lord. He remembered how Jesus had set His face steadfastly toward Jerusalem although it meant suffering and death. He thought back to Calvary, where the Son of God had died for the sins of all men, and to him came the last words of the dying Savior, “It is finished.” With that faith burning in his heart, the Prophet of God who had received divine revelations for the church in the latter days prayed fervently for the return of his Master.

“None who receive God’s Word are exempt from difficulty and trial; but when affliction comes, the true Christian does not become restless, distrustful, or despondent. Though we cannot see the definite outcome of affairs, or discern the purpose of God’s providence, we are not to cast away our confidence. Remembering the tender mercies of the Lord, we should cast our care upon Him, and with patience wait for His salvation.

“Through conflict the spiritual life is strengthened. Trials well borne will develop steadfastness of character, and precious spiritual graces. The perfect fruit of faith, meekness, and love often matures best amid storm clouds and darkness.”

With the faith of Jesus to strengthen us in the hour of chaos, and with the courage of a loyal soldier, shall we not with John pray for our Lord’s return? “Thy kingdom come” is the plea of every Christian who patiently maintains his confidence in the divine promises of the unfailing Word of God.

THE HOUR OF VICTORY

WHEN conquering generals returned to ancient Rome from the wars, it was customary for the populace to celebrate their victory with a triumph. The procession marched through the gaily decorated streets while the crowds shouted, "Lo triumph!" At the head of the parade were magistrates and senators; after them came trumpeters, followed by wagons loaded with the spoils of battle. Next came the captives, humbled by their chains. In the procession were animals to be sacrificed at the temple, and with them came the priests who would perform the rituals. Finally, the hero of the day appeared in regal splendor to receive the applause of the citizens. Thus was a returning conqueror honored in times of old.

We remember how our heroes were welcomed home when the Armistice ended World War 1. There were celebrations in every city and hamlet as the boys in khaki marched through the streets Victors of battle!

But far exceeding the glory of any triumph this world has ever seen is the home-coming awaiting those who have been true to God amid the conflict between good and evil. With eternal glory heaven will honor the heroes of the cross who have been victorious over sin.

As the third messenger from heaven delivered his fearful warning, he also brought the news of victory, for he closed his message with the announcement: "Here is the patience of the saints: here are they that keep the commandments of God, and the faith of Jesus." Revelation 14: 12. How wonderful is our God to give men this final picture of triumph! Here are men and women who have come out of great tribulation, who have known the controversy between God's truth and Satan's counterfeit religion. Here are men who have been as true to the commandments of God as the needle to the pole-heroic Christians who are not afraid to call evil by its right name.

OUT OF TRIBULATION

John heard the words of commendation from heaven for these valiant sons of God: "These are they which came out of great tribulation, and have washed their robes, and made them white in the blood of the Lamb." Revelation 7:14. This grand reunion is held upon the sea of glass; and, through the prophet's eyes, we see those who "had gotten the victory over the beast, and over his image, and over his mark, and over the number of his name, stand on the sea of

glass, having the harps of God." Revelation 15: 2.

When does this hour of victory come? We find that it takes place after the second coming of Jesus Christ. After recording the three messages of Revelation 14, the prophet wrote: "I looked, and behold a white cloud, and upon the cloud One sat like unto the Son of man, having on His head a golden crown, and in His hand a sharp sickle." Revelation 14: 14.

Before Jesus left this earth, He told His disciples that He was going away to prepare a place for them; and He promised that He would come again. John 14: 1-3. The Master foretold the final events in the history of our world, and likened His coming to the time of harvest. After the Master had related the parable of the wheat and the tares, He interpreted it in these words: "The field is the world; the good seed are the children of the kingdom; but the tares are the children of the wicked one; the enemy that sowed them is the devil; the harvest is the end of the world; and the reapers are the angels." Matthew 13: 38, 39.

In the events vividly portrayed by John we see the fulfillment of Christ's promise. After the three angels' messages have been proclaimed to our world, the conflict of the ages will be ended. Men will have had every opportunity to choose between the true doctrines of God and the counterfeit system of Satan. In that hour the victory will be announced. Jesus will declare, "It is done," and He will come to this earth from heaven with power and great glory.

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HOPE OF THE APOSTLES

That glorious return of Jesus, mentioned 318 times in the New Testament, was the hope of all the apostles. Peter declared, "The day of the Lord will come," and he described that majestic event in burning words of prophecy. 2 Peter 3: 10-14. Paul expected the second advent of Jesus to come when the gospel had been carried to the world; for he affirmed that "the Lord Himself shall descend from heaven with a shout, with the voice of the Archangel, and with the trump of God. And the dead in Christ shall rise first." 1 Thessalonians 4: 16. And John states the truth in these words: "Behold, He comes with clouds; and every eye shall see Him, and they also which pierced Him." Revelation 1: 7.

The second coming of Jesus Christ is a world shaking event that will be witnessed by all men living at that time. "Every eye shall see Him," echoes in our ears, and we remember that Paul said that the event would be heralded with a shout and a peal from "the trump of God."

This is the mighty triumph of the King of kings; for, as Jesus comes, He brings all the angelic hosts of heaven. He comes in His own glory, with the glory of His Father, and also with the glory of all the heavenly beings. Victory over sin and death has been accomplished, and the universe is at peace once more. This is the procession of triumph that "every eye shall see."

BEHOLD THE CONQUEROR

Jesus rides forth as a mighty conqueror. No longer is He a man of sorrows, and acquainted with grief. Now He comes as the victorious King who has redeemed His people from the slavery of sin. John presents this vivid picture of the triumph:

"I saw heaven opened, and behold a white horse; and He that sat upon him was called Faithful and True, and in righteousness He does judge and make war.

"His eyes were as a flame of fire, and on His head were many crowns; and He had a name written, that no man knew, but He Himself.

"And He was clothed with a vesture dipped in blood: and His name is called The Word of God. And the armies which were in heaven followed Him upon white horses, clothed in fine linen, white and clean. And He hath on His vesture and on His thigh a name written, KING OF KINGS, AND LORD OF LORDS." Revelation 19: 11-16.

What human being can portray the glory and majesty of the returning Lord? In His earthly life His divinity was clothed with humanity, and men did not see His majestic power. But when He comes again, Jesus will reveal His glory and the glory of His Father and the glory of all the angels.

Those who have scoffed at the promises of Christ's return will see Him in the clouds of heaven. Those who have mocked His claim to be the Son of God will be speechless in that hour of triumph. The words of the Master will be fulfilled: "Hereafter shall you see the Son of man sitting on the right hand of power, and coming in the clouds of heaven!" Matthew 26: 64.

HARVEST OF THE WORLD

In that time of harvest, the wheat will be separated from the chaff. Those who have accepted the sacrifice of Calvary, who have loved their Master and obeyed His commandments, will meet their Lord with joy. They can sincerely exclaim: "Lo, this is our God; we have waited for Him, and He will save us: this is the Lord; we have waited for Him, we will be glad and rejoice in His salvation." Isaiah 25: 9.

But human beings who have rejected every offer of divine love, who have spurned the messages of warning against sin, who have turned to their own willful, lawless career, will hide in the caves and the mountain fastness when the end comes. They will cry out to the rocks, "Fall on us, and hide us from the face of Him that sits on the throne, and from the wrath of the Lamb for the great day of His wrath is come; and who shall be able to stand?" Revelation 6: 16, 17.

A SONG OF DELIVERANCE

Upon the crystal sea before the throne are gathered the conquerors. They have "gotten the victory," and now they are able to sing a new song before the throne.

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It is the song of Moses and the Lamb—a song of deliverance. In all the ages there have been faithful men and women who endured suffering, persecution, disappointment, and even death, for the love of truth. They may have been defeated from the human viewpoint, but in the eyes of God they were “conquerors through Him that loved us.” Now their victory is proclaimed through the vast universe. These heroes have come out of great tribulation, they have endured patiently, they have kept the commandments of their God, and held firm to the faith of Jesus.

ALL THINGS NEW

In this world the child of God is not promised a sheltered life of ease. There are many Christians who suffer the pangs of hunger, who flee as refugees to escape the oppressor, who are made homeless and destitute by war; but in the hour of victory those trials are forever past. “Behold,” rings forth the Creator’s voice, “I make all things new.” Revelation 21: 5. Now the soldiers of the cross will receive their reward. “They shall hunger no more, neither thirst any more; neither shall the sun light on them, nor, any heat. For the Lamb which is in the midst of the throne shall feed them, and shall lead them unto living fountains of waters: and God shall wipe away all tears from their eyes.” Revelation 7: 16,17.

Into every heart comes the longing to be among the triumphant company that shall stand before the throne of God. “How can I be sure of the victory?” is the question.

The answer is found in the Bible, God’s guidebook for humanity. We cannot win the victory through our feeble attempts at doing good. Our salvation is a gift of the Father. Paul exclaims: “Thanks be to God, which gives us the victory through our Lord Jesus Christ!” 1 Corinthians 15:57. The human race was in hopeless chaos—there was neither remedy nor escape—when Jesus came to save His people from their sins. Because of His perfect life and willing death on the cross, man receives the gift of eternal life if he is willing to receive it. In an age of materialism and skepticism, faith is demanded of the follower of the Master. “This is the victory that overcomes the world, even our faith!” 1 John 5: 4. We must be willing to believe the promises of God, to follow the simple direction He has given to us, and we shall be able to gain the victory over sin.

The cross of Christ is the symbol of our salvation. In the long struggle between truth and error, the death of the Son of God on Calvary sealed the doom of the enemy. The wages of sin were paid by Jesus, and then God could deliver men and women from a lost world if they would give Him their full allegiance.

The victors will be patient, for the angel messenger declares: “Here is the patience of the saints!” Although buffeted by doubts, tempted by the enemy, persecuted by apostate religious powers, God’s children will wait patiently for Him. They will know what it means to endure hardship; they will have been through the darkest hours, moral and spiritual, that our world has ever known. But through every vicissitude and trial they have looked steadfastly unto Jesus.

Willing obedience is characteristic of Christ’s church. The victors will obey the commandments of God, and they will keep all ten. They will honor the Creator, who made heaven and earth; and they will remember His Sabbath, the seventh day of the week. This remnant group, in whose mouth is found no guile, will love their God enough to do His will in all things. They will follow the example of Jesus as He prayed, “Thy will be done.”

THE FAITH OF JESUS

The victors will possess “the faith of Jesus.” It is a faith that looks beyond the wickedness, the depravity, the moral bankruptcy, and the spiritual disillusionment of a lost civilization to the Light that shines brighter unto the perfect day. It is a faith founded upon the Word of God, for every Christian must be ready to meet temptation with the challenge, “It is written.”

The last generation of men will bear the burden of all the sins and weaknesses of their ancestors. If any individuals have inherited or cultivated tendencies to evil, certainly they have. Yet out of this age of chaos, out of a sin-weary world, God will bring a people victorious over every weakness and sin.

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NO MORE NIGHT

“I saw a new heaven and a new earth: for the first heaven and the first earth were passed away; and there was no more sea.” Revelation 21: 1. The Creator did not give up after man sinned; but, with long-suffering love, He wooed men back to Himself. He is giving the victors a glorious new world. There is the New Jerusalem, the capital city, where “there shall be no night.” “My people shall dwell in a peaceable habitation,” God promises, “and in sure dwellings, and in quiet resting places.” Isaiah 32: 18. War and strife will be for ever ended, and “violence shall no more be heard in thy land, wasting nor destruction within thy borders; but thou shall call thy walls Salvation, and thy gates Praise.” Isaiah 60: 18.

May God give us His power to live the life of victory in a world that has long been the battlefield between good and evil. May we learn obedience to His law, and willingly keep every precept. May we accept God’s Word through faith, and look to the cross of Christ for our way of salvation. May we, with the valiant Apostle Paul, be able to say: “Wherever I go, thank God, He makes my life a constant pageant of triumph in Christ, diffusing the perfume of His knowledge everywhere by me.” 2 Corinthians 2:14, Moffatt’s translation.

Then, in that day, when the controversy is ended, we shall be able to stand under the flag of the mighty Conqueror. Sin shall not rise again, for God has tested the allegiance of every man and woman who enters that new land. They will bear the seal of the Eternal One upon their character; they will know what it means to obey God. The Creator will look upon the fruit of His labor, and He will be satisfied.

The hour of victory is near. Jesus declares, “Behold, I come quickly.” With John we can respond, “Even so, come, Lord Jesus.”

THE LAND OF LIGHT

THAT clime is not like this dull clime of ours: All, all is brightness there.
A sweeter influence breathes around its flowers, And a far milder air.
No calm below is like that calm above,
No region here is like that realm of love;
Earth’s softest spring ne’er shed so soft a light,
Earth’s brightest summer never shone so bright.

Those dwellers there are not like these of earth, No mortal stain they bear;
And yet they seem of kindred blood and birth-Whence, and how came they there?
Earth was their native soil; from sin and shame,
Through tribulation they to glory came;
Bond-slaves delivered from sin’s crushing load,
Brands plucked from burning by the hand of God.

Horatius Bonar