



The Fourfold **Gospel Witness**

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Heaven**

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The Fourfold Gospel Witness

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(Celebrating Jesus Christ as Savior,
Sanctifier, Healer and Coming King)
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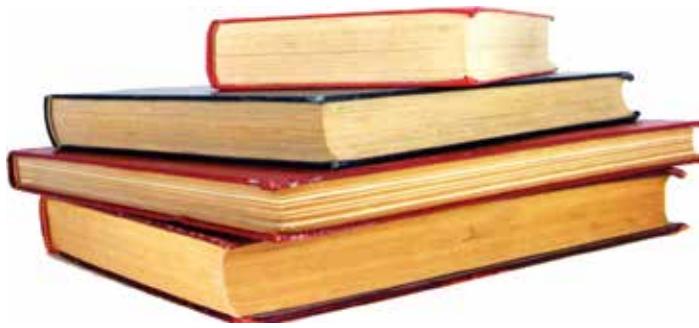
A lot of people talk about heaven who have no idea what they are talking about. They write books and produce movies and television programs, but none of it really harmonizes with what the Bible has to say.

Most of the people who talk about heaven would be greatly disappointed if they ever got to heaven because it is nothing what they think it will be. For most people heaven is simply a great up from Earth.

This issue of the Fourfold Gospel Witness focuses on what the Bible has to say about heaven. The glory of heaven is simply Jesus Christ.

For me personally, I do not want Hollywood describing to me what they think heaven is all about. The authors assembled in this issue give witness to what the Bible has to say about heaven. After reading this I think you will, like me, become homesick for heaven.

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Editorial

The Glory of Heaven

Lately, the market has been inundated with books and movies about heaven. It seems that anybody who has ever had a thought about heaven is writing a book or producing a movie along that line.

I must confess I have not read any of the books nor have I seen any of the movies and this is not a critique of those things. I guess my basic thought is simply this; I do not want anybody in Hollywood explain to me what heaven is all about. Hollywood has its ideas of heaven; those ideas are not rooted in the Scripture. They take what they call “literary license,” and we, the public, pay dearly for that license.

I want to know about heaven, but I want to know about heaven as explained in the Bible. I take the Bible as the Word of God and what it says I want to embrace. Also, what it does not tell us I do not want to speculate. I want to know all the Bible says about heaven for that is my final destination.

I begin with what Jesus said, “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” (John 14:2). I take for granted that Jesus, who came from heaven, had more of an insight into heaven than any celebrity in Hollywood. I will take His word for it any day of the week.

To begin with, many people have misunderstood the word “mansions.” They take the word, look around the world and see all the mansions man has made and think that is exactly what they are going to find in heaven. I do not think we will find anything in heaven created by man. That would be rather disappointing to find that there.

In the Greek, the word “mansions” has to do with residence or an abode. This residence will reflect, not the glory of man, but the glory of God. Whenever man touches anything, it always deteriorates. God, on the other hand, can never deteriorate and what He touches always exceeds any of our expectations. That is just the way God is.

Man has a lot of expectations, but cannot deliver on any of it.

The glory of heaven is not going to be a demonstration of man’s ability. The glory of heaven is going to be a demonstration of God’s ability in all of this. What God has in store for us is beyond human imagination and cannot fit within the boundaries of time.

When we think of the glory of heaven, we need to put our focus on Christ. Heaven is the eternal abode of Christ. If we want to understand the Christ of heaven, we need to go to Revelation 1:12-20. This is the Christ of heaven.

Some insist on worshipping the Christ hanging on the cross.

Christ hanging on the cross was a mo-

ment in history of which we are most grateful and is the foundation of our salvation. The Christ we worship is the Christ in Revelation chapter 1. He is the Christ of glory who has been glorified and has put the glory into the glory of heaven. He is not the meek and lowly Galilean, rather, He is our glorious risen Savior who resides in heaven and gives heaven all of its glory.

If we were to go to heaven and not find Jesus Christ, it would no longer be heaven.

If we were to ascend into the very pit of hell and discover Jesus Christ there, His presence would turn hell itself into heaven with all of its glory.

The glory of heaven is Jesus Christ. Apart from Jesus Christ, not only does heaven not have its glory, but it has no real significance to anybody.

When I go to heaven I will not be dazzled by the Golden streets and the mansions on each side of the street, but I will be dazzled by the presence of this resurrected Lord and Savior Jesus Christ. This is my anticipation of heaven.

Often, when some celebrity dies, everybody talks about them going to heaven. Yet, if you would examine their life nothing in their life even suggests that they were heaven bound. These people would find heaven a terrible place, because heaven is not all about them. Heaven is all about Him.

These people want to go to heaven, but they are not very comfortable around heavenly people while they were here on this earth. I have searched the Scriptures and I do not find any “red carpet” in heaven. These celebrities would be very uncomfortable if for some reason they

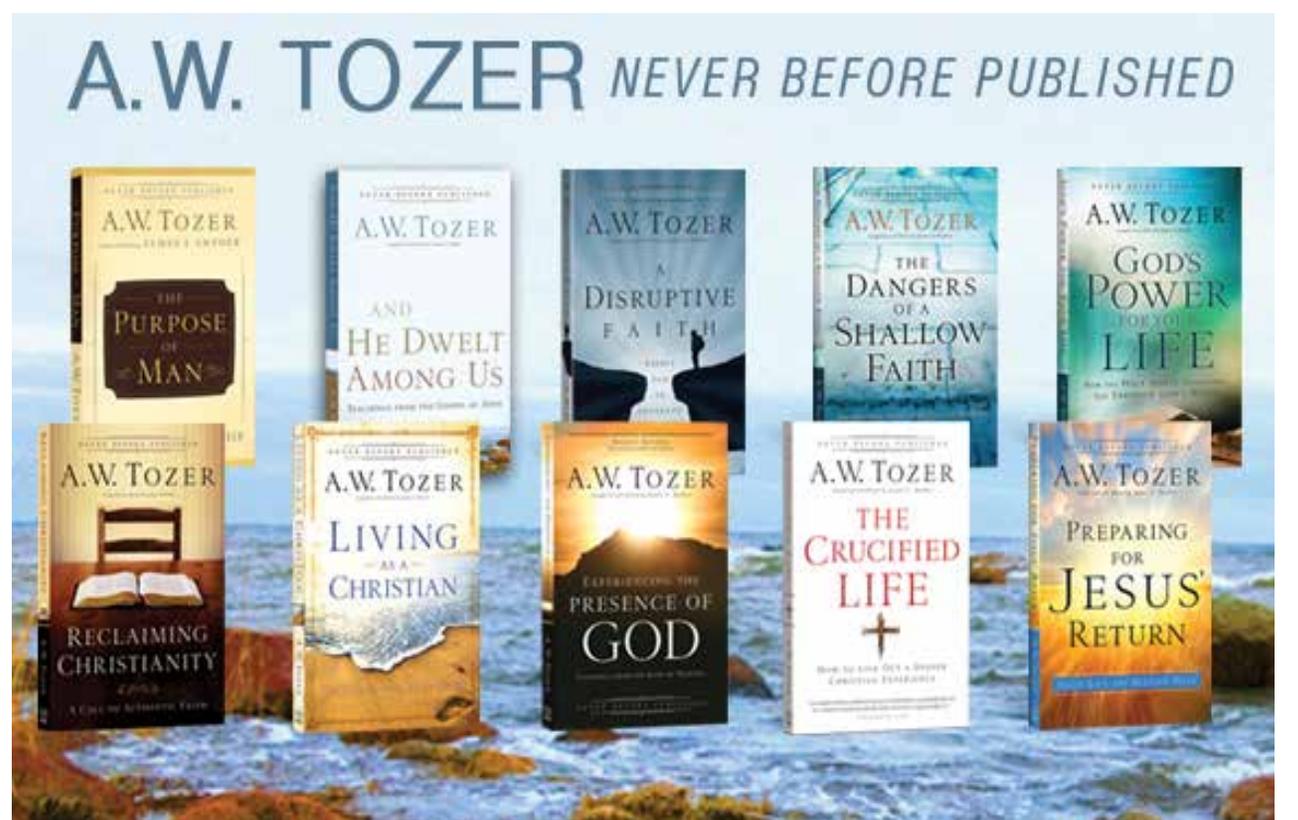
ended up in heaven.

I think it’s clear to say that nobody goes to heaven who does not know they are going to heaven. It is not a surprise that comes after death. Nobody ends up in heaven and says, “Wow, I never expected to come here!” That is sheer foolishness.

Jesus made the way to heaven quite clear. “Jesus saith unto him, I am the way, the truth, and the life: no man cometh unto the Father, but by me” (John 14:6). If you refuse or even ignore Jesus Christ, there is no other way to heaven. Some have said there are many roads to heaven, but that is not a scriptural viewpoint. Many people would like to believe that, but it is not the truth as presented in the Scriptures.

Many people agree that the apostle Paul was one of the most brilliant men of all history and quite articulate. If anybody could describe heaven to us, it would be him. But Paul said, “It is not expedient for me doubtless to glory. I will come to visions and revelations of the Lord. I knew a man in Christ above fourteen years ago, (whether in the body, I cannot tell; or whether out of the body, I cannot tell: God knoweth;) such a one caught up to the third heaven. And I knew such a man, (whether in the body, or out of the body, I cannot tell: God knoweth;) How that he was caught up into paradise, and heard unspeakable words, which it is not lawful for a man to utter” (2 Corinthians 12:1-4).

If the apostle Paul could not describe what he saw in the heavens, I am not going to take the word of anybody else.





THE NEW JERUSALEM

by: A. B. Simpson

Revelation 21:1-4

First, let us fully understand that the sublime picture of these closing chapters of the Apocalypse is not a description of the heavens into which our beloved ones enter when they pass from us through the gates of what we call death. There is a heaven into which Christ has passed and where, like Stephen, our parted ones who sleep in Jesus are welcomed home. There is a Father's house where they rest in peace and blessedness and doubtless, it has in it in embryo the elements of the glorious city and the eternal rapture, which this vision describes; but the full glory has not yet come. They are waiting for their crowns and for their everlasting home until we will be gathered with them in the great consummation.

Let us also remember that this is not a description of the millennial earth and the glorious state which Christ's reign for 1,000 years will bring. That is briefly described in the 20th chapter. The scenes in this chapter come after the millennium and the dissolution of all things which it is to lead. This is the eternal state, a new heaven and a new earth. May the Spirit of inspiration give us a vision to see and a heart to understand this glorious Apocalypse of the future.

A NEW HEAVEN AND EARTH

The scenes of this chapter follow earth's final tragedy. There has been a crisis, a catastrophe, a fearful cataclysm. Before the face of Him upon the Great White Throne, the earth and the heavens fled away and there was found no place for them. Just as man had to pass from the earthly to the heavenly, from the natural to the supernatural, from the mortal to the resurrection life through the gates of death, so now the material universe itself has to pass through the resurrection by way of death. The old planet is consumed with flame, the firmament and the heavenly bodies pass through a similar convulsion or dissolution, and from the wreck, there emerged a new heaven and a new earth.

This did not occur at the commencement of the millennial age. Then undoubtedly, great changes in earth's climate and surface took place, but they were only partial. Now it would seem the whole fabric of the universe must pass through the great transi-

tion and have its resurrection too. It would seem as if the taint of sin and the touch of Satan had left defilement and pollution upon the very atmosphere of the universe and God must have a great housecleaning and wash out with flames of fire every vestige, every memory of the awful crisis through which nature and the universe have passed.

And so by some mighty process the existing universe is dissolved and out of it emerges a new creation.

Now this is not the first time this doctrine has been revealed in the Holy Scriptures. Back in Isaiah we read, "Behold, I will create new heavens and a new earth. The former things will not be remembered, nor will they come to mind. But be glad and rejoice forever in what I will create, for I will create Jerusalem to be a delight and its people a joy. I will rejoice over Jerusalem and take delight in my people; the sound of weeping and of crying will be heard in it no more" (65:17-19).

And again in Second Peter 3:7-13, we are told that as the earth was once destroyed by a flood of water it is to be once more destroyed by a sea of fire.

Since everything will be destroyed in this way, what kind of people ought you to be? You ought to live holy and godly lives as you look forward to the day of God and speed its coming. That day will bring about the destruction of the heavens by fire, and the elements will melt in the heat. But in keeping with his promise, we are looking forward to a new heaven and a new earth, the home of righteousness.

This is precisely the teaching of the Revelation, and it looks forward not to the millennial reign of Christ but to the great crisis that is to follow it. The apostle's eye is looking on to the end of the panorama and taking it all in the light of final consummation.

In the change, which is to come upon the earth, it is added, "There was no longer any sea" (Revelation 21:1). Today the ocean covers and renders waste three-quarters of the surface of this planet. The world without an ocean could contain four times as great a population as the present surface of the planet. The ocean is a place of danger and

of death. There will be a river of delight and, doubtless, a sea of glass in the terrestrial geography of the coming age, but all that is terrific and scourging in the old ocean will have passed away.

THE NEW EARTH, GOD'S ABODE

It will be the personal residence of God. "Now the dwelling of God is with men, and he will live with them. They will be his people, and God himself will be with them and be their God" (21:3). This is a most significant statement. At the present time, this earth is not the residence of God in any primary sense. For a little while, it was the residence of Jesus Christ, but He was far from home and His Father's throne. At present it is the residence of the Holy Spirit but He is here as a visitor calling out a people to be gathered home. It is a far outlying world. It is a distant sphere that rolls in its orbit of darkness around the central throne; somewhere else today is the personal seat of God and the metropolis of the universe. When Jesus Christ ascended, He went home to His Father's throne. He left the realms of earth; He passed through the heavens, He ascended far above all heavens and somewhere yonder in space He rested and sat down at the right hand of God.

The eye of the telescope has not discovered the metropolis of God's empire. The light of inspiration has not told us where; but somewhere, locally and actually, God has His capital where Christ in human form is residing, and where angels and the spirits of glorified men and the bodies of Enoch and Elijah and those that rose from their graves after Christ's resurrection and ascended with Him, are living today in actual physical presence. It is not so far away that we cannot reach it by the telephone of prayer, but that may be farther than the farthest star that rolls in dark immensity.

Science tells us that somewhere in this universe there is a central star around which all the stars and constellations are revolving. Just as the moon moves around the earth, and the moon and earth around the sun, so the sun and all its planets are revolving around some other center and this system round a yet greater. And yonder in the far Pleiades, they tell us a mighty sun, Alcyone, far vaster than ours, seems to be at present the center of all the stellar motion. Is it there perhaps that God has His abode? We cannot tell, but this we know that the center of the universe some day will be this little world of ours. God will come down with His retinue and His throne; from earth will go forth the authority and the power that will govern all the material worlds and all the myriad beings that people immensity.

What a glorious prospect! What a stupendous honor! What a majestic hope! It would seem as if God were at last to be avenged for the curse of sin by turning the curse into a blessing and making the very place that had been associated with the bitterest hate of Satan and the cruellest sorrow of Jesus, His own dear Son, the very jewel of

the universe, the paragon of creation and the capital of the heavens.

NO DEATH OR SORROW

It will be a world without death, disease or sorrow. There will be no more crying. There will be no more pain. There will be no death; and God will wipe away all tears from their eyes. This does not only mean that there will be no tears shed in that happy world, but that all the tears that were ever shed will be turned into joy, that they will be more than healed and there will be no single memory or shadow of pain or grief to gall the perfect felicity of eternal years. Oh, sorrowing one, be patient. Lift up your heart. Rejoice! "Weeping may remain for a night, but rejoicing comes in the morning" (Psalm 30:5). Oh, mourner, some day earth's fairest scenes will not be its cemeteries, and earth's sweetest affections will not be merely the means of making deathbeds sadder and breaking loving hearts.

NO SIN

The other feature of the renovated earth will be that there will be no sin, and nothing that defiles will enter into the holy city and the happy life of the coming ages. Satan will never tempt again. There will be no more curse or cursed one. Never again will God have to cloud His face and perform the strange work of judgment which He so little loves, but the universe will settle down to everlasting love and uninterrupted joy. We will be established and will know that we will never fall again. Angels will be confirmed in their high and holy state and the very shadow of evil will at last be forgotten. Heaven will be so pure that evil will not be thought, remembered or conceived. The curse of time is to know both good and evil. In the innocence of those happy years, man will not know evil but only good. Oh, for that day to come when the crushing, defiling shadow of sin and doubt and fear will never fall again!

THE NEW JERUSALEM

Speedily the vision of the apostle is absorbed with one spectacle. It is the picture of the New Jerusalem, the holy city which he now beholds descending from God out of heaven and which is to be the chief attraction of the heavenly age.

Let us notice that this city is not created for the first time. It is recognized as having been there before, and John sees it descending from God out of heaven and resting finally upon the earth where it becomes the capital of the earth just as earth is the capital of the universe. This encourages us to believe that the New Jerusalem had already been a part of the glorious economy of the millennial age.

As we have already suggested it seems probable that this glorious city, with its blessed inhabitants constituting the Bride of the Lamb, was formed at Christ's coming

in the air and became the residence of Christ and His saints during the millennial age. During that period, it is not located on earth but seems to be suspended in the air where Christ will come to gather His risen and translated ones. It would seem as if during the millennial age it would be the heavenly home of the saints and so near to earth that they can pass from its gates constantly and instantly on their ministries of service and government over all the earth, but representing a higher life than that which the tribes of earth will live in their terrestrial sphere. Now, however, the glorious city descends to earth and becomes its metropolis.

This is the Father's house with its many mansions, which Christ has been so long preparing.

The description of this city of light and glory is not a mere figure or symbol. God is not playing with words when He gives us the dimensions, the structure, the very colors of the heavenly city. He means that it is an actual fact and not a mere figure of speech. There will be a real world, a real body of physical beings, a real Christ in His risen state and real city with all the glory and splendor of which these vivid descriptions give us but a faint approximation.

1. Its Form

Let us note the form and structure of this glorious city. "The city was laid out like a square, as long as it was wide" (Revelation 21:16). It is a perfect cube like the Holy of Holies in the ancient Tabernacle, which was a figure of heaven. The most remarkable feature of this description is that the height was equal to the breadth and length. In so vast a city as this it would either require that the towers should rise to a prodigious elevation or else that the streets should run vertically as well as laterally. There seems no reason why the latter should not be the case because to us up and down are terms entirely dependent upon the center of gravity. The reason it is difficult for us to ascend is because of the attraction of the earth; but in that city earth's attraction will be broken and God will be the center of gravitation, and in the supernatural life we, like Christ, will be invested with a power that will enable us to rise and soar in the heavens as freely as to pass from place to place on earth. Therefore, it would seem to be true that the streets of this city will run up and down as well as backwards and forwards and that our material conceptions of space and substance will be transcended by higher laws.

2. The Dimensions of the City

They are colossal and at first, we are staggered by its vastness. The entire measurement is 12,000 stadia, which is 1,400 miles. If this is the circuit of the city, it would make it 370 miles long, the same width and the same height. Think of a city one side of which would reach from New York to Buffalo, the next from Buffalo to North Carolina, the whole space including the states of New York, Pennsylvania, New Jersey, Maryland,

Virginia and West Virginia. And then when we attempt to realize the height we are staggered by the conception of a city whose towers would reach nearly 400 miles into the air, that is almost 100 times as high as earth's most lofty peaks.

This is the Father's house with its many mansions, which Christ has been so long preparing. This is the eternal home of all the families of the redeemed. Here are to be the palaces and homes of all the holy that have ever lived on earth. Surely, in this mighty city of the skies there will be for all. Oh, you who are poor and often tried with pinching poverty, lift your heads, your fortune is coming by and by, your city has foundations its Builder and Maker is God, your home is prepared where decay and parting will never come. Take in the grandeur of your Master's thought, beneficence of His resources, the transcendent glory of the hope laid up for you, and remember Him who said, "Everyone who has left houses or ... fields for my sake will receive a hundred times as much and will inherit eternal life" (Matthew 19:29).

3. The Walls of the City

It is surrounded with a jeweled wall of solid and crystalline jasper. The walls are not so high as the city, being only a little over 200 feet in height. But even this would present a magnificent effect with the turrets of the rising high above.

The foundations of this wall are described apart from the wall. They consist of various precious stones representing all the tints of the rainbow and the most precious crystals of the mine. They seem to represent the steps that rise to the entrance of the city. There are 12 gates to the city and to each of these gates it would seem there is a grand approach by means of 12 lofty steps. These steps are of all the colors of the rainbow blending in perfect harmony. There is the ruby, the sapphire and the diamond, the emerald, the topaz and the amethyst, all that crystal radiance and tinted beauty can combine to produce the most dazzling effects.

All this will be blended by God's infinite taste, and the city will look like a rainbow of glory even in its very foundations.

4. The Gates of the City

It is entered by 12 gates. Each of these is a single pearl. God will know how to make the materials for this splendid architectural monument if He has to gather all the pearls of the universe and blend them into one of these massive gates of crystalline beauty. And doubtless, from these gates there will open broad highways and magnificent avenues into every part of the glorious city.

5. The Streets of the City

They are solid gold and its pavement is described as like transparent glass. This does not represent so much its transparency as its translucency. It is finely polished like a mirror. Glancing up these splendid avenues and these golden palaces shining in the light of God, each reflecting back the glory of the golden pavement and the glorious sky, one

can scarcely imagine what a spectacle of dazzling splendor it must be.

6. The River of the Water of Life

This flows from the throne of God and of the Lamb, circling, doubtless, through the city, running down its innumerable avenues and carrying freshness and life to every part. Doubtless, it will be in some sense the channel of physical and spiritual life and convey to those who drink of its waters and bathe in its depths the quickening fullness of the blessed Spirit and the living Christ.

7. The Trees upon its Banks

Upon the banks of the river grows the tree of life. It is not a single tree but a single kind of tree with innumerable trees bearing their fruit anew each month while

its leaves are for the healing of the nations who people the earth abroad.

8. The Light of the City

There is no light and there is no sun. If our sun has been renewed in yonder heavens, it is but as a taper compared with the glory of Him who is the Light of heaven. "For the glory of God gives it light, and the Lamb is its lamp" (21:23). God Himself sheds His effulgence through the eternal day and He who is the "light, in him there is no darkness at all" (1 John 1:5) fills the heaven with the glory and brightness of His supernal presence. There is no need for rest. There is no cessation of the song or service. There is no yesterday and no tomorrow. There is no chronology and there is no time but it is one glad, eternal now, and the happy beings know that their joy can never end, their day can never have a period.

9. The Temple of Heaven

There is no temple there for God is the temple. No outward forms of worship are necessary in our conventional sense, for it is all worship, all love, all fellowship. Perhaps no language will be needed, but knowing as we are known, communing with God in the silent eloquence of the Spirit and as doubtfully knowing each other's hearts as perfectly as God knows ours, heart to heart and soul to soul will flow together like kindred drops of water or globules of air and all who will ever breathe out and send forth their adoration unto Him, who is the Source of Life and the Supreme Object of their worship and love.

Yes, this is the city for which Abraham looked, the "city with foundation, whose architect and builder is God" (Hebrews 11:10). This is "the heavenly Jerusalem" of which the apostle wrote where dwell the "thousands upon thousands of angels in joyful assembly . . . the church of the firstborn" (12:22-23). This is the goal of ancient hope, the dream of ancient prophecy and the eternal reward of the martyr and the love of those who counted all but loss for Christ. This is the vision that came to the seraphic soul of him, who sang with almost inspired cadences,

Oh, mother, dear Jerusalem
When shall I come to thee?

Then shall my sorrows have an end,
When I thy joys shall see.

10. The Inhabitants of the City

Three classes are described:

a. Those that are written in the Lamb's book of life, Christ's redeemed ones (Revelation 21:27).

b. Those who wash their robes. "Blessed are those who wash their robes that they may have the right to the tree of life and may go through the gates into the city" (22:14). This describes not only the saved ones but the sanctified also.

c. Those that overcome. This is for the conqueror. After we have taken Christ

as Savior and as Sanctifier, we will be tested and we must withstand in the evil day and having done all, stand. While the Lord has said, "To him who is thirsty I will give to drink without cost from the spring of the water of life" (21:6), He also adds immediately afterwards, "He who overcomes will inherit all this, and I will be his God and he will be my son" (21:7). The palaces and thrones of the New Jerusalem are only for the conquerors.

11. The Outcasts

On the other hand, there is a very explicit account of those who are excluded.

a. The cowardly (21:8). This is the Greek translation of the word "fearful" there. The cowardly man is placed in contrast with the conqueror, the man who does not dare to overcome self and sin, but yields with cowardly selfishness and fear to the public opinion of the world and the clamor of his own heart. He cannot stand the tests that are necessary for this glorious prize and is disqualified and excluded.

b. The unbelieving. The very organ and sense by which we will be able to know and understand that heavenly world, is a spirit of faith. A man without faith would be lost in heaven, blind to its life, deaf to its sounds, insensible to its sweetness and delight.

c. The vile. That is those that sin against nature and the very instincts, which God has put within us for our purity and protection against sin.

d. The murderers, including all who are controlled by violent passions and the spirit of hate which is essentially murder.

e. The sexually immoral, including all the forms of sensual and gross indulgence in impurity and licentiousness.

f. Those who practice magic arts. Those who play with spiritualism, clairvoyance and all the various forms by which the devil in the present day is getting men to worship him, including Christian Science, theosophy and all kindred forms of spiritism.

g. Idolaters, and this includes not only the worshipers of wood and stone but "greed, which is idolatry," (Colossians 3:5) and "if anyone loves the world, the love of the Father is not in him" (1 John 2:15).

h. All liars are excluded.

i. Everything that defiles. There will be no sin or possibility of sin in that holy place.

j. All that are not written in the Lamb's book of life, all the unsaved ones. Where do we stand? Looking up at that city of light, gazing down into that yawning abyss of fiery woe, once more let us hear Him say, "The Spirit and the bride say, 'Come!' And let him who hears say, 'Come!' Whoever is thirsty, let him come; and whoever wishes, let him take the free gift of the water of life" (Revelation 22:17).



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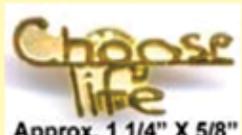
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A Glimpse at Eternity



By Keith M. Bailey

Revelation 21 and 22

The consideration of time and space history has come to an end and the two remaining chapters deal only with matters relating to eternity. This conclusion rests on verse one which says, "And I saw a new earth; for the first heaven and the first earth were passed away, and there was no more sea."

John's recent visions had shown that all the saved were safely with the Lord, all the unsaved were in the Lake of Fire. Satan and his demonic forces were all in the Lake of Fire as well. The first heaven and the first earth were gone, or as Peter describes it, "the elements melted with the fervent heat." Everything related to time is finished.

With this vision, John is introduced to everything new.

The new heaven, a new earth, and a new city, a new people yet there is a familiar ring to these words. New does not mean strange or foreign. It means the familiar has been made eternally holy by the powerful righteous and creative hand of Almighty God. John noticed that there was no more sea. Expositors have made many efforts to explain this statement without success. The Scripture merely states the fact that there is no sea in the new world and no explanation is given for its absence.

John next saw the holy city, New Jerusalem, descending from heaven. The beauty of the city was incredible for it was adorned as a bride for her husband. This is not a symbolic city but a real city. Its connection with the Bride of Christ will be considered later in this chapter.

The scene was followed by a voice from heaven explaining that God is now dwelling with man and they should be His people. God declares He will be the God of this new people. His personal care will allay their fears; comfort them with the glorious truth that all the distresses of life in the first world are gone forever. Death is replaced by immortality in eternity.

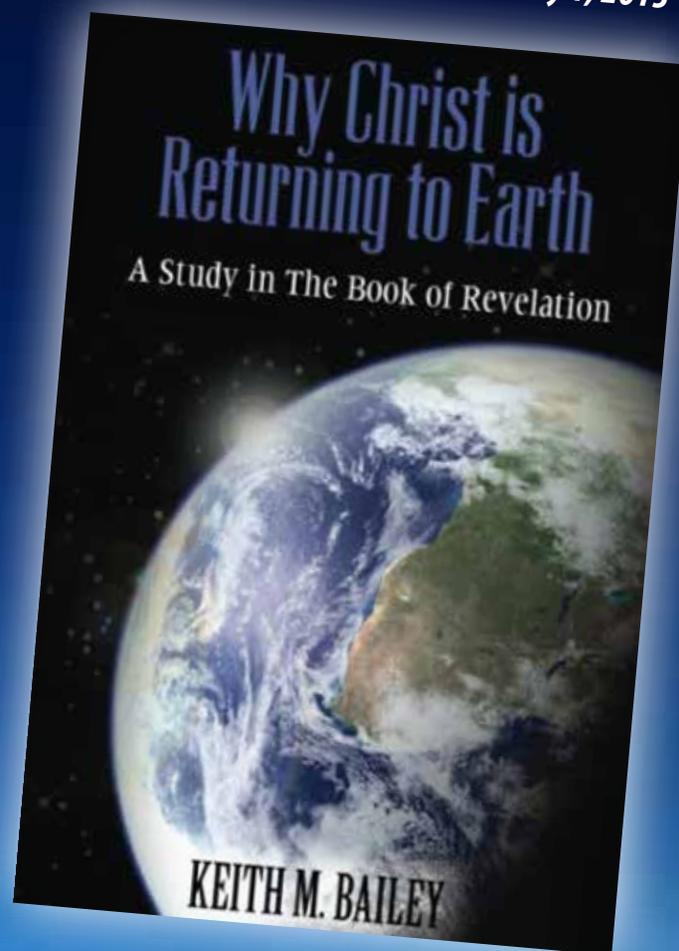
The truth becomes clear in verse five that though the thousand-year reign of Christ is now over the kingdom of God and the Lamb has become the eternal king. The kingdom is eternal. From His throne the king of eternity declares, "Behold I make all things new." John was then instructed to offer in his writing the truth uttered by Christ from the throne. He also was to write that Christ's words are always faithful and that is a promise that will hold good for all eternity.

He that sat upon the throne identifies himself as Alpha and Omega, the beginning and the end. This can be none other than the eternal Christ. It is He that came as Redeemer in the first world and opened the fountain of the

Why Another Book on Revelation?

\$12.00 Available around February 1, 2013

Many believers find Revelation difficult and therefore they seldom read it and never have seriously studied it. It is also neglected from the pulpit. Both laity and pastors avoid it for the same reason. It seems too mystical and symbolic for anyone but a professional to understand. Such is not the case. It was written for all believers to read and comprehend. The Holy Spirit inspired the book of Revelation and if for no other reason the Bible declares it to be profitable for doctrine, correction, and instruction in righteousness.



This book is an attempt to let Revelation tell its own story. The central theme as set forth in the first verse is the unveiling of Jesus Christ in full victory and in His glorified state. The book begins with an announcement that Jesus has won. He is stage center and in charge from the beginning of the Revelation to its conclusion.

This last book of the Bible shows how the history of the world will terminate. Jesus Christ is to personally, bodily, return to earth and set up the kingdom of heaven on earth. The fact that His church will reign with Him is of personal interest to every Christian. You cannot get this full story any place else in the Bible but the Revelation. The rapture of the church, the restoration of Israel, and the end of the times of the Gentiles show how God will close out history just as He had planned it. All these facts surround the incredible seven year tribulation period. It all makes sense when put in its context. History is laid aside and the door is opened to eternity.

This study of Revelation gives special attention to the key Christ gave John in Revelation 1:19. He told the apostle the book would be made up of three parts; the vision of the glorified Christ, the things that are an overview of the church age given in the seven letters, and the third section is comprised of the things hereafter. This third section begins with chapter four and continues to the end of the book. God is pleased to lift the veil on the future to the extent we need to be aware of it.

Other books by Keith M. Bailey may be found at
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waters of life. His promise to the overcomer is the inheritance of all things and the assurance that He will be their God and they will be His sons. The Lord declares from the throne that the wicked of every kind has been dealt with and consigned eternally to the Lake of Fire.

The New Jerusalem, the Lamb's Wife

One of the angels, which poured out the bowls of the wrath of God, comes to John asking him to follow that he might show him the Bride, the Lamb's wife.

Previously an angel took John into the wilderness to show him the Scarlet woman seated on the beast (Revelation 17:1). Now in this vision John has the privilege of seeing the Bride with Christ who is the moral antithesis of the Scarlet woman, known as the great whore. Purity, modesty and holiness characterize the Lamb's Bride.

John was then transported in the spirit to a high mountain from which he had a good view of the great, holy Jerusalem, coming down out of heaven. The city is said to have the glory of God the features of which are given in the next sixteen verses of this chapter. Such an actual city has been anticipated by the godly since the days of Abraham. The writer of Hebrews says that the ancient patriarchs looked for a city which had foundation whose Builder and Maker was God (Hebrews 11:10). Verse sixteen of the eleventh chapter of the book of Hebrews says, "Wherefore God is not ashamed to be called their God; for he hath prepared for them a city" (Hebrews 11:16). Later in the book of Hebrews mention is made once again of this anticipated city.

"But ye are come to Mount Zion and unto the city of the living god, and to an innumerable company of angels. To the general assembly and church of the firstborn, which are written in heaven, and to God the Judge of all, and to the spirits of just men made perfect" (Hebrews 12:22, 23).

Hebrews makes one more significant statement about the city. "For here we have no continuing city, but we seek one to come" (Hebrews 13:14).

There can be no doubt that the city John saw in this vision is the city toward which the saints on earth have been journeying across the ages.

John calls the city the Lamb's Wife. Some contend that this argues against the New Jerusalem being a literal city. But the reality is this magnificent metropolis is the eternal home of the Bride of Christ. Revelation 21:27 states that the population of this city is made up exclusively of those whose names are written in the Lamb's book of life.

It is true that the major features of this holy city give a symbolic picture of the moral and spiritual perfections of the Lamb's Bride.

The impressive wall of the New Jerusalem rest on twelve huge foundation stones, inscribed with the names of the twelve apostles. The Bride who dwells here has been saved by faith in the foundation of truth laid by the apostles under the direction of Christ.

Christ told the disciples that long ago night in the upper room that He was returning to the Father's house to build a place for them. He did

return and build a home for all the ransomed Church of God.

John learned that this New Jerusalem had no temple. None was needed for God the Father and God the Son are the Temple. This feature again speaks of the Bride. In her earthly journey, she had learned that true worship was not a matter of building and altars but direct and personal fellowship with God himself. New Jerusalem has no natural source of light. God, the Father, Son and Holy Spirit generate all the light that will ever be needed in the world to come. The light calls attention to the bride who lives in the new city. In her days on earth, Jesus said of her, "Ye are the light of the world."

While John looks on, the Angel measured the city walls and gates. He found it to be an enormous cube 1500 miles wide, 1500 miles long of 1500 miles high. It easily transcends the most elaborate and magnificent structure ever built on earth. The carpenter from Nazareth died, rose from the dead, ascended to heaven and in His glorified state built for His Bride the holy Jerusalem. If you are truly a Christian, this is where you will live forever.

Before we leave this chapter, consideration needs to be given to who will populate the New Jerusalem and the new earth. It has already been established that the church, the Bride of Christ, will live in the New Jerusalem. All those who have died, righteous and been resurrected from the dead will also inhabit the holy city. That would mean the Old Testament saints and the tribulation saints will take up residence in this remarkable city.

Who then will populate the new earth? Revelation 21:3 speaks of the new people among which God will dwell in the eternal age. They will be His people and He will be their God.

Revelation 21:23-24 says that God will be the light of the new city and that the nations of them, which are saved, shall walk in the light of the holy city. The kings of the earth will bring their glory and honor into it. Verse 26 says they will also bring the glory and honor of the nations into the New Jerusalem.

A great many expositors of Revelation believe that the holy city will hover over the earth during the millennium and the nations shall walk in its light. The difficulty with this interpretation is the lack of any statement that this was in God's plan. It is therefore an assumption lacking other scriptural support. This position also overlooks the reality of the human population on the new earth. A population that have been saved out of history past and so transformed by the grace of God that they are both sinless and perfect as are all the saints living in the holy city.

To deny the existence of nations in the eternal age is countered by the fact that the nations are mentioned three times in two chapters on eternity (Revelation 21:24, 26; 22:2). The kings of the earth are spoken of in Revelation 21:24. To arbitrarily transfer these passages to the millennium is a violation of this text.

So there will be people and nations on the new earth. Where will this human population come from? For a start, let us consider God has already revealed plans for the covenant nation.

Twice in the prophecy of Isaiah, the future of Israel is related to the new heaven and the new earth. Isaiah prophesied, "For behold, I create new heavens and a new earth, and the former shall not be remembered, nor come into mind" (Isaiah 65:17). The remainder of the 6th chapter is related to millennial days. The prophet relates Israel to the new heaven and a new earth.

J. Dwight Pentecost wrote the following regarding Israel and the new earth, "Israel's covenant guarantees that the people, the land, a national existence, a kingdom, a king, and spiritual blessings in perpetuity" (Things to Come, Dunham Publishing Company, 1961, page 561).

In Isaiah 66:22 it is written, "For as the new heavens and the new earth, which I will make, shall remain before me, saith the Lord so shall your seed and your name remain." From these passages is evident that Israel will exist as a nation in the eternal new earth.

There must be other nations for the word "nation" in the plural form is found three times in Revelation 21 and 22. After Christ's second coming, Matthew records that He will sit upon the throne of His glory and before Him will be gathered all the nations to be judged. The sheep nations were put at His right hand, the goat nations on the left. To those on His right hand Christ said, "Come ye blessed of my father, inherit the kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the world" (Matthew 25:34). To the goat nations He said, "Depart from me, ye cursed, into everlasting fire, prepared for the devil and his angels."

The sheep nations demonstrated their faithfulness and their relationship to Israel on earth. They like Israel restored will enter the eternal kingdom. They are no longer Gentile nations but "sheep" nations for they follow the Great Shepherd of the sheep our Lord Jesus Christ. These godly people will with Israel populate the new earth. The Bible does not indicate that they will reproduce in the new Earth. It would seem that this population will remain the same in numbers throughout eternity. There is no mention made of either death or reproduction in the eternal age.

We can now account for the earthly population of the new Earth and the population of the New Jerusalem. All will be godly, pure of heart, righteous in conduct. The entire population will forever enjoy true spirituality in the immediate presence of the Father and the Son.

Chapter 22 takes up another important aspect of life in the new Earth. John is now inside the holy city. He is shown the stream of pure water flowing out of the throne of God and the Lamb producing a river flowing down by a street. On each side of the river is the tree of life. Monthly it bears twelve different kinds of fruit. The leaves from the tree of life were intended for the healing of the nations. What need for healing could there possibly be on the new earth? The answer is found in the Greek word translated healing. It also means preventive healing. Evidently, it gives the body all it needs to keep well.

This account cannot help but bring to the reader's mind the Garden of Eden, man's orig-

inal home at creation. At the end of time and the beginning of eternity God created an eternal home for the saved that has everything in it God ever intended should be in the original Garden of Eden had it not been for sin. By the perfect redemptive work of Christ, sin has been removed forever from the home of the blood bought souls living in the new earth and its holy city New Jerusalem. It will be their privilege to feed on the fruit and leaves of the tree of life. The curse that rested on the first earth is gone and none can ever come on the new earth.

In verse three, we learn that the throne of God and the Lamb is in the city. Therefore, the government of the new earth is the eternal kingdom of God. There will be no inactivity there for His servants will joyfully serve Him constantly.

The most exciting phrase in this chapter is "they shall see his face" (verse four). What glory, what great expectation to live day by day seeing His face. Each person will have His name on their foreheads.

There will be no night in the new earth. It will be broad day light all the time. There will be plenty for saints to do. We have already noted they will serve Christ and they who ruled with Christ during the millennium will continue to reign in the eternal age.

In verse six, the angel told John that what he had heard is faithful and true. It is the Lord God of the holy prophets who arranged through His angels that those who serve Him might know what will shortly come to pass. What a strong emphasis is placed on prophecy by the above statement. Prophecy is not a sideline in the purpose of God. Prophecy is mainstream and keeps the child of God in touch with the way that God works in the affairs of this world. For the enlightened Christians it is foolhardy to ignore what God has shared with us about His plans for the kingdom.

At the beginning of the book of Revelation Christ said those who read the book will be blessed. In this last chapter of Revelation He says very forthrightly, "Behold I come quickly," keep the truth expounded in this book and you will be blessed. Christ expects us to be aware of the prophetic truth in the Word. Since His coming is imminent, it should be a daily concern for the child of God.

John once again succumbs to the urge to worship the angel and was rebuked for his action and exhorted to worship God. The angel's final word to John was the instruction to leave the book of Revelation unsealed. The practical reason is that the time is at hand.

To explain the point the angel said, "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" (Revelation 22:11).

In view of the imminent coming of Christ, meaning He could come any time of the day or night, are you ready to meet Him in the air or would you be left unready for His coming?

He brings the reader face-to-face with the possibility of being frozen, figuratively speaking, in your present spiritual condition forever. There is nothing like prophetic truth to bring

the soul to the hour of decision.

The remainder of this final chapter is a moving admonition to all who read the book to take seriously the wonderful unveiling of the Lord Jesus Christ in His full power and glory and the fact that He will impact this world like nothing else has ever been done.

He will by His own will overrule all human endeavor and opposition to close history and shut the door on this present world so He may open the door on eternity, the Paradise of God, the home of the redeemed forever.

The closing verses of chapter 22 are addressed to the individual believer and also to the church as a corporate body. The final beatitude defines who has the right to enter the holy city. Only they that do Christ's commandments may dwell in the city and eat from the tree of life. This indicates the fact that those who believe savingly in Jesus Christ are called to the way of obedience. This truth has fallen through the cracks with the church of our day.

Verse fifteen interrupts the series of admonitions to point out the final separation that divides those in Christ's eternal kingdom from those who are without because they believed not.

Jesus spoke to John emphasizing the importance of the message His angel has given the church in this book of Revelation. They remind the old apostle of when Jesus lived on earth and taught the disciples of His majestic offices. Jesus is

from the line of David speaking of His kingly office. He is also "the bright and morning Star." In this title is the victory of the eternal Christ, He is light for all people for all eternity. He is the light of His body here on earth leading her on as the lights go out in this fallen world. What great incentive to long for and ready oneself for the meeting in the air the day of the rapture.

The Last Call for Sinners to Come to Christ

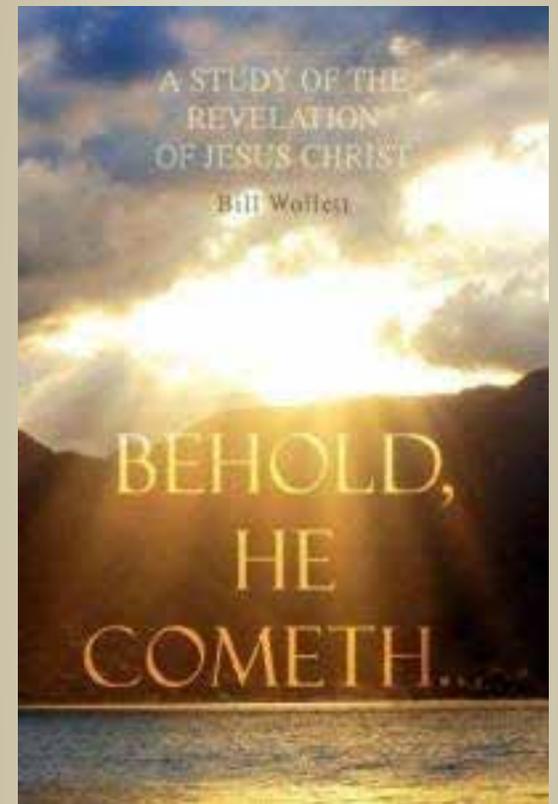
The Holy Spirit will be empowering the church to present the gospel of the Lord Jesus Christ right down to the final hour. The Spirit will continue to convict and convince the sinner of his need and to cultivate a thirst for God in the hearts of unbelievers. The Lord Jesus is in these words asking the church to remain faithful in her testimony with a day-by-day life of practical holiness.

The last warning in the Bible (Revelation 22:18-19) underscores the truth that the Scriptures are inspired of the Holy Spirit, inerrant, infallible, incorruptible and the final authority. Put simply, these verses are saying, be careful what you do with God's precious Word. Your eternity depends on it.

The last book of the Bible closes with a prayer. It is short but oh so significant. Jesus' last words to John the Revelator were, "Surely I come quickly." John, with holy and humble affirmation, cries out, "Amen, even so, come Lord Jesus."

The last benediction of the Bible is full of comfort. "The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ be with you all. Amen."

Without controversy, the Book of the Revelation is the most neglected book of the Bible. However, this first-century vision of St. John takes the reader into the 21st century and beyond! Written in down-to-earth language, this work enables even the reader with limited Bible knowledge to understand God's message for these last days. "Behold, He Cometh..." provides a valuable guide for Bible Study groups, especially teens, by answering many questions and generating thought-provoking discussions. Also, those who are looking for a practical way to present the Gospel to friends and loved ones will find this book to be a gift that will speak to the heart.



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A New Creation "I STAND AT THE DOOR" Not a Reformation

Paul Rader

"Behold, I stand at the door, and knock: 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).

What our scientists have called the unconscious self, God has chosen to name soul and spirit. God has chosen to call this great realm where He speaks, "the heart," and it has a door. The modern wireless has found delightfully that, through a proper radio apparatus or receiver, the sounds that emanate throughout the world from broadcasting stations may be gathered in. God intended man as the receiving instrument for Himself. This great heart realm is the delicate instrument chosen by God to know Him, to glory in Him, to talk with Him, to feed upon Him. Sin has tuned Him out and closed the door.

These radio-receiving instruments can be easily marred. Sometimes nothing is received but a buzz or sputtering. Sin has marred the soul and spirit, or heart realm of man, so that instead of receiving gladly all that comes from God, the sputter, bluster, and cross currents of unbelief kill out His revelation. God plainly states, because they would not receive the love of the truth, they are given over to receive the buzz and the sputter called "the lie."

Mankind has discovered by auto-suggestion that he can get responses from this unconscious self, but these are mere buzzes and sputterings. Modern men have discovered that this great unconscious heart realm is the pantry from which man was intended to draw the forces of life. They had found that, within us, is that great wonder-life, which builds this body, that unconscious life which quietly and silently keeps the heart beating and fills the lungs with air that attends to the supply in the blood stream for every part of the body that feeds the nerves on which travel a myriad of sensations in and out. They have tried through a formulated method to educate and rouse the unconscious self to more perfect body stim-

ulations and supply, to strengthening of the will, to enlivening of the talents. These psychologists have made remarkable progress. We might call them archaeologists of the natural man. They have dug up his ancient ruins made so by the fall and brought them to the light. Like all of archaeological research, all that is dug up only proves more and more the Word of God. The realm of the heart is filled with wonders, talents, longings, ambitions, tempers, prides, lusts, murder, abilities; but over all is an incomplete and awful buzz of sin and blight of death. God, seeing man a lost and blighted instrument for His manifestation, did not try to piece together the wreck and the ruin, did not try to lay down formulae by which man could rebuild himself into a temple for God's manifestations and for His abode. Seeing man thus, God has not attempted man's reformation. God's method with man, now wrecked and ruined as he is for purposes of God, is announced in the gospel. The gospel is the good news of a recreation for men through Jesus' blood and life. Jesus Christ announced this recreation to Nicodemus. This recreation is on a higher plane than man was put in the first place. When one is born again through Jesus Christ, he becomes, not like Adam was before he fell, but he is made into "a joint heir with Christ" (Romans 8:17).

Everything that we see in the world is created life, but when we come to Jesus Christ, we see uncreated life, for He is God, without beginning and without ending. He is eternal, everlasting, uncreated life. When, by faith, we believe that Jesus is the Son of God, He gives us this life, He recreates the heart, and thus Himself with His uncreated life, takes up His abode in us, and we take up our

abode in Him. "If any man be in Christ, he is a new creation; old things are passed away; behold all things are become new, and all things are of God."

This is the good news of salvation, "Christ in you, the hope of glory." Now, if modern man has found, that, in the unconscious natural man, there are resources that can be stimulated and called forth by suggestion, how much more shall we who have within us an abiding Christ believe that within us are all the resources of heaven? How much greater foundation have we, when we call not upon our own natural created resources, but rely upon His uncreated life by direct promise of God which says, "My God shall supply all your need according to His riches in glory by Christ Jesus." We can sing:

"Oh! what a wonderful place Jesus has given me!

Saved by His glorious grace I may be even as He;

When with my Lord I appear, like Him I know I shall be;

But, while I walk with Him here, I may be even as He.

"One in His merits I stand;

One as I pray in His name.

All that His worth can command,

I can with confidence claim."

I am the newly created temple, and within me He abides and I abide in Him. He has made this great promise. Oh, beloved, it is a tremendous challenge to our faith. "If ye abide in me, and my words abide in you, ye shall ask what ye will, and it shall be done unto you." Glory to God for the blessed Abider, in whom we have all things and abound.

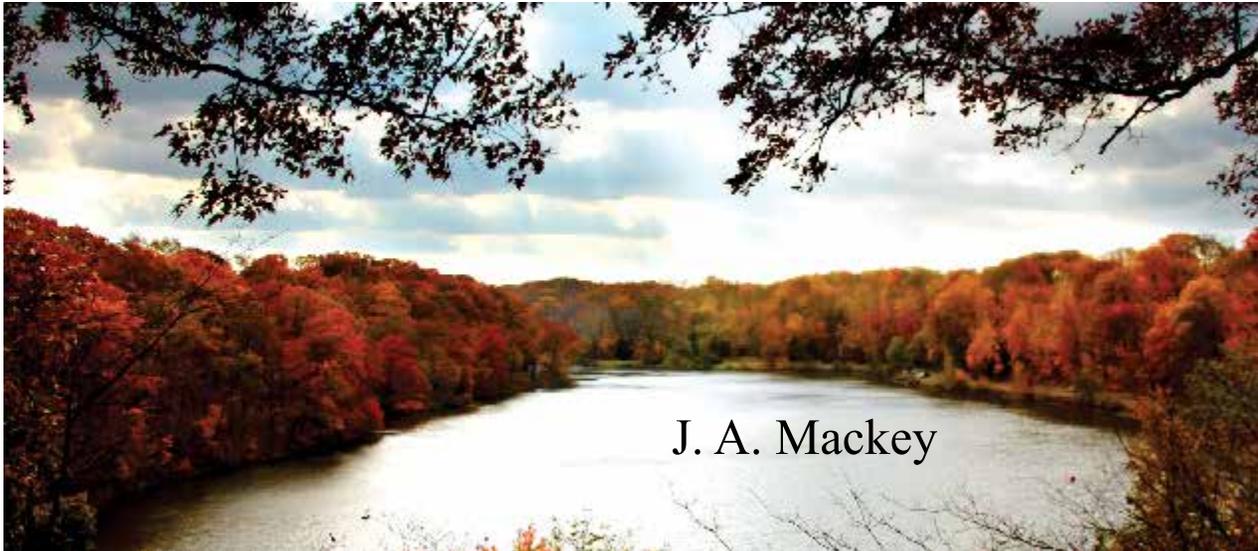
He is working for me. He is working in me. He is working now.



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THE EXTRAVAGANT NATURE OF THE GLORY OF GOD



J. A. Mackey

Anything you and I possess in health, wealth, goods, created things, property; things we either use or somehow hold dear to us are a mere pittance in the light of the Glory of God given to us to the end or goal that we who name his Name be one, even as you, Father and I are one. When I read John 17, particularly during Holy Week, but other times as well, I am stopped; almost arrested in my reading and thinking by three facts: providential if its true; the passion if it is true; and the proclamation's weight on you and me as Christians if it is true. That truth – if you and I “have been given the Glory of God, the very Glory God the Father gave his only begotten Son—the Son has given [and will continue to give] that they all be one in reflection of the Holy Trinity.”

First, that glory is the glory of being human. People searching for meaning in experiences (which are fleeting); relationships (which are usually broken); tattoos and piercings (where tattoos sag and piercings grow larger and larger holes); study, but nothing in particular (so we go to schools that have no necessary courses and therefore go through life without ever understanding even the fundamentals of the liberal arts: math, rhetoric, reading, writing, ad infinitum. All of these, and dozens more are calling attention to oneself because of the need to be loved as a human being, but without a substructure, no one ever gets to know you at all. But what we get to know, if indeed this is the “journey” we choose, is not who you are, it tells me you are questioning who you are.

Jesus prays that the glory: initiated in the Father; conveyed to the Son; is given to those who follow Jesus an answer to who I am: an actual recipient of the glory of God—Jesus prayed it—it is done. I therefore become a simple; complex; introvert/extravert; young/old; some kind of a person who is endowed through no merit of one's own, to be living in and experiencing the glory of God that say: “Hi, I'm Bill Westwood...” And in that, saying of I am comfortable in my own skin.”

Comprehending this is intensive. We're just scratching the surface of John 17:22. Barkley writes that the glory God gives us through Jesus' prayer is the cross we carry—ignoble to Jesus, victorious for the disciple. This may be an excellent way to begin to comprehend the fact that we possess glory: the cross is never heavy again: let's face it, Jesus did say, “Come unto me all you who labor and are of heavy burden and I will give you rest....” Matthew 11:28. That which Jesus gives us, glory, in a Hebrew/Greek cultural setting (with maybe more than desired of Roman influence), find themselves give grace which in Greek comes to us from the word “doxa.” Does that ring a bell for anyone? This is our first experience of “glory,” we may have. I grant you it is a bit technical, but when we ascribe glory to

“I have given them the glory you have given me.” John 17:22

Jeffrey A. Mackey, PhD, DD

the Holy Trinity singing, “Glory be to the Father and to the Son and to the Holy Spirit,” remember you exist in the Glory-sharing of the coming kingdom.

A second challenge of that glory which comes from the Father, through the Son, and ultimately to us, is what do we do with this attribute of God which we now in some way and to some degree own because Jesus Christ gave it to us. I believe we show the glory we have been given in our commitment to God and his Christ. Those who have been given the glory of God will “wear it well,” as has been said. One old time preacher man put the glory of God this way, saying it follows the believers life from baptism through to the end of life. Our baptism stands to show our relationship to God: “Baptism, which corresponds to this, now saves you, not as a removal of dirt from the body but as an appeal to God for a good conscience, through the resurrection of Jesus Christ.” I Peter 3:21. So we begin clean.

The Scriptures gently remind us over and over again that we are to be consecrated and to be continually so. Possessing the glory, the very same glory as Jesus Christ, pulls us in a gentle but always centripetal sense to the center who is Jesus Christ himself.



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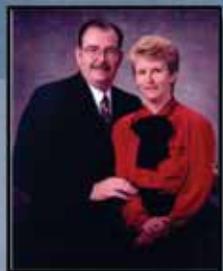
6:00 PM - Sunday Evening Praise with groups for all ages

Wednesday:

5:45 PM - Fellowship Supper (Covered dish)

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GLORY THE BALANCE OF GOD OVER ALL

"God, show me your glory...."

Jeffrey A. Mackey, PhD, DD

The literary professor, par excellence, of the 20 is, of course, the man, C.S. Lewis. In a wee book released, I believe, during World War II he has an essay from which the title of the book comes, *The Weight of Glory*. It is, without commentary, an excellent work, either due to, or partially due to the fact that he knows the Greek meaning of glory is "weight." God's glory is his weight upon the world, and the glorious weight of our hearts to give him our uttermost praise with all its concomitant weight we can, with the dynamic of the indwelling Holy Spirit behind us. Glory is Grace receiving in return what Grace has given to the human race, the Glory of being created in the image of God. We rather prefer to think that Glory is the dressing up of a good person to please God, when Glory is the heart of flesh and a new body put on to serve God. One can dress—up God on the outside, and hypocritical people will see though your hypocrisy like viewing a candle through gauze in the dead of night.

We cannot feign Glory any longer than we can feign Grace; and the epicenter of this feigning of Grace and Glory is in the vortex of contemporary music. I have been working my way through six hymnals, and find that I am at a loss to find a "hymn," "chorus," or something from The Contemporary Christian Movement, a song that has bears the weight of glorifying God. In the place of Glorifying God, there is only one person, to any one person's conviction and that he or she has his or her own glory. The thought that "When he was on the cross, I was on his mind?" says volumes about the atoning highpoint of Christian theology in the West.

When in an Eastern Country back in the decade of the 1908s, I met for more than half a day with a Christian pastor there who was so proud to show me his "God's song book." I asked him to read the titles in English that I might agree on knowing them. We were quite

successful for over ninety hymns, and then he, too, with is people in an Eastern Country shared my same difficulty, they want to ask "Not what they can do for their God, but what their God has done (not what he will do today or in the future) for them, as if they deserve the Grace of God. Anyone who believed he or she is worthy of the Glory of God, has both an exalted view of self and possesses a minutia understand of the Glory of God.

God had clearly told believers in Isaiah's Day through the Prophet: "I am the Lord, that is My name; I will not give My glory to another . . ." (Isa. 42:8) That comes to us, as it did to Israel when we think our church is the most glorious, our denomination is the most glorious, and even that our country is most glorious. That the glory of God transcends our artificial fences and is weighty precisely because it is so transcendent. When one person (as has happened in the last decade—and I am writing in 2014) had the Christian world all abuzz with the fact that Jesus would come back that year, and when wrong, he recalculated and others continues to follow. This is both gross narcissistic pseudo prophecy or it is infantile Christianity believing any thing they see or here by social or mass media. These were seeking the glory that could come their way for knowing something no one else knew! These mislead ones believed they were the church of God's glory and what they really were, what we would say today, self-seekers. A self-seeker can never know the Glory of God. One cannot see God in a mirror. Even his Glory coming upon Jesus at the Transfiguration caused the disciples to cover their eyes because it was so radiant.

But the Glory of God is broader that this by far. Hildebert of Lavardin (1056-1133) confessed: "God is over all things, under all things, outside all, within, but not enclosed, without, but not excluded, above, but not raised up, below, but not depressed, wholly above, presiding, wholly without, embracing, wholly within, filling." Exegete this and we begin to see the Glory of God.

Dan Schaeffer writes, "Then Moses said, 'I pray you, show me your glory!' (Exodus 33:18) In this, the earliest historical reference to the glory of God, Moses asks the Lord to

reveal it. We wistfully long for the same opportunity, because the glory of God is often a mystery to us." Somehow knowing instinctively that there was glory in and around the person of God, Moses wanted, I think—not selfishly, but out of sheer wonder and awe, to have a glimpse. Someone once said of the Glory of God, until you get a true view of a glimpse, you will never gaze on the Glory!

Dan Schaeffer continues: "When you glorify someone, you recognize his importance, or the 'weight,' of some desirable uniqueness he possesses. Beauty, majesty, and splendor are the main ideas the word seeks to convey." I cannot (nor do I wish to) forget two glimpses of the Glory of God, and all I can say is summed up in what Abraham Heschel wrote to the effect that awe and wonder were prerequisites to glimpsing the Glory and that is precisely where the Grace of God places us. The Aramaic-English Bible translates I Peter 2:10 this way, "You are those who at the first were not considered a people, but now are the people of God, neither were mercies upon you, but now mercies are poured out upon you." Living in the Glory, means first, standing in awe and bowing in wonder. There is no stairway up; there is no special saying to get past the King's guards; there is no private handshake; there is the invitation to come and experience the Glory of God.

I must bring us to a conclusion, and there is no place where Jesus Christ's will (as well as the will of the Father) is more pronounced and publicly recorded than here in the Word using words to pray to the one who created us to use words. In the High Priestly prayer of Jesus, recorded for us in the Gospel according to John, we find this portion of the prayer, which is beyond comprehension; defying exegesis; confounding most theologians; and sends shock waves up and down one's back when even the first mere truth of it begins to take foundational presence in our lives: "And I have given them the glory that you have given me, so that they shall be one, just as we are one, so that the world shall believe that you have sent me."

Dear reader what has Jesus prayed? He did not pray for God to give Jesus' followers Glory; he did not ask for permission to give his Glory to his followers, no, Jesus tells the Father, "I have given them the glory you have given me." There is either a limited amount of Glory to go around, or Jesus is the font of Glory from which there is no bottom: the supply is endless.

At Jesus' birth, we are told that, "the glory of the Lord shone around them" (Luke 2:9). And what in Bethlehem, that Glory that manifested itself all around, is what should be showing itself around the by believers in the Church. "The glory of the Lord shone around them," would be the best testimony an individual (Remember John 17) and of a church ("I gave it to them.") and this in the plural. To multiply grace mathematically, is to promote the divine Godhood geometrically.

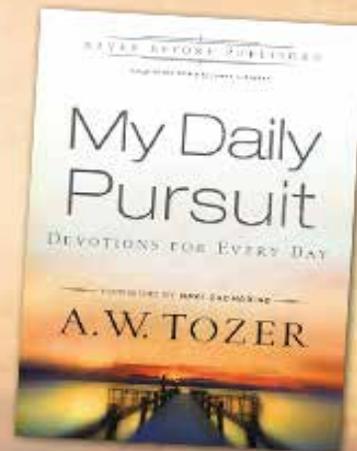
C. S. Lewis called it "The Weight of Glory," and by his near seven decades of positive influences on world-wide Christianity, his glimpse has become a gaze!

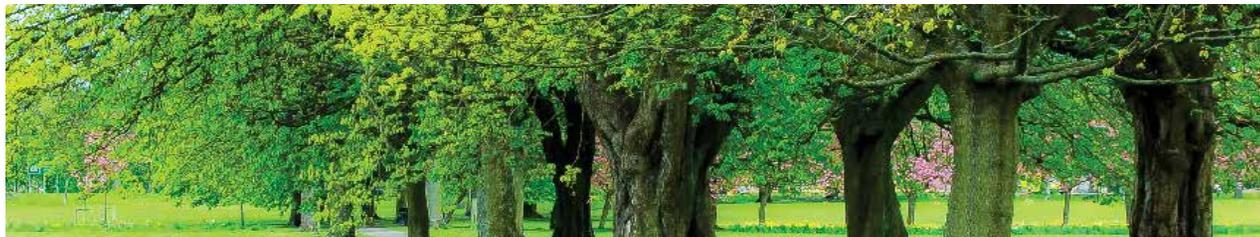
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On Longing For Eternal Life, And The Joys Promised To Those Who Fight To Gain That Life

Thomas à Kempis, (1380 –1471)

The Beloved: My son, when you feel the desire for everlasting bliss streaming into you from on high; when you thirst to leave that body in which you are now, as it were, camping for a time, so as to be able to gaze on my glory, that glory on which there falls no shadow of change: open your heart wide, and welcome this holy inspiration with all the longing you have. Thank me again and again for my divine bounty in dealing thus with you so generously, visiting you in my mercy, stirring you with the fire of my love, uplifting you with my strength, and so preventing you from falling down again into those worldly ways to which you gravitate so naturally. You must not take this favour to be the result of your own meditations, your own exertions; it is yours only because the grace of heaven has come down to help you, because God has looked on you in love. Its purpose is to make you advance in holiness, to make you more deeply humble, better prepared for conflicts yet to come; it is to make you cling to me with all the love of your heart, to make you long to serve me with willing devotion.

There are often fires burning, my son, but not a flame shoots upward without smoke beside it. That is the way with a lot of people who are afire for heavenly things; the flame is there well enough, but they are not free from the temptation of bodily desire. Thus it is that, for all the longing they put into their prayers, they do not offer them solely for the honour of God. That is often the way with your own desire, though you may have persuaded yourself your prayers were going to be perfectly sincere; but no prayer can be called perfect or free from blemish when there is some tincture of self-interest in it.

Do not ask me for things to make life pleasant and comfortable for you; ask for what is acceptable to me, for whatever brings me honour. If you look on things in the way you should, you ought to prefer my way of ordering things, and keep to it, rather than ask for the fulfilment of your own desires or for the keeping of something you have desired before. I know what your desires are; I have heard what you so often sigh for. You would like to be at this moment amid the freedom and the glory of the children of God, enjoying your eternal home and the abounding happiness of the heavenly country; but the time for that has not yet come. You are still, for the

moment, in another kind of time—wartime it is, a time of toil and trial. You long to be filled with the supreme good, but that bliss is not to be arrived at now. I am speaking of myself; wait for me, the Lord says, until the coming of the kingdom of God.

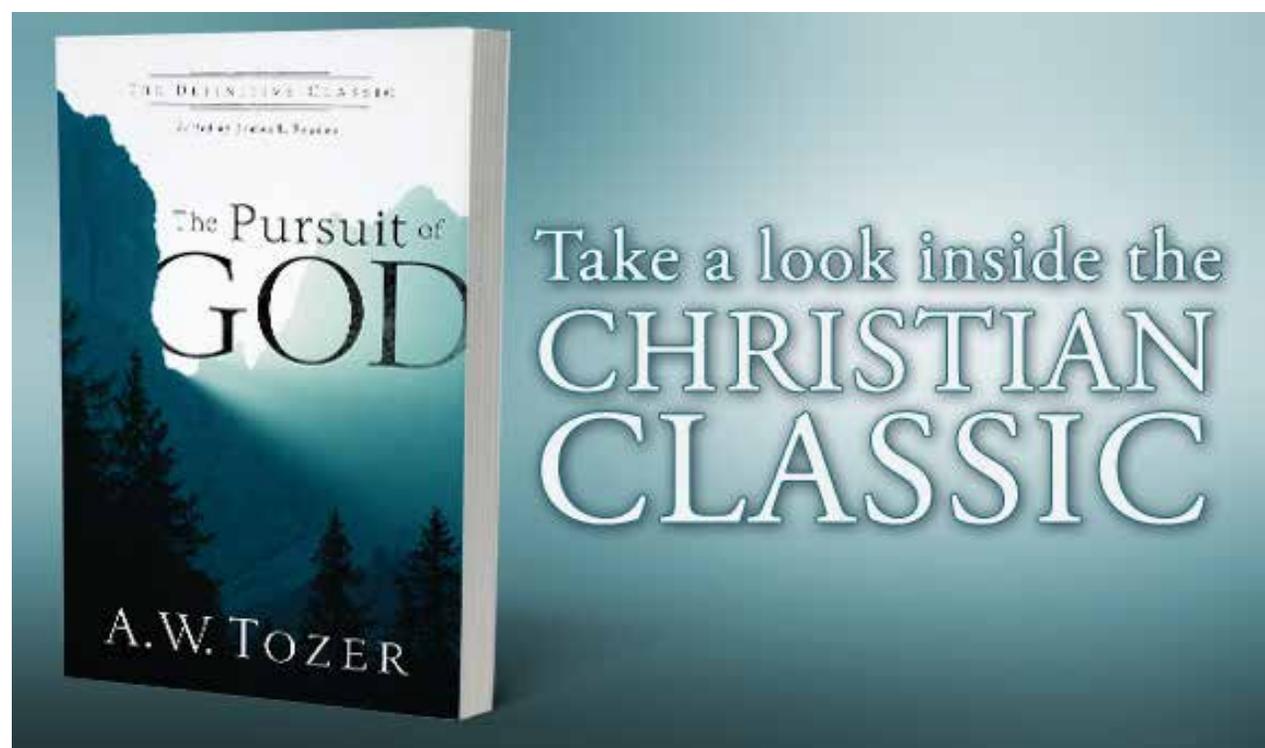
There is still a time of trial for you on earth; you must be tested in many ways. Sometimes you will be given consolation, but it will not be granted you in full abundance; so take heart and be strong, whether doing or enduring what goes against nature. You have to clothe yourself in a new kind of manhood, change into another kind of person. Often you will have to do what you dislike, and forgo doing what you would like to do. Other people's interests will prosper, your own make no headway; others will be listened to when they speak, but people will take no notice of anything you say. Others will ask for things, and get them; when you ask, your request will be in vain.

People will say a lot of nice things about others; no one will say a word about you. Others will be given this or that position of trust; you will be reckoned good for nothing at all. Naturally, this kind of thing will make you sad now and then, but if you bear it all without saying a word, you have taken a great step forward. These are the ways—these and many others like them—by which a faithful servant of the Lord is usually tested, to see how he can renounce himself and break his own will in everything. There is hardly anything in which you need so much to die to yourself as to see and suffer things that are opposed to your own wishes. This is especially so when things are ordered to be done which to your mind are quite out of keeping and completely useless. Being under obedience to another, as you are, you dare not stand up to one higher in authori-

ty, and so you think it hard to have to live your life at another's beck and call and disregard your own feelings.

But think, my son, of the reward these hardships are going to win you; think how soon they will end, how great is the prize you will be given. Then you will not feel the weight of them; instead, they will comfort you and be a strong support to your will to endure. In return for the free surrender of what little choice you have in earthly things, in heaven you shall always have your own way. Yes, there you shall find all you have ever wanted, all you could ever desire. There every kind of delight will be yours to have, and you will never be afraid of losing it. There will your will and my will be ever as one, and you will desire nothing I do not desire, nothing for yourself alone. There shall be no one to withstand you there, no one to complain, no one to hinder or thwart you; but all you have ever desired will be there together, giving joy to your powers of love and filling them to the very brim. There, for the shame you have suffered, I will give you glory; in place of the garb of mourning, a robe of honour; instead of the lowest place, a seat in my kingdom for ever. There your obedience shall be rewarded in the sight of all; your hard penance shall be turned to joy, and your lowly subjection receive a crown of glory.

During this present life, then, behave humbly towards all men, and do not mind who says this or who orders that, but take great care that whenever anyone asks you for something or makes some suggestion, whether he be your superior, your equal, or one below you, take it all in good part and with unfeigned willingness try to do what he says. Let other men have their ambitions in one direction or another, one man priding himself on his ability in one field, another in something different, and getting praised for it any number of times; you must take pleasure in none of these things, but only in being slighted and in my good pleasure and honour alone. This is what you must desire: that in you, whether by your life or by your death, God may always be glorified.



THE RENASCENCE OF WONDER

George H. Morrison

“Open thou mine eyes, that I may behold wondrous things out of thy law.”

Psalm 119

There died not long ago in London a gentleman of whom the public knew but little, but who exercised no inconsiderable influence upon the literature of our time. Mr. Watts Dunton was a poet, and as a poet, he ought to be remembered. He was a novelist, one of whose novels was very widely read, and is read still. And he had such delicate and loving insight into all that is true and good in literature that Rossetti thought him the first critic of all time. Whether his poems will live or not is questionable, but there is one phrase he coined which certainly will live. It was he who gave us the now familiar phrase “that renascence of wonder.” And it is because his death has constrained some of us to meditate again on the rebirth of wonder that I am going to speak on it tonight.

For one of the hopeful features of the present day, and we ought to note it amid much that is discouraging, one of the hopeful features of the present day is just that wonder is coming to its own again. Some of us here tonight are old enough to remember a time when it was different. As with Mr. Gradgrind in *Hard Times*, the motto of thirty years ago was ‘Never wonder.’ And it would be a very interesting study, though one scarcely congenial to the pulpit, to trace the causes, in science and society, of that hard unwondering temper. It is enough to say with profound gratitude that that temper is disappearing

now. Silently almost imperceptibly, there has come a renascence of the sense of wonder. Men are awaking to the mystery of things; to the reality of the unknowable; to the fact that there are great and vital truths, which it is quite beyond our power to prove.

Of course, there is a wonder, which is born of ignorance, which must inevitably pass away. It is what Crabbe calls in his grim poem ‘the rustic wonder of the village boy.’ You show a savage a Geneva watch, and in his eyes, it is a miracle. He will call the village in intense excitement to share in the wonder of his ignorance. And naturally, as knowledge widens, and the principle mechanics are explained, such ignorant wondering ceases to exist. But that is only the counterfeit of wonder. True wonder is never expelled by what we know. On the contrary, the more we truly know, the more wonderful does everything appear. In the elementary laws of all mechanics, there is more real mystery for thoughtful men, than for the savage in that watch which is a miracle. It was one of my privileges as a student to listen to the lectures of Lord Kelvin. On what these lectures actually taught me perhaps the less said the better. And yet I, and many of my fellow-students, looking back upon these golden days, feel how incalculable is our debt to them. Here was a man whose knowledge was profound; who moved with the perfect ease of conscious mastery, a

man who spoke, and in every seat of learning the wisest were content to listen; and yet of arrogance was not one trace of the pride of intellect absolutely nothing, but through everything a certain sense of wonder as in the presence of mysteries unfathomable. That and that alone is genuine wonder the wonder not of ignorance but of knowledge; the wonder that does not vanish when we know, but grows and deepens with everything we know. It was the wonder of the Apostle Paul. It was the wonder in the breast of Jesus. And it is the wonder who shall feel forever in the perfected knowledge of eternity.

...all great experiences tend to recreate the sense of wonder...

It is not knowledge, then, which is the foe of wonder; it is something far more commonplace than that. The blight that wilts our faculty of wonder is the familiarity, which begets contempt. Some one has said that if all the stars were to cease shining for a

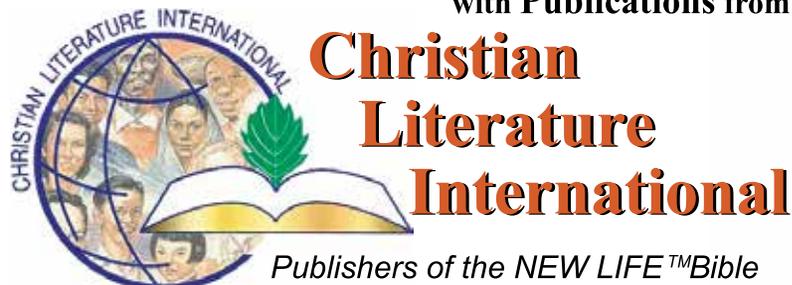
hundred years, and then were suddenly to flash out again, there is not an eye on earth but would be lifted heavenward, and not a heart but would break forth in praise to God. But the stars were there when we were little children, and they will be shining in the heavens tonight, and to us the spectacle is so familiar that we have lost the wonder of it all. ‘I would rather live in a cottage and wonder at everything,’ says Ruskin, ‘than live in Warwick Castle and wonder at nothing.’ And that is the peril of those who live in Warwick

Castle, and in a castle more magnificent than Warwick; a castle whose fretted ceiling is the heaven, whose tapestry is the garniture of summer, whose gateways are touched with the glory of the east, and whose loud-resounding organ is the sea. Live for forty years in Warwick Castle and the wonder of it is scarcely felt at all. Live forty years in such a world as this, and a certain blindness falls upon the eyes. And therefore the need that when the evening falls, and the morning breaks, and the summer comes again, we should pray as the psalmist prayed so long ago, ‘Lord, open thou mine eyes that I may see.’

May I say in passing that all great experiences tend to recreate the sense of wonder? Sickness, sorrow, death, conversion, has a way of bringing new

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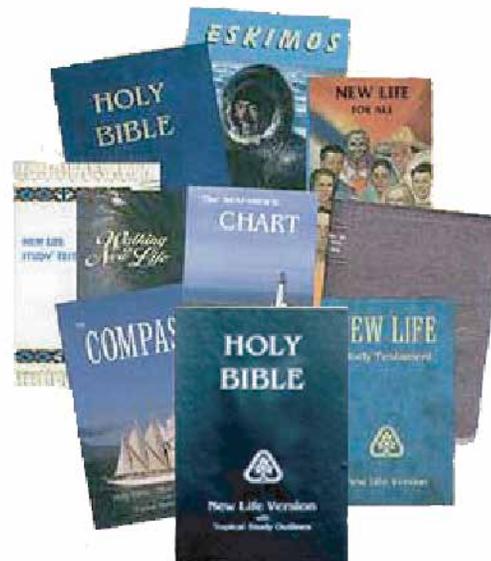


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wonder into everything. That most winsome of all saints, St. Francis tells us of a terrible illness which he had. For weeks, his life was hanging in the balance, and he only wanted to go home to God. And then he tells us how, when he recovered, and went out for the first time on the Italian hills, there was a joy, a wonder and ecstasy in nature that made the world like a paradise of God. That was in Italy long ages since. Are there none here who have had like experience? None who have known this blessing of a sickbed that they have felt afresh the wonder of the world? And I suggest that in the will of God, which is as merciful as it is wise, that recreating of the sense of wonder may be one purpose of many an hour of discipline. I remember once at a street corner hearing a man describing his conversion. It was on a Sunday evening many years ago. And as I stood and listened I heard him crying out that in the hour when he accepted Christ the sun was different, the moon was different, the flowers in the field were different to him. I thought him a foolish ranter then. I do not think him a foolish ranter now. I remember the gracious word of One who said, 'Behold, I make all things new.' For in all the great experiences of the soul there is none greater than genuine conversion and it recreates the faculty of wonder. That is how the rod of God is sometimes sweet and blessed as the dew. It touches the dusty lanes of common life, and they sparkle as on a morning in the May time. The world is never more beautiful or fresh, nor life more wonderful, nor loved ones dearer, than after a season when the sky was darkened and we thought that everything was over.

Now when we turn to Christ, there is one question that naturally rises. Did Christ acknowledge the faculty of wonder? To that question, there can only be one answer. You had a lecture the other evening from Professor Milligan on the discoveries that have been lately made in Egypt. Among these discoveries, as he informed you, are certain sayings attributed to Christ. And one of the most beautiful of all of them is this, 'he that wonders shall reign, and he that reigns shall rest.' Think of it. Inscribe it on your hearts. I feel quite certain it is a genuine logion. Who but Christ would have said in such an age, he that wonders shall rein, and he that reigns shall rest? And even as I hear it, I hear another saying not recovered from Egyptian refuse 'except ye become as little children, ye cannot see the kingdom.' The Pharisee was far too proud to wonder; the little child is wondering all the time. For it the world is not full of laws and maxims; it is full of a lot of wonderful things,' as Stevenson puts it. And so when Christ dislodged the Pharisee, and placed in the centre the disregarded child, he proclaimed to everybody with ears to hear, he that wonders shall reign, and he that reigns shall rest. 'Let others wrangle,' says St. Augustine, 'let others wrangle, I shall wonder.' You can be a genuine Christian without wrangling, but you never can be a Christian without wondering; wondering at the lilies of

the field, and at the lights and shadows of the summer evening, and at the heaven and hell in the heart of every prodigal, and at the love of God victorious on a cross.

I close by suggesting to you a line of thought that you may carry out with you into the world. It is how the gospel, steadily and surely, has deepened the sense of wonder in humankind. It has done so largely in two ways, and these I offer for your consideration.

The first is that our Christian faith has added to the mystery of everything. You and I live in a far more awful universe than that which smiled on the lighthearted Greek. There is not a common word which we can use, such as sin or life or death or love or duty, but has become a thousand times more awful since Jesus moved across the fields of Galilee. For the pagan, life was a brief journey; for the Christian, it is the prelude to eternity.

For the pagan, death was a forgetting; for the Christian, it is heaven or it is hell. For the old pagan, sin was venial folly; for the Christian, in the light of Calvary, sin is an infinitely guilty thing in the eyes of a holy and eternal God. It was Goethe who said, thinking of all that, that Christianity is the religion of sorrow. Nothing could be more false than that; it is a religion of joy and peace and power. And yet the strange thing is that at the very heart of an experienced peace too deep for words, there is a mystery that man can never fathom. In the presence of a deepened mystery like that, man cannot argue; he can only wonder. He must cease speaking. He must bow. He must say to his heart, Keep silence before God. And that is what the faith of Christ has done, and doing it has recreated wonder, by the mystery which it has found in common words like sin and life and death and love and duty.

The second is that our Christian faith

has shown us love at the very heart of everything.

And wherever love is, whether in heaven or earth, wonder is never far away. That little child asleep in its mother's arms is to you a very ordinary little mortal. But to its mother what a wonderful child it is, and wonderful because she loves it so. And so with Christ, once we have learned to love him, and to experience his love to us, there falls a newness of wonder upon everything. God is power, I know that he is power; but he may be power, and still leave me cold. God is justice, I know that he is justice, and yet infinite justice can never win my heart. God is love, and the world is made in love, and every touch of His hand on me is love and immediately I cry in adoration, His name shall be called Wonderful.

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CHINA CLIPPINGS



Xing Tao Church Under Construction

- The Xing Tao Church has been under construction for sometime already. The congregation is making good progress on this authorized building that will serve as a regional center with adequate space for the church to conduct training seminars for elders, teachers and pastors from the surrounding area within a radius of fifty mile. Most of these people cannot attend seminary or Bible School but the church can provide extended sessions of several weeks or even months of training. This is a Chinese solution to the unusual growth of Christianity in China and helps people become better workers in reaching the millions of the area.

- PRAY for the pastors of this flourishing church who are faithful teachers of God's Word.

- PRAY that international workers will have unusual wisdom and be sensitive to their limitations in working with churches in order that the laws of the land may be upheld.

- PRAY that this church will be able to fulfill their great aspirations to teach the Word to leaders of surrounding church groups.

China is Changing

ONE OF THE MOST AMAZING transformations is underway in China today. If you knew "old China" this picture supplied by Open Doors would be absolutely unbelievable. This modern street never existed in my day. Old wooden structures lined the streets.



Dirty, garbage filled streets and rickshaws and donkey carts were all prevalent. The prosperity of the past two decades have changed China immensely, but the one thing that has not changed is the hearts of people. They still need Jesus. Praise God slave labor camps are closing, and hope fully prison time for printing Bibles and Christian literature will also cease.

One thing that has not changed. The Chinese Church has always had a great passion to reach others. That passion is still at fever pitch and outreach is underway in all levels of society. At the present rate of growth, this church could have the largest number of Christians and be the largest missionary-sending nation in the world within two decades! As you read Page 2, examine your own heart and ask yourself if you and your church have the same passion to reach others with the Good News. Then pray that the Church in China will be strengthened to withstand the tide of materialism sweeping the country. Pray that the revival blessings will continue and millions more find Christ as Savior and Lord.

Glory to God

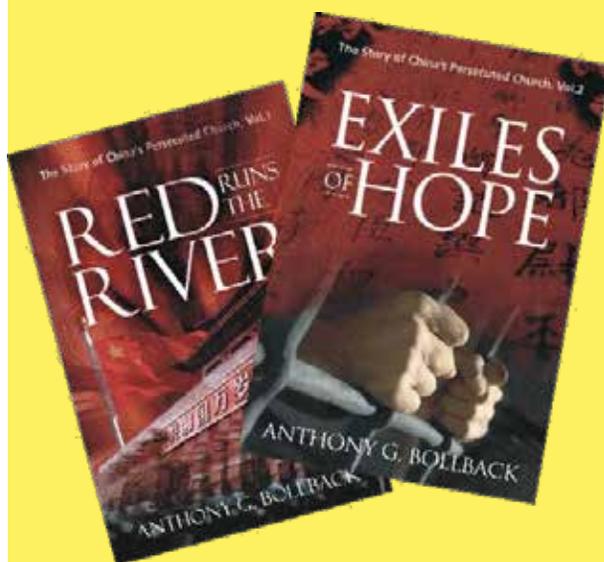
Persecution and China have been synonymous for decades. Praise God, China has declared that the slave labor camps will be closed down immediately! That does not mean persecution is over, but even house churches and the government have a better understanding of each other and these horrible camps will close. China is still #37 on Open Door's World persecution list.

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One of the thrilling reports comes from workers involved with Bright Choices Camps where training is provided to young people. A group of teachers from the USA had an effective ministry of teaching and contacts. PRAY that the summer camps will be fully enrolled and teachers available. The Team is rejoicing in the thrilling testimonies of attendees whose lives are being transformed and broken marriages restored. As God leads, please give toward these projects.

World Cup DVD in Chinese

All soccer fans will be thrilled with the powerful witness this DVD provides of soccer's best giving personal testimonies. The actual scenes of World Cup games is very exciting. It has been released in 41 languages including Mandarin and Cantonese. Contact Shawn@athletesinaction.org or go to their site <http://theprize.com/now> to order DVD copies at \$2.00 each.

Have We Forgotten to God Belongs The Glory

Serena Berthoud



Psalm 19:1-2

“The heavens declare the glory of God, and the sky above proclaims his handiwork. 2 Day to day pours out speech, and night to night reveals knowledge.”

Are our ears tuned to the Lord’s frequency, do we even notice his handiwork? Or are we blind to the very magnificence of all that he created? God’s glory abounds all around us proclaiming he is God, each day the sunrise speaks and the day concurs how great our God is. We mostly live oblivious to all the creation around us, caught up in our own little world. If we continue to live this way, we are self centered and not God centered. There is great danger in forgetting who created us, and all around us, and instead trying to exist by our own efforts. The Father has the glory and dominion over everything, however he will allow us our delusions that we are supreme, and he will stand back and allow us to fall.

Chronicles 29:11

“Yours, O Lord, is the greatness, and the power, and the glory, and the victory and the majesty: for all that is in the heavens and in the earth is yours. Yours is the kingdom, O Lord, and you are exalted as head above all.”

Creation has a time span a beginning and an end, a start and a finish. The Lord on the other hand is infinite, eternal, never ending. Genesis 1:1, “In the beginning God created the heavens and the earth.” God was there and created the beginning as well as the heavens and the earth. God knows our end as well as the end to the current heaven and earth and when he will create the new heaven and earth. God’s glory is beyond the limitation of our words, beyond the smallest of our minds. Imagine the Red Sea parting for the Israelites, manna raining down from heaven to sustain them, then forty years of wandering in the wilderness, never needing new shoes or clothing. The Lord protected his people, despite their stiffed necked attitude. Yet at every turn, they forgot to whom, the glory belonged, even creating a golden calf to praise and glorify: an object that had no power to create or protect them.

Jeremiah 2:11-13

“Has a nation changed its gods,
Even though they are no gods?
But my people have changed their glory
for which they do not profit.
Be appalled, O heavens, at this;
Be shocked, be utterly desolate, declares
the Lord,

for my people have committed two evils:
they have forsaken me,
the fountain of living waters,
and hewed out cisterns for themselves,
broken cisterns that can hold no water.”

We are no less stiffed necked today and we have our own golden calves that we glorify.

Drugs, alcohol, sex, fame and money these are some of the gods that guide our lives and many people live like they don’t know a real God exists. Well what happens when the creation forgets the creator and does not honor him with the glory due him; can we claim ignorance? The Bible is the Lord’s word, delivered to us through his chosen vessels; given to us as God’s instruction on how to live our lives. God’s answer in reference to this often asked question is no, all the evidence of who God is, is before us attesting to our creator, leaving no excuse, Romans 1:18-20, speaks to this debate.

Romans 1:18-20

“For the wrath of God is revealed from heaven against all ungodliness and unrighteousness of men, who by their unrighteousness suppress the truth. 19 For what can be known about God is plain to them, because God has shown it to them. 20 For his invisible attributes, namely, his eternal power and divine nature, have been clearly perceived, ever since the creation of the world, in things that have been made. So they are without excuse.”

As Romans 1:18 says, man and woman by their unrighteousness choose to suppress the truth and knowledge of the creator. Were they to accept the truth of the creator how could they live with their unrighteousness. The problem, however arises that in not acknowledging the reality in this life, they will have to face the consequences for their choices, in the next life, eternity. Look around you God is all around us in the things that have been made. Man can try to find other answers for how the earth came to be or how he came to be, but there will always be a hole in their theory, ultimately because it is an attempt to disregard our creator. Most of us want someone to share our lives with and to take care of us, yet we refuse our God, who created us to spend time with Him and to take care of us. God loves us, even though we are not deserving of His love, but He must be first in our life our He is not in our life. He is our God, we are not god, He gets the praise, honor, and glory. Have we forgotten to God belongs the glory? We have, look up today, look around at nature, you will clearly perceive God in the things that he has made, glory, glory to the Father.

Psalm 72:19

“Blessed be his glorious name forever;
may the whole earth be filled with his
glory!
Amen and Amen!”

The Lord of Glory
Serena Berthoud

*His Glory is right there, all can see,
The heavens declare His Supremacy.*

*The sun so fiercely hot;
Stops shining when He, declared it
stop.*

*Day’s dawning boldly displays
God’s Glory,
It’s handiwork applauding the great
creation story.*

*Night then slips stately into place;
Also, speaking of why the Lord
alone is great.*

Everyone Is Special Rachel Duncan

When we look or listen to
what is around us,
Is it God’s wonderful world
that we see or hear?
Some of us cannot see; they
are special in God’s eyes,
Some of us cannot hear; they
are special in God’s eyes.

When we look or listen to
what is around us,
Is it God’s wonderful world
that we see or hear?
Some of us cannot walk; they
are special in God’s eyes.
Some are in wheel chairs;
they are special in God’s eyes.

When we look or listen to
what is around us,
is it God’s wonderful world
that we see or hear?
When we get to heaven what
a wonderful day that will be
When those that cannot see
will see
Those that cannot hear will
hear
Those in wheelchairs will walk
and run.

When we look or listen to
what is around us,
Is it God’s wonderful world
that we see or hear?
Remember, we are all special
in God’s eyes



The Holy City and the
Blessed Hope
(Preparing for Jesus'
Return, Regal Books)
A. W. Tozer

Eternal God and Father of our Lord and Savior, Jesus Christ, I bow before Thee in expectation of Thy glorious majesty. My hope is not in this world, but rather in that which You have prepared for me and for all those who love Thy appearing. Grant me patience while this world rumbles on it in a cycle of monotony. Amen.

The purpose of this book has been to alert Christians to the times in order to prepare for Jesus' return. I have deliberately not focused on the dramatic elements of prophecy that seem only to feed the religiously curious; rather my goal has been to feed that blessed hope of the believer. Many become discouraged about prophecy because when certain events did not followed what some prophecy teachers taught. For the most part, their focus has been earthbound. However, the old man of God looked for a "city whose builder and maker was God" (Heb. 11:10). Men like Abraham got a glimpse of such a city and lost all interest in things earthly.

It was impossible to move Abraham out of his tent once he got a glimpse of that city. His focus was on that city, and nothing on earth held his interest anymore. After all, how can anything on this earth, tainted by sin, compare with that holy city?

Someone might have gone up to Abraham and asked if he would like to move into a city such as his nephew, Lot did. Abraham would smile and get that faraway look in his eye and say, "I'm looking for a city all right. But a city whose builder and maker is God." It is hard for us to explain such a city to those who have never had the vision Abraham had. After all, words could never convey the majesty of such a city. Man at his best has nothing to compare with that city.

God prepared the city that John writes about for man. Jesus said, "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, I will come again, and receive you unto myself; that where I am, there ye may be also" (John 14:2-3). We could, as many have,

argue about the word "mansions" and what is actually meant here. Or, we could focus on the fact that Jesus has promised to go and prepare a place for us. To define and describe that "place," exhausts the imagination of every man this side of eternity.

THE GLORY OF MAN

Perhaps the great hindrance we have into our envisioning that New City prepared for us is that we have a low view of man. Our picture of man is shrouded in wickedness and depravity. "The heart," Jeremiah the prophet wrote, "is deceitful above all things, and desperately wicked: who can know it?" (Jer. 17:9). All we know concerning humanity are these phrases, "deceitful" and "desperately wicked." Although man has fallen, never forget that God created a masterpiece when he put together Adam.

One of the supreme glories of man is his many-sidedness. He can be, do and love many things. He is not forced to be one thing, like most other creations.

A rock is a rock; a star is a star; a mountain is a mountain. But man is the supreme ruler of cause-and-effect. He can be a master or a servant; a doer and a thinker; a poet and a philosopher. Man, created by God Almighty, is not a machine made for one operation only. Rather, man is a diamond with many facets to reflect the goodness of the Creator. He can love many things, and if he loves God first, none loses. The key, of course, is putting God first. The sun shines on the whole meadow regardless of what is in that meadow, a mountain, a valley, a river and no creature is neglected.

The glory of man is also seen in the fact that he is equipped for both solitude and society. Every normal person loves both. "Enter into thy closet" (Matt. 6:6), "Forsake not the assembling of yourselves together" (Heb. 10:25). Every normal person must have time to be alone, to get acquainted with himself and understand his inner thoughts. To aspire and dream and look as far into the

future as possible. As Lord George Gordon Byron (1788–1824) wrote:

*There is a pleasure in the pathless woods,
There is a rapture on the lonely shore,
There is society, where none intrudes,
By the deep sea, and music in its roar:
I love not man the less, but Nature more,
From these our interviews, in which I steal
From all I may be, or have been before,
To mingle with the Universe, and feel
What I can ne'er express, yet cannot all
conceal.*

It is important to get alone. As reaction follows action, the tide, the moon, the day, the season, so man faces those of his kind. This is the reason for all social groups. Whether it is two people keeping each other's company in a lonely settler's hut back in the hills, or in a great city where several million people inhabit, people enjoy the company of other people.

***Ideally, we
were made for
each other.***

THE NEW HUMANITY

Ideally, we were made for each other. However, sin has entered the picture with greed, hate, power and lust to destroy the glory of that kind of society. It was God's

intention in the Garden of Eden that it was not good that man should live alone. And so God brought together Adam and Eve and formed the first society. What a society that must have been without the taint of sin so prevalent today.

I believe that in the final state of perfection, minus sin, the new humanity will dwell in the perfect enjoyment of each other's company. This is what we have in Revelation 21. John calls it the New Jerusalem.

In that blessed society there will be several aspects, we do not enjoy now but which God intended in the very beginning. Everyone will appreciate each other for who they are. No one will be jealous of someone else. No one will look at somebody someone else and covet his or her property and goods. No one will try to subject somebody someone else into servitude labor. No one will suspect of somebody someone else something terri-

ble and take him or her to court.

There will be no slums. How our cities are degraded by this element that seems to be growing with each generation. There is a reason we have slums, and the simple reason is sin. If we could eradicate sin from our society, slums would disappear overnight.

Another quality in this New Jerusalem is that pride will not strut while hunger crawls in these slums. There are so many people today proud of their accomplishments, beating themselves on their chest, getting their names in publications and while across town in the slums, people are starving to death.

Who will dare rise to challenge the desirability of this New Jerusalem? No lover of humanity will. The New Jerusalem will eliminate all the negative aspects of humanity. Throughout history every social dreamer has sought this throughout history. Many great men have sought to bring social regeneration to society. Most of them have failed. Each generation seems to be more degenerate than the previous one. Men have worked hard to try to eliminate the negative aspects of humanity, all to no avail; we are worse off than before.

None of it has come through humanity; but John the Revelator saw it descending out of the heavens. "And I John saw the holy city, new Jerusalem, coming down from God out of heaven, prepared as a bride adorned for her husband" (Rev. 21:2).

This is the city seen by men of faith down through the years. Abraham, David, the apostle Paul, the martyrs of the church all saw this city John describes here. It is prepared as a bride adorned for her husband. It is the Bride of the Lamb. The city is described here as shining in the reflected light as if the glory of God.

THE ALL-SATISFYING ASPECTS OF THE NEW JERUSALEM

The thing about the city that we have to look forward to is that it will satisfy man's whole nature. God created man with a certain nature, which that is compromised, in this life, because of sin. Sin has robbed you and me of this divinely created humanity. But in this New Jerusalem, man's whole nature will be satisfied. It will be a time of celebration as each person realizes the extent and purpose to which they were created.

The society in this New Jerusalem will be exactly what God created it to be back in the days of the Garden of Eden. There will be no idleness, for God created man to be a worker. Even Jesus, during His earthly ministry, was known as a worker of good works. There will be no idleness in this New City; but rather man will exercise the full extent of his humanity in doing things reflecting man's glory, which in effect reflects God's glory through the man.

Solitude will be a great pleasure. Almost like the old song about heaven, "50 Miles of elbow room." Man will be able to explore to the full extent of his nature the de-

lights of solitude and reflection. A man needs plenty of room for reflection these days.

Then, in the New City, there will be permanence. In society today, there is no such thing as permanence. What is in vogue today will very likely be out of focus tomorrow and long forgotten. Nothing in our society is permanent. As soon as you work for and achieved some pleasure, the pleasure is over and the cycle starts all over again. In this New City, there will be a permanence only God can give.

Beauty will be a part of this new city. Nothing ugly will adorn the streets of this New Jerusalem. There will be beauty as coming from the master artist, God Himself. There will be beauty, but not daintiness, a beauty that permeates the entire city.

There will be music that will lift the soul Godward. Much of the music we have this side of the New Jerusalem is divisive to say the least. There is no music that enralls the whole society. Music is broken up into little bits here and there; but in the New Jerusalem, the music will be that which will bless the entire population.

One aspect of the New Jerusalem that I particularly am looking forward to is the music. Music has always been an integral aspect of my worship each day. Scarcely a day passes but I open my hymnbook and, slightly off-key, sing one of the great hymns of the Church. My hymnbook is second only to my Bible, and both I have within easy reach most of the time. There is nothing like a hymn to set my heart in the right direction.

The music of heaven, the New Jerusalem, will be an important aspect of our ecstatic adoration of the One on the throne. In dire contrast, music today serves to divide us in the church. There in that grand city, New Jerusalem, the music will be of such a nature as to bring us into absolute harmony with one another, unknown this side of eternity. Throughout the years, the Church of each

generation has been ingenious in the art of the division. Not just theology, but music has been the vehicle of such divisions.

Music today divides with different styles relating to different people, from traditional to the latest gospel boogie. The music in the New City will strike a chord of worship within the same that cannot be touched today. This music will stir all hearts. It will not be a style of music that defines the worship there, but the object of worship. Everyone will be on the same tune. Perhaps something in the past can compare to this, but not today. The battle about worship and music has for the most part the loss. It has so fractured the Body of Christ today that it can only be remedied in the New Jerusalem.

For myself, I am anxious for that time. I often get weary of the dichotomy of noise that passes for music in many churches, Bible conferences and camp meetings today. In my opinion, the music of the church today can be enjoyed and appreciated by both saint and sinner alike. Then, in the New Jerusalem, only the redeemed will appreciate the musical strains directed toward the throne. Even the angels will stand in silent wonder as the redeemed sing to the Lamb the song of the soul set free.

What an awesome moment that will be when every soul of those redeemed by the Lamb will be free from the carnal accouterments of this world! Free from the "deceit-

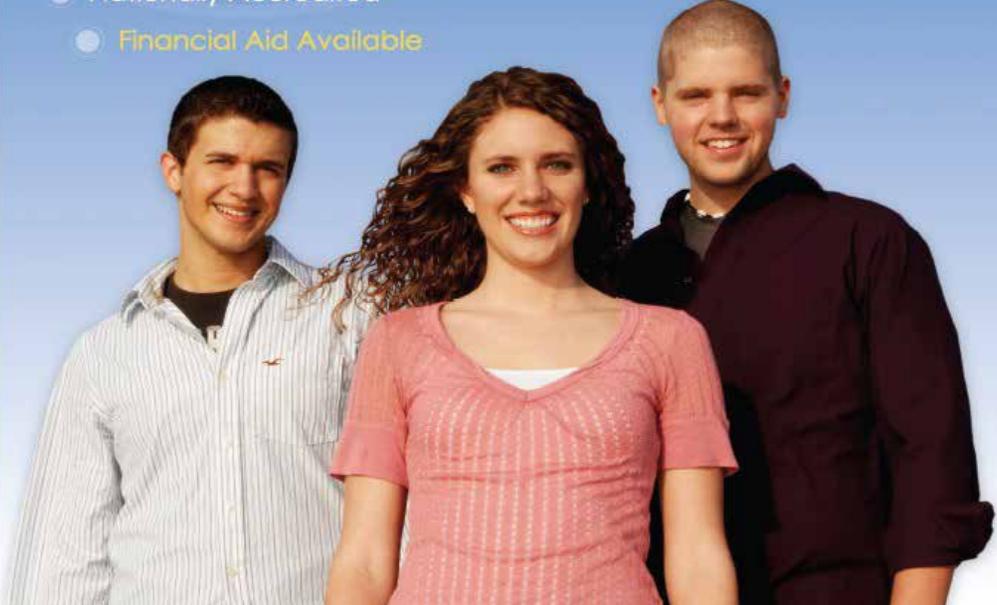
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fulness” and “wickedness” that has plagued mankind since the days of Adam and Eve where the sounds will be pure and holy and melodious in the ears of the One sitting on the throne, who alone matters.

Now we usually sing to please ourselves. Then our song will be only to please Him whose ears are altogether pure, holy and righteous altogether. It will be the music of those who have been perfected even as He is perfect. What a choir! There is nothing to compare this side of that New City.

The beauty of that New Jerusalem will be majestic, like the grandeur of the earth. When flying over the Grand Canyon, one can see the breathtaking beauty of nature. Nobody can create beauty like our Creator.

Life in the New Jerusalem will be quite different. Life there will be without sin. Everybody will be safe from the wickedness of the wicked man. No wickedness will walk the streets of that city. Sin will be cast out forever and man will live in the beauty of God’s holiness and love. We cannot walk down the streets of any city today without fear of being mugged or robbed. In that new city, no such fear will permeate society. Wickedness will be gone because wicked men will not be there. You cannot define wickedness without pointing to some man. Wickedness is the result of a wicked man, this New Jerusalem will have no wicked men in it whatsoever and therefore wickedness will be a stranger in that city.

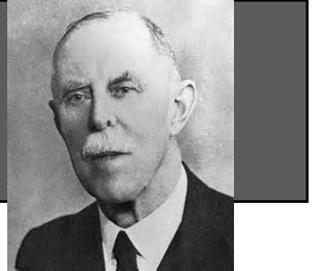
Life in the New Jerusalem will be without artificiality. We will be safe from the dullness of mindless man. No longer will we be subjected to boring stories by relatives who have not had a decent thought in decades. In the New City will be men and women whose minds are sharp, whose brains are in full force without dullness whatsoever. Think of the intelligent conversations!

John says, “Behold, the tabernacle of God is with men, and he will dwell with them, and they should be his people, and God himself shall be with them, and be their God.” There is no local temple in this city; God Himself is the Temple.

All those who enter into the new city are those whose names have been written in the Lamb’s book of life. These are men and women who have lived the Blessed Hope all their lives and have brought their lifestyle into absolute harmony with God. The Blessed Hope points us in the direction of that eternal city, the New Jerusalem.

The Three Jerusalems

F. W. Boreham



TODAY I saw Jerusalem—Jerusalem, beautiful for situation, the joy of the whole earth. Indeed, I saw three Jerusalems. It was like a series of colorful dissolving views; or, if you prefer it, like a series of dramatic transformation scenes.

(1) I saw Jerusalem ablaze! From the topmost turret of the Temple to the outer walls of the city, Jerusalem was one raging inferno of flame! From the Gate of Ephraim on the North to the Pool of Siloam on the South, and from the Tower of David in the West to the Brook Kedron in the East, everything was enveloped in the red, red conflagration!

(2) I saw Jerusalem—Jerusalem, whose very name suggests the Abode of Peace—converted into a frowning and impregnable fortress. ‘Pray for the peace of Jerusalem; the pilgrims sang as they approached it on their way to keep the Feast ‘pray for the peace of Jerusalem: they shall prosper that love thee! Peace be within thy walls and prosperity within thy palaces! For my brethren and companions’ sakes I will now say: Peace be within thee!’ Yet look at it! The walls are a mass of watch-towers, ramparts, bulwarks and battlements; the fortifications bristle with the engines and implements of war!

(3) I saw Jerusalem, seated like a queen among her inland hills; but—I could scarcely believe my eyes!—I saw an immense sheet of water in the foreground, with tall ships sailing to and fro! I saw Jerusalem standing on the banks of a noble river—a river that any foes attacking her would have to cross!

Fire! Fortress! Flood! These were the three visions that held my heart in thrall after reading half a dozen verses of the thirty-third of Isaiah. Nothing witnessed at a cinema could be more sensational. I resolved to return to my Bible and to examine each of these scenes in more minute detail.

I.

Here is Jerusalem ablaze! But the flames are not destructive flames; no walls are crumbling; no roofs are collapsing; the inhabitants are walking the streets un-

harmd by the fires! Near the beginning of Jewish history, and near the end, there are instances of such protective flames. The long and eventful pageant of Hebrew story began when Moses beheld, on the fringe of the desert, a bush that blazed with fire and yet was not consumed.

And, towards the close of the same stately epic, we read of three Hebrew children who walked unscathed in the midst of the burning fiery furnace. The flames, so far from destroying them, actually defended them, for, when their enemies approached, they were immediately consumed by the flames.

Now what was the fire that, in Isaiah’s vision, enveloped Jerusalem? It was the self-same fire that enveloped the bush that Moses saw. And, as Moses gazed upon the wonder, the fire spake. I am the God of Abraham and of Isaac and of Jacob! And Moses hid his face, for he was afraid to look upon God!

God! Afraid to look upon God! So the fire was God! Thus it was in the case of Jerusalem. Isaiah had come preaching his distinctive gospel of Immanuel—God with us! And when the people realized that, in very deed, God was with them, all their familiar haunts became terrible with a sense of His presence. The city, like the bush, was afire with God! They felt their consciences scorched and their souls burned. Who, they cried, who among us shall dwell with the devouring fire? Who among us shall dwell with the everlasting burnings?

And, in answer to that terrified inquiry, the prophet bids them, live righteously, speak truthfully, deal honestly and minister help—fully to the needs of others. Only thus can they walk unscathed in the fire divine. If, Isaiah assures them, if they put away from themselves everything that the flames exist to destroy, they shall live joyously in the immediate presence of the Most High, whilst all who draw near to do them harm shall be utterly destroyed.

And that is exactly what happened. Sennacherib with his mighty host invaded Palestine. The Assyrian came down like a



God is Good...All the Time!

wolf on the fold. Everybody knows the story.

Like the leaves of the forest when Summer
is green,
The host with their banners at sunset were
seen;
Like the leaves of the forest when Autumn
hath blown,
That host on the morrow lay withered and
strown.

That miracle of the protective fire has been many times repeated. It was repeated in 1588 when the great Armada came. The breath of God stirred the waters into a wild tumult and the huge galleons were hurled to destruction. It was repeated in 1805 and 1815 when, with good reason, England dreaded a Napoleonic invasion. A great Hand, Victor Hugo says, was seen above the nation. Its finger touched the earth at Waterloo and blasted all the aspirations of the tyrant. It was repeated in 1940 when, after the fall of France and the debacle of Dunkirk, England seemed to have been left at the mercy of her mighty foes. It was repeated here in Australia in 1942 when, during those dreadful months that we are never likely to forget, this great land seemed to lie hopelessly in the path of the oncoming invaders. And, down to the end of time, that miracle will be repeated wherever people recognize—tremblingly, gratefully, reverently—the divine presence in the midst of them; put from them every evil thing that would offend Him; and rely for their defense on His everlasting might and mercy.

II.

Here is Jerusalem bristling with ramparts, a city of fortifications! But the defenses are not material and military defenses. For if, the prophet tells them, if they cleanse their hands and purge their hearts, and put all their confidence in the Lord their God, the city shall stand invincible and unassailable. They shall dwell on high, he says; their place of defense shall be the munitions of rocks; bread shall be given them and their waters shall be sure! It is a vision of Impregnability and Inexhaustibility—they can neither be conquered by assault nor reduced by starvation.

The best exposition of the passage is, of course, Martin Luther's. Like Athanasius, Luther stood alone against the world. 'Here I stand!' he cried. 'I can do no other: so help me God!' No man, compared with the forces arraigned against him, ever looked so pitifully impotent. Yet Luther felt like a general whose city was so powerfully defended that it could defy the most violent onrush of its enemies. In that confident mood, he wrote his famous hymn—

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
Doth seek to work his 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.
Doth ask who that may be? Christ Jesus, it
is He!

Lord Sabaoth is 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.

Let goods and kindred go,
This mortal life also;
The body they may kill,
God's truth abideth still,
His kingdom is for ever.

There, in his 'mighty fortress', the lonely Luther dwelt on high: his place of defense was the munitions of rocks: bread was given him, and his waters were sure. His triumph over prelates and principalities and powers represents one of the outstanding landmarks of human history.

That Song of the Fortress became the 'Marseillaise' of the Reformation. It was for generations the battle-song of the nation. All Germany was singing it; and, if Germany had gone on singing it for a century or two longer, the tragedies that broke upon the world in 1914 and in 1939 would have been averted. Luther himself lived his life to the music of his own hymn. 'Come on, Philip,' he would say to Melancthon, when things were going badly with them. 'Come on, Philip; let us sing our hymn!' As Luther and Melancthon entered Weimar on the day of their banishment, they heard a little girl crooning to herself Luther's hymn—A mighty fortress is our God.

'Sing on, dear child,' Melancthon exclaimed, patting her head, 'you do not know what a great heart you have comforted this day!' And that opening line—A mighty fortress is our God—is inscribed on Luther's tomb at Wittenburg.

The invisible but invincible ramparts! We all love the story that the followers of the saintly Felix of Nola were so fond of telling. Hotly pursued by those who sought his life, Felix slipped into a wayside cave. Almost on the instant, a spider wove its web across the rocky entrance. The persecutors, seeing the web, argued that it was useless to search there: obviously, nobody had entered the cave for days. 'Ah,' exclaimed Felix when he emerged, 'where God is not, a thick wall is as a spider's web: but where God is, a spider's web is as a mighty wall!'

That was Isaiah's message exactly.

III.

And here, in our third vision, is Jerusalem enfolded by broad and fast-flowing waters! The glorious Lord shall he to thee a plate of broad rivers and streams, whereon shall go no galley with oars, neither shall gallant ship pass thereby.

Civilization invariably travels by water: it follows the courses of the streams. Great cities are built beside great rivers. Here in Melbourne every visitor examines the stone, down near the river bank, that marks the spot at which Batman exclaimed that this was the place for a village!

Who can read the record of any great war without recognizing the value of a broad river as a barrier in the path of an oncoming foe? Yet is was the ceaseless lament of Jerusalem that she had no river. Nineveh stood proudly on the banks of the Tigris; Babylon on the Euphrates; Thebes on the Nile; and Rome on the Tiber. But Jerusalem? If only she had a river! A river to stand as an impass-

able obstacle between the city and her assailants! A river to bear the commerce of the world to her markets! A river, gleaming and beautiful, to complete the loveliness of the landscape!

But listen! The glorious Lord will be unto thee a place of broad rivers and streams! He will be to

the city all that the city lacks. Just as He is the father of the fatherless and the husband of the widow, so He will be the river of the riverless city. And not only so. He will secure to the riverless city all the advantages of a river, with none of its attendant perils. For rivers are often treacherous. The Euphrates helped Cyrus to capture Babylon: the St. Lawrence assisted Wolfe in the conquest of Quebec. But the city whom God protects is immune from such dangers. He will be to that city a river where shall come no galley with oars, neither shall gallant ship pass thereby.

So we have our three dissolving views, our three transformation scenes.

Jerusalem, with the Most High as its Protecting Flame!

Jerusalem, with the Most High as its Impregnable Fortress!

Jerusalem, with the Most High as its Enfolding Stream

The three pictures are painted to show that he who dwells in the secret place of the Most High and abides under the shadow of the Almighty is as secure as those three Hebrew children who, in the midst of the flames, were attended by One whose form was like unto the Son of God. Amidst the din of battle such a man may enjoy, in the shelter of the Mighty Fortress, the peace that passeth all understanding. And, exposed to attack on every side, he may feel that, like a city moated by its expanse of waters, he is on every side enfolded by the care that never fails.

'Here I stand!' he cried.
'I can do no other: so
help me God!'

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A. W. Tozer embarked upon a lifelong pursuit of God at the age of 17 after hearing a street preacher in Akron, Ohio. He was a self-taught pastor, writer and editor whose powerful messages continue to grip the hearts and stir the souls of today's believers. Follow his quotes at tozeraw@twitter.com.

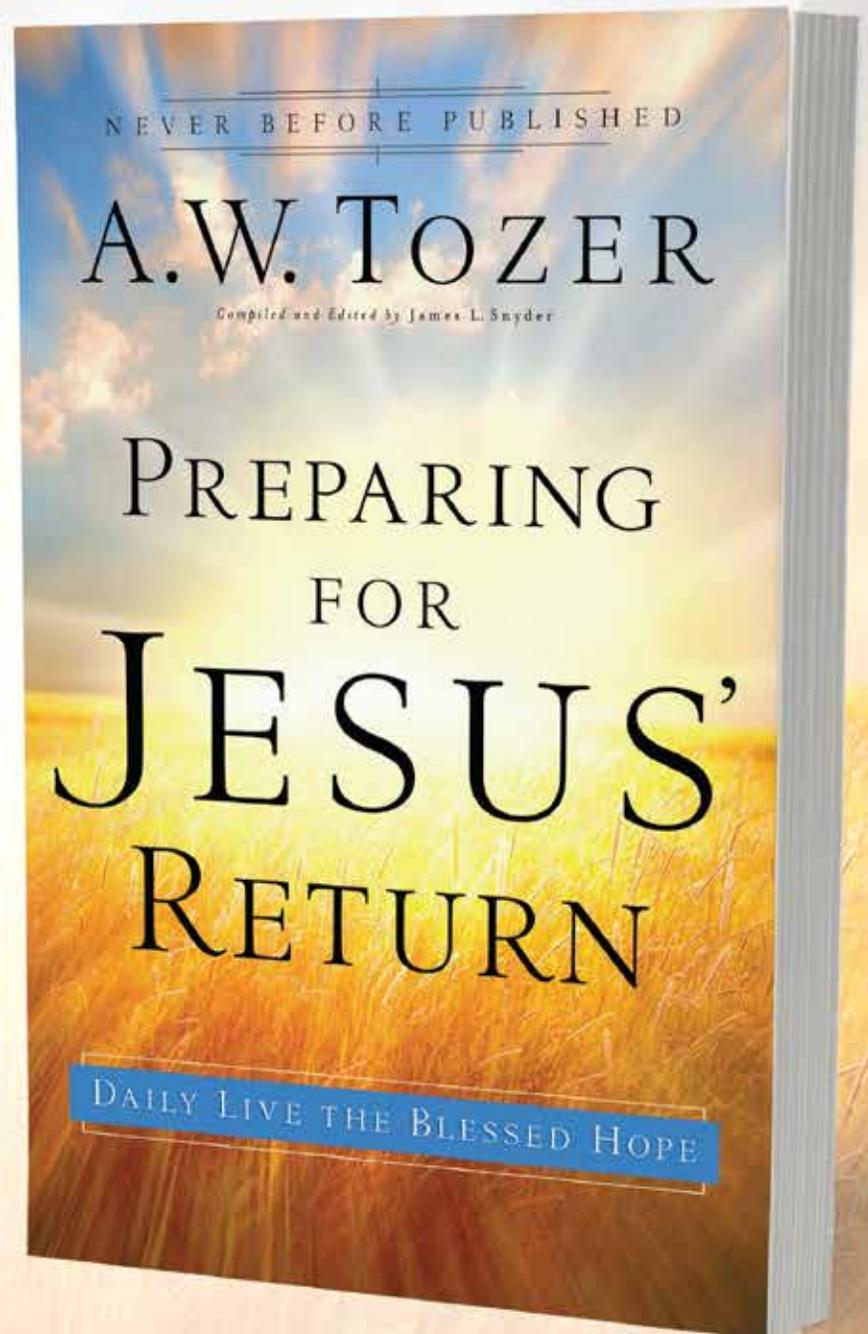
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