

**Buried Evidence**

# **BURIED EVIDENCE**

**Report on A Personal Tour of the Middle East**

by

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1950**

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**SIGNS PUBLISHING, COMPANY**

**(A.C.A. Ltd., Proprietors)**

**Warburton, Victoria, Australia**

## **Foreword**

GEORGE BURNSIDE'S devout Scottish parents, Who had emigrated to New Zealand, where he was born, were delighted when as a young man he gave his heart to the Lord. When he later enrolled at a Christian college to train for the ministry they were overjoyed. Since his graduation and subsequent ordination, the evangelistic ministry of George Burnside has been a source of blessing to untold thousands in Australia and New Zealand as he has unfolded to them the word of life.

Over a period of many years he has become a familiar public figure in large evangelistic campaigns, as with an open Bible in his hands he has searchingly proclaimed God's message for this present hour, and has persuasively and effectively brought men and women to a saving knowledge of the gospel of Jesus Christ. In addition to his public evangelism, George Burnside served for some time as speaker in the Australia-wide broadcasts of the Voice of Prophecy.

Over the air, and from the public platform he has proclaimed his unshaken faith in the accuracy and veracity of God's Word. He makes no secret of his passion to vindicate the authenticity of the Scriptures, and in BURIED EVIDENCE a number of these sermons and radio addresses have been brought together for the first time. They make no pretence to literary excellence, although by no means do they lack this, but rather come straight from the heart of a true evangelist. Already in their spoken form they have brought blessing and conviction to those who have listened. Their influence will continue and enlarge as they, in the medium of this book, are now placed in the hands of men and women who are seeking for light and truth.

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### How the Bible Got Its Name

IT was my privilege recently to visit the town that gave the Bible its name. Few Christians know how and from where the Bible received its name. The word "Bible" means "the Book, and it is certainly well named, for there is no book in the history of the world that has been so important. It has not only been the most loved and the most hated of all books, but also no book or collection of books in the history of mankind has had such attentive reading. Has had such a wide circulation, or has had such diligent investigation as have the Old and New Testaments. This wonderful Book has survived the extinction of the ancient world and the Roman Empire; it was the first book printed by movable type; its sale has increased all the time, even in the times of business depression. In fact, as we shall notice, even its very enemies circulated it and they bear witness to its truthfulness and its power. This Book has not only altered individual lives; it has even changed empires. It is well named THE Book, the Bible.

Now, this Book, the Bible, receives its name from the little town of Byblos, an ancient city of Phoenicia. It lies about seventeen miles to the north of the present town of Beirut in Lebanon. Some 2,000 years before Christ it was the principal city of the Phoenicians. It was the center of their worship of the sun. Some authorities claim it is the oldest city in the world. Long before the time of Sidon or Tyre, Byblos was a great commercial center, and the sacred city of the Phoenicians. The Biblical name of this ancient city is still preserved in the name of the city that occupies the site. If you open your Bibles at Psalm 83: 7 you will read there of Gebal. That is the ancient name of the town that became known as Byblos. You see, the Greek people were unable to pronounce the letter 'g,' and so instead of Gebal they called it Bebal, or Bebaal, for it was there that Baal worship, or sun worship, found its center among the ancient Phoenicians. Later on the Egyptians captured Bebal.

Now the Egyptians are said to be the first people to manufacture and use writing paper. It was made from a reed that grew in abundance along the marshes of the delta of the Nile. From the Greek names of this plant 'papyrus' and 'byblos' the words 'paper' and 'Bible' have been derived. The fibrous inside lining of the plant was cut lengthwise in thin strips and laid side by side. Over these were laid at right angles another layer of these strips. After being treated with a gum solution, the sheets were pounded and pressed, dried in the sun, and became the famous writing paper of ancient times.

While these paper reeds were still growing in abundance along the Nile delta a remarkable Bible prophecy was made. You will read it in Isaiah 19: 7: "The paper reeds by the brooks, by the mouth of the brooks, and every thing sown by the brooks, shall wither, be driven away, and be no more." True to this remarkable prediction, the paper reeds have long since \* disappeared from Egypt. When the Egyptians captured Bebal they planted the papyrus reeds there, and they grew very well. Later on, because of political upheavals, the export of the paper reeds from Egypt was cut off, and the Greeks had to receive it from Bebal. The paper that they received from Bebal became known as "Bebal," or "Byblos" and hence the word "Bible," the Book, The Bible.

You will notice in Psalm 83 and verse 7 that Gebal is mentioned as one of the enemies that were

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uniting against the people of God and His truth. They were determined to wipe the name of the God of Israel from the face of the earth, but they themselves were ultimately destroyed. The tongueless ruins of the cities of these nations mentioned in this scripture, namely, the Edomites, the Moabites, the Ammonites, and the city of Tyre, are but mute and amazing testimony to the truthfulness of the Bible. I have visited these places and seen Bible prophecies fulfilled to the very letter. Even the enemies of the Bible witness to its God-inspired message. Truly as it says in Psalm 76: 10: "Surely the wrath of man shall praise Thee." Gebal or Byblos, one of the enemies seeking to destroy God's name, has provided the name of God's Book. Byblos once was also the center of sun worship, the great counterfeit of the truth of God. I saw there the ancient altars on which human sacrifices were offered to the sun. Today they are but curios.

Yes, the Bible, Byblos, THE Book, is more than a Book, it is the greatest of books; it is the Book of the ages; it is God's Book; it has weathered the storms of the ages and overthrown all its enemies. While the dust of over thirty centuries lies upon its pages, still this precious old Book, the Bible, lives. It speaks today to the sons of earth in over eleven hundred different languages-from the highlands of New Guinea to the side-walks of New York. It tells to all the, same sweet story, the story of a love that led Christ to die for man.

As the Bible, the Book, transcends all others, it reveals our Lord Jesus Christ who likewise transcends all others. While He appeared to die in weakness, He affected this world more by His death than any other man did by his life. This so impressed the great Napoleon that he exclaimed: "You speak of Caesar, Alexander, of their conquests, of the enthusiasm they kindled in the hearts of their soldiers, but can you conceive of a dead man making conquests with an army faithful and entirely devoted to his memory? My army has forgotten me while living. Alexander, Caesar, Charlemagne, and myself have founded empires, but on what did we rest the creations of our genius? Upon force. Jesus alone founded His empire upon love, and at this hour millions of men would die for Him. I have so inspired multitudes that they would die for me, but, after all, my presence was necessary-the lightning of my eye, my voice, a word from me-then the sacred fire was kindled in their hearts. Now that I am on St. Helena alone, chained upon this rock, who fights and wins empires for me? What an abyss between my deep misery and the eternal reign of Christ who is proclaimed, loved, adored, and whose reign is extending over all the earth."

And so it is, a public life that lasted but three and a half years ended with a death of shame at the early age of thirty three, yet even today, nearly 2,000 years later, it is swaying a world's history and destiny. Why? Because He was God manifest in the flesh. (1 Timothy 3: 16.) He became the Savior of the world, the only Savior, as we read in Acts 4: 12: "Neither is there salvation in any other: for there is none other name under heaven given among men, whereby we must be saved."

What a wonderful Book is the Bible! What a wonderful Savior is Jesus! What a wonderful salvation He offers!

Just recently I had the privilege of visiting many ancient countries. I want to tell you more of the remarkable way that Bible prophecy has come true. Holy men of God spoke as they were moved to write the pages of Holy Writ. (2 Peter 1:21) The ancient peoples, who were so opposed to the righteousness and the teachings of our God, have been used to confirm the truthfulness of the Bible they opposed. For today Edom, Moab, Ammon, the land of the Philistines, the old city of Tyre, are in the exact condition that the Bible 2,500 years ago said they would be in. The stones cry out in confirmation of the truthfulness of the Bible, and Gebal, one of those powers in opposition to God, He has taken and used to provide the name for His wonderful Book, the Bible.

Like the Bible, the written Word which "lives and abides for ever" (1 Peter 1: 23), Jesus is the One who is "alive for evermore." (Revelation 1: 18.) Yes! He is a living Savior.

In 2 Corinthians 5: 17 we read: "If any man be in Christ, he is a new creature." He has a new life from our living Savior. How does Christ do it? I don't know, but I do know it works. There is so little we do know about the wonders of our God. No one can explain how it is that a black cow can eat green grass which makes white milk that produces yellow butter. Or consider the remarkable transformation that takes place when a caterpillar encases itself in its own home-made casket and is changed into a beautiful butterfly. Its hair is changed to scales, a million to the square inch. The many legs of a caterpillar become the six legs of a butterfly, the yellow becomes a beautiful red, and the crawling instinct of the caterpillar becomes the flying instinct of the butterfly. Or consider how God can take common and unattractive sandy material, and through natural processes transform it into a beautiful fiery opal. And so our Savior can take the life of a sinner and transform it until it glows with the beauty of our Lord and is fragrant with the graces of Christ.

## **The Voice of Certainty**

FOR centuries, before Sir Thomas More wrote his “Utopia,” men and women, weary with the burden and tragedy of life, have longed for an ideal world. To this day that longing persists and deepens in the heart of mankind. Who has not in his moments of idealism dreamed of a world where war and conflict will be no more; where division and separation will no longer exist; where happiness, justice, and righteousness shall cover the earth as the waters cover the sea? In the not far-distant future such a happy state is to become the inheritance of countless thousands now living on the earth. And this conviction does not proceed from a mere guess or opinion, but it is based on the sure word of Bible prophecy. The Scriptures predict a golden age to come, and assure us that it is not remote.

Now, the question is, can Bible prophecy be relied upon? Yes, friends, because it is not merely the guess of man. It is actually the foreknowledge of the living God. How do we know? To man the future is an impenetrable wall. One can as easily resurrect the dead from the grave as give a certain outline of the next year in the history of the world. When Solomon declared, “Thou knows not what a day may bring forth,” he affirmed a truth too obvious to be challenged by even the most militant skeptic. And yet, man yearns for a knowledge of the future. Because of this craving the palm reader, the fortune teller, and the astrologer do a thriving business. Each of us has an inborn longing to see ahead, but tomorrow baffles us. With all the vaunted advancement and knowledge of this marvelous twentieth century, we are no nearer fathoming the future than were the ancients. It still remains mysterious.

Man’s extremity is Gods opportunity, and the inability of man serves only to contrast the infinite ability of our God. Whereas the future is absolutely sealed to man, it is an open volume to God. He can portray it even more vividly and more accurately than the historian can write the past. In this attribute of foreknowledge is found one of the characteristics of the God of the Bible, the one that distinguishes Him from the legions of false gods. It really is the acid test of, His divinity. On this score He issues the ringing challenge found in Isaiah 41:22,23: “Let them bring them forth, and show us what shall happen: let them show the former things, what they be, that we may consider them, and know the latter end of them; or declare us things for to come. Show the things that are to come hereafter, that we may know that you are gods.”

And again in Isaiah 46:9,10 He says: I am God, and there is none like Me, declaring the end from the beginning, and from ancient times the things that are not yet done.”

Here, then, is absolute proof that God is God. It affixes a seal to His divinity that cannot be counterfeited. It raises the God of the Bible to a height of omniscience, so far beyond human perceptions that no man, no matter how militantly agnostic he may be, has ever attempted to disprove God on the basis of prophecy. Even in these days of questioning and unbelief in the Bible and in revealed religion, Bible prophecy stands unchallenged and unimpeachable.

Notice some of the predictions that were made regarding mighty Babylon and its fall, one of the most remarkable of which is that concerning Cyrus the Great. The prophet Isaiah, who outlined the work of Cyrus, was born in the first half of the eighth century before Christ, about the year 760 BC. And Cyrus was born early in the sixth century about 599 BC, or nearly a century and a half later. Any encyclop2edia or Bible dictionary will substantiate these dates. Inasmuch, then, as Isaiah had made all his prophecies and was dead before Cyrus was born, it is obvious that the prophet did not write after the history had occurred, but moved by the inspiration of God, he revealed the work of Cyrus long in advance. Notice what Isaiah wrote: “That said of Cyrus, He is My shepherd, and shall perform all My pleasure: even saying to ‘Jerusalem, Thou shall be built. and to the temple, Thy foundation shall be laid. Thus said the Lord to His anointed, to Cyrus, whose right hand I have held, to subdue nations before him. And I will loose the loins of kings, to open before him the two hinged gates; and the gates shall not be shut. I will go before thee, and make the crooked places straight. I will break in pieces the gates of brass, and cut in sunder the bars of iron: and I will give thee the treasures of darkness, and hidden riches of secret places, that thou may know that I, the Lord, which call thee by thy name, am the God of Israel. For Jacob My servant’s sake, and Israel Mine elect, I have even called thee by thy name: I have surnamed thee, though thou has not known Me.” Isaiah 44:28-45:4.

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Now you will notice that Cyrus was named more than a century before he was born, and that he was to order the building of Jerusalem and especially the temple there. Doors and gates were to be opened before Cyrus, and the treasures of darkness and the hidden riches of the secret places would fall to him. What are the facts? Any history of ancient time tells us that there arose during the time of the Babylonian captivity of the Jews, a mighty warrior and general, who was known in history as Cyrus the Great. And through his leadership the Babylonian Empire was overthrown by the Medo-Persian armies. History also witnesses to the fact that Cyrus, in the first year of his reign issued a decree that the temple of Jerusalem should be 'rebuilt, and that all the Jews who cared to, might return to their native land. Not only this, but he even sent back the vessels of the temple that were taken away by Nebuchadnezzar. And further, he contributed large sums of money toward the building materials for the restoration of Jerusalem.

Mark well the fact, that all this was predicted by Isaiah more than a century before Cyrus was born. I want to go even further. I want to amplify all this with other prophecies concerning the same event, all of which constitute an incontrovertible testimony to the scrupulous accuracy of Bible prophecy. For example, Isaiah predicted in the captivity of Babylon that Elam should be joined with Media. You will read that in Isaiah 21, verses 2-9. Yet, only until a very short time before Babylon fell, Elam was one of the most loyal Babylonian provinces. When the victorious Cyrus, at the head of the Medes, began to spread his conquest, the Elamites revolted and joined the forces of Cyrus, and in the spring of the year 539 BC the two peoples started their march on Babylon. The Elamites are later known in history as the Persians, and their union formed the great Medo-Persian empire. Now when Isaiah made his prophecy of the two peoples uniting against Babylon, there was no appearance in the world that would warrant such a prediction. But our God sees beyond superficial appearances and apparent probabilities. He can read the future. The past, the present, and the future are alike known to Him.

Note another interesting prophetic detail concerning the march of Cyrus on Babylon, as given by Jeremiah. About the year 597 BC or some fifty-nine years before Babylon was taken, Jeremiah sent a letter to Babylon. You will read about it in Jeremiah 50 and 51. This predicted the overthrow of the city. Addressing the Hebrew captives, the prophet gave them a sign that they might know the time of the approaching destruction of the city. We read in Jeremiah 51: 46: "And lest your heart faint,

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and you fear for the rumour that shall be heard in the land; a rumour shall both come one year, and after that in another year shall come a rumour, and violence in the land, ruler against ruler." In other words a rumour of the city's destruction was to come one year, and the city would be destroyed the next. Let us see if history fulfilled the prophecy. Herodotus, the Greek historian, tells us, Book 1, chapters 189 and 190, that Cyrus had started in the spring of 539 expecting to march directly on BabyIon. When, however, he reached the River Gyndes, one of his sacred horses was drowned in the stream, and Cyrus, infuriated because of the loss, stopped for months to dig 360 channels, there diverting the river and spreading it out over the plain. This delayed his destruction of Babylon until the next year, 538 BC. What a peculiar and wonderful fulfillment of Jeremiah's fore view! God foresees even the unexpected happenings, and He fits them all into His master plan for the future.

Approximately one-fourth of the Bible is prophetic, and there are over a thousand distinct and separate Bible prophecies recorded. How unique are the Scriptures! In the Koran of the Moslems, there is no prophecy. In the classics of Confucius, no prophecy. In the Vedas of the Hindus, no prophecy. The Bible is the only Book out of all the millions written by men and women of all ages, that reveals the future.

The Bible is the one Book in the world that contains God's foreknowledge. In this respect it stands without a rival and without a peer. And just as the ability to forecast the future infallibly is the hallmark of the true God, so the fact that this foreknowledge is given to us only in the Bible marks it as the Book that is divinely inspired. No man, no matter how learned, can give us an inkling of the future. So the Bible, in outlining history in advance, could not possibly be the work of man, but only of God Himself, as it is so, well stated in 2 Peter 1:21: "For the prophecy came not in old time by the will of man. But holy men of God spoke as they were moved by the Holy Ghost."

## **My Visit to Rose-Red Petra**

### THE CITY THAT THE WORLD FORGOT

WITH what amazing precision and exactness of detail the Scriptures spoke in the ancient prophecies! In the early dawn of history there were two brothers named Esau and Jacob. Two nations were to come of them, and it was declared at their birth that they would be widely differing peoples.

In Genesis 25: 23 we read: "The one people shall be stronger than the other people; and the elder shall serve the younger."

Esau was the father of the Edomite nation, while Jacob, became the father of the Jewish people. Side by side these people developed. The Jewish nation out reigned Edom for many generations as the prophecy said.

Regarding their later history, Bible prophecy dealt with exactness of detail. The land of each was to be desolated. But one was to perish off the face of the earth, while the other was to remain a living witness throughout all, time to the justice of the living God. Well, the people of Israel out reigned the Edomites by many generations. However, the latter became strongly entrenched in their many cities on the great trade routes between the East and West. Petra became their capital city. Petra means "rock," and is called Mount Seir in Genesis 36: 8, 9.

The Edomites despised the truth of God, and the ancient prophecy foretold their doom. In Jeremiah 49:13,17 we read: "All the cities thereof shall be perpetual wastes," and "Everyone that goes by it shall be astonished"; while in Obadiah, verse 18: "There-shall not be any remaining of the house of Esau: for the Lord hath spoken it." And in Joel 3:19: "Edom shall be a desolate wilderness." So literally were these prophecies fulfilled that not only was Edom overthrown and its people defeated, but the very name of their city was forgotten for over a thousand years. It was truly the city that the world forgot. That great and mighty people disappeared leaving no trace and no record in secular history of the part that they had played in world events. Petra had dropped from the memory of mankind. In fact, so completely had it disappeared that the critics of the Bible ridiculed the statements of Holy Writ. They maintained that there never was such a people. Their strong argument which seemed unanswerable was: Where is Edom situated? The city had disappeared, the people were forgotten. Not one of the race remained. No one could even produce a relic of the Edomites. However, the spade of the archaeologists unearthed a record of Rameses III of Egypt who boasted of his campaigns and the defeat of the Edomites at Seir. The tablets of Tiglath Pileser the king of Assyria, the monuments of Esar-Haddon, and the records of Nebuchadnezzar of Babylon, mention the Edomites and their wonderful, city.

With the discovery of these ancient tablets from Egypt, Babylon, and Assyria, interest was again aroused amongst Bible students and archaeologists, and the result was that in 1812 the British Archaeological Society sent in a young Swiss explorer to try and find this lost city. He disguised himself as an Arab so as to avoid the certain fate of infidels in those parts. He traveled throughout Jordan with little success. However, through becoming friendly with the Arabs and aiding them medically he was told of wonderful ruins that had been discovered, and the Arabs led him to a remarkable cleft in the rock nearly a thousand feet deep and barely wide enough to permit the passage of a single file of men. The local Arabs being very superstitious feared to enter it. However, undaunted, this Swiss traveler plunged into this slot in the rock wall. The winding passage down which he traveled narrowed until he could touch the two walls with outstretched hands and could scarcely see the top of the mountains 1,200 feet above him.

The path lay in perpetual gloom, the chilly darkness hiding the fierce rays of the desert sun. This passage provided the most impregnable entrance that any city has ever possessed. It is the only approach to this the most wonderful natural fortress that I have ever seen anywhere in the world. This canyon, three miles in length, is so narrow that in places it would be well-nigh impossible for two horsemen to ride abreast. The traveler pressed on regardless of the menacing cliffs until suddenly the passage widened, and a flood of sunlight was admitted by a gap in the mountains. Here the Swiss scholar looked in amazement, for before him carved in one piece from the living rose-red sandstone cliff was a wonderfully preserved temple, sixty feet in height, a temple carved literally like a cameo from the cliff face. He was looking at a city that no European had seen for well over a thousand years. There was this great dead city, carved from the sheer sandstone heights that ringed the valley, tier after tier of majestic, but empty, tombs, temples, dwelling places, and palaces-every structure hewn from the living, multicolored sandstone. It was well

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called the “rose-red city, half as old as time.” It was evident that a very large city had once existed here. These ruins were not relics of a feeble race certainly not of a people who were likely to perish utterly, but how true are the Bible prophecies!

Petra, this principal city of the Edomites, is found in one of the most rugged places on earth. Ranges are thrown up to form the weird mountains, like mountains of the moon, thus looming one of the wildest, weirdest, and most fascinating regions on earth. The sandstone is brilliantly hued with a wide range of color-yellow through to brown and then through red to purple. The buildings that once evidently covered the floor of the valley are gone, worn away by the wind and rain of centuries, but here and there small remains are yet to be seen. However, far up the sides of the encircling mountains these valley people have left imperishable records of their former existence in buildings, some of them as large as churches. There they are tombs, palaces, and dwelling places, all hewn from the solid rock. I saw flights of steps, temples were beautifully carved pillars, and excavated residences of large dimensions in one of which is a single chamber which I calculated to be at least sixty feet in length.

I climbed up an old path of a cliff face to the high place. God strongly warned Israel against the worship connected with these high places. There, the Edomites worshipped the sun, and one can still see the altar facing the east. This rock-hewn altar is made in a perfect circle symbolizing the sun, and here the human victims were offered to the blazing orb of day. The circular hollow in the center which caught the blood and drained it away is still to be seen. The prophets of God warned that this counterfeit worship would lead to destruction. Utter desolation both of the country and the family of Esau was foretold, and utter desolation is certainly now their condition.

When Christ was riding into Jerusalem in triumph, the Pharisees requested: “Master, rebuke Thy disciples.” They did not want to hear the hosannas come to Christ. Christ answered them: “If they held their peace the very stones would cry out!” In this infidel age when nations and people are dishonoring God and disobeying His Word, God has raised up witnesses from the dead to show forth His authority and power and truth. Rocks of the rose-red city of Petra cry warning. Rocks from that rock city witness to the truthfulness of the Word of God. The God of the Bible is today worshipped by millions, while the high places of Edom and other heathen centers are but tourist attractions.

It would take days and weeks to visit every excavation of this wonderful fascinating rock city of the dead. One can count at least three thousand temples, tombs, and dwelling places cut from the rock. I wish that every unbeliever could stand as I did in this city of the rock and there open the sacred Book of God and read the words of the inspired pen written when this desolate place was one of the great cities of the ancient world. His unbelief would be arrested as the stones of this ruined city speak as one risen from the dead. One is compelled to read the handwriting of God Himself in the desolation and perpetual ruin around it. Petra, the wonderful city of the Edomites, would become “the stones of emptiness!” See Isaiah 34:11. May we heed the advice then given in verse 16 of the same chapter: “Seek you out of the book, of the Lord, and read: no one of these shall fail!”

## Prophecy Speaks and Cities Fall

OUR purpose is not only to make clear that the only true explanation of world development is found within the covers of the Bible but also to show that fulfilled prophecy is an antidote of doubt and infidelity. It is just as McKinley declared: “History is the unrolled scroll of prophecy.” These words are far more true than many realize. For instance, notice that the ruins of ancient capitals testify to the marvelous accuracy of the Scriptures of truth. Tyre is an excellent example. I visited the site of this ancient city recently. For two thousand years Tyre grew in importance until she was mistress of the sea as was Babylon of the land. She was the commercial center of the world. Carthage, the rival of Rome, was only a colony of Tyre-Tyre the beautiful, the rich, the learned, into which flowed the fine gold of Tarshish, the precious stones of Aram, the spirited horses of Armenia, the beautiful ivories of Damascus, the fine linen of Egypt, the flocks of Arabia, the rich perfumes of Sheba, the slaves of Javan. In short, Tyre was the London of Asia. Ships from all nations anchored in her harbor, and their passengers bartered in her streets.

While Tyre was at the height of her glory and power, while it would seem she must stand for ever, along came Ezekiel, who prophesied about 590 BC, saying: “They shall destroy the walls of Tyrus, and

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break down her towers. I will also scrape her dust from her, and make her like the top of a rock. It shall be a place for the spreading of nets in the midst of the sea; for I have spoken it, said the Lord God. They shall lay thy stones and thy timber and thy dust in the midst of the water. And I will make thee like the top of a rock: thou shalt be a place to spread nets upon; thou shalt be built no more: For I the Lord have spoken it, said the Lord God." Ezekiel 26: 4-14.

Immediately after the giving of the prophecy, Nebuchadnezzar besieged Tyre, and after thirteen years of effort, took the city and destroyed it, wreaking fearful vengeance on buildings and people.

Perhaps some will maintain that it cannot be proved that this prophecy was made before Nebuchadnezzar besieged Tyre. While personally, from a close study of the facts, I believe it was, I shall not refer merely to that siege. Though the prophecy began with the king of Babylon's siege its marvelous predictions looked down more than two thousand years into the future-in fact, even to our day, as we shall see.

While the ruins of the old city remained after Nebuchadnezzar had finished with it, the prophecy declared that the timbers and rocks and even the very dust should be cast into the sea, and men would dry their nets in the midst of the sea. This prediction was not fulfilled by the king of Babylon, and it certainly seemed improbable it would ever be fulfilled, for if Nebuchadnezzar in his anger had taken full vengeance and had not thought of this, who was likely to care enough about the ruins of a deserted city to be so violently destructive? It would be the frenzy of madness. Meanwhile there stood the prophetic words awaiting fulfillment.

Two and a half centuries passed, and still the ruins stood, a challenge to the accuracy of prophecy. Then through the East the fame of Alexander the Great sent a thrill of terror. He marched swiftly to attack new Tyre in 332 BC. Reaching the shore he saw the city he had come to take with half a mile or more of water surging between them, for it was built upon an island. Alexander's plan of attack was speedily formed and vigorously executed. He took the walls, towers, timbers, and ruined houses and palaces of the ancient Tyre, and with them built a solid causeway to the island city. So great was the demand for material that the very dust was scraped from the site and laid in the sea. By this military stroke Alexander signally fulfilled two prophecies that had been given centuries before: "I will also scrape her dust from her, and make her like the top of a rock." And "They shall lay thy stones and thy timber and thy dust in the midst of the water." Ezekiel 26:4,12.

The island city was ruthlessly reduced to ashes thus answering the prediction of Zechariah 9:4: "She shall be devoured with fire."

Considering the suddenness of the downfall the words of Isaiah, penned nearly four centuries earlier, convey an added significance. As the ships of Tyre, returning from a two- or three-year voyage, reached the harbor, the mariners looked out in astonishment to behold not a stately metropolis, but heaps of ruins and tottering walls; hence the prophetic picture: "The burden of Tyre. Howl, you ships of Tarshish; for it is laid waste, so that there is no house, no entering in." "Howl, you ships of Tarshish, for your strength is laid waste." Isaiah 23:1,14.

Now twenty-four centuries have passed away and what are the facts? The place of old Tyre is just a bare wilderness that has been scraped like the top of a rock. The island city of Tyre is also gone. The sole tokens of her ancient splendor and strength are scores of columns of red and grey granite one can see lying broken and strewn amid the rocks that once formed the island city of Tyre. The causeway built by Alexander the Great to reach the island city of Tyre, has since silted up and on it a small fishing town has been built and I saw the fishermen drying their nets on the ruins of ancient Tyre. They are literally drying their nets on what was once the midst of the sea!

Every year, every day, every minute that Tyre remains in utter ruin and that the fishermen continue to dry their nets on what was once the midst of the sea, disproves the statement of skeptics that the prophecies are vague, or that they were written after the event. Some may say, "It's a good guess." Ah, no, my friends, that is not a sufficient answer. In fact it is an exceedingly lame answer in view of the fact that no person outside the Bible has made a solitary correct forecast covering hundreds of years concerning any city of earth. Only Bible writers were able to foretell with perfect accuracy events two thousand years in the future. Believe it or not, there has never been a single failure in Bible prophecy. The prophets of God, with never a single mistake in hundreds of prophecies, unerringly stated the facts. From the public platform before thousands in many lands I have repeatedly asked anyone to point out a single instance in which the prophet said that a people or a city, or a nation was to be utterly destroyed and that people, city, or nation is in existence today. Nineveh, Tyre, Babylon, Assyria, and scores of others are in the exact condition in



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which the Bible said they would be. I have seen prophecy fulfilled to the letter in these ancient places. We can know that the Christian Scriptures on this point are unassailable.

Take as another example Babylon, the grandest city that ever pressed the earth. For wealth and magnificence it has had no equal. The metropolis of “the golden kingdom” was a marvel of plan and execution. In vivid language the doom of the great city was foretold. “Babylon, the glory of kingdoms, the beauty of the Chaldees’ excellency, shall be as when God overthrew Sodom and Gomorrah. It shall never be inhabited, neither shall it be dwelt in from generation to generation: neither shall the Arabian pitch tent there; neither shall the shepherds make their fold there. But wild beasts of the desert shall lie there; and their houses shall be full of doleful creatures.” Isaiah 13: 19-22.

When Isaiah delivered this message he might have been considered insane; and he died long before his words were fulfilled. But, literally and accurately was the word of the prophet fulfilled: “It shall be as when God overthrew Sodom and Gomorrah. . . . It shall never be inhabited . . . neither shall the ‘Arabian pitch tent there.’” Verses 19, 20.

Writing of this “desolate metropolis,” a nineteenth century traveler said: “The name and remnant are cut off from Babylon. There the Arabian pitches not his tent; there the shepherds make not their folds.” And again: “While the lion in one part of Babylon is howling his testimony to the truth of God’s Word, the bittern in a pool in another part, and the ‘doleful creatures’ in another, the heaps and burnt mountains in still others, are warning the traveler over its ruins to ‘take heed’ to the ‘sure word of prophecy.’”

## My Visit to Nineveh

A FEW months ago I stood amidst the ruins of the great city of Nineveh, capital of the ancient Assyrian Empire. When the prophet Jonah preached in its busy highways, 2,800 years ago, Nineveh was then centuries old. Its mighty walls rose from the right bank of the River Tigris opposite where the modern city of Mosul now stands.

Nineveh, I was told, means “agreeable dwelling,” and from the records of reliable historians and what I have seen taken from its ruins, the old city must have been well named. According to the divine record in Genesis 10: 11 it was founded by Asshur in the early dawn of history. The prophet Jonah gives a little insight, too, into its size and importance when he refers to it as “an exceeding great city.” It was surrounded by mighty walls, one hundred feet in height, which were built on a rock foundation. Overshadowing the walls were fifteen hundred watchtowers, some two hundred feet in height. Its kings lived and played in the lap of luxury, in magnificent palaces, their every meal a banquet, their every day a coronation day. There were polished walls of jasper, glazed tiles and sculptured reliefs depicting hunting scenes, and the victorious battles of their military exploits. The royal mansions were adorned with bronze and carved ivory, with ceilings of mother of pearl and floors of alabaster.

But while Nineveh was a thing of beauty, it was also a sink of corruption. One well-known writer describes Nineveh as “a center of crime and wickedness” and the Holy Scriptures agree with this description. The prophet Nahum calls Nineveh the gory city, “full of lies and robbery.” Nahum 3: 1. Behind her mighty walls Nineveh stood, defiant of earth or heaven. At her feet rolled the commerce and wealth of Eastern and Western Asia. But fraud was in her storehouses and uncleanness was in her houses. Obscene displays were in her theatres-iniquity was everywhere. Nineveh the magnificent! Nineveh the vile! Nineveh the doomed!

Because of God’s mercy, despite, the wickedness of Nineveh, Jonah the prophet was sent with a message of warning. Every child acquainted with the Old Testament narrative knows the story of disobedient Jonah who tried to escape the task of preaching a disagreeable message, and of his remarkable rescue. Jonah’s tomb is still to be seen in Nineveh, preserved in the ruins of the city as a shrine particularly sacred to Mohammedans. Standing on the elevation by Jonah’s tomb I looked over hundreds of acres of desolate mounds-hundreds of acres of fulfilled Bible prophecy. Listen while I read from the prophet Zephaniah: “And He will stretch out His hand against the north, and destroy Assyria; and will make Nineveh a desolation, and dry like a wilderness.” There it lay before me. Nineveh was indeed “a desolation and dry like a wilderness.” The mounds of Nineveh stood as a mute but forceful testimony to the inspired character of the Holy Bible. “He will make an utter end of the place” the prophet of the Bible had declared

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in the heyday of Nineveh's glory. And so it lay before me "empty, void, and waste" as Nahum 2:10 declared it would be. But its overthrow and desolation was but the beginning of the fulfillment of a whole series of most astonishing prophecies concerning this cruel city.

For nearly 200 years after Jonah preached in Nineveh, it continued to grow in beauty and power. It looked more beautiful, more enduring, than ever. Its army was large, completely equipped with iron weapons; they were the first to employ the battering ram and several other siege machines. Their armor clad and mounted archers were unsurpassed. Even the famous legions of Caesar were not so uniformly well clad as were the Assyrian soldiers on the eve of their country's final eclipse.

Now notice seven prophecies regarding Nineveh. Nahum 1: 10 is the first: "While they are drunken as drunkards they shall be devoured as stubble fully dry." The heathen historian Diodorus Siculus relates that, "the king of Assyria, elated with his former victories ... had abandoned himself to scandalous inaction and had appointed a time of festivity and supplied his soldiers with abundance of wine. The general of the enemy, appraised by deserters of their negligence and drunkenness, attacked the Assyrian army while the whole of them were fearlessly giving way to indulgence."

Second, in Nahum 1: 8 we read: "With an over-running flood he will make an utter end of the place," and again in chapter 2 and verse 6: "The gates of the river shall be opened and the palace, shall be dissolved." It was indeed a supernatural event, when we remember that Nineveh, by means of river gates and walls, had been able to control the torrents of the Tigris for some two thousand years, that now after God had declared it, when an army was besieging it, that the waters should suddenly rise to such an unparalleled height as to tear away two and a half miles of its walls, and through the breach the attacking army rushed.

The third prophecy you will find in Nahum 3: 13: "The fire shall devour thy bars," and again in verse 15: "There shall the fire devour thee and the sword shall cut thee off." Fire and sword were the forces by which God had said He would destroy the city. According to the heathen historian Diodorus Siculus, the king of Nineveh knew of the prophecy that the river would lead to their destruction, and so gave up in despair when the calamity came that he fired his own palace.

Fourth. "I will make thy grave" declared God through His inspired prophet. (Nahum 1:14.) "Thou shall be hid." (Nahum 3:11) Nineveh was to be buried. The silent years rolled by, and Nineveh was not rebuilt. The winds blew the voiceless dust until the city was so completely buried in its grave that its site was unknown and even its existence questioned. Critics ridiculed the Bible statements and maintained that Nineveh had never existed.

Fifth. Nineveh became a desolation, empty, void, and waste, just as Nahum 2: 10 had foretold.

Sixth. We read in Zephaniah 2:13,14: "He will stretch out His hand against the north, and destroy Assyria, and will make Nineveh a desolation, and dry like a wilderness. And flocks shall lie down in the midst of her." While there I saw a small flock of goats and sheep searching for pickings amidst the mounds that once were the glorious palace of Sennacherib.

Seventh. Remarkable as these prophecies are, the Bible goes further. Nineveh was not to remain buried, with critics continuing to cast reproach against those who believe and obey God's Word. Oh, no! For although God would leave her buried throughout long centuries, it was foretold that before time should close, Nineveh would be raised from her grave and become a "gazing-stock." "I will set thee as a gazing stock." You will find that statement in Nahum 3: 6. When modern excavations started in Assyria first by Botta, the French consul of Mosul, and then by Layard, the Englishman, no one knew where Nineveh was located. When the Frenchman uncovered the palace of Sargon at Khorsabad, he thought he had found Nineveh, so he entitled his report "Monument of Nineveh." When Layard the British archeologist excavated the Biblical city of Calah (Genesis 10:11) he thought he was digging up the old palaces of Nineveh, therefore he named his famous work describing these discoveries, "Nineveh and its Remains." This will give you some-idea of how completely Nineveh was lost to the world.

However, with the deciphering of the Assyrian tablets, it was discovered beyond all question that Nineveh lay beneath the mounds just across the Tigris River from the present town of Mosul. These mounds when opened told the story of the glories of Nineveh and its downfall.

One building had contained over seventy halls, rooms, and passages, lined with sculptured slabs of alabaster. Another contained nearly two miles of bas-reliefs, and twenty-seven portals framed by colossal winged bulls, each weighing forty tons, cut from one solid piece of rock. All around were obelisks, statues, and carved ivory. In the library were discovered 25,000 books of baked clay tablets, some with such fine, delicate handwriting that a magnifying glass was needed to read them. They consisted of

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dictionaries of all kinds, poems, rituals, contracts, and letters by the hundred, medical prescriptions, revealing a wide knowledge of drugs, and chemical texts explaining how to make clear and colored glass. Some tablets told of certain kings of Israel, and heathen kings mentioned in the Bible, while still others confirmed the Bible story of creation and the Flood of Noah's day. After spending much time in research among these wonders of Nineveh and comparing them with the Holy Bible, I was again impressed by the singular accuracy of the Bible. The Bible deals with facts, and the ruins of the past confirm it.

## I Saw the Treasures of Egypt

SOME time ago I had the privilege of going down into the ancient tomb of Tutankhamen in the Valley of Kings, which is over 700 miles up the River Nile. Later I went to the Cairo Museum and saw the wonderful objects that had stood in that tomb for over three thousand years. A floor of the museum is devoted to its treasures. My first impression was gold, gold, gold. Gold shining, gold gleaming, gold almost rose red and dull, gold in solid masses, gold hammered paper thin, everywhere as far as I could see down to the end of that great corridor gleamed the bright metal for which men have fought and died throughout all time. I looked in amazement and I began to realize what the Scripture meant when it said that Moses left the treasures of Egypt to walk the ways of God. "By faith Moses, when he was come to years, refused to be called the son of Pharaoh's daughter; choosing rather to suffer affliction with the people of God, than to enjoy the pleasures of sin for a season. Esteeming the reproach of Christ greater riches than the treasures in Egypt: for he had respect unto the value of the reward. By faith he forsook Egypt, not fearing the wrath of the king; for he endured, as seeing Him who is invisible." Hebrews 11: 24-27.

The expression "the treasures of Egypt" was no meaningless phrase. The four chariots in the tomb were completely covered with gold; every inch was decorated either with embossed design and scenes hammered into the gold itself or with inlaid design made of colored glass and stone. The shrine was 17 by 11 feet by 9 feet high, and was also completely covered with gold. Within this shrine was another and still another, each overlaid inside and out with gold. Within the third shrine was the sarcophagus of the finest yellow quartzite, with a lid of red granite. The lid weighed twelve hundredweight. Within were three coffins, one fitted within the other. It was difficult to get them out, for the mass weighed several tons. The coffins were made in the shape of a human body, the first one of wood, the second with pure gold beautifully inlaid, and the last coffin cover in which the king's mummy was found, was made of solid gold. The value of this coffin alone is said to be a quarter of a million pounds.

The mummy was covered with twenty-two layers of mummy cloth; over the face was a solid gold mask which was the portrait of the king. King Tutankhamen was a young man, probably about eighteen years old, when he died. Inside the mummy 5 bindings 143 pieces of jewelry of various kinds were discovered. Of the thirty-two pages that Carter, the discoverer, used to describe the examination of the mummy, more than half are given over exclusively to listing precious articles found wrapped in the coverings. The eighteen-year-old Pharaoh was wrapped in several layers of gold and precious stones. As I looked at the almost unimaginable treasures of the Cairo Museum, especially that golden room of King Tutankhamen, I realized afresh why every child of God should not value gold very highly, for some day in the city of God we will walk on gold. It will be the paving-stones of New Jerusalem.

We think again of Moses who turned his back on all the glory and all the gold of Egypt "choosing rather to suffer affliction with the people of God, than to enjoy the pleasures of sin for a season." Hebrews 11:25. Why should we not follow his example; why should we not in these days when everything human is passing away, give our allegiance too, to the King Eternal, and choose like Moses, if need be, "to suffer with the people of God?"

It was the custom to bury an immense amount of wealth with a king. It has been estimated that some of the tombs must have contained treasures valued at ten million pounds or more in the form of jewels, precious stones, gold, silver, cups, thrones, etc. However, practically all the tombs discovered had been robbed thousands of years before, the mummies removed, and the apartments left in a wrecked condition.

Now what does all this mean to us as Bible believers? It means a great deal, and I will tell you the

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main point that I wish to make. A few years ago some of the skeptics, trying to discredit the Bible, drew attention to the statement in Exodus that the Israelites made the sanctuary in the wilderness. In harmony with God's commandment they used a great deal of gold in its construction: they covered the ark with gold, they made the cherubims out of pure gold; in fact, according to the Scriptures, a vast amount of gold was used. But these skeptics claimed that there was not that much gold in the world in those days, that gold was practically unknown, and that the Israelites could not have had it because there was no gold in Egypt. It was not mined there, they said. But just this one tomb of an Egyptian king, a king who reigned only a short time, and only shortly before the Israelites left Egypt, has been found to be so full of gold that it has been the astonishment of the modern world. Then, think of the many Pharaohs whose tombs have been robbed during the ages; of the millions and millions of pounds' worth of gold that must have disappeared from them. The opening of this practically untouched tomb proves that there were vast quantities of gold in Egypt at the time the Israelites left that land. Yes, the Bible is true.

And as I sat and watched the sun sinking to rest in a blaze of crimson and gold behind the overwhelming grandeur of the magnificent and enormous structures of stone that told of the departed glory that was Egypt's, these enormous relics of a dead past, although cold, massive, and forbidding, told a story. Whether it be in Karnak with its magnificent time-defying ruins, mightiest of antiquity, or the seventy-seven pyramids that lift their heads above the desert wastes, one of which required two and a half million blocks of stone in its construction. and one hundred thousand slaves working steadily for twenty years, they all tell Of the might and grandeur of ancient Egypt and of the amazing evidence that God has given to us of the inspiration of His Holy Book. For remember, the prophets Isaiah, Jeremiah, and Ezekiel lived at the time when Egypt was a mighty nation. She had had a line of kings such as no other nation under heaven had possessed, and it seemed as though she would last for ever. These prophets predicted certain things about Egypt, which at the time of their prediction, about 600 years B.G., seemed impossible of fulfillment. When most other people were predicting unending prosperity for Egypt, the prophets of God pronounced the very opposite. See Isaiah 19 and Ezekiel, chapters 29 and 30. These prophecies have all been fulfilled. Notice some of the statements from Ezekiel: "They shall be a base kingdom; neither shall it [Egypt] exalt itself any more above the nations, for I will diminish them, and they shall no more rule over the nations. The pride of her power shall come down. I will make the land of Egypt desolate and the county shall be desolate in that thereof it was full. I will sell the land into the hand of the wicked, and I will make the land waste, and all that is therein by the hand of strangers. I the Lord have spoken it; and there shall be no more a prince of the land of Egypt."

When the city of Rome was founded, Egypt was already two thousand years old. Rome became powerful and conquered the world, including Egypt, and it was in turn conquered by barbarian nations from the north. Egypt was still powerful, still rich and full of people. When the Arabs came in the seventh century it took them fourteen months and the lives of 23,000 men to capture Alexandria alone, and then its fall was due to treachery. They destroyed the famous Alexandrian library, which was a world calamity. This library supplied the Arabs with fuel for six months.

If the prophecy had said that Egypt, like Babylon, would be utterly destroyed, the skeptics would have good reason to laugh, for Egypt has not been destroyed. It has been reduced and brought down to a low level, a very low level compared with its former glory. Babylon was destroyed, Chaldea was destroyed, Assyria was destroyed, but not Egypt. The Scripture says that Egypt would be diminished but not destroyed. She is still a nation, but on a very low plane compared with her past.

Egypt stands today as a great witness to the Word of God. A testimony to the truthfulness of the Bible. As I saw its ancient ruins, its mighty pyramids, its endless deserts, the smiling green of the valley of the Nile fertilized every year by the overflowing of the river, my mind meditated on the brevity of human life, for remember, if time should last, the great cities of our modern age would probably not endure as long as the ancient temples' of Egypt. They would pass away and new civilizations would arise, but the Word of God stands for ever. In His kingdom God's people will look back on this earth as the kindergarten which preceded the great university of heaven. My friend, Let Him be King will you not give your heart to Christ now of your life and Savior of your soul?

"Him that comes to Me," Jesus declared, "I will in no wise cast out." John 6:37.

And never forget the eternal words: "For God so loved the world, that He gave His only begotten Son, that whosoever believes in Him should not perish, but have everlasting life."

## Thousands Saved by a Bible Prophecy

TO some people the prophecies of the Bible don't seem to be of any practical benefit. They look on them with indifference. They think it is of little concern whether these prophecies are believed or not. And yet on one occasion the lives of thousands of men and women were saved by a brief prophetic warning of just three score words. The prophetic words of the Master Teacher meant everything to them, and they will mean everything to you too if you will heed them. In Matthew 24 we have recorded the majestic outline of future events, spoken by Christ on the Mount of Olives. So exact and up to date are portions of this prophecy, that it might have been spoken yesterday instead of the distant year Of AD 31.

How wonderful is the "sure word of prophecy"! It is a living thing. It travels with the unfolding of history through the ages, and when the time comes, it speaks the meaning of current events to ears that hear. The passing centuries are no barrier to the span of divine prophecy. When the hour comes, it brings forth the event foretold ages before.

"Time like a mighty river, deep and strong, In sullen silence rolls its tide along."

And this living word of prophecy tells where we are in the stream of time.

Christ was on the Mount of Olives with His disciples. Below spread such a view as was never seen again after the Roman armies came. The center of all was the temple. Secular writings are eloquent of its grandeur. The front walls were plated with gold, dazzling to behold in the sunshine. The historian says that elsewhere its stones were of such pure whiteness that at a distance it appeared to the stranger like "a mountain covered with snow." So massive was the masonry that the disciples thought that nothing could ever lay it low.

But the disciples had seen Jesus weeping over the city. Of what value were architectural beauty, massive structure, and the round of religious ceremony, when men were rejecting light and following their own traditions, thus making void the holy law of the Most High? Christ knew that those religious teachers were rejecting the light of life. He knew the cry would ring out in the streets of the holy city, "His blood be on us, and on our children." He had told His disciples repeatedly that He was going up to Jerusalem to be put to death by men. They could not comprehend it; but so it came to pass. The ancient prophecy had foretold it.

All prophecy had pointed to that day when the supreme sacrifice for sinful man would be made. Yet, as Jesus said, the people of Jerusalem were too busy with earthly things and the empty forms of religion to know that they faced the crisis of the ages. "If thou had known," He cried over Jerusalem with weeping, as the hour of fulfillment drew near. Christ wept for the people, not for Himself, for He saw the inescapable future. On the cross He prayed, "Father, forgive them; for they know not what they do." It was not as a martyr that He went to death, but as sinless substitute for guilty humanity. Ages before, prophecy had foretold: "He was wounded for our transgressions, He was bruised for our iniquities: the chastisement of our peace was upon Him; and with His stripes we are healed." Isaiah 53:5.

We had our part in that wondrous moment In old Jerusalem and how cheap and passing seem all earthly considerations in comparison with the eternal glories opened to us in His sacrifice upon the cross!

Most people in Christ's day were too busy to pay attention to what the "sure word of prophecy" had said of their time. Graetz, the Jewish historian, marvels that so little attention was given to these things: "How great was the woe caused by that one execution! He is the only mortal of whom one can say without exaggeration that His death was more effective than His life. Strange that events fraught with so great an import should have created so little stir at the time of their occurrence in Jerusalem." "History of the Jews," Vol. IV, page 165.

Too busy to listen! Too intent on things of the moment to listen to the voice that speaks for eternity! That was the fatal error of the people in that time of crisis. With that sad failure grieving His heart as the moments were slipping by toward Calvary, Christ, in His prophetic outline on Olivet, sought to prepare believers in future generations to "know the times" and "the seasons."

The Savior's prophetic discourse was given in reply to two questions asked by the disciples as they were looking down on Jerusalem. They had heard that Jerusalem was actually to be destroyed, and they evidently associated such an almost unthinkable catastrophe with the end of all earthly kingdoms. We read in Matt. 24:3: "And as He sat upon the Mount of Olives, the disciples came unto Him privately, saying, Tell us, when shall these things be? and what shall be the sign of Thy coming, and of the end of the

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world?”

True to Christ's prophecy, forty years later the city that had cast away God's protection found itself compassed with the Roman armies. Every detail of Christ's prophecy was fulfilled. Of the immediate sign of its fall, and as a signal to the believers round about to escape for their lives, Christ had said: "When you therefore shall see the abomination of desolation, spoken of by Daniel the prophet, stand in the holy place, (who so reads let him understand:) Then let them which be in Judea flee into the mountains. Let him which is on the housetop not come down to take anything out of his house. Neither let him which is in the field return back to take his clothes. But pray you that your flight be not in the winter, neither on the Sabbath day." Matthew 24:15-20.

Daniel's prophecy had made it clear that Roman armies would be the agent of destruction. Now Luke's record of Christ's words gives the last sign for flight even more plainly when he says: "When you shall see Jerusalem compassed with armies." It was in the year AD 66 that the Roman army, under Cestius, encompassed the city. They fought about the holy temple, attempting in vain to enter. It was the signal to the Christians. But how could they flee, as Christ had commanded. The attackers encircled the city. The furious war party in the city, the Zealots, would have prevented any attempted flight.

Just here came the providential stroke of deliverance. Cestius suddenly drew back. Josephus says: "He retired from the city, without any reason in the world." ("Wars of the Jews," Book 2, chapter 19.) The Christians knew the reason. Christ had said, "Flee." And, as the Zealots opened the gates and set out in pursuit of the retiring Romans, the watchful believers knew their moment had come. They fled to the mountain regions beyond.

For thirty-five years they had kept Christ's prophecy in mind. It is to be understood also that for all these years they had prayed that the time of their flight might not be in the winter nor on the Sabbath day; not in the cold of winter, for the flight required such haste that Christ's prophecy told the man on the housetop or in his garden not to try to gather any extra clothing. History shows that such haste was necessary. The moment the Zealots returned, the gates were closed and desperate preparations were begun for the next encounter. No Christian could have escaped then.

They were to pray that their flight be not on the Sabbath, for that was the holy day of rest and worship. That prayer, enjoined by Christ was answered. Graetz, the Jewish historian, has computed the days involved showing that Cestius must have withdrawn from the city on Wednesday, October 7. And so you see, their flight was "not in the winter, neither on the Sabbath day."

Before long the invading forces of Rome returned to the siege, and after fearful scenes of famine and bloodshed, the city was ultimately taken, the temple burned, and the Jewish survivors sold as slaves. But, and note this point, history records that not one Christian perished in the siege of Jerusalem. All had been saved because they heeded that one prophetic statement. To them, prophecy was important; and if we would make the eternal port in safety, we also must heed its warning and appealing voice.

The final siege and overthrow of Jerusalem took place in AD 70 under Titus. He vainly tried to save the temple, but the fury of the resistance defeated his attempt and the temple was burned. The gold plate, melted by the fury of the fire, ran through the foundations, and we are told that these foundation stones were literally torn up in search of the precious metal. Thus were the words of Christ fulfilled to the very letter: "There shall not be left one stone upon another that shall not be thrown down." Matthew 24:2. The sure word of prophecy had been fulfilled.

Friends, the same earnest, loving voice, which brought warning, deliverance, and life to thousands at the dark hour of Jerusalem's downfall, whispers across the ages to us in this troublous time: "So likewise you, when you see these things come to pass, know you that the kingdom of God is nigh at hand. Watch you therefore, and pray always, that you may be accounted worthy to escape all these things that shall come to pass, and to stand before the Son of man." Luke 21:31-36.

The Jewish nation despised the prophetic word of Christ, their city and temple were destroyed, and their people either slain or scattered to the four winds. The Christians, who heeded and trusted these words, found life and salvation. We may find the same protection from the Word of God that lives and abides for ever.

## **My Visit to Old Ur of the Chaldees**

IT is a thrilling, awe-inspiring experience to walk along the streets of Ur, the original home-town of Abraham; to wander through the ruins that once were the homes of his neighbors. I had this experience while travelling in Mesopotamia. It was a long drive by car from Baghdad along the clay road that runs toward the Persian Gulf. We drove all day and after dark arrived at a small cluster of sun baked clay huts that formed the small railway junction of Ur and spent the night with the Arabs in one of their mud huts. Dawn broke over that flat land, and as the sun grew stronger it served only to reveal a wide wilderness. Some two miles away an enormous mound of reddish earth rose from the dry, salty, blank, unredeemed desert. It was unmistakably the famous Ziggurat of Ur, the temple tower of the moon goddess of the ancient people of Chaldea.

I climbed the Ziggurat by the very ramp, uncovered by the excavators, which had been used by the worshippers twenty-three hundred years before Christ. I looked around at a view I shall never forget. Immediately below, clustered at the foot of the ruined temple, lay Ur. There were thousands of roofless brick houses intersected by streets. This was the city in which Abraham was born, and from which he left for the Promised Land. To stand and look over that dead city and read the sacred Scriptures regarding it, is a thrilling experience. Notice these words from Genesis 11: 23-31: "And Haran died before his father Terah in the land of his nativity, in Ur of the Chaldees." "And Terah took Abraham his son, and Lot the son of Haran his son's son, and Sarai his daughter-in-law, his son Abram's wife; and they went forth with them from Ur of the Chaldees, to go into the land of Canaan."

Until 1926 so-called higher criticism was actually taught in some churches and Sunday schools regarding Abraham. It was maintained that the story of Abraham was merely traditional folk lore, and that neither Abraham nor his city, Ur of the Chaldees, ever existed. Time has again confirmed the Bible, and the spade of excavation has proved the precious old Book to be true. For centuries the city of Abraham lay as nameless ruins beneath the great waste of unprofitable sands. Now that very city has been discovered and unearthed, and we find that not only was Abraham. A real man, but that Ur was a great seaport city, a cultural center, a city of libraries, art, museums, and schools. As Sir Leonard Woolley has declared in his book, "Ur of the Chaldees," page 118: "We must revise considerably our ideas of the Hebrew patriarch, when we learn that his earlier years were spent in such sophisticated surroundings. He was the citizen of a great city and inherited the traditions of an ancient and highly organized civilization. The houses themselves bespoke comfort and even luxury."

Here is something very interesting about one of the houses in Ur which has been lately unearthed. It is reported that on the wall beside the door, on the right side as you enter, you can see a little boy's attempt to try out his new stylus, or ancient pencil. He had scratched a name on the wall in the cuneiform letters, which he, no doubt, learned in the school near by. If we translate this name into English we get this, "Abrain." Was this the Abram of the Bible? It was about his time, and in his city. Then in this same city a clay tablet was found containing a contract regarding camels. The name signed by the party of the first part is the same as scratched on the wall, "A-B-R-A-M," and of hundreds and thousands of tablets found and translated, this is the only one with "Abram" upon it, and we have found it right in this city of Ur. We can confidently trust the Bible and the Christ of the Bible.

When God called Abraham out of Ur of the Chaldees, he little realized to what pinnacle of fame his obedience to God would lift him. Among ancient characters there is none that takes a higher place than does Abraham the Hebrew. To the Jewish people he is Father Abraham; the Arabic descendants of Ishmael speak of him as "the friend of God." The Mohammedans place him first among their four great prophets, while to the great Christian world he has been and still is the "Father of the Faithful." Today, under the roof of the mosque at Hebron is his monument. It is covered with gorgeous green brocade and shielded by a silver grille. In the middle of the floor is a circular opening covered with a grating. From this grating is a lamp suspended. Peering down through the opening you can see the lamp burning in the darkness far below. You are looking into the cave of Machpelah, where rests the dust of Abraham. He left Ur with his eyes fixed on the promise of the Eternal. He was content to be a stranger and a pilgrim, "For he looked for a city which hath foundations, whose builder and maker is God." Hebrews 11: 8-10.

But let me assure you that the blank and unredeemed waste of unprofitable sand that stretches as far as the eye can see, is not what Abraham saw. Today it seems incredible that such a wilderness should ever have been inhabited by man, and that the dusty, weathered hillocks at one's feet cover the temples and

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houses of a very great city. But such is the case.

It has been found that the houses of Ur had two storeys in Abraham's time, and contained from fourteen to twenty rooms, with plastered and whitewashed walls; built in a better way than during Nebuchadnezzar's reign. Documents reveal that a high educational system existed during that period, with the following subjects taught in the schools: languages, writing, arithmetic, geography, and natural science. Jewelry and other gold and silver objects discovered in the tombs of Ur showed that craftsmanship had reached an exceedingly high level.

We now know that in the days of Abraham, Ur had had a long and glorious history. The excavation of the royal tombs has revealed a fabulous store of treasures; objects of gold and silver were abundant, not only as ornaments for personal adornment but also as vessels. Weapons and even tools were made of precious metals. Copper was a metal in everyday use. They also used glass, bronze, tin, and iron. In their flourishing days the arts and crafts rose to a high level of perfection and beauty which was not seen again for centuries. This is especially interesting to the Bible lover, for the Bible knows nothing about the fable of early barbarians and uncivilized men gradually developing into civilized peoples. Excavations have confirmed the Bible in this also. As Dr. Hall in his history of the Near East declares: "When civilization appears it is already full grown." The same was discovered in the monuments of ancient Egypt. Notice this statement from Mr. Philip H. Gosse in his book, "The Monuments of Ancient Egypt," page 291: "The information derived from the monuments of Egypt is entirely opposed to the imagined progress of art and science. On the contrary, the more remote the antiquity of the records which have been preserved to us, the greater is the skill, the power, the knowledge, and the taste which they reveal."

These ancient peoples even had a greater knowledge of astronomy than was prevalent in civilized Europe 3,500 years later. Works of art, astonishing in their beauty, have been found to be relics of the first, not latter ages. How wonderfully the spade of the archeologist is confirming this precious old Bible of ours! Dr. A. H. Sayce, that eminent authority and archeologist, declared when speaking at a great meeting in the Albert Hall, London, on December 4, 1923: "A skeptical attitude toward the records of the Old and New Testaments is today usually the mark of ignorance or semi-knowledge. The leading scientists have returned in great measure to what may be termed the traditional views on the subject, and nowhere is this more strikingly the case than as regards the historical records of Scripture."

Recent findings of the archeologist continue to show that the ancient worshippers of the moon goddess of Ur, unknowingly prepared for us the baked clay evidences that God's Word is true. The silent dead are giving emphatic testimony to the truth of the Bible records. As man has scraped away the dust of these ancient cities and tombs, and the Bible, the lamp of time, sheds its light, we see Abraham and other great characters of Scripture revealed as living originals, historical characters.

The evidences of the divine origin and historic accuracy of the Holy Scriptures were never so strong as they are today. Recently a prominent archeologist was asked if any discovery had been made in all the wide-spread diggings in Bible lands that contradicts the Bible. Note the answer of this man of research: "No, not one. There has not been the faintest disproof of the Bible, but many corroborations." This is not only interesting, but comforting: the witnesses of a bygone world testify to the correctness of the deathless Word of our God and cry aloud from the dim past that the Bible is the Word of truth.

## Why an Atheistic Scientist was Converted

LISTEN to the testimony of a prominent scientist. It tells of an amazing experiment that convinced him of the truth as it is in Jesus. Dr. N. Jerome Stowell, a leading nuclear scientist, is now currently speaking to thousands of people in Southern California. In a recent radio discourse he said, "In our solar plexus is the seat of our emotion. With a delicate instrument, which we have devised, we can measure the wavelength of the brain. Recently we checked the emanations from the brain of a woman near death. She was praying at the time, and we could tell that something about her was reaching toward God. The meter pegged 500 positive.

"In the same hospital we trained the meter on the brain of a man cursing God. It pegged 500 minus. These are the two extremes so far indicated on the instrument.

"We are on the threshold of spiritual discoveries. No one can fathom the literal pull a Christian



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exerts when he is in personal contact with God. It is tangible far beyond the comprehension of mortality. It is similar, in one sense, to that which we know as radar.

“These experiences have caused me to turn to God. I have been a Christian only a short time and I know little of the way. This I do know-the things of God are positive. I will endeavor to keep my life far above the zero indication. The world little realizes the impact of believing prayer. It is a moving of the resources of the infinite.”

Truly, fellow Christians, “more things are wrought by prayer than this world dreams of.” Yes, “prayer changes things; it is the key in the hand of faith to unlock heaven’s storehouse, where are treasured the boundless resources of Omnipotence. Prayer is the breath of the soul, it is communion with God, communion with the Fountain of strength, peace, and happiness. It is the opening of the heart to God as to a friend.”

Here is Dr. Stowell’s own account of the experiment that changed him from an atheist to a believing child of God:

“I was almost a devout atheist. I didn’t believe that God was any more than a conglomeration of everyone’s mind put together, and the good that was there-that was God as far as I was concerned. As for the real, all-powerful God existing and loving us all, with power over everything, I didn’t believe that!

“Then one day I had an experience that really set me thinking. I was in a large pathological laboratory and we were attempting to find the wave-length of the brain. We found more than just a wave-length of the brain. We found a channel of wave-lengths, and that channel has so much room in it that the different wave-lengths of each individual brain are farther separated in identity than the fingerprints on each individual’s hand. This is a point we should remember: God can actually keep in heaven a record of our thoughts as individuals just as the FBI can keep a record of our fingerprints in Washington, D.C.

“We wanted to make an experiment to discover what took place in the brain at the moment of transition from life to death. We chose a lady whose family had sent her to a mental institution, but who had been discharged. The doctors could find nothing wrong with her other than the fact that she had cancer of the brain. This affected the balance of her body only. As far as her alertness of mind was concerned, and in every other way, she was exceptionally brilliant. But we knew that she was on the verge of death, and she was informed in this research hospital that she was going to die.

“We arranged a tiny pickup in her room to ascertain what would take place in the transition of her brain from life to death. We also put a very small microphone, about the size of a shilling, in the room, so that we could hear what she said if she had anything to say.

“Five of us hardened scientists-perhaps I was the hardest and most atheistic of the group-were in an adjoining room with our instruments prepared to register and record what transpired. Our device had a needle pointing to 0 in the center of a scale. To the right the scale was calibrated to 500 points positive. To the left the scale was calibrated to 500 points negative. We previously had registered on this identical instrument the power used by a 50 kilowatt broadcasting station in sending a message around the world. The needle registered 9 points on the positive side.

“As the last moments of this woman’s life arrived, she began to pray and to praise the Lord. She asked the Lord God to be merciful unto those who had despitefully used her. Then she reaffirmed her faith in God, telling Him she knew He was the only power and that He was the living power. She told God He always had been, and always would be. She praised God and thanked Him for His power and for her knowledge of His reality. She told Him how much she loved Him!

“We scientists had been so engrossed with this woman’s prayer that we had forgotten our experiment. We looked at each other and saw tears streaming down scientific faces. I had not shed tears since I was a child.

“Suddenly we heard a clicking sound on our forgotten instrument. We looked and the needle was registering a positive 500, desperately trying to go higher, only to bounce against the 500 positive post in its attempt!

“By actual instrumentation we had recorded that the brain of a woman, alone and dying, in communication with God had registered more than fifty-five times the power used by a fifty kilowatt broadcasting station sending a message around the world.

“After this, we decided to try a case very unlike the first one. We chose a man lying in the research hospital, stricken with a deadly social disease. His brain had become atrophied to the very point of death. He was practically a maniac.

“After we had set up our instruments, we arranged for one of the nurses to antagonize the man.

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Through her wiles she attracted his interest in her, and then suddenly told him she didn't want to have anything more to do with him. He began to verbally abuse her and the needle began to register on the negative side. Then he cursed her and took the name of God in vain. The needle suddenly clicked back and forth against the 500 negative post!

"By actual instrumentation we had registered what happened in the brain when that brain broke one of God's Ten Commandments, 'Thou shall not take the name of the Lord thy God in vain.'

"We had established by instrumentation the positive power of God and the negative power of the adversary. We had found that beneficial truth is positive and that non-beneficial things, covered by the 'thou shall not' of the Ten Commandments, are negative in varying degrees.

"If we scientists can record these things, I believe with all my heart that the Lord God can keep a record of our thoughts! He has more power than we have, and is a better record keeper than any of us on this earth....

"It is the presence of God in us that gives us power, of whose magnitude we have no conception! I am now a scientist who loves the Lord with all my heart. I want you to pray for me, that I will always think and say and do the things a positive God wants me to think and say and do, and that I will think and say and do nothing according to the wishes of a negative adversary, who kept me blinded and bound so many years."

## The Old Book That Is Up to Date

IT has been roughly estimated that already 95 per cent of the earth's inhabitants may be reached by the gospel in the language in which some portion of the Bible has been translated. This is the Book that speaks to all mankind. While the Bible was born in the East and is clothed very largely in Oriental form and imagery, still it walks in the ways of all the world with familiar feet. It enters land after land to find its own everywhere.

**"It claims no climate, shuns no race  
While centuries depart;  
It finds a home in every place  
And speaks to every heart."**

While the Bible not only has reached every place and speaks to mankind in every land, it has also stood the test of every age. On the other hand, modern scientific discoveries have wrought havoc among the ancient systems of thought, and the errors of the pagan philosophers are made more manifest, as specialists in the various fields of science proceed with their investigations. The so-called scientific theories of the pagans of bygone days are being demolished by the discoveries of our modern age. For instance, the ancients had many misconceptions in regard to the shape of the earth. Some of the illustrious Greeks thought that the earth was the shape of a table, while others maintained it was egg-shaped. The ancient Egyptians imagined the whole universe to be a large box with the earth forming the bottom of the box. The ancient Persians held that the earth was flat, shaped like a warrior's shield, while in Central America they taught that the earth was a large square block.

The ancient pagan peoples had also many strange ideas concerning the suspension of the earth. For instance, in the Hindu mind it was supposed to be supported on the backs of four elephants, which in turn were supported on the back of a giant turtle which swam about within the celestial crystal sphere. Some of the ancient astronomers of Greece taught that the earth stood on pillars, others said it rested on the shoulders of the famous giant, Atlas.

Some people have thought that the Holy Bible is merely the production of the combined wisdom of these ancient philosophers of paganism. But that couldn't be so, for the Bible contains none of these notorious pagan blunders. While the ancients had many misconceptions with regard to the shape of the earth, the Bible plainly stated that the earth was round:

"It is He [God] that sits upon the circle of the earth." Isaiah 40:22. Isaiah, 2,700 years ago, declared that the earth-was a circle or sphere. Solomon added his testimony by stating that God set a

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compass, or as the margin says, a circle, upon the face of the deep. Long before the days of Columbus the Bible stated that the earth was round. When pagan philosophers were advancing all kinds of theories, the Bible stated truths that today science is confirming. Sir Isaac Newton is known as the discoverer of the law of gravitation; but 3,500 years ago the Bible declared that the earth was hung on nothing. "He [God] stretches out the north over the empty place, and hangs the earth upon nothing." Job 26: 7. Paul has stated in Hebrews 1:2,3: "He made the worlds; . . . upholding all things by the word of His power." The passing years have certainly not overthrown this precious old Bible of ours.

**"Time's finger cannot dim its page,  
No foe can cloud its might.  
The ages pass-from age to age  
It shines more clear, more bright"**

Consider some of the wonders of science that are revealed in the Bible, wonders that were revealed thousands of years ago. One of the fundamental laws of modern science is that life comes only from the living; but this principle was announced in the Bible thousands of years ago. In the first and second chapters of Genesis, we have the record of creation, where it says that everything should reproduce after its kind. It took the living God to create life, and subsequent life comes only from life. The Bible states a fact when it says that God created every living thing. (Genesis 1: 24, 25.) In Genesis 1: 27 we read that God created man in His own image. This was the origin of mankind. The Bible says: "And the Lord God formed man of the dust of the ground." Genesis 2: 7.' Science says that the earth consists of oxygen, hydrogen, carbon, phosphorus, calcium, and other elements. Laboratory analysis has proved that man is composed of these very same elements which exist in the earth.

The sun which brings light to the earth and makes life possible is used in the Bible as a symbol of Jesus Christ. In Malachi 4: 2, RV, we read of the wonderful day when the Sun of righteousness will arise "with healing in His beams." Modern science has proved that the sun is a source of health, that in its ultra-violet radiation there is healing, and that these rays are important to the physical life of man. Literally, the sun has healing in its beams. This was discovered by scientists about 100 years ago.

The circulation of the blood was not known until Sir William Harvey, the great English physician, discovered it in the year 1660. Up to that time it was believed that air was carried through the arteries of the body. That is why the name arteries or "air tubes" was given to them. But blood has been circulating through them since the creation of man. Three thousand years before Harvey's discovery, Moses had written in Leviticus 17:14: "For it [the blood] is the life of all flesh; the blood of it is for the life thereof." No cell can grow in the human body without blood.

Long ago, sterilization was mentioned in the Bible. "Everything that may abide the fire you shall make it go through the fire and it shall be clean: nevertheless it shall be purified with the water of separation: and all that abides not the fire you shall make go through the water." Numbers 31: 23. In other words, in order to be cleansed things had to go through fire or through water. You see these principles of public health all through the Bible in the most startling way.

Though the Bible originated in the East, one can travel through the East today and can see that these simple principles of sterilization and health are still unknown there. There is only one explanation as to where these sound principles and this wonderful knowledge came from, as recorded in the Bible: it came by divine inspiration. "Holy men of God spoke as they were moved by the Holy Ghost."

The Bible also pictures the earth as being stored with fire or heat. Away back in Job 28: 5 we read: "As for the earth, out of it comes bread: and under it is turned up as it were fire." The earth gets warmer as man digs into it at the rate of 1 degree Fahrenheit for every fifty-five feet of descent. In 2 Peter 3: 7, RV, we read: "But the heavens that now are, and the earth, by the same word have been stored up for fire, being reserved against the day of judgment and destruction of ungodly men." The earth is stored with fire. This thought is impressed very vividly in one's mind as one visits the great thermal regions in this earth or beholds the great volcanoes in action.

Above us, the starry heavens show the work of an Almighty hand, for: "The heavens declare the glory of God, and the firmament shows His handiwork." Psalm 19:1. And, "By the word of the Lord were the heavens made, and all the host of them by the breath of His mouth." Psalm 33: 6. We see these things about us. We cannot deny them. The existence of the earth, of man, of the animal creation, of the heavens above, proves to us that there was and is a Creator. The Bible is proved true; therefore, why should we not

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believe this great Book when it tells us of other things. When it tells us “that Christ died for our sins according to the Scriptures; and that He was buried, and that He rose again the third day according to the Scriptures”? 1 Corinthians 15: 3. Why should we not believe this? Why should we not also believe that “God so loved the world, that He gave His only begotten Son, that whosoever believes in Him should not perish, but have everlasting life”? Why should we riot obey the Scriptures which tell us to repent and confess our sins and believe on the Lord Jesus Christ, and be baptized and obey His Word?

The Bible was given, not that we should have arguments about its accuracy, but that we should believe on the Lord Jesus Christ. “But these are written, that you might believe that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God; and that believing you might have life through His name.” John 20: 31.

## The Dead Sea Scrolls

WHILE in Jerusalem I had the privilege of spending some time with the director of the Jerusalem Museum examining the Hebrew Bible scrolls that were discovered in caves near the Dead Sea. As I saw some of the archeological discoveries that either establish the reliability of the Bible text or furnish an historical background that is a great aid to a correct understanding of the events described in the Bible, I was impressed with the thought that unbelief or ignorance of its teachings is inexcusable.

I saw the jars that had held the original manuscripts and the linen which had been wrapped around these precious documents. I handled and examined fragments of the Bible manuscripts of Genesis, Leviticus, Deuteronomy, and Isaiah. These are carefully placed between two sheets of glass where they are fitted together like the pieces of a jigsaw puzzle. Some of these manuscripts date back to the fourth century BC. I especially remember handling an old manuscript in the Phoenician script that had been written some 400 years before Christ.

As the director of the Jerusalem Museum assured us that they had found manuscripts or fragments of all the books of the Old Testament, I asked him if there was any difference between these ancient manuscripts and our present Bible. He quickly answered, “There is virtually no difference. In practically all things they are exactly the same as the Authorized Version. You can take that for certain,” he assured me personally.

These manuscripts are coming from the Wilderness of Judea, and it is certain there are more to discover, as the district is full of caves. The discovery of these Biblical manuscripts has certainly turned the and Dead Sea region into an archeologist’s paradise.

An official report of the scientific excavations of the first cave was published recently. In this work 971 manuscript fragments are published, of which 964 are photographic reproductions. These fragments come from eleven Old Testament books and several non-Biblical Jewish writings. Though they do not provide much text material in point of quantity, they certainly give a good picture of the nature of the Bible text as it existed in the time when these manuscripts were written, in the last centuries before Christ and the first century of the Christian era.

It is interesting to note that in February, 1955, an official announcement was made by the Government of the State of Israel that four scrolls that had been the property of St. Mark’s Monastery in Jerusalem and which had been stored in America ,since 1948, had been purchased by Israel. The price paid for the scrolls was £120,000. This shows clearly how valuable these documents are.

Since the discovery of the first cave in 1947, the manuscript material found in the Dead Sea region has increased greatly. Several more caves have been discovered, and many manuscript fragments have come to light. Cave Number Four has proved to be the most important so far discovered, for it has provided thousands of manuscripts belonging to more than a hundred Biblical and non-Biblical works, among which all the Old Testament books are represented. All this material is in the Archeological Museum in Jerusalem, where French, English, Polish, German, and American scholars are working hard deciphering, assembling, and preparing the fragments for publication.

Already it is possible to draw a number of conclusions from these discoveries. First and foremost I would say the most valuable finding is that the Old Testament text has experienced virtually no alteration during the past 2,000 years. The text of the Dead Sea scrolls is for all practical purposes identical with the Hebrew Bible on which all modern translations are based.

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Here is an interesting statement made by Professor Frank M. Cross, who is a member of the permanent staff working on the Dead Sea scrolls. He says, "Not only in Isaiah, but in other prophetic books, indeed in the entire Old Testament, we must now assume that the Old Testament text was stabilized early, and that late recessional activities were only of slight effect. This conclusion, of course, powerfully supports textual scholars of conservative persuasion." - *The Christian Century*, August 11, 1955, page 920.

This pronouncement coming from one who, has such an intimate knowledge of this mass of unpublished material, can be added to the statements concerning the reliability of the Bible text, which had been made by several scholars shortly after the discovery and publication of the Isaiah scroll.

It can safely be said that the finding of the Dead Sea scrolls has been one of the most important discoveries ever made in the field of Bible archeology. They therefore have great importance in strengthening the confidence of Bible readers in the integrity of the Old Testament.

These discoveries will also prove of value in other directions. For instance, many of the non-Biblical works shed very interesting light on the thinking of the Jews in the time of Christ and the apostles. The result is that many of the scholars expect that the Dead Sea scrolls will exert an even more definite influence on the New Testament studies than on the Old Testament. Whether this will be the case or not, it is a little early to say.

During the past few years excavations have uncovered the location of the community which produced these priceless documents. Lying only a few miles south of Jericho, the ruins of this site have been known for many years, but have never been touched by the spade of the archeologist. The excavations have now revealed that this site contains the ruins of the headquarters of the Essenes, a Jewish group living in the Dead Sea region. Although this sect is never mentioned in the Bible it played a great role in the religious thinking of the Jews at the time when Christianity was born.

I was very interested in some of the things discovered in these excavations. I have seen the old stone tables on which they wrote their manuscripts. I have also seen and handled the old bronze and baked clay inkpots that they used to hold their ink while writing these manuscripts, and one also sees the bowls that they probably used to wash their hands before they would write the word God, for so particular were the old Jewish scribes that they would never dare to write the word God without first washing their hands.

In a recent presidential address to the Victoria Institute, London, Sir Frederick G. Kenyon, who was at one time head of the manuscript department at the British Museum, gave a very heartening review of the manner in which, during the past half century or so, the critics and opponents of the Bible had been decisively defeated, while the authenticity and trustworthiness of the Scriptures have been triumphantly established. I quote his words: "In the latter years of the nineteenth century the champions of Christianity were mainly on the defensive. Natural science was in the heyday of the progress which took its rise in the discoveries and doctrine of Darwin. At the same time within the sphere of religious study itself a school of thought asserted itself which questioned the authenticity and trustworthiness of the fundamental doctrines of Christianity, and applied the utmost freedom of skepticism to their narratives. Against this attitude the state of our knowledge of Biblical archeology did not supply arguments which could effectively convince those who did not wish to be convinced. The advocates of the Christian faith fought at a disadvantage and were on the defensive. Now all this is changed, and the point which I want to make is that we are no longer on the defensive. It is no longer the Christian scholar who is out of date. The up-to-date scholars are now those who recognize the authenticity and authority of the Christian literature. It is the critics who formerly claimed to be advanced, who are now belated and behind the times."

We may rejoice in the great evidence that our God has given us in these last days, of the truthfulness of the Bible. We would do well to remember that if God thought it worth while to give us the Book, it is worth our while to seek to fathom its depths and to saturate our thinking with its truths. So, read the Bible to be wise, believe it to find satisfaction, and practice it to enjoy fullness of life.

## **The Problems of the Bible**

ON February 13, 1918, in the closing phases of the first World War, Viscount Allembly, the commander of the British Army in the Middle East, was outlining to his officers a plan of frontal attack on the village of Michmash. One of his officers, Major Petrie, felt sure that he had heard the name Michmash

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before, but could not remember where or when. That night he could not sleep, for turning the word over in his mind. Michmash, Michmash he mused. At last it occurred to him. Michmash was the name of a place mentioned in the Bible. Quickly finding the passage in 1 Samuel 13 and 14, the major rushed to his superior officer, roused him from sleep, and excitedly pointed out the verses describing a battle in that very place 3,000 years before.

The Biblical account tells how Jonathan and his armor bearer climbed up a steep path by two sharp rocks and subdued the Philistines in their rocky stronghold. The general decided it was worth investigating, and sent out scouts at once to check on the accuracy of the Bible description. When the scouts located the sharp rocks and other landmarks, they reported their findings. The commander and major studied the Bible account more carefully, and that night changed their plan of attack. The next morning a small detachment of British soldiers followed Jonathan's route, surprised the Turks, and routed them with ease.

Just how often the Bible has provided an exact plan for successful attack and victory on a literal battlefield, I don't know, but the Bible has certainly meant personal power for victorious living. It has certainly meant peace of mind in the time of trial, and strength to meet every crisis, and hope for the future. And much more than all that, only eternity will reveal how many times the Bible has made possible victory over temptation and sin. There is power in the Book of God. We read that the gospel "is the power of God unto salvation to everyone that believes." Romans 1:16.

Some time ago, a skeptic, speaking of the Bible, said that it was quite impossible in these days to believe in any book whose authority was unknown. A Christian asked him if the compiler of the multiplication table was known. "Oh, no," the skeptic answered. "Then, of course, you wouldn't believe in it." "Oh, yes, I would," said the skeptic, "I believe in it because it works." "And so does the Bible," replied the Christian. The Apostle Paul declared, "I can do all things through Christ which strengthens me."

There is also beauty in the Book of God, One writer has well said, "Any author would give his right eye to have written those wonderful words in Psalm 139:9,10. "If I take the wings of the morning, and dwell in the uttermost parts of the sea; even there shall Thy hand lead me, and Thy right hand shall hold me."

**"Let all the heathen writers join  
To form one perfect book.  
Great God, if once compared with Yours,  
How mean their writings look!**

**"Not the most perfect rules they gave,  
Would show one sin forgiven;  
Nor lead one step beyond the grave,  
But Yours conducts to heaven."**

There are too many people concerned about the things in the Bible they cannot understand. They become so disturbed over these things that they are unable to obtain the blessings found in the easily understood truths that God has revealed. Remember, Christian experience and Bible knowledge are progressive, like the growth of a child. How little a child knows when he first starts to go to school! There is so much to learn that he would soon become confused if he were too much concerned about the things that he didn't know. He must first learn the simple facts of addition and subtraction before he can grapple with multiplication and division. He must first master these and then other knowledge will be mastered in turn. Similarly, while the Christian should continually seek for advancement in the knowledge of spiritual truths, his mind should be intent upon those things that he already knows. He should be more concerned about living up to the things he knows and understands than about the things that he does not know, and probably never will know in this life.

Not all that is in the Bible is perfectly understandable. It is a Book that rewards earnest thought and deep study. Its truths do not all lie on the surface. Nevertheless there are truths that can be understood by simple minds. You remember Christ intimated that many things that He taught could be understood by babes, even though the worldly wise passed them off as mysteries. There are difficulties in the Bible, but since when is difficulty in comprehending a thing proof that it is false? Should we, because we cannot fully comprehend the nature of electricity conclude that to use electricity is folly, and therefore have it

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disconnected from our houses? Because no one can explain the phenomena of sight, should we conclude that sight is of no value? Because the process by which our bodies assimilate food has never been fully understood, should we refuse to eat?

The Bible not only has difficulties but recognizes its own difficulties, and even adds a caution in regard to them—a caution much needed at this time. St. Peter declares that St. Paul's Epistles contain some things which are "hard to be understood, which the ignorant and not steadfast wrest as they do also the other Scriptures unto their own destruction." 2 Peter 3: 16, RV. In the Bible there are things that are hard to be understood, and when the infidel approaches us with difficulties, we need not be either surprised or alarmed, for the Bible says that they are there, and for us to say that they are not there would be to deny the Bible. The only thing that concerns us is whether we "wrest them to our own destruction." Let us always be on guard against the conclusion that since we cannot solve certain difficulties, they are therefore beyond solution. This inference savors so strongly of pride as to be utterly repugnant to the spirit of true scholarship.

The Bible is a wonderful Book. None other has been studied so much or called forth a tithe of the criticism that this Book has engendered. No other book has ever stimulated intellectual activity like the Bible. On the battlefield of truth, it has ever been around this Book that the conflict has raged. In fact the very multitude of infidel books attacking its veracity is a witness to its power to stimulate the intellect. Why should we not see the same amount of intellectual activity challenging the other so-called holy books of the East? Never a book spoke like the Bible. No other book comes home to the heart and the conscience with light, power, and healing as does this wonderful Book. It teaches men how to live; it gives them courage in the face of death.

A well-known infidel is said to have exclaimed in his last moments, "I am about to take a leap in the dark." Cast the Bible aside, and every man at death takes a leap in the dark. In the language of another writer: "Weary human nature lays its head on the Bible's breast, or it has nowhere to lay its head."

Travelers on the brink of the dark and terrible valley which parts the land of the living from the untried hereafter, either take the Bible or they wander into gloom without hope. They who look their last on the beloved dead listen to this voice of comfort and hope and peace, or else death is no uplifting of everlasting doors and no unfolding of everlasting arms, but only an enemy, a blackness of darkness for ever.

Dr. H. A. Kelly has well said, "I have never in my whole life met a man who really knows the Bible and who has rejected it. The difficulty has always been an unwillingness to give it an honest trial. Our Lord Jesus Christ Himself said: "You will not come unto Me, that you might have life."

Christ accepted the Bible in His day without any comment or question; and Christians of this day need not fear to accept the Bible that Jesus believed and taught.

When Columbus saw the South American coast where the River Orinoco meets the sea, a member of his party said to him that they had discovered a new island. Columbus replied, "No such river as that flows from an island. That mighty torrent must drain the waters of a continent. Just so, the Bible comes not from the empty hearts of impostors, liars, and deceivers. It springs from the eternal depths of divine wisdom, love, and grace. It certainly is the transcript of the divine mind, the unfolding of the divine purpose, the revelation of the divine will.

The Moderator of the Presbyterian Church, at the coronation, gave our Sovereign Queen Elizabeth the Word of God saying, "Our gracious Queen, we present you with this Book, the most valuable thing this world affords. Here is wisdom. This is the royal law. These are the living oracles of God." May God help us to receive it, to believe it, and to be saved through Christ Jesus our Lord.

## Enduring City of the Skies

IT is interesting to discover that the early history and folklore of most nations contain some reference to the creation of this world, the garden of Eden, the fall of man, and the Flood. It is also apparent that from the beginning, people have been looking forward to a better land. We all long for something better. God planned a better world, but the realization of that plan has been hindered by evil. We read in Revelation 21: 4 that ultimately "God shall wipe away all tears from their eyes, and there shall be

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no more death, neither sorrow, nor crying, neither shall there be any more pain: for the former things are passed away.”

The time is coming when our God will make all things new, including the world itself. Then it will be in truth “the days of heaven upon the earth.” Deuteronomy 11:21. We really have something wonderful to look forward to, for no matter how dark the things are in this world, there is a bright, beautiful day coming.

If we could see that beautiful land of tomorrow pictured on a television screen we would be thrilled. But if we are faithful to Christ, we shall see it in reality. The Scriptures have a great deal to say about the better land, especially about the city of the skies, the capital of the wonderful world of tomorrow. Some people read about it and say, “Oh, it must be just spiritual or symbolic. It can’t be real.” But why can’t it be real? The earth we live on now is real. We are real, are we not? Of course it will be different, but we are never told in the Bible that it will not be real. The earth was real in the beginning before sin entered. Why will it not be real when sin is gone? Our Savior certainly was real after His resurrection, and when He comes again we “shall be like Him, for we shall see Him as He is.” 1 John 3: 2.

We read in Revelation 21: 2-4 that the city of the skies is the New Jerusalem, and that someday it will descend to this earth. “And I John saw the holy city, new Jerusalem, coming down from God out of heaven, prepared as a bride adorned for her husband. And I heard a great voice out of heaven saying, Behold, the tabernacle of God is with men, and He will dwell with them, and they shall be His people, and God Himself shall be with them, and be their God. And God shall wipe away all tears from their eyes; and there shall be no more death, neither sorrow, nor crying, neither shall there be any more pain, for the former things are passed away.”

This earth, once the place of man’s shameful fall, is to become the resting place of the city of God. This earth, once bedewed with great drops of blood which fell from our Savior’s brow in the dark garden of Gethsemane, will enjoy God’s presence, for it is said that He will dwell among men.

There, “God shall wipe away all tears from their eyes.” He will do this by removing all cause for tears. Lonely, weary, and often hungry, Christ walked the rough and thorny byways of this world, but He holds something better in reserve for His blood-bought people. If God had nothing better to offer the redeemed than this sin-stained world then He would be ashamed to be called our God; but the Scripture says “He hath prepared for them a city.” (Hebrews 11:16.) Down through the ages, men have been building cities. They have been building palaces, but the hand of time has ever been busy sweeping these away, until our world is strewn with the wreckage of ruined cities and human habitations. But, there is to be revealed a city whose Builder and Maker is God. Only the divine Architect can build an enduring habitation. That city is to be the capital of the new world—the home of the redeemed.

While ancient Babylon, unequalled in wealth and magnificence, had walls of baked bricks, the city of God has walls of jasper. Babylon had stone streets, but the city of our God has streets of gold. Babylon had gates of brass, but the New Jerusalem has gates of luminous pearls. Babylon was built on a square measuring fifteen miles on each side, but the capital of the new world will stand on a square of at least 375 miles on each side.

Sickness and death have cast their shadows over all earthly cities, but of the holy city, we read, “The inhabitant shall not say, I am sick.” Isaiah 33: 24. There the links of friendship will never be broken, for the power of death, that cruel destroyer, will never again be known. Eternity crowns all its glories and there will be pleasures for evermore.

In all his works, man has vainly endeavored to approach the eternal, but humanity’s monuments have crumbled and all its gardens are withered. Its empire capitals and lordly mansions have shared the ultimate fate of the humble cottage. In the year AD 79, Pompeii went down in its mantle of burning dust; in 1755 Lisbon was shaken to pieces by an earthquake. In 1789 Paris was painted red with fire and blood; in 1871 Chicago went down in a sheet of flame that swallowed up £100 million worth of treasures. In more recent years, the destruction of modern cities by aerial bombardment is too vividly remembered to need mention.

But what of the future? Men may insure their palaces, but that insurance will not count with heaven. The divine sentence of doom still reads: “The cities of the nations fell.” Revelation 16: 19. Yes, the cities of the nations will fall, but the jewel-founded city of God will never go down. Time cannot bring decay or rust there; disease will find no place there; tears will be for ever wiped away. The hands of its immortal inhabitants will be clasped in friendships that will never be broken. Their hearts will respond to a joy that will never be lessened by sorrow, for it is written: “In Thy presence is fullness of joy; at Thy right



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hand there are pleasures for evermore.” Psalm 16: 11.

Now what about the city’s size? Is it big enough? Will it accommodate the millions of the saved? Revelation 21: 15-18 states: “And he that talked with me had a golden reed to measure the city, and the gates thereof, and the wall thereof. And the city lies foursquare, and the length is as large as the breadth: and he measured the city with the reed, twelve thousand furlongs. The length and the breadth and the height of it are equal. And he measured the wall thereof, an hundred and forty and four cubits, according to the measure of a man, that is, of the angel. And the building of the wall of it was of jasper: and the city was pure gold, like unto clear glass.”

Twelve thousand furlongs! Think of it, friends. Eight furlongs to a mile, that would equal 1,500 miles. If this measurement is the entire circumference of the city, as some suggest, the New Jerusalem would be 375 miles on each side. If we understand the 12,000 furlongs to be the length of one side of the city only, then the walls would surround 2,250,000 square miles. From either standpoint, there is room for all the people who ever lived on the earth, from the days of Adam to the present, should every one of them be saved.

We read that the length and breadth and height of the city are equal. This may properly be defined as “in proportion.” It would be strange if, when the walls are only 144 cubits, or 264 feet in height, the city itself would actually be as high as it is long and wide. However, someone has given us the following facts: If the city is a square, 1,500 miles each way, it encloses 21 million square miles. Now allowing three-quarters of the city for its streets of gold, parks, the river of life, the throne, and courts of God, there would still be plenty of room left. If you allow 4,000 cubic feet to a room, there would be room enough for 50 million million people, which would be 50,000 times as many as have ever lived on this earth. And so, according to this computation, if all the inhabitants of the earth were saved, each could have a mansion of 50,000 rooms. Is there room enough? Yes, indeed. Room enough for all the saved, for the angelic host, and for those happy inhabitants of unfallen worlds who will visit the city not built with hands.

We, however, should not picture the redeemed merely as city dwellers. We are told that from the New Jerusalem they will go forth on the face of the re-created earth where they shall build houses and inhabit them; they shall plant vineyards, and eat the fruit of them.” Isaiah 65: 21. Theirs will largely be an outdoor life amidst the beauties of nature, with endless opportunities for research into the mysteries of natural science. The Scriptures say that “from one Sabbath to another, and from one new Moon to another shall all flesh worship Me said the Lord.” Isaiah 66: 23. It is upon such occasions that the redeemed will occupy their city mansions.

The twelve foundations of this city are of precious stones arranged like the spectrum of a rainbow, only more complex. Upon these rest the walls of jasper, transparent to allow the different colored rays of light to pass through. The twelve mighty gates of pearl must be wholly for beauty, because they are never shut. Like God’s grace and mercy, they open towards all points of the compass, and they are open for evermore; but no one will ever pass through those gates of pearl who has not previously passed through the narrow gate of repentance. Only the obedient, through Christ’s abundant grace, will enter there. We can say with the Apostle John, as he saw the redeemed come home: “Blessed are they that do His commandments, that they may have right to the tree of life, and may enter in through the gates into the city.” Revelation 22:14.