



Kept by the Power of God

Millions Dead — But Alive in God's Memory

Inside . . .

Kept by the Power of God

Our Lord's Return

Jairus' Daughter — Did She Really Die?

Tormented Forever

Kept by the Power of God

“Preserve me, O God: for in thee do I put my trust.”

— PSALM 16:1 —

“BEHOLD, THE MAN!” (*ECCE HOMO!*) Pilate’s exclamation concerning Jesus seems to convey a note of wonder and admiration for the perfect man. To the hard-headed Roman procurator, the prisoner appeared not only as a Jew above all other Jews, but also as a man above all other men. Pilate might have said, “Do you really wish me to crucify such a noble specimen of the human race — one whose beauty of character is so evident in his features and his bearing?” His symbolic hand-washing later evidenced Pilate’s deep misgivings at being involved in so great a travesty of justice.

Others, too, were irresistibly drawn to Jesus. Even as a lad he astonished the Doctors of the Law by His attention to their instruction and His intelligent questions and answers. When He began His ministry He had but to say, “Follow me,” and disciples forsook all else to throw in their lot with this charismatic preacher. The common people “heard him gladly” and thronged to His wayside gatherings. And when the Pharisees and chief priests sent officers to arrest Jesus, they returned empty-handed and subdued, saying, “Never man spake like this man” (John 7: 32, 46).

THE SAME YESTERDAY, TODAY AND FOREVER
Transferred by Divine power from a higher, spiritual plane of being, Jesus’ human perfection emanated from His Heavenly Father, from whom all life ultimately flows. As David attests, “with thee is the fountain of life” (Psa. 36: 9). Unimpaired by Adamic weakness, Jesus’ character qualities, His thought processes, mental abilities, heart affections, His own unique personality, all remained as before — human reflections of His former glorious character endowments as the *Logos* (the Word, John 1: 14). His *identity* was the same. Though He was not “Jesus” until His human birth, nor Jesus *Christ* until His anointing at Jordan (*Christ* means anointed), He was essentially the same person. Full

awareness of His former condition was doubtless hidden from Him until His consecration to sacrifice. The Holy Spirit would thereafter bring former experiences to His remembrance, so that He was able to say on one occasion, “Before Abraham was, I am [existed — *Ed.*]” (John 8: 58). And near the end of His ministry, asking no *greater* reward, He prayed, “O Father, glorify thou me . . . with the glory which I had with thee before the world was” (John 17: 5).

In our Lord’s resurrection also, He was the same *person*. In His appearances to the disciples during the forty days before His ascension He was not always immediately recognizable, assuming different human bodies on different occasions, but He made Himself known to His faithful followers in unmistakable ways. The tone of the voice, a familiar action, a characteristic expression, would compel their attention, and they would be convinced. They *knew* their Master.

The “yesterday” of our Lord’s existence would be the period recorded in the Old Testament, the “Jewish Age,” when as the Father’s special messenger, the *Logos*, He cared providentially for the faithful of those times, and revealed to them God’s plans and purposes for the blessing of mankind. The “today” corresponds to the present “Gospel Age,” during which the risen Lord still ministers to the faithful — those who trust in Him as the promised Messiah for Israel and the Savior of the world. And “for ever” — unto all eternity, He will be the One — the *same* One who, “for the joy that was set before Him endured the cross, despising the shame, and is set down at the right hand of the throne of God” (Heb. 12: 2; 13: 8). Being now the “express image” of the Father’s person, partaking of the Divine nature, and made “so much better than the angels,” He is able to save “to the uttermost” those who come to God by Him (Heb. 1: 3, 4; 7: 25).

“Lift up a standard for the people” — Isa. 62: 10

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THE IMPORTANCE OF IDENTITY

As the great Creator preserved the identity of His only-begotten Son through two changes of nature — angelic to human, then human to Divine — we need not doubt that every individual of the human race can be rescued from death and restored to his or her former identity. How can *identity* be defined?

It is the distinct and recognizable nature of an individual, which results from a unique combination of characteristics and qualities. In philosophy, identity is the sameness of a person, which may continue in spite of changes in bodily appearance, personality, intellectual abilities, memory. In psychology, identity refers to one's conception of oneself and sense of continuous being, particularly as an individual distinguishable from, but interacting with, others
— *Hutchinson Educational Encyclopedia, 2001*

Approaching the matter from a Biblical standpoint, we read in Gen. 2: 7 that “the LORD God formed man of the dust of the ground, and breathed into his nostrils the breath of life; and man became a living soul.” The soul was not a separate entity which could exist apart from the body, but was *the man*, endowed with a consciousness of self and with sensory perceptions enabling him to interact with his environment. Eve was later created, and Adam described her as “bone of my bones, and flesh of my flesh” (Gen. 2: 23). Sharing his perfection, her *identity* was, however, entirely separate from his, and the difference in character qualities is evident in the Genesis story.

Identity Authentication

In today's world identity authentication is an increasingly important fact of life. Ever larger numbers of organizations transact their business through the Internet, and security is a paramount consideration. Many diverse means of identification are possible and are being introduced experimentally, and with varying success, to safeguard public and private interests.

Most of us in the present electronic era have several Personal Identification Numbers (PINS), exclusive to our own financial transactions. We are also accustomed to the use of passwords to gain access to various resources. But such artificial attributes are open to misuse, and one's “identity” can be stolen, leading to material loss and violation of personal privacy.

More reliable identification systems are being introduced. Biometric techniques are becoming increasingly important in the verification of an individual's identity. These include fingerprint recognition, hand shape, retinal scanning, facial features, and voice patterns. Though costly to implement, some

large organizations such as airlines have already installed biometric systems, and advancing technology is expected to make such security techniques more generally affordable.

God-Given Passwords

The uniqueness of fingerprints is well known. The pattern of ridges on the fingertips remains constant through life, and no two persons have prints exactly alike. Fingerprinting was first used in India in the late 19th century to identify crime suspects, and is now widely employed in police and security work. Computer data is also being safeguarded by fingerprint techniques, a scanned image of the authorized user's thumb being compared to a thumbprint stored in the database. Using special electronic scanners, even the whole hand can provide a satisfactory means of identification.

The pattern of a person's iris is also unique. This is the colored muscular diaphragm that controls the size of the pupil and responds involuntarily to light. When used to verify identity, the eye pattern is first scanned and recorded, and on subsequent occasions a video camera quickly checks the person's iris with the print on file.

Facial features and characteristic expression — the physiognomy — are also a reliable proof of identity. Our ordinary recognition of one another by visual means is usually instant, and often the features give an accurate impression of character and personality. Yet a face-to-face encounter is not necessary for recognition. We all preserve the memory of loved ones in photograph albums and can immediately identify their features.

Imaging of facial features by photographic means is now a highly sophisticated science. Using laser beams, holography employs a photographic technique to produce three dimensional images of startling reality. Cinema and television have enabled the world to recognize persons they have never met. Though cosmetic artistry may be used to disguise one's normal appearance, facial verification systems exist which allow for variations in hair style, spectacles, and other changeable elements. Accurate details of an individual's facial characteristics can be stored in an electronic database and used for security purposes. Most of us are photographed many times without our knowledge, in banks, supermarkets, shopping malls, and city streets having closed circuit television systems (cctv) which monitor our every move. We can all thus be *identified*.

All will agree that a person's voice is an essential part of his or her identity. Even over the telephone across great distances, one word may be sufficient to trigger instant recognition. The voices even of those long since dead can be heard on audiotapes and compact discs, a permanent record of this aspect of their individuality. The distinctive tonal quality of the

human voice can also be reproduced as computerized voice patterns, unique to the individual and valuable for verification of identity.

Engineering the Human Race

The *genetic* fingerprint is the DNA pattern unique to an individual, and can be used to identify that person and his or her offspring. Reports on research into this field bring amazing possibilities to our attention. Enthusiastic visionaries talk in terms of an “Eighth Creative Day” — the creator now being Man himself — when we shall be capable of changing the way we are, and when it will be possible to build a human being to a specified design through genetic engineering. Exactly how a controlled *identity* will be implanted, in the sense of bestowing the qualities and characteristics that make for individuality, is a matter left to the imagination.

Research into human longevity shows that in spite of the continued prevalence of disease, life expectancy is increasing, and has doubled from 40 to 80 years during the past two centuries. Studies on the process of aging tell us that aging is neither inevitable or necessary, and that we are not *programmed* to die. Aging and death result from a build-up of unrepaired faults in the cells and tissues of our bodies, and it is argued that if we can locate and cure these faults, we can extend life indefinitely: in short, defeat death.

However, no human aspirations for the actual raising of the dead and the restoring of identity have yet been voiced, and the anticipated “Eighth Creative Day” is but a dream, modified no doubt by immense practical considerations.

Can the world’s ills be cured by human effort? Are we on the brink of a New Age in which mankind will be completely in control of its own destiny? Many have grave fears and concerns as to the ethics of probing further into the secrets of life. Past experience has taught us that new discoveries and developments used for the common good are also abused for private gain and malign purposes. The increase of knowledge in this “time of the end” (Dan. 12: 4) has advanced by leaps and bounds, but there are few who regard it as God-given. The worldly-wise congratulate themselves on their own intelligence, and in their evolutionary thinking visualize a future in which they have complete control over the forces of nature. They are becoming “gods.” And the faith of many has grown cold, as the relevance of God’s Word in the modern world has become obscured.

WHAT DOES THE BIBLE SAY?

On Life

It was not the Creator’s intention that the life He had imparted to our first parents should be withdrawn.

No limited span of life was allotted, to run its course and expire. The man and the woman were indeed *programmed to live* and were instructed to be fruitful and multiply, and to fill the earth (Gen. 1: 28). All that was necessary to sustain perfect life was provided in their immediate environment, epitomized in “the tree of life” — theirs, so long as they were mindful of the conditions imposed by their Creator (Gen. 2: 9, 17). We know that on account of disobedience their perfect life was forfeited, and the death sentence passed to their posterity without exception.

Yet God had respect for some who, in spite of inherited imperfection, kept close to Him and resisted evil. He gave to Israel a special code of laws which, if properly kept, He said would gain them life (Lev. 18: 5). While knowing that imperfect, fallen men could not keep the Law perfectly, God had kindly set for them standards of conduct to keep them from the greater depravity of the world in general. In fact, the Law was “a schoolmaster” to bring them to Christ, through whom, in time, they would actually gain life. “In Him was life; and the life was the light of men” (John 1: 4).

On Death

Adam and Eve’s fatal choice, prompted by the Adversary, to violate God’s requirements, brought upon them the bitter experience of toil and hardship, sorrow and death, that became the legacy of every generation thereafter. God’s *program for life* did not change. He merely permitted the temporary intervention of evil, to teach lessons that could best be learned by experience. Denied the “tree of life,” the human race have suffered multiple physiological impairments, shortening their span of existence so that life itself seems but “a tale that is told” (Psa. 90: 9).

Fellowship with the Heavenly Father was also lost and, separated by sin from the One in Whom “we live, and move, and have our being” (Acts 17: 28), the race became captive to Satan, “a murderer from the beginning” (John 8: 44). Much as a mischief-maker sends a “virus” to play havoc with the computer programs of his victims, the Adversary as a consummate “hacker” has been permitted for a while to corrupt God’s life program for the human race.

Death is an intrusion into God’s creation and into man’s prospects. Satan’s first lie, “Ye shall not surely die,” was an evil masterpiece, an outstanding piece of strategy in deceiving first the woman, Eve, and subsequently almost the whole human family (Gen. 3: 4). The Adversary knew that *life-expectancy* was programmed into man, and the deep desire for life would persuade him that death could not be real. Disbelief in the unconsciousness of death is practically universal, though expectations concerning the “afterlife” are diverse.

But the Bible is positive, and not all were deceived. "The dead know not any thing . . . there is no work, nor device, nor knowledge, nor wisdom, in the grave" (Eccl. 9: 5, 10). "So man lieth down, and riseth not: till the heavens be no more, they shall not awake, nor be raised out of their sleep" (Job 14: 12). God's faithful people in ancient times did not understand death to imply an immediate transfer to a new life. Rather, it was regarded as a sleep, a period of complete unconsciousness, until in God's appointed time they would be awakened. (See the *Bible Question Box* in this issue.)

In Jesus' day also, the nature of death was understood by the faithful. Comforting Martha as she mourned the death of her brother Lazarus, Jesus said, "Thy brother shall rise again," and Martha answered, "I know that he shall rise again in the resurrection *at the last day*" (John 11: 23, 24).

On the Resurrection

At the heart of Christianity is the belief in the resurrection of Jesus and the hope of a resurrection to eternal life for those who trust in Him. That He was raised from the dead is to the believer a satisfactorily proven fact, which gives substance to our hope. From God's early promise that the seed of the woman would bruise the serpent's head (Gen. 3: 15), to the invitation to drink freely of the water of life (Rev. 21: 6), the Divine intention can be traced.

Job, in his extremity of suffering, still trusted. ". . . Hide me in the grave . . . until thy wrath be past . . . appoint me a set time, and remember me! . . . all the days of my appointed time will I wait, till my change come. Thou shalt call, and I will answer thee" (Job 14: 13-15).

The first to be raised are the Church. "The Lord himself shall descend from heaven with a shout . . . and the dead in Christ shall rise first" (1 Thes. 4: 16). This resurrection is not to human nature, but to immortality in the spirit realm (1 Cor. 15: 40, 44). The death sentence lifted, the remainder of the human family are raised to life on earth, given an opportunity under ideal conditions to benefit from their experience with evil, and to expunge from their being the dire effects of the dying condition. "All that are in the graves shall hear his voice, and shall come forth" (John 5: 28, 29). The practicalities of this stupendous process must be left for future consideration, but we may be sure that what the Lord has promised, He will accomplish.

GOD KNOWS OUR IDENTITY

"O Lord, thou has searched me, and known me. . . thou understandest my thought afar off . . . and art acquainted with all my ways" (Psa. 139: 1-3). David marvelled that nothing was hidden from the Creator:

"You made all the delicate, inner parts of my body, and knit them together in my mother's womb. Thank you for making me so wonderfully complex! . . . You saw me before I was born and scheduled each day of my life before I began to breathe. Every day was recorded in your Book!" (Psa. 139: 13-16, *The Living Bible*). And our Lord's assurance to the disciples that "the very hairs of your head are all numbered" (Matt. 10: 30) may well indicate not only the Father's care for our every need, but also His intimate knowledge of our being.

It is not so much the physical attributes that God regards in us. Rather, He looks upon that character, progressively built through life's experiences, based partially on genetic tendencies, partially on environmental influences, which is the essence of our being. The mental, moral, spiritual, and artistic qualities are ultimately a surer evidence of identity than are any physical features. When the breath of life is withdrawn and consciousness ceases, the unique identity of the individual is for a space of time only a memory in the minds of others. *But God does not forget!* We are engraved in His book, and the promise of a resurrection for all presupposes that He who originally created man is fully able to *re-create* each individual in a new body, the unique identity restored, the personal character qualities reinstated, so that all will know themselves, know one another, and be aware of their former existence.

The "knowledge explosion" of our day, particularly in the sphere of information technology, leaves us in no doubt that the Omniscient One, the Fount of all knowledge, is well able to retrieve the unique identity of each of us, and unite it with a new body. The Apostle Paul discussing the resurrection says that God gives each a body *pleasing* to Him (1 Cor. 15: 38). This is *not* the body that died, with its accumulated imperfections, but one newly created into which the germ of that life, "hid with Christ in God" (Col. 3: 3), is infused, making each *persona* again a *living soul*.

CULTIVATING CHARACTER

Our character and personality do not change during a night of sleep. Neither shall we, awakened from the sleep of death, discover in ourselves any improvement of character. But the Judgment Day then in progress will be a time of instruction, correction, and testing. No longer under sentence of death or hindered by inherited weakness — Adam's original sin, each will have a full, fair opportunity to eradicate in himself the adverse *effects* of sin, which have afflicted even the noblest. The Apostle Paul's despairing cry, "O wretched man that I am!" (Rom. 7: 24), finds an echo in the hearts of most who have sought in this life to rise above the power of sin.

While, mercifully, God does not expect perfection in those handicapped by inherited sin, He heartily approves our efforts to overcome it, and looks on our intentions, rather than on our achievements. “As . . . [a man] thinketh in his heart, so is he” (Prov. 23: 7). Reason and Scripture tell us that the higher our character development in this life, when it is difficult to overcome evil, the greater advantage we shall have in the resurrection morning. Jesus rebuked the Jews of His day who spurned the light of truth, saying that Sodom, then already a by-word for depravity would fare better than they in the Day of Judgment (Matt. 10: 15). Furthermore, the exercise of faith in God’s promises will gain for the faithful worthies of old, “a better resurrection” (Heb. 11: 35).

The unique combination of characteristics and qualities which comprise one’s identity is not irrevocably fixed, though it becomes more deeply engraved in process of time. As we live this life with a blank page, so to

speak, and write our biography with each passing year, we observe progressive development, and in the great awakening, further chapters will be added. We can all look back and marvel at the changes in ourselves resulting from our yielding to the grace of God. We can also look forward, anticipating a story of epic proportions as we experience the promised resurrection to perfect, everlasting life, in heaven, or on earth, according to the design of the great Creator.

Seeing the resurrection work complete, man crowned again with glory and honor, having dominion over God’s earthly creation (Psa. 8: 4-6), the heavenly hosts may well exclaim: “Behold the Man!” (*Ecce Homo!*), and Man responds: “O LORD our Lord, how excellent is thy name in all the earth!” (John 19: 5; Psa. 8: 1).

* * *

Preservation of Identity in the Resurrection



FIRST PUBLISHED in the early 1900s, the pen-product of John Edgar, a Scots physician, this work was later reprinted in the April, 1965 issue of *The Bible Standard*, with some revisions.

Dr. Edgar died in his mid '40s. A well-known writer and lay preacher, he was a leading expert on the Bible and the Great Pyramid (often called “the Bible in stone”).

His other writings include the booklet, *Where are the Dead?* and *Great Pyramid Passages* (Vols. I and II), written in collaboration with his brother, Morton.

In his booklet, *The Preservation of Identity*, on which the preceding article is based, Dr. Edgar uses the phonograph, or gramophone, disc to illustrate the principle behind God’s power to preserve our identity in the resurrection, the grooves cut by the recording stylus representing the impressions on our mind and character made by our life experiences. An apt illustration for its day, advances in technology in the decades since, render that particular illustration — though not its principle — less relevant as far as the modern reader is concerned. (The illustration of that modern marvel, the compact disc, on our cover underscores the globe-circling impact of today’s technology.) However, this booklet will repay a careful reading and still, today, holds forth a fascinating (and comforting) thought: *God knows who we are and cares about us*. Though many consider our planet to be a by-product of blind physics, lost in the vastness of space and subject to the whims and chances of a cold, unfeeling universe, the Scriptures assure us that we are the handiwork of a loving Creator, Who has a Plan of salvation for all who accept His Son, Jesus. The grand Day of Resurrection will be the culminating feature of that Plan.

* * *

OUR LORD'S RETURN

Its Object, Manner, and Signs of the Times

"If I go . . . I will come again"

— John 14: 3 —



Part 4 in our series on Habakkuk 2: 2: "Write the vision, and make it plain upon tables, that he may run that readeth it"

WHEN OUR LORD was with His disciples at His First Advent, He intended for them to understand that for some object, in some manner, and at some time, He would come again. We are safe in concluding that all Christians agree that the Bible teaches Messiah's Second Advent. Dwight L. Moody, the great nineteenth century evangelist, once said that one in every seven verses in the New Testament refers to our Lord's second stay on earth. And an even larger proportion of such passages is found in the Old Testament. In fact, this subject is the most prominent in the Scriptures, except for the doctrine of the Ransom — that Jesus Christ offered Himself as the corresponding-price for Father Adam and the entire race in his loins.

Many believe that the conversion of a sinner is part of the coming of Christ, and that thus He will continue to come until the entire world is converted. However, the Scriptures point out in many places that the opposite would be the case. The Apostle Paul, writing to Timothy, warns that: "In the last days perilous times shall come. For men shall be . . . lovers of pleasures more than lovers of God" (2 Tim. 3: 1-4). Facts also bear out the thought that the world is further away from conversion to Christ now than ever.

The Scripture at the head of this article and numerous others, on the other hand, point to a second *personal* coming of our Lord. In this article we will briefly consider first the object, second the manner, and third, the signs of the time which mark our Lord's Second Advent.

THE OBJECT OF OUR LORD'S RETURN

There are several objects of our Lord's return, but we will consider here the main object — to bless the whole human family, living and dead, with opportunities of obtaining *restitution* (Acts 3: 19-21). Restitution means a return to an

original estate or condition. The original estate of the human family was the image and likeness of God, as these were exemplified in Father Adam and Mother Eve. By the *image* of God we understand the perfection of Adam's nature — the condition of being "very good" — to be meant (Gen. 1: 26, 27, 31). Adam and Eve were perfect in their physical, mental, moral, and religious faculties. By the *likeness* of God, we understand man's rulership over the earth, even as God is Ruler over the Universe, to be meant. This implies a perfect earth with perfect rulers in charge.

The Apostle Paul observed in Heb. 2: 8 that the original perfection of being and rulership had been lost, and has been replaced by physical, mental, moral, and religious *degradation*, and the cursed condition of the earth. The Scriptures assure us that this state of affairs is due to the sin of Adam (Gen. 3).

The purpose of Christ's First Advent was to lay down Himself as the Ransom-price, and His Second Advent is to make that Ransom-price available for the recovery of the world and to restore all people to the image and likeness of God — to the blessed condition which Adam and Eve enjoyed in the Garden of Eden. Christ returns to set up His 1,000-year Kingdom and all who obey the reasonable requirements of that Kingdom will enjoy all the blessings that it will bring. Not only will the living at that time receive the benefit, but the dead will also be awakened and given the same opportunities.

THE MANNER OF OUR LORD'S RETURN

According to some popular views our Lord is to return visibly, riding upon a literal cloud, blowing a literal trumpet, shining with a dazzling literal light, and blasting the literal universe into atoms. However, when we compare

this view with the Bible, reason, and facts, we find many contradictions. The idea of a visible return of our Lord is based upon a *literal interpretation* of *figurative* passages, such as parables, symbols, and dark sayings.

A careful examination of the Scriptures reveals the fact that our Lord's Return is invisible to men's natural sight, but visible to their mental sight — their eyes of understanding. The Bible directly teaches that Jesus, as a glorified being of the Divine nature cannot and will never again be seen by human beings. John 14: 19 reads, "Yet a little while, and the world seeth me no more." Jesus here referred to Himself as being forever invisible to mankind in His glorified resurrection body. St. Paul, speaking of our Lord in His exalted state, says in 1 Tim. 6: 16, "Who only hath immortality, dwelling in the light which no man can approach unto; whom no man hath seen, nor can see."

There are several lines of Biblical evidence which suggest that the manner of our Lord's Return is invisible, but the basic reason for this fact is that our Lord *gave up His humanity once and for all*, and since His resurrection *is no more a human*, but is a spirit being and, of necessity, is invisible to the natural sight. Indeed, God directly tells us that Jesus is now a spirit being. This is stated in 1 Cor. 15: 45: "The first man Adam was made a living soul; the last Adam was made a quickening spirit." The first Adam was a human being with a human body, whereas the last, or Second Adam, is Jesus, Who was made a spirit being at His resurrection.

THE TIME OF OUR LORD'S RETURN

As to the time of our Lord's Return, or Presence (Greek, *parousia*), there is much Scriptural evidence that it will occur at first in secret, during a time of social turmoil (1 Thes. 5: 1-4). Generally speaking, the Bible teaches that God's Kingdom, of which Christ is its chief representative, is to be established in the seventh 1,000-year day after Adam's fall into sin.

Isa. 2: 2 says, "It shall come to pass in the last days, that the mountain of the Lord's house shall be established in the top of the mountains, and shall be exalted above the hills; and all nations shall flow unto it." In the Hebrew, the expression *in the last days* can also mean *in the last one of the days*. The last one of God's days, each of which would be a period of a thousand of our years, would be the seventh day or the seventh thousand-year period (2 Pet. 3: 8). God's numerical system often features the number seven. The expression "the last one of the days" means the seventh day, the last day of the week. A week of God's days is equal to 7,000 years of our time. Isa. 2: 2 therefore suggests that the Kingdom of God is to be established over all the earth during the seventh thousand-year day. Though the earth itself may be thousands of millions of years old, we believe Bible chronology demonstrates that man's history is only a little over 6,000 years from the creation of Adam.

That this seventh thousand-year day is the seventh from Adam's fall into sin and the original death sentence, God has pictured by the Sabbath-day arrangement for Israel. Following their six days of labor, they were to keep holy the seventh day by resting from their work.

Mankind in sin and under the curse has been laboring and heavy laden during the antitypical six days (Matt. 11: 28; Rom. 8: 20-22). This is symbolized by the six days of labor, each day typing a period of a thousand years. But a rest day from the curse, the great antitypical Sabbath, the Millennium, follows the figurative days of toil and hardship. During it, mankind will rest from sin, error, and death, with their entailment of woes. This is the last one of the days, the seventh thousand-year day, the antitypical Sabbath, of which Isa. 2: 2-4 speaks. This scripture, teaching that the Kingdom is to be established in the seventh thousand-year day from the fall of Adam, implies that Christ's return is to be *in this period*; for He returns to establish the Kingdom and to offer restitution to all mankind, both dead and living (Acts 3: 19-21; 15: 14-17; Dan. 7: 13, 14; Isa. 35: 1-10).

As the Lord of the Sabbath, and the Giver of Rest (Luke 6: 5; Matt. 11: 28), Jesus must return at the onset of the great antitypical Sabbath to establish His Lordship over the earth and set in motion the greatest peace process the world has ever known. Following 6,000 years of enmity between God and man, and between man and man — a weary and rest-*less* experience — peace cannot come without even further upheaval and strife, as the forces of evil are challenged and overthrown. The achieving of perfect peace will indeed be a *process*, and will take the entire 1,000 years of Christ's Mediatorial Kingdom to complete.

That great conflict occurring at the time of the Second Advent is a well-established Biblical concept. This is implicitly stated in Dan. 12: 1, with its figurative reference to Jesus as Michael, the great prince of the people. And Jesus Himself spoke of it, describing the turmoil as unprecedented and ferocious in its finality (Matt. 24: 21).

The forces of evil are led by the great Adversary, Satan, who will struggle to hold on to his influence and do all in his power to resist the incoming Kingdom. The overthrow of this usurper, therefore, must be a primary objective of the rightful Heir to the Kingship of earth, our Lord Jesus, addressed prophetically in Psa. 2: 8 (*American Standard Version*): "Ask of me, and I will give thee the nations for thine inheritance, And the uttermost parts of the earth for thy possession." Speaking symbolically of the eviction of Satan, the unlawful incumbent at present ruling the nations, Jesus referred to him as the "strong man" who must be bound before his goods and house can be taken (Mark 3: 27). Their leader captive, the consequent power struggles among the servants of Satan — the "kingdom divided against itself" — will precipitate the downfall of his vast and malicious organization.

THE KINGDOM DRAWS NEARER

Another feature marking the time of our Lord's return is the explosion of knowledge in every branch of science and technology, with a phenomenal increase in travel and in *speed* of travel — many running to and fro as prophesied (Dan. 12: 4). The transport revolution of our day gives credibility to the concept of the "global village" where in process of time "the earth shall be full of the knowledge of the Lord, as the waters cover the sea" (Isa. 11: 9).

In large part due to this increasing mobility and ease of communication, society at large is in a restless condition, and we see the preparatory stages of the overthrow of the kingdoms of this world. In these times of almost unlimited communication from one end of the earth to the other, we are bombarded with daily exposures of evil deeds, political intrigues, social injustice, financial deceptions, and religious hypocrisies. Foretelling such conditions at this time — distress of nations, men's hearts failing them for fear of those things coming upon the earth, our Lord in prospect spoke to us, who are living through these experiences: "And when these things begin to come to pass,

then look up, and lift up your heads; for your redemption draweth nigh" (Luke 21: 25-28).

We do not know the date of the establishment of this kingdom to come, but judging by the events of the day — as outlined above — we believe the Lord Jesus is working behind the scenes and hastening that day along. Significant among the signs of the times is the return of the Jewish people to Palestine and the creation of the independent state of Israel in 1948. In spite of the friction surrounding the Israeli-Palestinian conflict today, and the increasing hostility of many nations toward the Jewish nation, the mark of progress toward the setting up of Christ's Kingdom quite clearly rests on Israel. We expect that things will go badly for Israel before the eternal light dawns on both that nation and the rest of the world. Israel stands on the shoulders of the Hebrew patriarchs and matriarchs of long ago; it is in the experiences of those men and women as recorded in the Old Testament that we find the key to understanding the news events of our present time. We expect to treat of this subject in greater detail in the near future. [For further details on the Second Advent, see our book, *The Millennium*, \$7.00, postpaid.]

of interest . . .

The name Isaac N. Vail is well known to students of the Bible, who have read the sixth volume of *Studies in the Scriptures* (especially Chapter 1). In a letter to the *Scientific American* Prof. Vail drew attention to astronomic and paleontological phenomena that accord with a theory, known as the Canopy Theory. We reproduce this letter for the interest of our readers:

"THAT FROZEN MAMMOTH"

"To the Editor of the Scientific American :

"I have read with great interest in your issue of April 12 the note on the recent discovery of the body of a mammoth, in cold storage, by Dr. Herz, in the ice-bound region of Eastern Siberia. This, it seems to me, is more than a 'Rosetta Stone' in the path of the geologist. It offers the strongest testimony in support of the claim that all the glacial epochs and all the deluges the earth ever saw, were caused by the progressive and successive decline of primitive earth vapors, lingering about our planet as the cloud vapors of the planets Jupiter and Saturn linger about those bodies today.

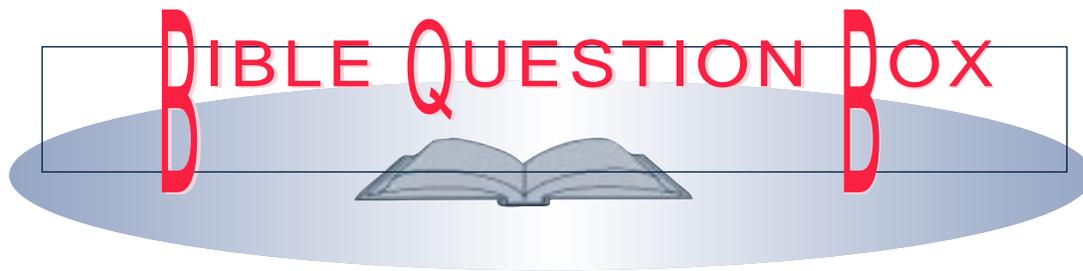
"Allow me to suggest to my brother geologists that remnants of the terrestrial watery vapors may have revolved about the earth as a Jupiter-like canopy, even down to very recent geologic times. Such vapors must fall chiefly in polar lands, through the channel of least resistance and greatest attraction, and certainly as vast avalanches of tellurio-cosmic snows. Then, too, such a canopy, or world-roof, must have tempered the climate up to the poles, and thus afforded pasturage to the mammoth and his congeners of the Arctic world, making a greenhouse earth under a greenhouse roof. If this be admitted, we can place no limits to the magnitude and efficiency of canopy avalanches to desolate a world of exuberant life. It seems that Dr. Herz's mammoth, like many others found buried in glacier ice, with their food undigested in their stomachs, proves that it was suddenly overtaken with a crushing fall of snow. In this case, with grass in its mouth unchewed, it tells an unerring tale of death in a snowy grave. If this be conceded, we leave what may have been an all-competent source of glacial snows, and we may gladly escape the unphilosophic alternative that the earth grew cold in order to get its casement of snow, while, as I see it, it got its snows and grew cold.

"During the igneous age the oceans went to the skies, along with a measureless fund of mineral and metallic sublimations ; and if we concede these vapors formed into an annular system, and returned during the ages in grand installments, some of them lingering even down to the age of man, we may explain many things that are dark and perplexing today.

"As far back as 1874 I published some of these thoughts in pamphlet form, and it is with the hope that the thinkers of this twentieth century will look after them that I again call up the 'Canopy Theory.' — Isaac N. Vail."

The above letter and theory promulgated in it, written about a century ago, may well have interest revived in it by recent remarkable discoveries. In May 1997 the journal, *Science News*, in a caption asked the question "Is Earth pelted by Space Snowballs?" (p.332). The article revealed that a controversy had been active among scientists about alleged "snow comets." Although some scientists grudgingly admit that they might exist, they are puzzled by the origin of these objects. The discoverer of this phenomenon, Dr. Louis A. Frank, a space physicist, believes that 20 snow comets — some weighing from 20 to 40 tons — disintegrate in the earth's atmosphere every minute (University of Iowa — <http://smallcomets.physics.uiowa.edu/>).

Prof. Vail, if alive today, might well have pointed to the snow comets as the remnants of what he described as the "vast avalanches of tellurio-cosmic snows" which buried millions of mammoths and other animals. Did not God ask Job, "Have you entered the storehouses of the snow?" (Job 38: 22, *Revised Standard Version*).



Q Mark 5: 22-43 and Luke 8: 41-56 record the account of Jesus' raising Jairus' daughter from the dead. Luke 8: 52 reads, "And all wept, and bewailed her: but he said, Weep not; she is not dead, but sleepeth." What did Jesus mean by the statement "she is not *dead*, but *sleepeth*"? Why would He have said that she was not dead, if she really was dead?

A There are two possible explanations: The first is that the girl had not actually died, but was in a deep coma. Some translations seem to favor this view, such as *The New Standard American Bible* which for Luke 8: 52 reads, "for she has not died, but is asleep." Also, *The New International Version Interlinear Greek-English New Testament* reads, "she did not die but sleeps." If this was the case, our Lord was speaking literally when He said that she was not dead, but merely sleeping (a coma is essentially a deep sleep). [Compare the case of the Apostle Paul and Eutychus, who fell from the third floor loft (Acts 20: 7-12).]

The second explanation is that the maiden had really died, so when our Lord spoke of her as not being dead, but merely *sleeping*, He was speaking figuratively.

Let us consider various arguments that would favor the first explanation — that the girl was not actually dead. One argument is that after the one from the ruler of the synagogue's house came with the news that the child had died, Jesus said in Luke 8: 50, "Fear not: believe only, and she shall be made whole." The word "whole" in verse 50 comes from the Greek word *sozo* meaning *heal, preserve, save, or do well*. To "be made whole" gives the thought of being healed. In fact, *The NIV Interlinear Greek-English New Testament* renders it, "will be healed." In every other case where this Greek word *sozo* is used in connection with Jesus, it has reference to Jesus healing the diseases of those who were *dying*, but not yet *dead*.

Another argument is that for Jesus to have stated that the child was not dead, when she was dead, would have been a contradiction — an untruth, something Jesus would not have been guilty of.

Girl Was Literally Dead

Let us now consider some arguments favoring the second explanation — that the girl was literally dead. One argument is the fact that after Jesus remarked that she was

not dead, but only sleeping, verse 53 says, "And they laughed him to scorn, knowing that she was dead." This seems to indicate that there was no doubt in the minds of the people present that she was really and truly dead.

Again, after Jesus called her to rise, verse 55 says, "And her spirit came again." The word "spirit" comes from the Greek word *pneuma*. This word has many different meanings, two of which are *breath* and *life* (including the *privilege* to live). Combining these two, we have *breath of life*, which seems to be the appropriate meaning here. This would also appear to show that she was actually dead — that there was no life left in her.

We find a later, but similar instance where Jesus speaks about sleep, and this is found in John 11: 11-14. Here Jesus spoke to His disciples about Lazarus' death as a figurative sleep. When the disciples did not understand what He meant, He told them plainly that Lazarus was dead.

As Jews, the girl's parents would have held the hope that their daughter would return in the resurrection — yet death is still an enemy, one that produces sorrow. Our Lord was performing His mission of comfort — "to preach good tidings unto the meek, . . . to bind up the brokenhearted, to proclaim liberty to the captives, and the opening of the prison to them that are bound" (Isa. 61: 1).

Whether she was actually dead, or merely in a deep coma, undoubtedly these circumstances gave our Lord a wonderful opportunity to teach an even greater lesson than that He was able to perform miracles. That lesson is that from God's standpoint, the Adamic death is viewed as merely a sleep. All who have died the Adamic death will be awakened in the great resurrection day and will receive the opportunity to come up to human perfection and live forever, if faithful (John 5: 28, 29).

The Scriptural evidence seems to favor the second explanation — that the maiden had died and that our Lord brought her back from the dead. He did not *resurrect* her, but merely awakened her — true resurrection means a bringing up to *perfection*, something that for the world of mankind will take the Millennium to accomplish.

Q Revelation 20: 10 reads, “And the devil that deceived them was cast into the lake of fire and brimstone, where the beast and the false prophet are, and shall be tormented day and night for ever and ever.” Does this verse prove the doctrine of eternal torment?

A The Scriptures teach that the Devil, or Satan, will be destroyed — see Heb. 2: 14; Isa. 14: 12-17; and Ezek. 28: 11-19. The Greek verb translated *torment* in this verse is *basanizo*, and it has three meanings. The first meaning, which many Greek lexicographers agree, is *to test, to examine*, the second meaning is *to test by torture or to examine by torture*, and the third is *to torture or to torment*. (See, for example, Wigram’s *Analytical Greek Lexicon of the New Testament*.)

That the word *basanizo* apparently first means *to test*, can be seen by considering the noun *basanos*, from which the verb *basanizo* is derived. *Basanos* means primarily a *touchstone*, such as a thing used to test metals. The second meaning, *testing by torture*, is derived from the ancient custom of testing persons by torture; see, for example, the description of the jailer in the parable of the unjust steward in Matt. 18: 34. Eventually, the word assumed the third meaning, *torment*.

The translators, likely influenced by the credal doctrine of eternal torment then current, adopted the third

meaning of the word in this verse. Taking the first meaning, the thought is clearer and more consistent with overall Biblical doctrine: “And shall be *tested* day and night for ever and ever [“unto the ages of the ages” — *American Standard Version* (footnote) and the *Diaglott*].” Thus, the Greek for the expression “for ever and ever” implies a very long-lasting period of time.

This suggests that throughout the ages to come the perfect minds of God’s people will reflect on the nature, character, fruits, and history of the devil, the beast, and the false prophet (the beast and false prophet are symbolic of evil systems or organizations). As often as they examine them, they will concur with the Great Judge’s decision that this threesome deserved to be consigned to the symbolic lake of fire and brimstone — utter, complete, and eternal annihilation.

The Heavenly Father does not need the assent of His creatures for His decisions. However, as a tender and merciful Father, He loves His creatures not as abstract entities or chattel, but as children, and He invites them as His children into fellowship of thought and conduct with Himself. Eternally His children will attest His goodness and benevolence. His justice will always be seen to have been done. * * *

- What is the meaning of hades? What is the “lake of fire”? Is the story of the Rich Man and Lazarus true, or is it a parable?

- These questions are asked — and answered — in our free leaflet, *What is Hell?* and the paperback book, *Life—Death—Hereafter* (\$2.00).

- For a complete listing of our publications, please request our most recent catalogue or visit our Web site, www.biblestandard.com (also, biblestandard.co.uk)



announcements

GENERAL CONVENTIONS FOR 2002

At-a-glance (in alphabetical order)

France: March 31-April 1; July 26-28 (*revised dates*); November 2, 3

Jamaica: March 29-April 1

Nigeria: *Umunkiri*, June 28-30; *Osusu Amukwa*, September 29; *Abia State*, Aba, November 22-24; *Akwab Ibom State*, Nduetong Oku, November 23-25

Poland: *Poznan*, May 3-5; *Lublin*, July 12-14; *Rzeszow*, July 15-17; *Wroclaw* July 19-21; *Bydgoszcz*, July 22-24; *Katowice*, August 16-18

United Kingdom: *Hyde*, August 2-4

United States: Massachusetts, April 19-21; Michigan, May 25-27; Pennsylvania, July 4-7; Ohio, August — *dates to be announced*; Illinois, October 4-6; Tulsa, November 8-10

Details

United States

Massachusetts, April 19-21 (Fri.-Sun.):

Site: Holiday Inn, 245 Whiting Farms Road, Holyoke, MA 01040; tel.: (413) 534-3311 *Rates and Reservations:* \$78.98 (tax included), for 1-2 people; meals \$11.95 (noon) and \$9.95 (evening) on a donation basis. (A hospitality room will be available for anyone needing a place to rest during the day.) Reservations at group rate guaranteed only until March 21. Full payment must accompany reservation; checks payable to "Holiday Inn." Reservations may be made not later than March 21, through Bro. Gunar and Sr. Lucy Vanags, 668 E. St. North, Suffield, CT 06078 (tel.: (860) 668-0701; e-mail: gunluce@earthlink.net); or with the hotel (credit cards accepted). *You must mention the LHMM convention to get the special rate.*

Michigan, May 25, 26, 27 (Sat.-Mon.): *Site:* Comfort Inn Muskegon, U.S. Route 31 at Sherman Boulevard, Muskegon, MI 49444; tel.: (231) 739-9092 *Rates and Reservations:* For 1-2 people, \$59.94 including tax at 11%; 3 people, \$65.49; 4 people, \$71.04 (tax of 11% included in all rates); children 18 and under stay free with parents; Continental breakfast included (served in motel lobby). ***Please make your reservations with the hotel by April 24; be sure to tell the hotel you are with the LHMM to get the rates shown here; ask for a confirmation number; each room must be individually guaranteed three weeks in advance by credit card or check; you may cancel with 48 hours notice;*** for further information you may contact Sr. (Mrs.) Carlla Olson, Muskegon Class Secretary, by telephone at (231) 894-4131, or by e-mail at colsoncjo@juno.com

SERVICES BY VISITING MINISTERS

The General Editor, Bernard W. Hedman

Springfield, Massachusetts Convention, April, 19, 20, 21

Carl W. Seebald

Springfield, Massachusetts Convention, April, 19, 20, 21; Muskegon, Michigan Convention, May 25, 26, 27; Chicago, June 22, 23

Ralph Herzig

Springfield, Massachusetts Convention, April, 19, 20, 21; Muskegon, Michigan Convention, May 25, 26, 27; Springfield, Mass., June 2

Richard Blaine

Cleveland, Georgia, May 18; Marietta, Georgia, May 19; Muskegon, Michigan Convention, May 25, 26, 27

Robert Herzig

Springfield, Mass., April, 7; Springfield, Massachusetts Convention, April, 19, 20, 21; Boston, Mass., June 16

Jan Wojnar

Springfield, Massachusetts Convention, April, 19, 20, 21; New Haven, Connecticut, May 19; Pittsfield, Mass., June 9

Leon Snyder

March-April: Barbados, March 20, 21; Trinidad, March 23-26, Jamaica Convention, March 29-April 1; Ft. Lauderdale, 3; Sebring, Fla., 4; Keystone Heights, Fla., 7; Waycross, Georgia, 9, 10; Marietta, Georgia, 13, 14; Sand Ridge, West Virginia, 16; Springfield, Massachusetts Convention, 19, 20, 21; Lenox, Mass., 23, 24; Springfield, Mass., 27, 28; Cambridge Springs, Pennsylvania, 30; *May:* North Canton, Ohio, 1; Muskegon, Michigan Convention, 25, 26, 27 *June:* Muskegon, Michigan, 15;

Baron Duncan

Pittsfield, Mass., April 14; Springfield, Massachusetts Convention, April 19, 20, 21; Muskegon, Michigan Convention, May 25, 26, 27

Evangelists' Services

Tom Cimbur, Colorado North, May 4, 5

Robert Branconnier, Auburn, Massachusetts, May 12

Harry Hammer, Muskegon, Michigan, April 6, Grand Rapids, Michigan, April 7; Minneapolis, June 8, 9

Jon Hanning, Sand Ridge, West Virginia, May 11, 12

Don Lewis, Chicago, April 13, 14

David Lounsbury, New York City, April 28

Harold Solomon, Boston, Mass., May 26

Robert Steenrod, Derry, Pennsylvania., April 7; Beechgrove, Tennessee, June 8, 9

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