

A Bird's Eye View
Of
God's Plan

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This book is dedicated to my faithful wife,
LOLA H. CHURCH
Who has been a real inspiration in my life.

FOREWORD

Our Lord Jesus wants us to be like Himself. The Holy Spirit dwells in us, and makes us like Jesus as we yield habitually to His wooing and leading. This is the practical meaning of that big word "predestination," as my friend, Mr. Church, makes so clear in this little book.

It becomes increasingly clear that our Lord Jesus will come back soon to finish up His earth task, and start things a-going in His own way, down on this dear old earth of ours.

I am glad to be in partnership with Mr. Church in this warm, clear, Scriptural bit of practical teaching.

S. D. GORDON.

The author of Quiet Talks.

A BIRD'S EYE VIEW OF GOD'S PLAN

1 Cor. 15:25-"For he (Christ) must reign, till he hath put all enemies under his feet."

Rev. 11:15-"The kingdoms of this world are become the kingdom of our Lord, and of his Christ; and he shall reign for ever and ever."

The Bible is not a book on science, nor history, nor geography. It is a book that sets forth God's plan for the redemption of a fallen race, and it tells us about what is being done and what the consummation shall be. It is true that when it treats of science it is accurate, and far ahead of all the knowledge of man today. When it deals with history it is true to the facts, and its accuracy along that line is being verified every day. When it deals with geography it always gives the facts as they are.

But the Bible is not a textbook on these points. There are many things along those lines that God has left for man to discover by his own research. God does not deal with these questions in this Book, because they are not essential to salvation. He has given us the book of nature to study at our leisure, but the one theme, that so vitally concerns our souls, He has revealed to us through His Word. It is far more important to know how to find the Rock of Ages than it is that we should know the age of rocks.

There are three great themes that run through this whole Book from Genesis to Revelation. The first is: that man is lost, without hope, and without God. The second is: that there is no salvation except through the shed blood of Jesus Christ. This truth runs

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through the Bible like a crimson stream, from the first promise that God ever made, to the closing scene of Revelation, where we see the redeemed hosts stand before His throne with their robes washed in the blood of the Lamb. The third great truth taught in this Book is: that this old world that has been cursed so long by sin is to be brought one day under the dominion and sway of Jesus Christ, the Son of man, the Son of God. This refrain runs through this Book like a Pæon of praise from the first promise in Genesis to the last of Revelation, where we hear the hosts as they shout His praise around the throne. This is the one grand objective and climax toward which this old world is moving. Everything that God is doing, both in Providence and Redemption, is directed toward the consummation of this one thing. Unless you see this truth, there are vast portions of the Bible that you will never understand; but when you see this grand truth, then all of the Word will fit into the pattern and you will be made to marvel at the unity and harmony of the Bible.

"Our Lord is now rejected and by the world disowned,
By the many still neglected, and by the few enthroned;
But soon He'll come with glory, the hour is drawing nigh,
For the crowning day is coming bye and bye."

No one can read the Bible without being impressed with the truth that this world is in a state of rebellion against God. Wherever you turn in this Book you find the indications of this truth. From the Book of Genesis, where we find man driven from the Garden of Eden, down to the Book of Revelation, where we are permitted to catch a glimpse of the final conflict between a rebellious world and a Holy God, we find this

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shadow hanging over the world like a black cloud to blot out the beauty of the heavens.

However, alongside of this sad truth there is another to give us hope, and that is the fact that God has given us the assurance that Holiness shall conquer, and righteousness and peace shall reign in this old sin cursed world. "The EARTH shall be filled with his knowledge and glory as the waters covey the sea." Glory to His name!

For at least six thousand years God has been working at this stupendous task, and it is not yet done. But thanks be unto God, it shall be done one of these days. The task will be finished, and every knee shall bow and every tongue confess that Jesus is Lord, and all things shall be brought into one in Jesus Christ. For He must reign, till He hath put all things under His feet. "Jesus shall reign where'er the sun doth his successive journeys run."

This work can never be fully accomplished until Jesus comes back in person, and puts down all rebellion and binds Satan and casts him out. There can be no peace for this earth until the one who has caused the rebellion and discord has been removed and the curse of sin is removed from this earth. To see this truth is to find the key that unlocks the glorious truths of this wonderful Book called the Bible.

Now in order to properly understand and appreciate just how this rebellion is to be put down, and how the plans and purposes of God are to be realized, we need to have some conception of what has already happened, and what is going on, and what God intends to

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do in the future. If you can know what a person has done, and what he is now doing, it often helps to be able to understand what may be expected of him in the future.

It is my purpose to try to show in this message something of what has already happened in this old world, and also some of the things that are now going on, so that we may present for your consideration what we feel may be expected in the future. Sometimes it helps us to go away back and get a long look at the whole plan from beginning to end so that we may see it as a whole. One reason why people are confused is that they have such a restricted view of the plans and purposes of God. Paul speaks of the ETERNAL purpose of God. If you can look at things from such a large conception as this, it will broaden your vision and help you to understand some things that possibly were not clear before.

The First Creation

If you will turn to the first verse of Genesis you will find there these words: "In the beginning God created the heaven and the earth." This verse is *dateless*. It does not say when the beginning was. It may have been six billion years ago for all we know. There are some people who have the idea that you have to believe that the earth was created six thousand years ago, in order to be orthodox. This is not true. There is no date set for the creation of the earth. I do know this, that when the scientists have gathered all of their facts and are able to say just how old this earth is, if they are ever able to do this, they will not be able to go

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back beyond the first verse of Genesis, and there will be no conflict between the two facts-the facts of nature and the facts of the Bible.

Now in the second verse of Genesis you will find that it says: "And the earth was without form and void; (the Hebrew is Tahu Bohu)." I confess to you that for a long time I thought that the Bible meant to teach that this was the way God created the earth (without form and void, or as the Hebrew has it: Tahu Bohu), and I find that a great many other people have the same idea. However, several years ago I came to see some things in the Bible that have changed my mind about this.

In the first place, I find that Isaiah, in the 45th chapter and the 18th verse, says: "He created it not in vain (Tahu)." The Hebrew word is Tahu and is the same used in Genesis 1:2. Now in these two statements you seem to have a contradiction, but it only *seems* to be, for the Holy Spirit does not contradict Himself, and both of these men wrote by Divine inspiration. I find by careful comparison that the same verb that is translated *was* in Genesis is used in speaking of Lot's wife becoming a pillar of salt. Now in the case of Lot's wife we know that she was not always a pillar of salt, but that she became a pillar of salt after she had been something else. And so we see that it would be proper to say, in Genesis 1:2, and the earth *became* "Tahu Bohu." It was not created that way but it became that way *after it was created*, and the apparent contradiction between Moses and Isaiah is removed.

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The Fall of Lucifer

This naturally brings up the questions: If the earth was not created Tahu, then When did it become Tahu Bohu? And why did it become that way? These are perfectly natural questions and lead us into some wonderful truths. I would like to present three brief passages of Scripture that seem to shed some light on these questions. The first is found in Jeremiah 4:23-28 "I beheld the earth, and, lo, it was (or *became*) without form and void; (Hebrew, Tahu Bohu)." And he goes on to tell of a great catastrophe that came upon this earth and threw it into confusion and darkness. Now of course the writer did not see this with his natural eyes, but rather by Divine inspiration. In other words, he was inspired of the same Spirit as was John on the Isle of Patmos. The only difference was that he looked back into the past, and John looked forward into the future. He saw what had already happened on this earth at some time in the dim distant past, and John saw what shall take place here at some time in the future.

The second passage that I call to your attention is found in Ezekiel 28:12-19-"Thou sealest up the sum, full of wisdom, and perfect in beauty. Thou hast been in Eden the garden of God; . . . Thou art the anointed cherub that covereth; . . . Thou wast perfect in thy ways from the day that thou wert created, TILL iniquity was found in thee . . . Thou hast sinned . . . Thine heart was lifted up because of thy beauty, thou hast corrupted thy wisdom by reason of thy brightness," etc. In this passage the prophet is told

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to take up a lamentation (or *parable*) against the king of Tyrus, but he does not go far until we realize that he is talking to some other person *through* king Tyrus, just as Jesus on one occasion spoke to the Devil *through* Peter. There may be a part of this passage that would apply to a local king, but part of it is bound to be addressed to another person. This other person has been in the Garden of Eden and is spoken of as the covering cherub. We are told that he was perfect when he was created and remained that way until he fell. (Now none of these things can be true of the king of Tyrus.) He fell because iniquity was found in him and he sinned. We have reason to believe that he fell because of his beauty and superior wisdom and glory. In other words, the passage seems to indicate that this spirit being was once in this world in his purity and beauty, but that he fell because of sin.

I really think that the person addressed here through Tyrus is the same one that Jesus addressed through Peter. In other words, *it is Satan or the Devil*. He is the one that was once in the Garden of Eden and was perfect when created, but fell through sin.

The third passage that I want to call to your attention is found in Isaiah 14:12-17: "How art thou fallen from heaven, O Lucifer, son of the morning! how art thou cut down to the ground, which did weaken the nations! For thou hast said in thine heart, I will ascend into heaven, I will exalt my throne above the stars of God: I will . . . I will . . . I will be like the most High. Yet thou shalt be brought down to hell." In this passage we are told of a person who is called

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Lucifer, and also son of the morning. He was an angelic being and yet he decided that he wanted to be lifted up. He said, "I will." As you read this passage, please take note of the number of times this expression appears, "I will"; that is essentially what sin is. It is your will against God's will. That is where sin really started, and that is what it is today. Jesus said, `How oft would I, but ye would not.'" This person that Isaiah speaks of was an angelic creature of great beauty and wisdom, and occupied a place of power and authority, but he was not satisfied; he wanted to take God's place and authority. He was cast down and in his overthrow there came a great calamity to the earth that made it as a wilderness.

Now to briefly sum up these passages that we have before us, we find these things stated. Isaiah 45:18 says that God did not create the earth Tahu. Genesis 1:2 says that it *became* Tahu Bohu. Jeremiah 4:23 tells of a time when some great calamity came to this earth and caused it to become Tahu Bohu. Ezekiel 28:12-19 tells of a person who was once in the Garden of Eden. He was a covering cherub and was *perfect*, but he sinned and fell by reason of his beauty and wisdom and was cast down. Isaiah 14:12-17 tells of a person by the name of Lucifer, the son of the morning. He was an angelic being and occupied a place of honor and power; he was not satisfied, but became puffed up and wanted to take the throne of God. He was cast down on account of this and in his overthrow the earth was made as a wilderness. In the Book of Revelation, the 12th chapter, the 7th verse, we are told of

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war that took place in Heaven among the angelic host. One side was led by Michael, the archangel, and the other was led by the Great Red Dragon, Satan, or the Devil. In this conflict we are told that Satan was defeated and cast down. In Peter and Jude we are told of the angels that kept not their first estate and that were cast down. We are led to believe that this spirit being, that we speak of as the Devil, was once an angel of light and that he fell through pride and rebellion against God, and that he drew with him in his fall a large number of angelic creatures that joined him in his rebellion against God.*

I believe that in the first verse of Genesis we have the account of the *original creation*. We do not know when this was. *I believe that at this time Lucifer, an angel of light, was appointed as the governor of this particular planet upon which we live.* It seems that Lucifer was not satisfied with his place in this universe. He wanted to set himself up above the clouds and wanted to, at least, be equal with God. It seems that he stirred up a revolution in the ranks of the angels that fell with him and are his co-workers in his unholy purpose. The angels that remained true to God

* Luke 10:17-20 "And the seventy returned again with joy, saying, Lord, even the devils are subject unto us through thy name. And he said unto them, I beheld Satan as lightning fall from heaven... Notwithstanding in this rejoice not, that the spirits are subject unto you; but rather rejoice, because your names are written in heaven." In this passage we find that Jesus confirms the fact that Satan fell from Heaven, and that he is a spirit being, and that there are other fallen spirit beings with him. However, the thing that I want to point out to you about this passage is this: the seventy came back to Jesus rejoicing over the fact that they had such great power over these fallen spirit beings, but Jesus warns them to beware of getting too elated over this power, for it was at this very point that Satan fell. They are not to rejoice that they have power, but that their names are written in Heaven and that they are saved by God's grace.

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were led by Michael, the archangel, and they were able to overthrow Lucifer and he was cast down. Then this fallen angel became what we know as the Devil or Satan, and the angels that fell with him are his coworkers now. *I believe that in this great conflict, that resulted in the overthrow of Satan, the whole earth was thrown into chaos and confusion and that the earth BECAME TAHU BOHU as the result of this terrific conflict, and that this came some time after the first or original creation, which is spoken of in Genesis 1:1. In fact, it seems to me that this would have to come after that, as before that there was nothing but God. We also know that Lucifer and his angels fell before man came upon the scene, and so it would have to be between the first verse and the creation of man. I BELIEVE THAT IN THE FIRST VERSE OF GENESIS WE HAVE THE ACCOUNT OF ORIGINAL CREATION. We do not know when this was. Then Lucifer was appointed as governor of the earth. He was not satisfied, and led in a revolt against God, but he was defeated and cast down, AND IN HIS DEFEAT AND OVERTHROW THE EARTH WAS THROWN INTO CHAOS AND BECAME TAHU BOHU. Then after this, God recreated the earth, and brought order out of confusion and made the earth a fit habitation for man to dwell upon. This was done after the overthrow of Lucifer or Satan. In other words, the SIX DAY ACCOUNT OF CREATION IS NOT THE ACCOUNT OF THE FIRST CREATION, BUT IS THE ACCOUNT OF THE RE-CREATION AFTER THE FALL OF SATAN. I believe that there is a definite break between Genesis 1:1 and Genesis 1-3 and no one knows all that took place in that period of time.*

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For all we know there may have been æons that passed during this break.

Now if people would keep this in mind it would save a great deal of confusion. In between the first verse of Genesis and the third there is all the room you need for all the geological ages that may be necessary, and you can pile in all the fossil remains that you want to and it does no violence to the teaching of the Bible. In fact, my own personal idea is this: all of those huge mammals that once roamed this earth did not live during the lifetime of man, but lived back during that period when Lucifer was the ruler of this planet. If I had the time I could not only give you scientific evidence that seems to support such a view but I think I could also give you Scriptural evidence that seems to indicate that the climatic conditions would be favorable to such life as these fossil remains seem to indicate.

This idea also helps us to understand some things in the Bible that it would be hard to understand in any other way. It gives a satisfactory conception as to the origin of sin and evil. It also explains where the Devil came from, and how he came to have the power that the Bible indicates he possesses. To my mind this is the only satisfactory answer to these and many other such questions.

Now I realize that this idea is just a little new to some people, and is so different from the conceptions of some people that I think it would not be amiss for me to give just a little more proof for such a contention as this. I want to suggest three other reasons

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why I think this theory is true to the fact.

First, I would like to call your attention to the use that Moses makes of two words in this first chapter of Genesis. In the first verse he uses the Hebrew word, *Bara*, which is translated *create*. This word means, *to make out of nothing*. In other words, the literal meaning of the first verse is: "In the beginning God made out of nothing the heaven and the earth." However, when we come to the six day account of creation we do not find him using this word until we get to the 21st verse, and it is used only twice in the whole six day account of creation. Once in the case of the air breathing animals, which, of course, would have been destroyed in this great catastrophe, and once again in the account of the creation of man, which, of course, was an entirely new creation. In the other places, he uses another word that has an entirely different meaning. He uses the Hebrew word, *Asah*, which is translated into the English, *made*. This word means to *assemble*. It is not a creation of something from nothing but it is the assembling of something that is already created. In other words, he does not say that God *created* the sun, moon and stars on the fourth day, but he really says that God assembled them and gave to them their appointed places. They had already been created in the *original creation* back in the dim past, but had been obscured by the darkness that came as the result of the fall of Satan.

The second reason that I offer is: the use that God makes of the word, REPLENISH, in the 28th verse. Now this is exactly the same word that God used in speak-

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ing to Noah and his sons when they came from the Ark. He told them to be fruitful and multiply and replenish the earth. In the case of Noah and his sons we know that the earth had already been inhabited, but the people had been destroyed by the flood, and God is telling them to re-people the earth. Now, if there had never been any inhabitants of any kind on this earth before Adam, why did God tell the first man to *re-people* the earth? It would seem that He would have just said PEOPLE the earth or populate it. The mere fact that God uses this word would seem to indicate that there had been some kind of inhabitants on this earth before man.*

The third reason that I offer for this contention is this: We know from the teaching of the Bible that this person whom we know as Satan or the Devil was once an angel of light. He has fallen, but in spite of this fact he has great power and authority in this earth. Christ spoke of him as THE PRINCE OF THIS WORLD. Paul also tells us that we wrestle against *principalities* and powers and against wicked spirits in high places (or *places of authority*) against the rulers of the darkness of *this world*. We also remember that when Satan was tempting Christ in the wilderness he offered Him *the kingdoms of this world and the glory of them*. Now if he did not have these to give, why did Jesus not deny this claim? For He knew whether Satan had this power or not. And how could it be a

*It might be well for me to add just a word of explanation about those beings that inhabited the earth before Adam. I do not mean to suggest that they were human beings, but that they were angels that fell with Satan. I do not believe in the idea of a pre-Adamic race of human beings. I believe that Adam was the first human being on this planet and that all humanity sprang from him.

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temptation to our Lord, if he did not have it to give? It seems to me that it is easier to recognize the fact that he does have some power and authority and that it was given to him by Divine appointment.

When we recognize this fact, it will remove many difficulties out of our way and help us to a better understanding of the teachings of the Bible, and also something of the plans and purposes of God. In fact, when you come to see this truth, the whole plan of salvation will open up to you in a new way, and you will have a greater understanding of what God is trying to do in Redemption and Providence.

This Idea Related to Other Truths

With this thought as a background there are several great truths that take on new meaning, and we begin to see reasons for certain things in a new light. For instance, the matter of there being a place called Hell takes on real meaning. Just remember that this person called Lucifer before his fall, and Satan after his fall, is a spirit being, and so are the angels that fell with him. They can't be destroyed in the sense of annihilation, for you cannot destroy spirit. In fact, science is telling us today that you cannot even destroy matter in the sense of annihilating it. You can change its form, but not do away with it entirely; and certainly you can't destroy spirit or personality. *You can no more destroy spirit, in the sense of annihilating it, than you can destroy God.* Since this is true, then God had to prepare a place where these fallen spirits could be shut up. The very love of God demands this, for if

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they were permitted to remain at large they would for-ever destroy the peace and tranquility of Heaven and the universe. They have done it and will continue to do so as long as they are permitted to remain at larger. Hell is just as necessary in the economy of this universe as a jail or a penitentiary is for the State in which we live. There must be a place where these rebellious spirits can be shut up. There is such a place and it is called Hell. Satan and the fallen, angels will go there, and so will all the souls of men who refuse to submit to the will and purpose of God. It is, the place that God has for outlaws. All sin and sinners will be sent there one of these days and peace will reign.

Then, too, the necessity for an atonement begins to take on new meaning as we look at it in the light of this truth that I have set forth. We hear many people today say that they cannot conceive of a loving heavenly Father demanding the death of His Son for the sins of the world. In fact, we hear a great deal about the love of God, and I believe that *he is* love. However, we need to remember that there is also a legal or governmental aspect to the atonement, that I fear many people overlook.

We must remember that God is not only love, but that He is the seat of all law and order. He has the great responsibility of upholding the moral and spiritual law of this universe. He must be true to His essential nature and attributes. Even if He were willing to overlook the sins of a fallen race, without any provision being made whereby He could do it and be just, *we need to remember that Satan and the fallen angels*

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would be there ready to accuse Him of laxness and failure to be true to the law.

I believe that the most profound problem that ever confronted the mind of an infinite God was the problem of how to redeem a fallen race and at the same time be true to the law of holiness and justice. In other words, how could He be just and at the same time justify the ungodly? The Cross is the answer to this problem, and it is the greatest manifestation of the wisdom and power of God that this universe will ever see. It is so legally perfect that no one will ever be able to find a flaw in it, and when a soul stands and claims the merits of that blood, even the Devil, who is the accuser of the brethren, cannot say a word, but will have to admit that every demand has been met. Glory to God! I am amazed at the wisdom, power and glory of the Cross and all that it does for me.

In the third place, I would like to call your attention to one other thing that this truth brings up. It is the question of why God did not then, or does not now, drive the Devil or Satan out. This is a question that naturally arises in our mind. I have no doubt in my mind but that God could have put him out the very moment that he rebelled. He could have then and there shut him up in Hell and started all over again; but I want to remind you that God does not rule this universe by sheer force and physical power alone, but He is doing everything according to His own essential nature and being. He is holy, just, and loving, and He would rather work in accordance with His nature and attributes than to do things by force. In fact, one of

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the things that make me marvel, when I think of God, is the infinite patience of God and the high regard that

He has for the rights of all. He absolutely refuses to ride roughshod over the rights of any being in this universe. He gave to Satan this appointment, and even though Satan has rebelled He respects his rights as a divinely appointed being. He will dispossess Satan and banish him to the place where he belongs, but He will do it in such an orderly way that even Satan and all who side with him will have to admit that God has been true and recognized the rights of all. To me this is a glorious truth. God has been working at the task for six thousand years and it is still not finished; but thanks be unto God, when it is finished every creature in Heaven and earth and Hell will have to admit that God has given every being his rights, and that sin has been conquered and the rebellion put down in accordance with the Holy nature and character of God. There will have to be an Amen! from every being that can understand anything. All creation will recognize that God has been true to the laws of this universe and to His own character and nature.

Really this is the thing that is back of the whole plan of redemption. I hope that as we go along you will be able to see it. God is putting down a rebellion, but He is doing it according to the law of holiness rather than by force. This is why the Incarnation was necessary. It is why there had to be a cross. It is why there must be a return of Jesus to this earth. He is the One that shall complete this work, for He has de-

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clared that He will make all things new. His return will be the final stage in this great work, and the establishment of His Kingdom *on this earth* will be the realization of God's plan and purpose for this earth. His will must be done *here as* it is done in Heaven. This will be what will happen when Jesus comes back the second time without sin unto salvation. Glory!

Now please keep this fact in mind as we go along. Lucifer or Satan was defeated in his plan and purpose of trying to overthrow the throne of God, out he was not destroyed. Neither was he sent to Hell and finally disposed of. Just remember that he was given this appointment by the God of this universe, and that God refuses to use force alone in ruling this earth. He is going to dispossess Satan, but it is to be done according to law and order. Now one of the laws of government is: *that the properly appointed person holds his place an authority until his successor has been found and duly qualified.* Satan had been duly appointed and held his appointment by Divine authority. He is not to be put out by force, but God is going to find a worthy successor to take his place; and until that person is found, he by right of his appointment retains his power and authority in this world. So you see that the big question was: Can God find one who is worthy and able to qualify as a successor to take the rulership of this earth out of the hands of Satan? If He cannot, then Satan will by right of law retain the power; but, on the other hand, if God can find one who is worthy and will meet the demands, then Satan can be deposed and the world brought back under the sway of God and

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holiness. This was the problem that God faced, and must solve, if He is to accomplish His purpose. Will He be able to find such a being? If so, who will it be? These are interesting questions and the answer to them is given in the Word of God, and constitutes what we know as the Gospel today. In other words, the Good News that we have to offer to this world is the proclamation that a worthy ruler has been found, that Satan is to be put out, and we may be saved by faith in this Second Adam. This old earth is to be brought back under the will and rulership of God. It is my purpose to try to show you how this worthy one was found and how He was able to qualify as the rightful ruler of this earth.

While we are on this particular point it might be well for me to point out to you this fact: Lucifer or Satan is a provincial *governor of this planet*, which is a very small one, and he rules by Divine permission. God is the supreme Ruler of the whole universe, and His will is supreme. Lucifer holds his appointment by Divine permission, and therefore his power is limited by the overruling Providence and power of God. God recognizes his rights and permits him certain privileges and powers, but God has also set a limit to just how far he can go. He occupies somewhat the same position that Pilate did in the government of his province. Within his own province he was ruler, but after all he was subject to the higher authority and power of the supreme ruler at Rome. This same thing is true of this world. Satan was appointed as the provincial ruler of this planet, but over and above him

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is the Kingdom of God in the heavens, and His Kingdom ruleth over all. God grants to the ruler of this earth the right to exercise his authority and power, but at the same time he is under the necessity of being accountable to the Supreme Ruler, by whom he was appointed.

Man, The Second Ruler Selected

In, the chapter that has gone before, we have tried to point out that in the beginning God appointed Lucifer, who later became Satan, as the ruler of this earth. He was not satisfied with this appointment and stirred up a revolution among the angelic creatures. He was defeated in his plan to overthrow the government of God, and in his overthrow the earth was thrown into chaos and confusion and it became Tahu Bohu. He still retained his right as the Divinely appointed ruler until a worthy successor could be found to take his place. He is to be displaced, but not by force. He is to be ousted from his place according to the laws of holiness and justice. In the six day account of creation we are permitted to see the work of God as He sets about the task of bringing order out of confusion and going about the work of finding another ruler, that will be worthy to take the place of this rebellious creature.

After God had finished the work of re-creation and had everything in readiness to proceed with His plan, we hear Him say: "Let us make man in our own image, after our likeness," and He created man in His own image and after His likeness, and breathed into him

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the breath of life and he became a living soul. *He created man for the purpose of being ruler of this earth*, and He told him to subdue it and rule over it. However, this second ruler had to be tested and proven to see whether he would prove himself worthy to be the ruler of this earth. He was placed in the Garden of Eden, with the most ideal conditions and surroundings, to be tested. There was just one point at which he was to be tested, and that was at the point of obedience to the God of this universe. If he was obedient and submissive then he was to have all of this planet as his inheritance and was to live under the blessings and protection of God.

God gave him just one "Thou shalt not." If he had kept this and been obedient to God he would have been appointed as the ruler of this earth, and the rebellion would have been put down. Sad to say, man failed at this point, and instead of fulfilling the mission and purpose for which he was created he disobeyed God and joined the forces of the rebellious. In Psalm 8:4-8-"What is man, that thou art mindful of him? and the son of man, that thou visitest him." For thou hast made him a little lower than the angels, and hast crowned him with glory and honor. *Thou madest him to have dominion over the works of thy hands*; thou hast put all things under his feet: all sheep and oxen, yea, and the beasts of the field; the fowl of the air, and the fish of the sea, and whatsoever passeth through the paths of the seas-" we have the picture of what God intended that man should be if he had not fallen. However, the writer of Hebrews quotes this same passage

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and says: "*But now we see not yet all things put under him.*" (Hebrews 2:8). This is proof that man never has measured up to what God intended that he should be. The fall of Adam was the cause of this, and in Adam the whole human race fell and lost its right to be the ruler of this earth. Our forefather lost our inheritance for us, and squandered our estate, The human race went bankrupt in Adam.

This fall and disobedience of Adam left things somewhat in a muddled condition. Here was Lucifer, who had been appointed as the ruler of this earth, and yet he had rebelled. The second ruler, Adam, that had been appointed to take his place, had failed and joined in the rebellion. This left Lucifer or Satan still in authority and power, for his successor had not yet been found. He will retain his place until a worthy one is found to take it from him.

This condition was somewhat similar to the condition that once existed in Israel. You remember that Saul was chosen to be the king of Israel and was appointed to this place by the direction of God. For a while he ruled according to God's will, but later he rebelled and grieved God. God sent Samuel down to tell him that his kingdom was taken from him, and that he was rejected as the ruler over Israel. However, we find that he did not quit ruling that day. The fact of the matter is that he ruled for twelve or fourteen years after that. The reason for this was that there had to be one found who was worthy to take his place. David was chosen for this and anointed for the place, but he had to be tested. While he was being

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tested and proven worthy to fill this place, God permitted Saul to go on in the place to which he had been appointed. However, when the proper time came, Saul was ushered off the stage and David stepped in to take his place. God permitted Saul to go on in spite of his rebellion, because He was planning for something else. The same is true of Satan. God permits him to hold his place because He has something else in mind that will bring things right. We may wonder why God permits Satan to continue on in his rebellion and yet hold such power and authority, but just remember that God had already anticipated just what would happen and He has other plans that will not fail. He has a Kingdom that was founded before the foundation of the world, and He has another One that was chosen before the foundation of the world who will not fall. If it were not for this fact, then we would have the right to accuse God of injustice in creating a race that He knew would fall.

Some people feel inclined to object and complain against the foreknowledge of God, but I Praise His name that He is infinite in knowledge and that He was able to anticipate the fall of man and make provision for it. Before man ever sinned, God had anticipated the fall and had made provision whereby man could be redeemed from his sin. God told man that the day he ate of the forbidden fruit he would die. We usually explain this by saying that he did die spiritually, and I believe this with all of my heart. However, I also believe that he would have died physically that day, if it had not been for the fact that Jesus Christ, the

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Lamb of God, had been offered before the foundation of the world. Adam was permitted to live and was given another chance, by virtue of the fact that Jesus had already agreed to bear the sins of a fallen race. God could have permitted Adam to die, and started all over again, but He saw fit in His mercy and love to permit him to live, by virtue of the atonement that was to be made through Jesus Christ, and He gave the human race another chance through Christ. "For since by man came death, by man came also the resurrection of the dead. For as in Adam all die, even so in Christ shall all be made alive." The whole human race lives today, not because of its innocency, but by virtue of the atonement made through Jesus Christ. *God withheld the stroke of judgment in order to give the Second Adam a chance to come and undo what the first Adam had done.* While the earth was awaiting the coming of this Second Adam they were saved by faith in Him that was to come, and every promise and prophecy had this as its central theme. Every altar that was erected, and *every sacrifice that was slain, pointed forward to this one glorious event.* This event, with the things that took place with it, is the focal point of all human history. It is the pole around which all other things revolve. The promise and hope of the coming of this Second Adam proved to be the one ray of hope that broke through the dark clouds that overshadowed this earth. It was the morning star that gave hope to a fallen race, and caused them to feel that after all life was worth while. Without this promise and hope the human race would have been lost and left to grope in

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hopeless despair, but with this promise men were able to look forward to a better day and be saved by faith in Him that was to come.

As Adam and Eve went forth from the Garden of Eden, they went with the consciousness that they had failed in their mission in the earth, and had missed their opportunity. They realized that they had proven a disappointment to God. They also went out into a world that was cursed for their sake, and with the realization that they were to spend their days in sorrow and toil. However, they did have one ray of hope in the midst of the darkness. Eve went with the promise of God ringing in her ears and singing in her heart, that the seed of the woman should bruise the serpent's head-in these words: "And I will put enmity between thee and the woman, and between thy seed and her seed; IT SHALL BRUISE THY HEAD, and thou shalt bruise his heel." In this we find the first promise of a Redeemer for this sin-cursed world, and this promise contains the Gospel in embryo. This is the light which lighted the pathway of a fallen race for about four thousand years, and came to full bloom in the death of Christ on the cross. It seems that Eve thought, when Cain was born, that he was to be this one that would bruise the serpent's head, for she named him Cain, which means, I have begotten a man of Jehovah. However, we see that she was to be sadly mistaken in this, and that many weary centuries were to drag by before this promised one should come. In fact, it may be that Satan suggested to many: people back in that time the same thing that he is suggesting to many people today

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about the Second Coming of Christ. It seems that he is trying to get many people to believe today that Jesus will never come back to this earth again. It may be that he suggested the same thing about the First Coming, but Jesus did come according to the promise that God had made. This was the one glorious event toward which the world looked, for it was the coming of this Second Adam that was to be the means of this rebellion being put down, and all things being brought back under the rulership and authority of God. When Christ has finished the work of putting down the rebellion He will turn it back over into the hands of God, and His will is to be done on this earth as it is in Heaven. Glory to His name!

Jesus the Second Adam

It will be well for us to remember that in the coming of Jesus Christ a very, definite thing was to be accomplished. He did many things while He was here, *but the thing, for which He came, above everything else, was to bring this rebellious planet back under the rulership of God.* It is true that while He was here, He revealed God to us. He also showed us how man ought to live. He gave to us the example and pattern of what God intended that man should be. He also gave to the world the only philosophy of life that will really work in this world. In His death on the cross He paid the price for man's redemption and made it possible for God to justify the ungodly and at the same time be just. However, it will be well for us to keep in mind the fact that *He came to qualify as the rightful Ruler and King of this earth.* He came to take the

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place that Adam was intended to fill. He did not take upon Him the form of an angel, but He took upon Him the form of a man. The favorite name by which He spoke of Himself was "The Son of Man." He lived as a man. He met temptation as a man. He ate and slept as a man. He passed through all of the experiences that are common to man. His life was little different from the common lot of the average man. He worked and knew the ache of toil, and the pangs of hunger and thirst. He subjected Himself to everything that God can ever ask of any man, and He could say, "*I do always the will of my Father.*" In other words, where the first Adam had failed through disobedience He met every requirement and measured up to every demand. He could come to the close of His life and stand up before His enemies and say: "Which of you convinceth me of sin?" In other words, can any one find that in me which would disqualify me for the place of ruler ship under God? And I thank God that even to this *day* not one single person has ever been able to find one single thing in His life that he can point to and say that this is sin, and He is not qualified for the place. Even the infidels and skeptics have to admit that He is the sinless One, and all join in saying, "He is worthy."

Thank God that there is one, *that is known as the Son of Man*, and yet He has been proclaimed before Heaven and earth as one that is worthy to be the Ruler of this old sin cursed earth. "Every knee shall bow, and every tongue confess that he is Lord to the glory of God." A worthy ruler has been found, and the king-

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doms of this world are to become the kingdom of our Lord and His Christ, and He shall reign forever and ever. Amen!

While He was here in the flesh He presented Himself to the Jews as their King. He entered into Jerusalem just as the prophet had said that He would, and His disciples saw in this event the fulfillment of God's promise. However, the leaders of that day were so blinded by sin and selfishness that they refused to recognize Him as their rightful Ruler. Instead of accepting Him as their Messiah and King they rejected Him and brought false charges against Him. They arrested Him and carried Him before their court and charged Him with the charge of blasphemy. They said that He was a blasphemer, for He claimed to be the Son of God. They sentenced Him to death on this charge. They carried Him to Pilate and charged Him with treason. They said that He made Himself to be the King of the Jews. They told Pilate that if he let this man go he was no friend of Caesar's, and it was on this charge that Christ was sentenced to the cross. They rejected Him as the Son of God, and also as their King. They crucified Him and thought that they were done with Him.

However, I thank God that He took an appeal. He appealed His case to the Supreme Court of this Universe. The Judge of all things sat on the case and examined all the evidence in the presence of all the angelic creatures of Heaven. On the third day He handed down this momentous decision: "*He is not guilty of blasphemy, for He is my Son. He is not guilty of*

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treason; for He is not only the king of the Jews, but He is King of kings and Lord of lords." He dispatched an angel of glory to the garden where He was being held a prisoner in the cell of death, and on the first Easter morning the angel came down with the keys of death and opened His cell, and He came forth to life and was justified in His claims before all creation.

His resurrection is the testimony of God, to this skeptical world, that Jesus is all that He claimed to be, and that one day He shall be the Ruler of all things. God has already called Him back to His right hand, and has appointed Him as heir of all things. He has already been proclaimed before high heaven as the rightful Ruler of all things, and only a short time more and all things shall be brought into one in Him, and He shall rule where'er the sun doth his successive journeys run. His kingdom shall rule from sea to sea, and until sun and moon shall wax and wane no more. Glory to God forever! I feel like shouting every time I think about it!

The Way to Enter His Kingdom

Now in order that we may be saved from confusion and error it might be well for us to keep in mind the fact that even though Jesus Christ did come down and take upon Him the form of man and allied Himself with man in this way, yet we do not become one with Him in the Incarnation, but rather by the process of Regeneration. We are by nature the sons of Adam, and are therefore fallen creatures. Our inheritance has been lost, and we are by our own act sinners in the

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sight of God. We have played the prodigal and have gone off and wasted all in riotous living. We may rejoice over the fact that a worthy Ruler has been found for this earth, and that it is to be brought back under the dominion and sway of God, yet we as fallen creatures could never have any part in this reign except by being born again.

We need to see that Jesus not only needed to live such a life as would qualify Him as the rightful Ruler of this earth, but that He also had to make some provision whereby the race of Adam might be saved from the Fall and given another chance. He did this in His death on Calvary. He paid the price for our redemption and threw wide the doors to His own Kingdom so that all who would, might be saved by His blood and become heirs of God with Himself. "To as many as received him, to them gave he the power (or authority) to become the sons of God, even as many as believed on his name." This is the only way by which we may become a part of His Kingdom and have a part with Him in this glorious reign. "Except a man be born again, he cannot see the Kingdom of God." It is by virtue of His blood that we are forgiven of our sins, and justified before God, and it is through the New Birth that we have entrance into the family of God.

We are by nature the sons of fallen Adam, but by Regeneration and Adoption we are adopted into the family and become heirs of God and joint-heirs with Jesus Christ. "If we suffer with him we shall also reign with him." (2 Tim. 2:14.) He hath "made us kings and priests unto God: and we shall reign on THIS

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EARTH." (Rev. 5:10). Please notice that it says ON THIS EARTH, not in Heaven, but right here where sin has held sway so long. Praise His name for such a hope.

The Nature of the Kingdom

The very first promise that God ever gave to man implied that this rebellion should be put down and that the leader was to be conquered and put out. This promise opened and expanded under the inspiration of the Holy Spirit until the prophets were able to catch a glimpse of the earth as it was to be, under the rulership of this coming King who was to put down the rebellion. They saw the earth with sin cast out and the Kingdom of God set up on this *earth*. The Jews looked for an earthly kingdom where the Messiah should be the supreme Ruler of this earth, and where sin should be cast out and the will of God was to be done. They had just as much right to expect the *Kingdom as* they did the King. The trouble was that they did not see the First and Second Coming of this Messiah. They overlooked the coming when He was to suffer and bear the sins of the world; and because of this they were confused and failed to recognize the Messiah when He came. They had the right to expect the Kingdom, but they looked for it at the wrong time and in the wrong way.

Many people today are making just as big a blunder about the Second Coming of Christ. They are like the Jews. They cannot see any Second Coming of Christ. However, we need to remember that Jesus did not one single time repudiate the idea of an *earthly kingdom*,

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but that He tried to get His people to see that there were other things to be done before it could come. He came into this world as the PROMISED MESSIAH. The angel Gabriel told Mary that He was to sit upon the *throne of David*, and that He was to *rule over the household of Jacob*.

In the third chapter of John He told what the condition of membership in His Kingdom should be. It was the New Birth. In the Sermon on the Mount He gave the charter by which people should live in this New Kingdom. He offered Himself to the Jews as their Messiah, and this was no empty gesture either. Not one single time did Jesus repudiate the idea that these disciples had about an earthly kingdom. Even on the Mount of Ascension just before He went back to Heaven they asked Him if Pentecost was to be the time when the Kingdom was to be restored.

Now if He ever intended to repudiate this idea, and free the minds of His disciples of this conception, this was the time to do it. However, we find that *He did not deny it*. He did not even insinuate that it was not to be. In fact, He confirmed them in this hope, but He told them that it was not for them to know the time and the season when it should be. The thing that they were to be concerned about then was to receive the Holy Ghost and go out as witnesses *to the fact that he was coming*.

This Hope was the glorious incentive of the early church and sent them out to all the world to try to get it ready for the Coming King. For the first few centuries this was the mightiest incentive in the church,

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but somehow the church lost this HOPE. When the HOPE of Jesus' return burns bright the church takes on new life, but when it grows dim the church lags and dies. Some of the greatest missionaries and soul winners have been people who cherished this hope, and worked with this promise in mind.

If you will study history you will find that every great religious awakening that has come since Pentecost, came as the result of the rediscovery of some neglected or forgotten truth. The Reformation came as the result of Luther's preaching Justification by faith. The great Wesleyan revival came as the result of preaching the Witness of the Spirit and Entire Sanctification. I firmly believe that another revival could be started today in our cold, dead churches if every pulpit in the land would begin to ring out the message, "JESUS IS COMING," and begin to preach holiness of heart and life as preparation for this great event. "He that hath this hope in him purifieth himself, even as he is pure." If we had men today who would believe what the angels said, "THIS SAME JESUS SHALL . . . SO COME IN LIKE MANNER AS YE HAVE SEEN HIM GO!" and what Jesus said, "I WILL COME AGAIN;" if the preachers would believe and preach this, it would precipitate a revival that would sweep this land. HE IS COMING.

Regardless of whether people believe it or not *He is coming*. In spite of the fact that so many people laugh at such a hope, and scoff at the idea, HE IS COMING. The rebellion is going to be put down, *and God's will is going to be done in this earth as it is done in Heaven.*

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Like oil upon the troubled waters cast,
Like sunshine after rain when storm is past,
So to the heart oppressed by sin and pain,
The Savior's promise, "I will come again."

What tho' the watching days be long and drear?
What tho' the testing oftentimes severe?
Sweet recompense for every pain 'twill be,
When in the clouds our coming King we see.

The King is coming, oh, hallelujah!
The King is coming back to claim His own.
His chariot wheels are rumbling and Satan's kingdom crumbling,
The King is coming back again to claim His own.

"Know this first, that there shall come in the last days scoffers, walking after their own lusts, and saying, Where is the promise of his coming? for since the fathers fell asleep, all things continue as they were from the beginning of the creation . . . But, beloved, be not ignorant of this one thing, that one day is with the Lord as a thousand years, and a thousands years as one day. "THE LORD IS NOT SLACK CONCERNING HIS PROMISE, as some men count slackness; but is longsuffering to us-ward, NOT WILLING THAT ANY SHOULD PERISH, BUT THAT ALL SHOULD COME TO REPENTANCE. BUT THE DAY OF THE LORD WILL COME AS A THIEF IN THE NIGHT;" "WATCH! FOR IN SUCH AN HOUR AS YE THINK NOT THE SON OF MAN COMETH."

PREDESTINATION

Romans 8:29 "For whom he did foreknow, he also did predestinate to be conformed to the image of his Son, that he might be the firstborn among many brethren."

It may seem just a little strange to hear a Methodist preacher talking about the doctrine of predestination;

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but this is a Bible doctrine, and regardless of the different schools of thought, I believe all of the doctrines of the Bible. When the Bible teaches anything, it is not for me to brush it aside and dismiss it with a wave of the hand, but it is my duty and privilege to accept it, and find out what the Bible really teaches on the subject.

I believe with all of my heart that the Bible is the inspired Word of God. If I do not understand it, that does not prove the doctrine untrue, but rather demands that I search and study until I can get the particular truth to harmonize with all of the doctrines of the Bible. Dr. G. Campbell Morgan once said, "A text without a context is a pretext." I believe that this is true and I also believe that a doctrine without a context is a pretext. In other words, any doctrine or truth of the Bible must be brought into harmony with all of the other truths that are taught in the Word. Any interpretation that does not harmonize with the teaching of the Bible as a whole is bound to be the wrong interpretation.

Now, it would be well for us to see that to reject a certain interpretation of a doctrine is not to reject the doctrine itself. Personally I have never been able to accept that old *extreme* interpretation of the doctrine of Predestination which taught that certain people were predestinated to be saved and would be saved regardless of what they did or did not do, and that certain other people were predestinated to be lost and would be lost regardless of what they did or did not do; in other words, that idea that all things have been

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marked out by the Lord and are bound to happen just that way. To my mind this kind of interpretation does violence to the whole teaching of the Bible and to the revelation of God that is given to us through Jesus Christ. In fact, this kind of teaching is in direct opposition to the statements of the Word of God; for God's Word says that He is "not willing that any should perish, but that ALL should come to repentance." The promise is that WHOSOEVER will believe shall not perish, but have everlasting life. The Bible teaches that Jesus Christ died for ALL, and that ALL have the opportunity to be saved. If anyone is not saved it will not be because God willed or predestinated that he should be lost, but rather because he would not accept the proffered mercy of salvation. If the Bible teaches anything it teaches this in a thousand places.

Now I believe in Predestination, but not in that interpretation of the doctrine that teaches a limited Atonement and that teaches that certain people are doomed to be lost from the day of their birth, and that certain other people are bound to be saved, regardless of whether they try or not. I believe that the Bible teaches a LIMITLESS ATONEMENT and that all can be saved if they will comply with the conditions. That does not mean that all people will be saved, for some of them will never accept the offer and comply with the conditions. However, to make God responsible for the loss of one single soul would do violence to the plain teaching of the Bible, and also to every sensible conception that we have of God as a loving heavenly Father.

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Since this is not the Bible teaching on the doctrine of Predestination, then we must find some other interpretation of the doctrine that will bring it into harmony with all the rest of the Bible. For even though we have rejected this particular interpretation we still have the doctrine in the Word, and we must find an interpretation that does no violence to the doctrine nor to the teaching of the Bible.

Now there are several great truths that go with this particular doctrine, and they Interlink with it and must be brought into harmony with this truth, and this doctrine must be brought into harmony with them. There can be no proper understanding of this truth unless these other truths are kept in mind as we study it. To neglect or overlook these other truths is to lead into confusion and misunderstanding.

I. Man Is a Sovereign Being

To my mind this point is where many people have gone astray in their thinking. They have *overemphasized* the sovereignty of God and have lost sight of the fact that God has also created man as a sovereign being. He had the right to create man as He desired, and He saw fit to create him a free moral agent with the power of choice. This truth runs all through the Bible from the first of Genesis to the last of Revelation. In fact there are some great truths that the Bible does not try to prove, but rather the whole Bible is based on the assumption that they are true.

For instance, the Bible does not try to prove the existence of God. It merely starts out with the statement, "In the beginning God," and the whole Bible is based on the assumption that God is. The Bible does

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not try to prove that man is a spiritual being and has a soul. But it says that God breathed into man the breath of life and he became a LIVING SOUL, and the whole Bible is based upon the assumption that man is a spirit being that is created in the image of God. The same thing is true about the sovereignty of man. The Bible does not try to prove that man is a sovereign being, but it rather states that GOD CREATED HIM IN HIS OWN IMAGE and then goes on the assumption that he is like God, and that he has the power of choice and can say yes or no. In fact, *the whole plan of salvation is based upon this assumption*. The plan is: WHOSOEVER will believe on Christ shall be saved, and the assumption is that man has the power to BELIEVE, and that he has the power and privilege to *refuse* to BELIEVE.

Now it might be that someone will ask. "How is it that God is Sovereign and man is also sovereign? How can both be sovereign at the same time?" The answer is: that God is infinite in power and authority and He had the power to create man in any way He saw fit. It so happens that *He saw fit to create man as a sovereign being*. Just try to picture in your imagination a large circle. This represents the sovereignty of God and is all-inclusive. God's will is supreme in this universe. However, inside of this large circle imagine a small circle, and let this represent the sovereignty of man. *Man is sovereign by Divine will and decree*. God had the right to grant him this privilege and He did grant it to him.

We know that it is possible for a sovereignty to exist within a sovereignty, for we have an illustration of

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it in the government of this world. Some years ago, Mussolini, the Dictator of Italy, saw fit to grant the right of sovereignty to the Pope of Rome. He marked off a certain boundary of land and granted to him the right to be the ruler there. If Mussolini abides by this agreement, then the Pope can tell him to keep out, and he will have to do so, for he has granted the Pope this privilege. God has seen fit to do something like this in the case of man. He has granted to us the right of sovereignty and He will never violate this privilege that He has granted to us. To me this is a glorious thought and adds dignity and meaning to the personality of every human being. God has granted to us this right, and we have it in our power to say NO to the infinite God of the universe, or we may say YES, and He will respect our desires and wishes.

Now this great truth must, be kept constantly in mind as we study the doctrine of Predestination. If we overlook this and fail to keep it in mind we will be confused in our thinking about this doctrine. In fact, whenever we let one or the other of these truths get out of balance in our thinking, it will lead to confusion. We need always to remember that God is Sovereign, and at the same time we need also to remember that man is sovereign. To lose sight of either of these truths will lead to confusion.

Another thought that has helped me in the study of this truth is that I came one day to see the difference between the JUDICIAL covenants and promises of God and the COVENANTS of MERCY and SALVATION. I mean by JUDICIAL those covenants and promises that concern

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the *government* of the world and God's plan for this earth. These COVENANTS are without any CONDITIONS and there are no IFS about them. In other words, God has certain plans and purposes that He intends to work out in this world, and He will do it in spite of all the rebellion in this world. On the other hand, ALL of His covenants of MERCY and SALVATION are made on CONDITION, and there is an IF in each of them. They are for us IF we will accept them but we may refuse and miss them. To see this distinction will save us from confusion.

II. Predestination Is Based on Foreknowledge.

Now I am frank to confess to you that the question of Foreknowledge gave me more trouble in the consideration of this doctrine than any other point. The text clearly indicates that Predestination is based upon and conditioned by the Foreknowledge of God. It says, "Whom he FOREKNEW he also did PREDESTINATE." Now I believe that God does know all things and that He can foresee the end from the beginning, and I am frank to confess that this looked like fatalism to me. It seemed that if God already knew it, there was nothing that we could do about it.

However, I made this mistake, I failed to make a distinction between *foreknowledge* and *forewill*. The fact that God foresees that a thing is going to happen does not imply that He wants it to happen that way at all. In fact, the very opposite may be true. It may be that if God could have had His way the thing would have been altogether different. But it just means that God gave man the power of choice and that man made

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such choices as to lead to a certain end. *The truth of the matter is that the Freewill of man is not conditioned by the Foreknowledge of God, but rather the Foreknowledge of God is conditioned by the Freewill of man.* In other words, God refuses to foresee the end of any person's life until He has made ample room for the free exercise of man's right of choice, and when He does foresee the end it means that the end is as it is, not because God chose that it should be that way and predetermined that it should be, but rather that man's exercise of his right of sovereignty has led to this conclusion.

Then, too, we need to constantly keep this fact in mind, and that is, GOD IS LOVE. Everything that He does flows out of the depths of His great heart of infinite love. He loves every human being, and is not WILLING that ANY should perish. The very fact that God admits failure in any individual case implies that the great loving heart of God has exhausted every resource at His command, before He would admit defeat. He has done all that could be done without violating the rights of man's freewill, and *that* man was lost in spite of all God could do, and not because God WILLED OR PREDESTINATED that he should be lost.

We have two very striking illustrations of this point in the Bible. One of them is in the New Testament and the other in the Old. The one in the New Testament is the case of Judas. Now we know that a long time before Judas was ever born it had been prophesied that Jesus would be betrayed. However, we need to remember this: the mere fact that God fore-

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saw that this would happen does not mean that He wanted Judas to do it at all. Neither does it mean that Judas was compelled to do it because God had predetermined that Judas should be the victim.

The fact of the matter is: Judas was chosen by Jesus and given the same love, consideration and chance that any of the other disciples enjoyed. The only difference was that he refused to go the way Christ tried to lead him and he was lost. He was not lost because God willed that he should be, but he was lost in spite of all that Jesus could do to keep him from being lost. I believe that one of the saddest statements that Jesus ever made is found in John 17:12: "While I was with them in the world, I kept them in thy name; those that thou gavest me I have kept, and none of them is lost, BUT the son of perdition; that the scriptures might be fulfilled." Jesus hated to admit defeat and failure in a single case, but one had slipped through His fingers and He could not keep him against his will. Neither can He keep you and me against our wills.

The case in the Old Testament is that of Pharaoh. When God spoke to Moses at the burning bush He told him that He would harden Pharaoh's heart; and a great many people take this as if God hated Pharaoh and set about in an arbitrary way to harden his heart and blind his eyes. This is not true. It would pay us to stop and think about how God went about the matter of hardening his heart.

Pharaoh was a heathen and did not know the Lord God of Israel. When Pharaoh asked Moses who the Lord God was, Moses set about the task of showing

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him. In this display the Lord gave one of the most spectacular demonstrations of His power and glory that any one ever saw. He showed His power in ten great demonstrations, and the evidence should have been sufficient to convince any one, but we are told that PHARAOH HARDENED HIS OWN HEART. In other words, God hardened his heart by giving him light and truth and he would not accept them. He is hardening the hearts of people like that today. He gives them light and they will not walk in it, and He gives them truth and they will not act upon it, and in this way their hearts are being hardened every day. This has always been the case. It was true in the days of Jesus.

Now, of course, some one will be sure to want to ask if the Bible does not say that God raised Pharaoh up for this purpose. The answer is: *yes* and *no*. In Exodus 9:16 we find these words: "And in very deed for this cause have I *raised thee* up, for to skew in thee my power." If you will notice in the margin of your Bible you will find that another word is suggested in the place of *raised up*. We find the margin to read: "*Made thee stand*," and the context shows that this is by far the better translation. In ether words, God said to Pharaoh in this place: "Pharaoh, I could have killed you with some kind of pestilence or plague, but *I made thee to stand* in order to show my power through you." This is really what He is saying to this man. He is telling him that He could have killed him, and gotten him out of the way, but that He decided to let him stand and make an example out of him so that all the world might know that a man. could not stand in

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the way of God and defeat God's purpose.

This is a truth that it would be well for many people to remember today. It is in our power to defeat the plan of God about our soul's salvation; but in spite of this, God is going to move on to the accomplishment of His plans and purposes in this world. We may be laborers with Him in this and share in the reward. On the other hand, if we refuse He will even make the wrath of men to praise Him and will accomplish His purpose anyway.

I want to say very emphatically that in all of my study of the Bible I have never found one passage of Scriptures, when properly understood, that teaches that God ever willed or purposed that one single soul should perish. On the other hand, I know of many, many passages that declare that it is not God's will that any should perish. He takes no pleasure in the death of the wicked nor in the loss of any soul.

Jesus has made provision whereby any and all may be saved. If any soul is ever lost it will not be because God willed it, or predetermined it, but that soul will be lost against God's will and in spite of all that infinite love can do to prevent it. On the other hand, if a soul is saved it will not be just because God willed, or purposed, that it should be saved, but it will be because that soul said, "I WILL ACCEPT." No one will ever be saved unless he wants to be, and unless he at least has a desire to move toward God. Romans 8:30 says: "Moreover whom he did predestinate, them he also CALLED (or INVITED). *He* invites, but we must accept His invitation, and He refuses to trespass upon our

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right of choice. He says, "Behold, I stand at the door and knock: if any man hear my voice, and OPEN the DOOR, I will come in to him, and will sup with him, and he with me."

III. Election and Predestination

In the third place we must keep in mind just what the Bible teaches on the subject of Election, before we can properly understand what it teaches about Predestination, for Predestination is based upon Election. In other words, the thing that is predetermined, or marked off, is for those who are the ELECT. Now the doctrine of Election I fear has been misunderstood by a great many people. There are many people who seem to think that what Election means is: that certain people are elect unto salvation and others unto damnation, and that this Election is by Divine decree without any regard to the freewill and choice of man.

I do not believe that the Bible teaches any such thing. In fact, the Bible tells us that we are elect THROUGH Jesus Christ. Now, how are people to be the ELECT through Jesus Christ? In John, the third chapter, we are told, "God sent not his Son into the world to condemn the world, but that the WORLD through him might be saved. He that believeth is not condemned, but he that *believeth* not is condemned already, BECAUSE he believeth not on the only begotten Son of God. And this is the condemnation, that light is come into the world, and men loved darkness rather than light, because their deeds were evil." In other words, any one and every one in the world could be saved and become the Elect through Jesus Christ, but they refused

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to do so and therefore are already condemned. Not because God had predetermined that they should be, but just because they refused to meet the conditions.

We also note that Peter urges people to *make their calling and election sure*. Many are *called*, but *few* are *chosen*, and the reason why they are not chosen is that they failed to make their ELECTION SURE by accepting God's proffered offer of full and free salvation.

The best explanation of Election that I have ever heard was given by an old Negro in the South. Some one asked him how he explained Election, and he said, "It is like this: the election is going on all the time. God is voting for you to be saved, and the Devil is voting for you to be lost. Up to this point the score is tied, and there can't be any election until another vote is cast. The deciding ballot is the one that you cast, and if you vote with God you will get ELECTED." I believe that this is according to the teaching of God's Word.

If we are lost it will not be because God determined that we should be, for He is not willing that any should perish, but that all should come to repentance. On the other hand, if we ever become the Elect of God it will be because we accept God's plan for us and are saved by faith in Jesus Christ. This is the only way that any one can become the Elect of God. If you are elected in this way, then all things are yours, and ye are Christ's, and Christ is God's. Glory to His name!

Up to this point I have tried to point out to you that any one and every one can be saved and if we are not saved it will not be because God willed, or predes-

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tinated, that we should be lost; but it will be simply because we refused the mercy of God, and failed to comply with the conditions. In other words, the doctrine of Predestination that is taught by the great Apostle Paul is not that certain people are predestinated to be saved and others to be lost. It is something other than *this*.

Now the word, PREDESTINATE, means: TO MARK OFF FIRST OR BEFOREHAND. The thing that has led so many people into confusion, and has brought the glorious doctrine into disrepute, has been that some people have jumped to the conclusion that it is a MARKING OFF OF WHO SHALL BE SAVED AND WHO SHALL BE LOST. This is not what the doctrine is at all. *The matter of who shall be saved and who shall be last is to be determined by the freewill and choice of man.* WHOSOEVER WILL MAY BE SAVED.

PREDESTINATION IS RATHER A MARKING OFF OF WHAT SHALL BE THE INHERITANCE OF THOSE WHO WILL BE SAVED. In other words, this is not a doctrine for sinners but for saints. It does not concern the sinner at all. You have to become a child of God by faith in Jesus Christ, before this doctrine will mean anything to you. However, if you are a child of God, it ought to be one of the most precious doctrines in the Bible to you. For God has PREDESTINATED OR MARKED OFF some glorious things for those who will be saved.

In the case of Abraham we have a glorious example and illustration of this wonderful truth. When God spoke to Abraham He told him that if he would come out of that land, He would give him a glorious inheri-

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Lance and make of him a great nation. Now the question of whether Abraham would come out was one that he had to decide for himself. He had the power and the privilege to either come out or stay where he was. If he had chosen to stay down there, he would have missed all that God had in mind for him.

However, Abraham made a, wise choice and decided to go out; and when he did come out, God showed him the land and pointed out the boundaries and told him that this was to be for him and his descendants. It was a long time before they actually owned it, but Abraham lived on it by faith and believed God would keep His word. When the proper time came, God gave it to his descendants as He had promised. All of this time it was PREDESTINATED or MARKED OFF for them.

The same thing is true of every person in this world. God calls to us, and tells us that if we will come out of the world He will give to us a glorious inheritance. He has it MARKED OFF for us. It is in our power to refuse to come out and miss the inheritance; but when we do come out, we will find that He has a glorious inheritance marked off for us.

WHAT HAS GOD PREDESTINATED FOR US? WHAT IS IT THAT HE HAS MARKED OFF FOR US? When I come to this part of the message it makes me feel like shouting, for God has such glorious things marked off for us. I only wish I could get you to see the richness and fulness of this glorious truth. I want to suggest a few things that He has marked off for us.

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I. Chosen unto Holiness

In Ephesians 1:4, we find these words, "According as he hath *chosen us* in him before the foundation of the world, THAT WE SHOULD BE HOLY AND WITHOUT BLAME BEFORE HIM IN LOVE." In this verse Paul lifts the curtains that hang between the visible world and the spirit world, and permits us to catch a glimpse of the purpose of the Triune Godhead. He shows to us what God has marked out for us. It is that we might be holy and without blame before Him in love. This is the *very best* thing that God could choose for us as His children. Anything less than this would be unworthy of a Holy God.

Just try to imagine God's planning such a salvation as some people *went to think* that He has offered. Just imagine His planning to forgive us of our sins, but leaving us so that we had to *sin every day*, and be forgiven every night, and finally manage to stumble into the haven of refuge. No, my dear friend that is not what He has chosen for us. He has chosen that every child of His shall be holy and without blame before Him in love.

He swore to Abraham that we, being delivered out of the hands of our enemies, should live before Him in *holiness* and righteousness, *all the days of our life*. (Luke 1:74). We are also told that Jesus suffered without the gates that He might sanctify the people *with His own blood*. (Hebrews 13:12). This is the will of God, even our sanctification. God hath not called us unto uncleanness, but unto holiness. He therefore that despiseth (or rejecteth), despiseth not

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man, but God, who hath given us also the Holy Ghost. Both He that sanctifieth, and they *who are sanctified*, are all one, for which cause He is not ashamed to call them brethren. Without holiness no man shall see the Lord. These and many other such passage; lead us to see that it is God's choice for us and our glorious inheritance in Christ. God has marked this off for us. and if we miss it, it will be too bad.

This glorious inheritance was purchased at a great price. Jesus suffered without the gates that we might have it, and I pray that we may not despise it. Why not enter upon your glorious inheritance today, if you have not already done so? It is one of the things that God has marked off for those who will be saved by faith in Christ.

II. Predestinated to Be Conformed to the Image of Christ

The next thing that we notice that God has pre destinated or marked off for us is: that. we shall be CONFORMED TO THE IMAGE OF HIS SON. "He has predestinated that we shall be conformed to the image of his Son, that he might be the firstborn among many brethren." This leads us to see that God is not only interested in our having an experience of grace that will make us pure within, but that He also wants us to have a character and life that conform to the life of Jesus Christ.

St. Paul seems to think of this particular phase of the truth as if God were somewhat like a sculptor, that is, shaping and molding an image out of a rough piece of stone. That is why, in the 28th verse of the 8th

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chapter of Romans, Paul is able to say: "We know that all things work together for good to them that love God." The reason he believes that, is that God has predestinated that all whom He foreknows shall be conformed to the image of His Son.

All things are not pleasant for us now, and all things may not seem for our good now, but they will eventually bring us to the image of Christ, and that is the thing for which God is working. He may have to put us in the fires of afflictions, but we shall come out without the smell of fire on us, and even while we are there we may have one like unto the Son of God to walk with us. Glory to His name!

"He shall sit as a refine, and purifier of silver." (Mal. 3:3). Now to refine silver you have to cast it into the furnace and let it burn until all of the dross and impurities are burned away; and then when it has gathered in a puddle the silversmith looks in and sees his own image perfectly reflected in the; silver, and he knows that it is pure and takes it out of the fire. The same is true of us. We often have to be put in the fire and have the dross burned away; but just remember that Jesus, the great Silversmith, is leaning over and watching us. When He sees His own image perfectly reflected in us, then he takes us out and brings us to Himself. We can afford to let Him do this for us, even though it does hurt at the time, for just remember that one day He is to present us before the Throne and we are going to be like Him and see Him as He is. He is going to be the firstborn, but He wants all of His brethren to be like Him. Praise God for such a hope.

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"Upon our journey here below we meet with pain and loss,
Sometimes there is a crown of thorns, sometimes a heavy cross;
The dreary road to Calvary, the bitter goal and sting,
But what's inside those gates of pearl will be worth everything."
"WHEN I AWAKE IN HIS LIKENESS I SHALL BE
SATISFIED."

III. Predestinated unto Adoption as Children

Ephesians 1:5-"Having predestinated us unto the adoption of children by Jesus Christ to himself." In this verse we are told about another thing that God has marked off for us. He has predestinated that we shall be adopted as children. Now at first glance this may not mean much to you; but when you come to really understand the meaning of Adoption, it will mean a great deal to you.

I was very much surprised sometime ago to hear a great Bible scholar say that the doctrine of Adoption did not mean a thing to hire. I fear that the reason why many people do not get any blessing out of the thought of Adoption is that we have had on overemphasis on the love of God and also some false teaching about the Fatherhood of God. There is not only a love side to the Gospel but there is also a legal aspect to it.

Finney was a great lawyer before he was converted, and when he preached he emphasized the legal aspect of the Atonement. On one occasion he called a group of lawyers together and preached on the legal aspect of the Atonement and twenty-five of them were converted as the result of that sermon.

It seems to me that it would pay some of our preachers who grow sentimental about the love of God

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to also remember that He is Holy. The greatest problem that ever confronted the mind of God was the problem of how to save a fallen race and at the same time be true to His essential nature of holiness. The Cross was the solution of that problem, and it is so legally perfect that no mind will ever find a flaw in it. He is Just and at the same time the justifier of the ungodly. Any soul that claims the merits of that Blood will be saved and even the devils of Hell will not be able to lift a voice against him or God. Praise God for such a plan! It is the marvel of the ages and the supreme manifestation of the wisdom and power of God.

Now to really appreciate the legal aspect of Adoption, we need to remember that we are the descendants of a fallen being. Adam was the head of the race and he fell and lost our inheritance for us, and we fell with him. Not only that, but we have all sinned, by our own choice, and come short of the glory of God. We are not condemned and lost because of Adam's sin, but because of our own sins. Our inheritance has been lost by us and we are morally, spiritually and materially bankrupt. We have no claim on God from the legal point. The air we breathe and the food we eat come to us through the *mercy* and *goodness* of God. If it were not for His love and mercy we could not live a single minute. We are spared moment by moment through the mercy of God. (If sinners would just see that, surely they would repent of their sin and rebellion). Now the matter of salvation is not just a matter of being forgiven, but it is more than that. Of course it would be a wonderful thing if God would just be will-

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ing to forgive us, and let us come back into the house and enjoy the blessings that His serving angels enjoy, but praise God, He has something better than that in mind for us.

He has worked out a plan whereby we, who are the fallen sons of Adam and have nothing by legal rights, shall be brought into the very family of God and become heirs of God and joint-heirs with Jesus Christ. To as many as receive Him, to them He will give the power (or privilege) to become sons of God. Think of it!

May I illustrate what I mean by the legal side of Adoption? Suppose a man and his wife take a child into their home and undertake to raise it. They love it, they feed it, and clothe it, and give it the very best chance that they are able to give. That is good; but one day they say, "We want to have this child legally adopted." You might wonder why they would want to be bothered about such a thing as that. You might reason that they could not do any more for it than they are already doing. However, there would be a decided advantage to such a step as this. It would mean a great deal to *the child*. It would mean that he would have the legal right to bear their name and claim all of the benefits that went with it; and it would also mean that when the estate is divided, this adopted child would share and share alike with the blood born children of that family.

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willing that you and I should be adopted into the family with Him and share in His glorious estate. He is the heir of all things, and one of these days the estate is going to be divided and we will share it with Him. Think of it. Praise His name forever and ever!

You know, when I get to thinking along this line it just makes me feel like shouting, and here is one thing especially out of which I get a great thrill. You know the astronomers have been studying the heavens for centuries and they have discovered millions of planets. They have gone to great trouble to find out how far away they are, and they tell us that some of them are millions of light years away from this earth, with light traveling at the rate of 186,000 miles per second. Today they are still trying to find more powerful telescopes to explore the vastness of this universe. Just the other day I read that they have a two-hundred-inch glass almost ready, and that it will help them to find out more about the universe.

Now here is the thing that thrills me- *they are just surveying the vast estate that we are going to inherit one of these days with Jesus Christ.* Every time they find a new star or group of stars, I can say, "Well, praise the Lord, that is ours also." Oh, if I could just get people to see this truth!

My friend, you and I can afford to endure anything and be deprived of everything in this world if we can only make it through until the estate is divided. We can afford to bear any reproach that we may be able to share in this. *Just think,* God has this MARKED OFF FOR US, if we will believe on His Son and be saved by

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His blood.

IV. All Things Brought into One in Jesus Christ. Paul tells us in Ephesians that God has predestinated that all things shall be brought into one in Jesus Christ. This is another thing that God has marked off beforehand. Today this world is in a state of rebellion. There are hosts of fallen angels that are working to defeat the plans of God in this universe. There are also millions of men and women who have refused to submit to the will and plans of God.

This earth is in a state of turmoil and strife because of the rebellion of Satan and man. The earth has been filled with hate, strife and bloodshed. Paul tells us that the whole creation is groaning and awaiting the redemption of the earth, when the curse of sin shall be removed and God's will shall be done on earth as it is in Heaven. Christ taught His church to pray for just this very thing, and also we are told that the Spirit cries, "Come, Lord Jesus, come."

Jesus has promised to come back to this earth again; and when He does come the rebellion shall be put down and the earth shall be filled with His knowledge and glory as the waters cover the sea. His kingdom shall reign where'er the sun doth his successive journeys ran, and His kingdom shall reach from shore to shore. "Then nations shall beat their swords into plowshares, and their spears into pruning hooks, and learn war no more." Peace and tranquility shall reign where chaos and confusion have held sway so long.

It may seem that this is a long time in coming, but just remember that God is not slack concerning His

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promises to us, as some men count slackness, but is longsuffering, not willing that any should perish, but that ALL should come to repentance. He has not forgotten, but one of these days He will clear away the rubyish and remove the rebels, just as He did the people in the land of Canaan, and we shall enter upon our inheritance just as surely as Israel entered upon theirs.

He has especially *marked off or predestinated that this earth shall be the place where Jesus Christ, the Son of man and the Son of God, shall reign and His saints with Him.* The Meek shall inherit the earth, and Christ shall reign over it.

NOW THESE ARE SOME OF THE THINGS THAT GOD HAS PREDESTINATED OR MARKED OFF FOR US. AND THIS IS THE KIND OF PREDESTINATION THAT I BELIEVE IN. THIS IS WORTHY OF A HOLY GOD, WHO IS LOVE, AND NOT WILLING THAT ANY SHALL PERISH, BUT THAT ALL SHALL BE SAVED.

Concluding Paragraph on Predestination

In concluding this study on Predestination, I would like to call your attention to Paul's argument on this subject in Romans. In the 9th, 10th and 11th chapters he is dealing with the vexing question of why Israel did not accept Christ and why they are now rejected.*

I want to especially call your attention to the fact

*Israel is not now rejected from personal salvation. Any and every Jew may be saved today on the same terms as the Gentiles. The thing that they were rejected from was being the chosen instrument through which the world was to hear the Gospel. This rejection was national. They are rejected in the same way as Esau was rejected. Romans 9:13-"As it is written, Jacob have I loved, but Esau have I hated." (A much better word would be "Rejected.") This is shown by Heb. 12:18, 17-"Lest there be any fornicator, or profane person, as Esau who for one morsel of meat sold his birthright. For ye know how that after-

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that Paul very clearly sets forth in this discussion this truth: the purposes of God with reference to Israel as a nation did not involve individual or personal salvation. This was not involved in the predestination that God had for Israel. Paul makes this plain with such statements as these: "But, Israel, which followed after the law of righteousness, hath not attained to the law of righteousness. Wherefore (or why)? Because they sought it not by faith, but as it were by the works of the law... WHOSOEVER believeth on him SHALL not be ashamed... They... have not *submitted* themselves into the righteousness of God. For Christ is the end of the law for righteousness to EVERY ONE that believeth. If thou shalt confess with thy mouth the Lord Jesus. and shalt believe in thine heart that God hath raised him from the dead, THOU SHALT be saved." With such statements as these Paul clearly sets forth the truth that any and all of Israel could be saved by faith in Jesus Christ, and that the thing depends upon *their own choice*. He clearly shows that the matter of salvation is one that must be settled by faith in Jesus Christ and that we must act.

The matter that Paul is talking about God's having marked off, or predestinated, for Israel was not personal salvation. They were to stand upon the same

(*Continued from page 61*) ward, when he would have inherited the blessing, he was REJECTED for he found no place of repentance, though he sought it carefully with tears."

The blessing that Esau sought with tears was not the blessing of personal salvation. It was rather the blessing that would have made him the one through whom the covenant of Abraham would have been carried on. He was rejected from this, just as the Jews are now rejected from being the chosen instruments through which God carries on His work of salvation. The Jews have been broken off and the Church has been grafted in.

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ground as the Gentiles at this point. The condition was faith in Jesus Christ as the Son of God.

However, the thing that He did mark off for them *was a matter that concerned the work God intended that they should do after they were saved.* He purposed that through the Jews Salvation should be given to the world. He gave the Bible through them, Christ came of the seed of Abraham through the flesh. God also intended that the Jewish nation should be the evangelists to carry the GOOD NEWS to all the world, that the Messiah had come, and that salvation could be had through faith in Him.

Through unbelief they rejected Jesus and lost the opportunity to fulfill this glorious mission, and therefore were broken off and the Church was grafted in. God had marked off this glorious inheritance for them, and offered them this wonderful privilege, but because of unbelief they refused to come out that they might inherit this land that God had marked off for them. *This shows that Predestination as Paul taught it was not an arbitrary thing that is forced upon people against their will, but is something that is offered to them who will believe and accept.*

MAY I SAY IN CONCLUSION, DEAR READER, GOD HAS SOMETHING MARKED OFF FOR YOU TO DO, AND I TRUST AND PRAY THAT YOU WILL NOT DISAPPOINT HIM, AS THE JEWS DID.

AMEN.

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