The Beautiful Blue Danube flowing between the ancient cities of Buda, at left, and Pest, in riot-torn Hungary. Many of these buildings have been wrecked in the recent anti-communist rebellion.
spreading the false claim that leaders or members. I never knew, or

TRUTH that sect known as "Jehovah Witnesses," sect of any kind. I have never, however, attended belonged to them.

the "Jehovah Witnesses" sect, continue with them. I have never, however, attended any meeting of, or had any remote semblance of fellowship with the "Jehovah Witnesses" predecessor, the "Pastor Russell" people.

I did not learn any of God's TRUTH from the "Jehovah Witnesses" sect. I have, of course, read some of their writings and their books, and I have been glad to find that they have certain truths, as all sects and denominations have (though mixed with dangerous errors), but God had already revealed these truths to me long before I read of them in their literature. I LEARNED NOTHING THAT I BELIEVE AND TEACH FROM THIS SECT. If they boast of having taught me anything, they misrepresent. I learned God's TRUTH direct from God—thus His WORD—the Holy Bible. I did not learn it from any sect or denomination. But I say unto you, as the Apostle Paul said:

"I certify you, brethren, that the PEEL which is preached of me is not the so-called "Jehovah Witnesses," nor of their late leader, Judge Rutherford—tho strange tales reach me that I spent some time with him in prison. I have never been in prison or in jail. I have never belonged to, attended any meeting of, or had any remote semblance of fellowship with the "Jehovah Witnesses" sect of any kind. I have never had any kind of fellowship with any of their leaders or members. I never knew, or

three years I went to some of the humble of God's people in the Willamette Valley of Oregon, and preached to them. (Please compare with Galatians 1:11-18.)

(Please continue on page 23)

Heart to Heart Talk with the Editor

Letters continue to ask, "Were you ever a 'Jehovah Witness'? Members of that sect have told me you were."

Although I have stated positively and definitely on the radio program a number of times and in articles in The PLAIN TRUTH that I never belonged to the sect known as "Jehovah Witnesses," or the Seventh Day Adventist denomination, it seems that many, especially of the "Jehovah Witnesses" sect, continue spreading the false claim that I once belonged to them.

Let me once again make the truth clear:

I have never been a member of these so-called "Jehovah Witnesses," nor of the Seventh Day Adventists. I have never in any manner, shape, nor form, had any remote connection with them, or associated with either sect or denomination. I have never had any fellowship with them.

I have never attended a regular meeting or church service of either, altho I have attended a very few week-night evangelistic campaign services conducted by Seventh Day Adventist evangelists. I have never, however, attended any meeting of the "Jehovah Witnesses" sect of any kind. I have never had any kind of fellowship with any of their leaders or members. I never knew, or

The WORLD TOMORROW heard in Australia!

2CH—Sidney—Sat., 10:15 P.M.
2AY—Albury—Sun., 10:00 P.M.
2GN—Goulburn—Sun., 10:00 P.M.
2GF—Grafton—Sun., 9:30 P.M.
3BO—Bendigo—Thurs., 4:15 P.M.
4TO—Townsville—Fri., 10:15 P.M.
4CA—Cairns—Sun., 10:00 P.M.
4WK—Warwick—Tues., 9:30 P.M.
From behind the Iron Curtain world-shaking headlines are flashing. Communist oppression in Eastern Europe is being overthrown. The way is being prepared for a colossal third force in world politics—a European Federation of Nations more powerful than either Russia or the United States!

The prophetic events which have rent Europe the past few weeks have been expounded for over the past 22 years in the pages of The Plain Truth. We have shown years in advance what would happen to Russia’s ill-fated Empire in Eastern Europe. These prophecies have been in your Bible for the past 1900 years. But the world, and the churches of this world, have refused to believe them.

God has raised up this very work to make known to the world His Truth— to carry to the world His prophecies before it is too late!

How to Know This Is the Work of God

Scripture is full of warnings about false ministers and false prophets. The world is filled with such men and organizations today. Out of this Babylon of confusion God must somewhere have His work today. How do you recognize it?

Here is the test: Jeremiah was inspired to give:

"The prophet that prophesieth of peace, when the word of the prophet shall come to pass, then shall the prophet be known that the Lord hath truly sent him" (Jer. 28:9).

That is how you can know who is preaching the truth today—when what he says comes to pass.

The Old Testament prophets have already spoken—their words are written in the Bible. But who today understands what the prophets foretold?

Why, only the ministers today whose word comes to pass!—those who are appointed and guided by God to preach the truth! Those whose utterances do not come to pass have not spoken the prophecies truly.

We give you here the record of what we have been proclaiming for the past 22 years—a message which no other voices, to our knowledge, have been proclaiming.

Most of you have heard nothing at all from the pulpits. Those few ministers who preach about prophecy have usually been warning that Russia is going to overrun Europe and attack England and America. Their words have not come to pass.

But what we have been warning you about is happening!—precisely as we have stated, and as much as 22 years in advance! This is how you can know that our work is not of men but of God!

The Record for Over 22 Years

Here is what we said nearly 5 years ago about the very nations that are now rebelling in Eastern Europe. From page 16 of the April 1952 Plain Truth: "Russia may give East Germany back to the Germans and will be forced to relinquish her control over Hungary, Czechoslovakia and parts of Austria to complete the ten nation union."

This prophecy is already happening. Russia has already withdrawn her troops from her part of Austria. Open revolt against Communist control has flared in Hungary, exactly as we said it would!

Russia emerged the temporary victor in Hungary because we failed to aid the rebels as we had promised them over Radio Free Europe. Many Hungarians hate us for not aiding them. They now see their only hope is a strong, rearmed, militaristic Germany within a united Europe—a third force against East and West!

And the spirit of revolution is spreading to the other satellites!

As far back as August 1950, we said: "But before Russia is ready ... the world will be stunned to see Germany emerge suddenly in a power never equalled by Hitler—by a union of ten nations in Europe, probably including some at present puppets of Russia—in a gigantic United States of Europe. This definitely is prophesied!"

This is happening exactly as prophesied. The Communist world is not yet ready to attack the West. "Before Russia is ready" satellites would have to break away from her control in order to form a union of ten nations in Europe. It is occurring now, before your eyes. The illustrations accompanying this article prove it!

Even Before World War II

Before World War II Mr. Armstrong recognized what was prophesied to happen in Europe! In the August, 1939 issue of The Plain Truth, page 6, he wrote that "a military accord officially lining up Spain with Italy and Germany will add one more of the ten prophesied kingdoms which are to give 'their power and strength' (of arms) to the 'beast.'"

These three nations are yet going to be in the coming Union of Europe!

And in August 1934—over 22 years ago—Mr. Armstrong wrote (on page 6) of "the Roman Empire ... a 'United States of Europe,' or federation of ten European nations within the bounds of the old Roman Empire."

Mussolini and Hitler began this union, but God cut their work short in order that this final gospel warning of "The World Tomorrow" might be broadcast as a world-wide witness before the final league of ten fascist European nations is formed!

Here is the earliest record of them all—from the June-July 1934 issue of The Plain Truth. From the article en-
titled "What Is Going to Happen?" we quote: "Scripture prophesies TWO GREAT MILITARY POWERS to arise in the last days—one the revival of the Roman Empire by a federation of ten nations in the territory of the ancient Roman Empire; the other, 'Gog,' or Russia, with her allies . . . possibly China or Japan."

China has become Russia's ally. China will not revolt as the nations in Eastern Europe are presently doing!

Here is the testimony of over 22 years. We have been warning that it is not Russia which will conquer us—it is not Russia which will master Europe,

Two men walk past burning heaps of paper in Poznan, Poland, where Red Poland's tanks and troops crushed a six-hour workers' riot for bread and better life. Scores were killed in the demonstrations.

Polish army officers and enlisted men hold a mass meeting in Warsaw in support of the new Gomulka Regime. They demanded prosecution of Communists who doomed innocent Polish military men to death on false accusations.

Wearing the armbands of the Hungarian Revolution, rebel troops momentarily move along the Austro-Hungarian border for aid for the wounded and dying.
though Russia WILL conquer the Orient—it is a union of ten fascist nations in Europe which will become a THIRD POWER in the world and rise up to conquer the Democracies of Northwest Europe and America! In the pictures accompanying this article you will see the initial stages of this prophesied union!

Rakoczy Street in Budapest, Hungary, before the Anti-Russian Revolution broke in full force.

Women offer prayers at caskets, piled one atop the other, containing bodies of Hungarians shot down by Communist secret police gun fire in town of Magyarover.

Mourners stand amid tombstones in a church yard in Gyöer, in Northwest Hungary, as religious services were rendered for victims of the rioting.
A mass meeting against Communist overlords in Warsaw, Poland, in front of the Palace of Culture.

Three women, at left, cross in front of Russian tank and armored car in Budapest, Hungary. Another tank follows the armored car.
MY ANSWER to an Atheist!

In response to hundreds of requests we are again publishing Mr. Armstrong’s open letter which has been out of print for almost five years.

by Herbert W. Armstrong

Five years ago, I published a letter from an atheist. Regardless of the spirit in which it was written, it posed fair questions. If a Christian is unable to answer these questions rationally and with proof, he has no basis for faith.

Here is a condensation of his letter and the article which appeared in the October, 1951 number:

"Mr. Herbert W. Armstrong, "Box 111, "Pasadena, Calif.
"Dear Mr. Armstrong:

'I judge by you being a preacher you have a God, and as we have history of many gods and the wonders they have brought to the world including its creation. May I ask, Which one of these many gods do you claim for your God? and, Will you please describe your God in a manner such as you would describe anything else to convey an idea? . . .

"But let me say, and history bears me out in this, of all the gods the Jew god is superior to all else that is called "God." He, alone, is GOD!

CREATION is the proof of God! But during the past two centuries especially there has developed among God-rejecting men in the occidental world the mental disease of theophobia. Two hundred years ago it appeared under the popular catch-phrases "deism" and "rationalism." Then it masqueraded itself under the appealing name "higher criticism." This pseudo scholarship employed, as it progressed, such attractive titles as "progress," "development," and "evolution." It has appealed to the intellectual vanity of a world groping in intellectual darkness in an era of widespread diffusion of knowledge.

The theory of evolution was therefore invented to provide the atheist's explanation of a creation without a Creator. But this misguided "rationalism" failed utterly to account for the origins of things and of life; and today the more candid among geologists and biologists confess that they do not know how the development from single-celled "amoe-" to man took place—Lamark's theory of "use and disuse," Darwin's "natural selection," and other theories have now fallen by the wayside, and "mutations" cannot be explained or proved.

Amazing New Knowledge of Science

Now suppose we confine ourselves to facts!

What, then, has Science actually determined?

The discovery of radioactivity in the past half-century has proved that there has been no past eternity of matter! Radio-activity is described as a process of disintegration. The atomic age is opening up new fields to explore. Until about 60 years ago, it was supposed that the smallest particle of matter was the hydrogen atom. But since the discovery of radio-activity about 1896, the facts brought to light reveal a much smaller unit than the hydrogen atom—one only about 1/1845 its mass—actually a small particle of negative electricity, called an electron. Soon after Mme. Curie discovered the element radium, in 1898, it was discovered that radium, and the other radio-active elements as we know now, are continually giving off radiations at an enormous rate.

Has Matter Always Existed?

Now notice carefully what this newly disclosed FACT of Science means:

Uranium is a radio-active element heavier than radium. It has an atomic weight of 238.5. In decomposing it gives off a helium atom, weight 4, repeated three times, and then the substance left is radium, atomic weight about 226.4. Radium, then, is simply the end-product of uranium after it has lost three helium atoms. Then the disintegration continues in radium. And the final product of this process of radio-active disintegration is the element lead! Now of course this process requires great periods of time. The calculated "half-life" of radium is 1590 years—uranium much longer.

I have seen it myself, in the darkroom of an X-ray laboratory. A tiny portion of radium was placed on a mirror at the far end of a hollow tube, and I looked into this tube thru a magnifying glass at the other end. Under this magnification what I saw appeared as a large, vast dark sky, with thousands of shooting stars falling toward me from all directions. Actually what I saw were the emanations of...
tiny particles being emitted by the radium, greatly magnified.

We know, therefore, that there has been no past eternity of matter!

The radio-active elements in existence today have not yet been in existence long enough to have run their course, and disintegrated into lead. To have ALWAYS existed, without any definite time of starting in the past, this "life" period of radio-active elements long ago would have run its course. All radio-active elements would have long ago disintegrated into lead. Since these elements exist only for a definite span of years, and all the radium, thorium, helium, and other radio-active elements in the world today have not yet existed that many years, there was a time, prior to the duration of this span in the past, when these elements DID NOT EXIST!

Here we have definite scientific proof that MATTER HAS NOT ALWAYS EXISTED. Here we have definite specific elements which once, in the long ago, did not yet exist. Then there was a time, later, when these elements CAME INTO EXISTENCE.

Evolution postulates that all things have always come about GRADUALLY, through the slow-moving natural processes of the present. Try to imagine, if you can, something coming into existence out of nothing GRADUALLY! Can your mind entertain the idea?

I think not. No, I think if you are rational you will have to accept the fact of a special and necessarily instantaneous CREATION. And some power or some one had of necessity to do the creating. There is a cause for every effect. And in accepting that inevitable FACT, proved by the findings of Science, of the existence of that GREAT FIRST CAUSE, you have accepted the FACT of the existence and pre-existence of the Creator—GOD!

Where Did LIFE Come From?

But how about the presence of life? How did life get here? Science has learned some things about that, too.

The wisest of the ancients did not know what Science makes available today. Thus it is demonstrated today that LIFE COMES ONLY FROM LIFE, and that each kind reproduces only after its kind (Gen. 1:25).

The works of Tyndall and Louis Pasteur, in the field of bacteria and protozoa, have finally demonstrated scientifically once and for all in these more minute fields what Redi first demonstrated with larger organisms.

All the advances of recent medical and surgical science in the treatment and prevention of germ diseases are based upon this great truth of the law of Biogenesis—that LIFE can come only from pre-existing LIFE.

No fact of science stands more conclusively proved today. LIFE CANNOT come from dead matter. THERE IS NOT ONE SHRED OF TRUTH FROM SCIENCE TO ACCOUNT FOR THE PRESENCE OF LIFE UPON THE EARTH BY ANY MEANS OTHER THAN A SPECIAL CREATION BY THE GREAT ORIGINAL FIRST CAUSE—GOD—who is LIFE AND THE FOUNTAIN SOURCE OF ALL LIFE! It is now absolutely certain, according to all that can be known from Science—according to all that is rational—that it required A REAL CREATION to produce life from the not-living—organic from inorganic matter.

One cannot rationally deny the existence of my GOD, unless he can account for the origin of LIFE without a Creator who, Himself, is Life! The Creator, therefore, begins to be revealed, by Science and by reason, as a LIVING God—a God in whom is LIFE, and who alone has imparted life to all that have it!

I could go further, and show you that what Science has discovered about energy and its origin and the laws of conservation of energy, also proves conclusively that "the works were finished from the foundation of the world" (Heb. 4:3), that the material Creation is a completed work, which is not now going on!

Next, then, let's examine whether the Great First Cause is a Being of intelligence, or merely some blind, dumb, unintelligent FORCE.

Is Anything Superior to Your Mind?

Look about you. You admit that the transmission of knowledge to your mind is limited to the channels of your five senses.

So now I ask you, do you know of anything that is superior to your mind?

Look at the planets coursing thru the sky. Behold, in all its splendor, the entire cosmic universe, with its suns, its nebulae, and galaxies.

Yet they are inanimate. They have no mind, no intelligence. They cannot do what you can do—think, reason, plan, and carry out plans according to private volition and will.

The human mind can know, think, reason, plan, and carry its plans to execution. It can invent and produce instruments by which it may acquire knowledge of the vast universe, or of the minutest particle. Thru radar, man has now been able to send a signal to the moon and cause it to return. He can harness waterfalls and make them serve his needs, cause rivers to run backward, turn the forces of nature to serving human needs. And now he has learned how to break down the atom, and utilize a power so vast that man is able at last to annihilate all life from off the earth!

But there remains one thing no man ever has been or ever will be able to do. He cannot build, make, produce, or create anything that is superior to himself!

A man can take existing materials and out of them build a house. But it requires intelligence and power superior to the house to produce the house. An automobile is almost a living thing, but the intelligence and powers required to invent and produce it are superior to the thing produced.

The Supreme Intelligence

To suggest to you, my doubting friend, that anything you could invent, make, build, or bring into being could be superior in intelligence and ability to your and your mind would certainly insult your intelligence!

Now let me ask you candidly, do you honestly believe that any power or force of less intelligence than your mind produced you?

If you do not believe in my God, then you have only the alternative of believing that something less than your intelligence produced you—that dumb, purposeless UNINTELLIGENCE brought into being your intelligence! The only rational possibility is to acknowledge that the very presence of the human mind is PROOF that the Great First Cause is also the SUPREME INTELLIGENCE, infinitely superior to the abilities of mortal man!
Suppose YOU Were Creator?

Suppose that you could add to your powers of reasoning, planning, designing, the actual CREATIVE power, so that you could project your will anywhere to produce and bring into being whatever your mind should plan and desire. Then, suppose you undertake the designing, creating, fashioning, shaping, and setting in motion a limitless cosmic universe—with suns and nebulae and galaxies in all their splendor, each of these vast units being of such intricate and complex construction as the existing universe. On some of these planets you would plan and produce all the forms of life that exist on this planet—and I do mean re-produce, for there would be no present universe to copy. There would be worlds within a world, down to the minutest infinitesimal particles of matter and chemical action such as we know by the aid of microscopes have been produced in this earth.

Do you think your mind would be equal to the task?

Just stop and think.

Is it rational, then, to believe that any power or force lacking even human intelligence could have planned, designed, created, formed, fashioned, shaped, put together and set in motion the awesome universe we behold?

The Great First Cause who created matter, then, stands revealed as the SUPREME INTELLIGENCE and ARCHITECT OF THE UNIVERSE!

The Miracle of Living Food

But again I say, look about you! Here are human beings on this earth, composed of 16 elements of matter—living, organic matter. These 16 living elements must be supplied and replenished thru food, water, and air.

No man with all his ingenuity and science and laboratory facilities CAN PRODUCE FOOD! That is, he cannot take plain organic matter and turn it into the living substance we call food. But some Power, Force, Intelligence, or Being did in some way, at some time, start the process going—a process far too wonderful for any man to devise or produce.

And so it is that out of the ground grows grass, and green leafy vegetables, and all other vegetables, and vines, and trees yielding fruits—each with its seed in itself, each thru this seed reproducing after its kind—and it is very good!

But when a marvelous little grain of wheat is planted in the ground, a plant develops and sprouts above the ground, and in some manner too wonderful for any human mind to understand or imitate, the elements drunk in thru the roots from the ground are utilized by the life germ in the seed of wheat, and new grains of wheat appear.

During this process, the inorganic iron and other elements dissolved in the ground, drunk into the roots and carried up into the new grain of wheat, have been actually converted into organic matter which can be assimilated as food.

And this same marvelous process takes place in the growth out of the ground of all grains, vegetables, fruits and foods. When we eat animal meat we are merely consuming, second-hand, the vegetation which the animal ate.

MAN, with all his vaunted science, his technical laboratory facilities, with all his inventive genius, lacks the intelligence and the powers to produce a grain of wheat, or to convert inorganic matter into food. Then is it rational to say that forces or powers exist, of no intelligence, which have been able to produce this living miracle of food? Did not a far GREATER Intelligence than man design, create, and supply man with all of this?

Man's Intelligence versus God's

But now let's COMPARE the wisdom and intelligence of man with that of the God who brought these marvels into being, and keeps them functioning.

The grain of wheat GOD causes to grow out of the ground is a perfect food. But, like other perfect gifts from God, man fails to value the priceless perfection of the all-wise God, and, undertaking to improve on God's handiwork, perverts, pollutes, and defiles it! Every bit of God's perfection man's hand has ever touched, it would seem, he has besmirched, fouled up and polluted!

And the poor, defenseless grain of wheat is no exception! Into flour mills of human devising go the millions of bushels of precious wheat. And there the supposedly intelligent human takes it apart, removes the 12 alkaline-reacting mineral elements, and, at huge profits to greedy millers, turn out for human consumption sacks of white flour composed of the four acid-reacting carbohydrate elements with poison bleach added!

Out of this the human population makes white bread, biscuits, doughnuts, pastries, puddings, macaroni, spaghetti, gravies, etc., etc., mixing the flour often with white "refined" sugar and greases or fats—a combination guaranteed to wreck any stomach in time! Yes, the sugar refiners do the same thing to sugar, and nearly all foods on the market for human consumption today have gone thru man's factories, suffered from man's processes, until they have been devitalized, depleted of their health-giving requirements, and turned from foods into slow-acting poisons! And these foodless foods with which man has tampered in lust for profits have produced in human bodies a whole series of diseases our forefathers of a few generations ago never heard of!

Result: today every eighth person drops dead before his time with heart failure, another eighth with cancer; every year 400,000 innocent little children die of their own graves with their little fingers thru being fed polluted foods; the population suffers rheumatism, arthritis, diabetes, kidney diseases, anemia, colds, fevers, pneumonia, and thousands of other diseases. We respond to the toothbrush and tooth-paste ads and frantically brush our teeth, but our teeth keep decaying and we lose them beginning at an early age because of lack of calcium and fluorine in our diet.

Today Americans are undernourished overeaters. We cram down too much bulk, yet starve our bodies of essential minerals and vitamins. It would seem man is not very intelligent, after all!

Then, too, the God who created this earth and all vegetation told us to let our land lie idle every seventh year. But man is too greedy to do that. And so our land is worn out and depleted, and such natural and good foods as carrots, beets, and turnips are lacking in the necessary mineral elements and vitamins! And other companies get rich selling vitamin pills thru drugstores!

WHOSE INTELLIGENCE IS THE HIGHER—that of the GOD who provided every perfect need for every living thing—
or that of greedy, gullible, God-rejecting humans who in the interests of bigger profits and more luxuries for themselves have robbed the very foods God created and gave us of their health and body building values?

"There Was No Watchmaker"

I needed an accurate watch with a very plain dial for timing broadcasts. The only kind that filled the need was a railroad watch. I have one—the very finest railroad watch made, a 23-jewel watch.

But it does not keep perfect time. Once or twice a week I have to adjust it a second or two. If I want to be sure it is accurate to the second, I set it by the master clock of my city, or any city, which is always found at the Western Union. But even this clock does not keep perfect time. Once or twice a week it must be adjusted a second or two by the master clock of the nation, by telegraph, from Naval Observatory, Washington, D.C. There at the Naval Observatory is the Master Clock of the U.S.A. But this great master clock of the nation is not perfect, either. It, too, must be adjusted and corrected occasionally.

Yes, it is corrected by the MASTER CLOCK OF THE UNIVERSE—up in the skies—by astronomers! Up there in the heavens is the great Master Clock that NEVER makes a mistake—is always ON TIME—never off a fraction of a second—the heavenly bodies coursing thru the skies!

Now you, sir—my doubting friend! If I show you my fine Hamilton-built, Ball-factory precision 23-jewel railroad watch and tell you that it was not made in these factories after all—in fact, it was not designed, planned, put together, by any watchmakers at all—that it just sort of happened—that the iron ores just brought themselves up out of the ground, refined themselves, formed and shaped themselves into the delicate little cogs and wheels and other pieces; the silicon just came of its own accord out of the earth and turned itself into the glass crystal; the gold case just refined itself, shaped itself; the cogs and wheels and cores of little parts just assembled themselves together in that case, wound themselves up, and started themselves to running and keeping al-

most perfect time—well, if I should try to tell you anything like that, you'd tell me I'm crazy or a fool, would you not?

Certainly! You know that the presence of that watch is rational and positive proof of the existence of a watchmaker, or watchmakers, who thought it all out, planned it, formed it, shaped it, put it together, and started it running.

But then you, Mr. Skeptic—you look up into the great vast sky at that MASTER Clock of the universe, which never misses a second—the perfect watch by which we must constantly set all our imperfect man-made watches—and you tell me, "That all just happened! There was no Great Watchmaker! No Master Mind thought out and planned that vast universe, brought it into being, set each star and planet in its own exact place, and started the myriad heavenly bodies coursing thru space, each in its prescribed orbit, in its orderly precision.

No, it just fashioned itself, put itself together, wound itself up, and started itself running. There was no Intelligence—no planning—no creation—no God!"

Do you say that to me?

If you can, I answer that I do not respect your intelligence. And the God I acknowledge replies to you, "None but the fool hath said in his heart, 'There is no God!'"

If you can look about you, and observe how intelligently planned and executed is everything in nature, and in plant and animal life—everything we see except the bungling, botching, polluting of God's beautiful handiwork by the clumsy hand of God—ignoring and rejecting man—and then say you doubt the existence of an all-wise, all-know-


Does CHRISTMAS Celebrate Christ's Birthday?


What is the origin of the Christmas tree—of "Santa Claus"—of the mistletoe and the holly-wreath?

We grew up practising these customs, taking them for granted, but never questioning why? It is time we learned the facts!

4000 Years of Christmas

Christmas was celebrated by pagans 2000 years before Christ was born. Yet it was not celebrated in Jerusalem—where Christ founded the inspired New Testament Church—until 385 A.D., over three centuries after the true Church fled from Jerusalem!

Why?

Did you know that the pagan Romans long before the birth of Christ called December 25 the Brumaia, or birthday of the new-sun after the winter solstice? Christmas was originally celebrated in honor of pagan gods. It was idolatry!

Every one of these facts you can find in the leading Encyclopaedias, in your own public libraries!

Though the Bible is silent about telling us to observe Christmas, or recording any such observance by the apostles or the early true Church, it does have something to say about the Christmas tree! Yes, it's time you learned the truth about Christmas!

You can have the astonishing facts about the origin and history of Christmas—how it crept into the churches—how the custom of trading gifts with one another commenced, instead of giving gifts to Christ—all these facts and many others are now available for you in our FREE 16-page booklet, "The Plain Truth about Christmas!" No other booklet makes the truth about Christmas so simple, so plain, so intriguingly interesting.

Write immediately for your free copy of "The Plain Truth about Christmas!"

Address your urgent request to the editor: Herbert W. Armstrong, P.O. Box 111, Pasadena, California. Don't delay. Write your letter for this amazing booklet before you read another article!
Mrs. Armstrong's Diary

In this third installment Mrs. Armstrong takes you to Jerusalem and "Calvary"—and to the very tomb from which Jesus rose from the dead! You'll also read about Megiddo and Rome.

...from the diary kept during their tour
by Lorna D. Armstrong

The first two installments of Mrs. Armstrong's diary took us from England, across the historic Mediterranean Sea to Egypt, the land of the Pharaohs.

From Cairo, Egypt, Mr. and Mrs. Armstrong and their son Dick journeyed to ancient Thebes and to the great pyramids. From there they flew to Bagdad in Iraq, near the site of ancient Babylon, now totally desolate.

Then they journeyed to Damascus, where the apostle Paul was converted. The trip continued from there to Petra, the mysterious city of Rock—one of the marvels of the ancient world.

Now comes the third and final installment with its many surprises!

Part III

From Petra to Amman. May 7, 1956.

We arrived in Amman, Jordan, in the evening tired and dusty. We then picked up our bags we had left at the hotel and, after looking in vain for mail from home, continued on toward Jerusalem.

From Amman to Jerusalem.

This trip was so very interesting. The country is more beautiful and every bit of the way filled with the history of the Israelites—with their wars, not only with the pagan nations around them, but among themselves.

We saw the place where Absalom was killed. It is no longer a wooded area, but today a bleak land denuded of trees. There are no oak trees. Remember how Absalom tried to escape the armies of David by riding on a mule through the thickly wooded land of Ephraim; how his long hair was caught in the thick boughs of a great oak before he was slain by Joab?

We were through Jericho where God caused the walls to fall as the Israelites marched around the city.

We saw the mountain from which Moses viewed the Promised Land before he died.

Every mile of the way was breathtaking. We were seeing in our imaginations, again, the tribes of Israel before and after they reached the Holy Land, then a land of rich vegetation, a land flowing with milk and honey; but now, because of their sins and their idolatry, it is a land under a curse. The only trees are those recently set out. Most of the land in Arab hands is uncared for.

We went through Bethphage and Bethany. Bethany is where Mary, Martha and Lazarus lived and where He raised Lazarus from the dead. When Jesus went into the city of Jerusalem, He often went to Bethany or out to the Mt. of Olives to spend the night.

Nearing Jerusalem

We passed the Garden of Gethsemane on our way to the hotel in Jerusalem which was situated outside the walls of the city. We looked forward to a good bath and a good bed after the long day's ride from Petra. We were quite disappointed however. After viewing the bathroom in connection with our rooms, we felt it would be cleaner to go to bed without a bath. So, after washing ourselves in sponge baths we tried to rest in very uncomfortable beds.

We arose early, anxious to see all there is to see in ancient Jerusalem. The old Jerusalem of Jesus' time is not there now, except a few places where excavations have been made some thirty feet below the present surface. Many Catholic shrines exist over deep holes or caves. To get to them one has to go down a steep stairway through dank, dark passageways; then there is a cave or hole where candles are burning and where people are kneeling, kissing rocks or cave walls. They believe these shrines to be the places where this or that happened in the life of Christ.

One such place, called the Church of the Holy Sepulchre, was crowded with people all over-awed and all worshipping a stone. Some were rubbing their hands over it and then over their bodies. Another had an airplane bag (the Pan-American bag that is given with purchase of a ticket) that he was rubbing over the stone. Another man lifted himself up and scooted around on the rock, rubbing his hip over it. Perhaps he expected healing from this procedure. Everyone backed out of the place crossing himself. We were waiting at the low-entrance incline and watching all this idolatry. We were disgusted and yet so sorry for their ignorance.

The Site of the Crucifixion

Afterward, we saw the real place where Christ was crucified and the tomb in which He lay. It is not in Catholic hands and is not within the walls of Jerusalem, but rather at "The Place of the Skull" which is located at Golgotha. The "skull" in the hillside is plainly visible. The tomb below has been recently excavated. The Scripture says in Matt. 27:33, that Jesus was crucified at "The Place of the Skull."

The route taken to Golgotha or "The Place of the Skull" is not the "Via Dolorosa" as claimed by the Catholics today. Along this narrow, dirty street, visitors are taken and it is claimed that miracles have happened.

The original level of the ancient city of Jesus' time was twenty to thirty feet below the present level. Two walls have been built in different places since the original wall around Jerusalem and only a small part of the old wall has been excavated. The base of the old Damascus Gate has recently been excavated under twenty feet of debris.
The rock above is called "Golgotha" in the Hebrew. It means "The Place of the Skull." Jesus was crucified atop this rock. Notice the natural caves forming the eyes and mouth.

From this place can be seen "The Place of the Skull." No one can fail to see the resemblance. There is a low eroded forehead, two deep hollows that make the eyes, a nose, and near the ground level, twisted lips.

We viewed this skull from a spot near the tomb in the garden; then walked past an ancient wine press to enter the tomb.

It was impossible fully to realize where we were—what we were seeing! To actually visit, to really see, and walk into the sepulchre from which Jesus rose immortal from the dead—the actual spot where the angels sat, at the right of the entrance—was an experience we couldn't fully comprehend until later.

It is an unfinished sepulchre; only one tomb was completed. Two others were partially finished. We saw the stone where the angel sat and also where the linen cloths lay that Peter and John saw as they stooped down and looked into the tomb.

We walked in the garden where Mary met the resurrected Christ. We saw the place where the stone had been moved in the groove to cover the opening of the Sepulchre. Near all this is evidences of rocks split by earthquakes. All of this, at the foot of Golgotha, was excavated in the year 1893. This is the place where Joseph of Arimathaea hurried to bury the body of Jesus before the High-Day Sabbath drew on.

The Sepulchre
This tomb is at the foot of "The Place of the Skull." It is, or rather was, a new sepulchre with only one of its tombs completed. There is a garden surrounding the tomb. It all is as the Bible describes, while the place in the city called the Holy Sepulchre is under a Catholic church, down a steep stairway, through dark rat runs to a hole in the ground where there is a rock.

We visited many places in the old city where churches and shrines were built over spots purported to be where Christ did this or that. All have their boxes out for money. They probably are fakes.

The ancient city of Jerusalem was destroyed. The Arab city now in existence on the site is filthy and crowded. Their Mosque or "Dome of the Rock" now occupies the site of the temple Solomon built.

Inside this "Dome of the Rock," which is built on Mt. Moriah, is a huge boulder surrounded by the dome. This boulder is covered and protected by glass on the circular hall around it. There is an entrance to a cave below this rock to an ancient threshing floor. There we found Muslim women bowing, kneeling, and touching their heads to the floor in their worship. On top of the rock, they claim, is the place Abraham led Isaac to sacrifice and near the place where the ram was caught in the bushes.

Near the "Dome of the Rock" is the "Gate called Beautiful" where the lame beggar was healed by Peter and John.

We drove out to see the Valley of Hinnom (Gehenna) or Hell as the King James Version of the Bible has it.

We drove to Bethlehem to the church built over the place claimed to be the stable where Christ was born. This also is a deep hole under the church, down steep stairs, through dank, dark rat runs to a cave—not a stable or anything resembling a stable or manger where Christ was born as given by Scripture. Here was an idol in a cradle. There were also numerous candles and odd lamps burning; and people were also kissing walls and floors and crossing themselves.

Adjoining this is a Greek Orthodox Church over another hole they claim is the birthplace of Christ. Here there was another idol in another cradle and other candles and other people kissing stones, floors, and walls. Our guide told us that...
Here is a picture of "HELl." The valley of Himmon, or "gehenna," translated "hell" in many versions, is viewed from outside the walls of Jerusalem. Into this valley criminals and garbage were dumped to be consumed by the fires that burned in the bottom. Worms consumed waste that fell on the ledges. The fires of this valley are again to be ignited and the wicked are to be cast into it and perish forever.

the two churches, or the Priests of the two, get into real fights some times. Each church has out its money boxes and each watches the other in jealousy.

We drove by Rachel's tomb on the way to and from Bethlehem and stopped there for a few moments. She died here at the birth of Benjamin.

When Not to Eat "Lamb"!

When we returned to our hotel, we were tired and hungry. I tried to eat. Muslims do not eat unclean meats but the "lamb" they served had been a lamb many years ago. Although I lost a lot of weight, I don't believe I'll be able to eat "lamb" again for months or maybe years. From Egypt on, everything has been "lamb." Strong, smelly, tough lamb! Everyone and every place smells of sheep, goats, and camels. I wonder if I will ever be able to get the sheepy, goaty, camelly smell out of my memory!

May 9th

The next day we went to the top of the Mt. of Olives. This was a real inspiration. This is the place where Christ spent much of His time, and the mountain from which He ascended into Heaven and on which His feet will again stand when He returns to this earth a Glorified Christ and King of Kings. We who overcome and are faithful unto the end, will be there with Him. I may never again see the Mt. of Olives in my mortal life but I expect to see it again then with Him.

We walked down into the beautiful Garden of Gethsemane among the ancient olive trees—some over two-thousand years old. We walked in the place where Christ prayed and sweated great drops of blood in His agony before He was betrayed by Judas. It is impossible to express the thoughts, the sensations, and the inspirations that one experiences here. It is so cold on paper, but to be there and experience it makes it all very real. To me the Bible is a new book now—so alive and real!

Our time in the old city of Jerusalem, under Arab control, was up. We were driven to the Mandlebaum Gate where we were to pass out of Jordan into "Israel"—the Jewish section. Yassar took us to the gate and through it to a small shed which is the Arab border customs house. Just outside are cement tank traps, tangled barbed wires, and many bombed out buildings.

From here on for 100 yards was "no man's land."

Entering Israel

No Arab was allowed to help us across to the "Israel" side; so Yassar stood on a cement tank trap waving to us as we started out on foot across this precarious ground. Mr. Armstrong and Dick were loaded down with bags. I had the two cameras, Dick's blue airplane bag, my hat-box, and hand-bag. Watched behind by the Arabs and in front by the Jews, we caught the feeling of animosity that exists between the two enemies. Soon we were faced by a sand-bagged shack on the Jewish side. We were watched thru a small window
The gorgeous altar of a Palestinian Catholic Church. The Church is dedicated to Mary, who is mistakenly called “Queen of Heaven.”

used as a place to shoot any intruder.

A Jew met us when we had finally made it across “no man’s land” and helped us into the Jewish Customs. We had to call the American Express from here and found out that our guide for this land of “Israel” had gone to Tel Aviv. We then called a taxi and went to our hotel—the “King David.”

What a change! It was like suddenly entering a new world.

All was different here. The streets are clean and wide. The children playing on the lawns are clean and healthy looking. It was such a relief to be out of the Arab country.

The hotel is beautiful and clean. The luxury of baths in clean bathrooms and eating in a clean dining room was such a wonderful feeling. The lack of good food and the little I took of it in the Arab countries caught up with me here and I spent one day sick abed.

Our tour over all “Israel” was so different from the Arab countries. There were no more Arab robes, nor diseased, crippled, and deformed people. These were more like the people of our country, yet they are not from America but from the countries of Europe, Asia and Africa.

We spent a couple of days seeing the Jewish side of Jerusalem. It is a comparatively new city, and very modern.

It probably was open field in Jesus’ day. None of the old historic Jerusalem is in Jewish hands.

After a visit to the tombs of the Sanhedrin and to the town where John the Baptist was born, we drove to Tel Aviv, over the ancient territories of Judah, Benjamin and Dan. Tel Aviv, of course, is on the Mediterranean sea-coast. From here, stopping only to check for mail, we proceeded north along the coast thru the ancient lands of Dan, Ephraim, and into Manasseh, then north-east over into the Valley of Jezreel and to Megiddo. This place is the “Armageddon” of the Bible prophecy, where the future battle of the “Great Day of God Almighty” is to be fought. In this valley more battles have been fought than any other place in the world. Once again “the blood will flow to the horses’ bridles” at this place. In the distance, across the valley, we could see Mt. Tabor.

Approaching Nazareth—the Town Where Jesus Lived as a Boy

We continued along the highway north-east to the town of Nazareth, where Jesus lived as a boy. Nazareth is located on a rather steep hill. The ancient city of Jesus’ boyhood is gone—buried underneath today’s city. The present city is now and has been for hundreds of years occupied by Arabs. The Arabs have built their city with adobe and stone.

Again we were taken to a dirty black cave over which is a Catholic church. They claim it to be the boyhood home of Jesus. There was another they called the home of Mary’s girlhood. But Jesus was a carpenter; Mary’s husband was a carpenter; and they did not live in dirt caves. Here again were fakes for money getting.

Our guide here, though an Arab, was a Catholic. He was very antagonistic after we refused to believe that Jesus

Viewing the Mount of Olives from near the tomb of Herzl, the founder of Zionism. Part of Jerusalem is in the foreground.
lived in a cave.

We were taken to a synagogue, however, that had been excavated. This was—and this time we could believe it—the very synagogue where Jesus did attend and where “He stood up to read.” (Luke 4:16). It’s a small place. It was a moving experience to be in the same room where Christ used to attend and speak on the Sabbath.

After another Arab lunch in Nazareth, we drove past Cana of Galilee where Jesus performed His first miracle.

As we neared the Sea of Galilee, we stopped and viewed it first, from a high hill. The Sea is approximately 800 feet below sea level.

As we drove over all this country between Nazareth, Cana, Capernaum, and the Sea of Galilee, it brought again to life the New Testament. Jesus walked over these hills along this way. He too viewed the blue Sea of Galilee from this high point, for it is on the way to Capernaum.

We drove along the seashore where even today the fishermen launch their boats and mend their nets. This is where Jesus called Peter and Andrew, and where they left their nets and followed Him.

We went over the hills where He fed the five-thousand, and we could view the place, across the lake, where He cast the demons out of the two demoniacs, and the swine ran down the steep embankment into the sea.

We passed through Magdala, the home of Mary the Magdalene, and then on to Capernaum. The town is gone but the synagogue has been excavated. It is in ruins now. It is a much larger place than the one in Nazareth. Here again, though, the Roman Catholics have a high iron fence around the place and expect money to be given for looking at it.

Jesus devoted a large part of His ministry in this region around the lake of Galilee, especially around the northwest portion of the lake where we were, and it was a very impressive experience to be there on the very spot.

It was growing late in the afternoon, so we drove on across the valley of Jezreel again, forking northward, arriving in Haifa in the early evening. Haifa is a very busy seaport city, located on a bay overlooked by the north tip of Mt. Carmel. We registered at our hotel and went for a walk around the city. A United States Cruiser was in port, and we saw a number of American sailors.

A Jewish Wedding

When we returned to the modern hotel for dinner, we found that hotel guests were not being admitted to the main dining room, located on the lower level below the street-level lobby. A Jewish wedding feast was in progress and the wedding guests completely filled the large main dining room. Hotel guests were being served in a smaller room on the same floor. It was filled, and we had to wait in this lower-level lobby some thirty minutes for a table. This gave us opportunity to observe a little of the Jewish wedding feast. This was most interesting, after having twice
passed by Cana of Galilee that day, where Jesus attended a Jewish wedding more than 1900 years ago, and turned the water into wine. We learned that Jewish weddings are elaborate affairs. The bride and groom came out in the lobby to have their pictures taken while we were there.

We spent the night in Haifa. Next morning we were driven all over the city, and stopped to go through a Jewish industrial fair being held there at the time. Here we saw displayed exhibits of the various products now being manufactured in the new nation “Israel.” It was an eye-opening revelation. It seemed to us that the Jews who have returned to Palestine are now manufacturing there almost every commodity and gadget that they need to be self-supporting.

We saw literally thousands of different items of modern Jewish manufacture, for home, farm, office or factory.

Then we were driven up on Mt. Carmel which overlooks the city.

We ate lunch on Mt. Carmel where Elijah lived. We drove past the place where Jezebel and King Ahab lived when she was thrown out of the window and the dogs ate her. We also saw the place of their summer palace, and the place where Elijah dared the prophets of Baal to call down fire to burn up the sacrifice, and where God, at Elijah’s prayer, sent down the fire that not only burned the sacrifice but the altar, the stones, and the dust. We were over the hills and dales where the prophets of Baal were slain.

From there we proceeded south and visited one of the Hadassa farms where Jewish children, from all countries, many of them orphans, are entered at the age of ten and schooled and trained until they are eighteen. It was a fruitful and beautiful place.

The children do all the work—care for the buildings, the chickens, the stock, and the farm. The supervisors train them to do each job well. They are so happy there that even though they sometimes leave for a visit to their homes they are always in a hurry to return.

We took pictures of this place. The overseer turned on a beautiful fountain for us and showed us the flowers. We took pictures of them in color.

Some of the boys took Mr. Armstrong and Dick to show them the stock. They are all very proud of their place and their work.

As we drove through the fertile fields, I stopped and picked some of the lovely lavender hollyhocks that grow wild everywhere along the roads.

Much of our journey from Haifa to Tel Aviv was along the Mediterranean Sea. It was such a beautiful trip.

We visited a communal farm between Haifa and Tel Aviv where families live and have everything in common. These are very productive farms, and because the land of Palestine has had its rest, it is very fertile.

These people live in large buildings and have a common dining hall, kitchen, and living room. The barns and dairy are near by, while the fields go for miles in all directions.

They drive out in the morning to cultivate the land. Each group has its certain work to do.

That American Tourist Again!

When we reached Tel Aviv we found a modern city. It was Friday afternoon when we arrived. Our hotel was a beautiful modern building on the seashore. When we entered the dining room here again was the woman whom we had seen and heard at Baalbek, Amman, and again at the King David in Jerusalem. It seemed wherever we went she was there. We did not want to start a conversation with her or rather have her try to start one with us, so we veered off to another corner of the dining room.

Our rooms here were very nice. On leaving us after taking up our bags, the boy said “Shalom.” Each time anyone greeted us this was the word they used.

We had a new experience the next day. Everything all over the city was closed. It was the Sabbath—no buses, no street-cars, not even any mail delivery to the hotel. Yet this Sabbath is not observed as a sacred day. The only synagogue we saw was a small one. All streets within two or three blocks of it each way were closed to traffic. However, the other streets were full of people out walking or on the beach swimming, surfboard riding, and playing games. It is a day used for their pleasure.

The land now called Israel is being rebuilt by Jews who are leaving God entirely out of their plans. The biggest building in all “Israel” is at Haifa and is named after the idol god Dagon. It is the tallest building in all the city and the great letters “Dagon” extend across the top of the building.

I sat on the beach at the rear of the hotel and a Jewess from New York was there with a Hadassah group. She talked to me of the wonderful things they were doing for the children and of the general upbuilding of the land. But, when I tried to talk of the part their religion had in the building of the country there was no answer. She just was not interested. God is not in the picture at all.

We had driven out to the ruins of Ashdod, a totally ruined and deserted Arab town since 1948. Thence we went to desolate Ashkelon where some of the ruins of the ancient city have been excavated and where part of the ancient wall still stands. God said that this city would be completely destroyed and it was.

We drove to Ekron where we took pictures of a group of Yemenite Jewish children. They are very dark.

After another night in Tel Aviv, we flew to Istanbul, Turkey. We had to fly over the Mediterranean Sea, the island of Cyprus—one of the world trouble-spots, Asian Turkey, over the Sea of Marmara and the Bosporus before arriving in Istanbul, which is located in European Turkey.

We stayed at the "Hilton Hotel" in Istanbul that was built by the American hotel man, Conrad Hilton.

Viewing the Black Sea Near Russia

Our first trip here was a boat ride up the Bosporus to the entrance of the Black Sea—Russian waters. We saw the submarine nets near the entrance to the Black Sea, put there by the Turks to prevent Russian submarines from coming through.

The trip was tiring because the boat was packed and we could hardly find even standing room. This was because we were there during the time of the
trouble wherever she went. At the King waiters trying to soothe her ruffled David in Jerusalem, she had several lady of Baalbek who did get in the
were not in the same hotel with the
spent so much time.

There is always a silver lining to
even up in the third arid

The German president and his ret-

That is why so many in this nation are

While we cannot promise that all ques-
tions will find space for answer in this department, we shall try to
answer all that are vital and in the general interest of our readers.

Is Money the Root of Evil?

This question has been asked fre-
quently since many heard Mr. Arm-
strong say that "money is not the root
of all evil."

Some have very quickly turned to
I Timothy 6:10 and, by careless read-
ing, assumed something this text does
not say at all. If you will turn to this
Scripture in your Bible and carefully
study it, you will see where the error is made.

To start with, notice that the text reads "For the love of money is the root
of all evil . . ." It says the "LOVE of
money," not merely money, but the
"love of money," is the root of all evil. From this you can see that a person with
no money could still commit this evil.

The poor and the rich alike can
LOVE money. Money by itself is not sin.
It is the misuse of money that is sin. Money can be used for good as well as evil.

The second point which is not gen-
erally known or understood is the ex-
pression rendered in the King James translation "the root." If an interlinear
Greek-English text is consulted, or some of the more accurate translations, you
will find the expression to be "a root." So "love of money" is merely "a root"
of all evil. This gives added meaning to
the thought. It is a root, not the only
root of evil. There are other roots of
evil beside the love of money. The cor-
correct rendering of this passage is: "For
the love of money is a root of all evils
. . ." (Panin Trans.).

Now it should be plain that money
is not the root of evil, but "the LOVE
of money is a root of evil."

Should You Pay Your Debts Before
You Start Tithing?

Some people say: "I know that it is
right to tithe, and I plan to start tithing
as soon as I can, but I think that I should
pay my debts first." What is wrong with
this question?

In the first place, to whom do you
owe the greatest debt? Why to God! If you have not been paying your tithe, you owe God ten percent of all that
you have ever earned. However, God is
quite lenient. If you start to pay your
debt to God first by tithing, He will
prosper you so you can pay off your
secondary debts to your fellow man.

Many are in debt now merely because
debts to your fellow man.

The poor and the rich alike can
LOVE money. Money by itself is not sin.
It is the misuse of money that is sin. Money can be used for good as well as evil.

The second point which is not gen-
erally known or understood is the ex-
pression rendered in the King James translation "the root." If an interlinear
Greek-English text is consulted, or some of the more accurate translations, you
will find the expression to be "a root." So "love of money" is merely "a root"
of all evil. This gives added meaning to
the thought. It is a root, not the only
root of evil. There are other roots of
evil beside the love of money. The cor-
correct rendering of this passage is: "For
the love of money is a root of all evils
. . ." (Panin Trans.).

Now it should be plain that money
is not the root of evil, but "the LOVE
of money is a root of evil."
Does the Bible Teach "Eternal Security?"

Can a person repent, be baptized and receive the Holy Spirit, and still, in the end fall away and be lost?

Christ said, "Not everyone that saith unto me, Lord, Lord, shall enter into the kingdom of heaven, but he that doeth the will of my Father which is in heaven." (Mat. 7:21). Again we read, "And because iniquity (LAWLESSNESS) shall abound, the love of many shall wax cold. But he that shall endure unto the end, the same shall be saved" (Mat. 24:12-13).

The Bible plainly teaches in many places that there is no "eternal security" for those who fall into apostasy. "For as to those who were once enlightened and tasted of the heavenly gift, and became partakers of the Holy Spirit, and tasted the good word of God, and the powers of the age to come, AND FELL AWAY, it is impossible to renew them again unto repentance" (Heb. 6:4-7, Panin Trans.).

Some do fall away. For them there is no eternal security, but a "CERTAIN fearful expectation of judgment, and a fierceness of fire which shall devour the adversaries" (Heb. 10:27). The fate of the wicked is eternal destruction in the lake of fire—the second death!

The parables clearly show that some—after hearing, understanding and accepting the Word of God—let the cares of this life and the lust of riches enter in and choke the Word after which they soon fall away. They no longer strive forward in Christian growth.

We also read in the first few chapters of Revelation that it is only the OVERCOMERS who shall be given eternal life and who shall inherit all things. Even the apostle Paul once said, "I keep under my body, and bring it unto subjection; lest that by any means, when I have preached to others, I myself SHOLD be a CASTAWAY" (I Cor. 9:27).

Yes, even the apostle Paul, the chief of the apostles, feared lest he should be a "castaway"—lest he should fall short of the mark of our high calling and not be granted eternal life in the end.

There is no eternal security for us who are yet mortal and subject to sin, BUT there is eternal security for those who overcome and are granted eternal life. After we are made immortal, we shall be permanently saved from sin, (Please continue on page 24)

Mrs. Armstrong's Diary

(Continued from page 17)

feathers and finally before we left the head waiter was called to try to calm her. We scurried out of sight of her in this hotel.

It's complaining or boasting Americans that cause people of these countries to hate us.

Our guide was a woman—a Greek Orthodox, and our driver was a man. We drove to the museums, then past the Palace and back to the hotel for lunch.

During our visit in the museums our guide was disgusted with us and frustrated at our lack of enthusiasm over the icons and Greek Orthodox religious trappings and pictures. She would exclaim, "Isn't this beautiful" over some idolatrous picture and receive no response from us. Finally, when it became so tiresome, as we went through the pagan temples, Mr. Armstrong told her what he thought of paganism and gave her a good explanation of what life is all about. She heard the Gospel for the first time in her life.

We went to the Market Place where Paul disputed with the Athenians. We also saw Mars Hill where Paul told the Greek "wise" men at the Court of Areopagus that they were too superstitious and declared to them the true God. We went up to the famous Acropolis and spent some time there.

Our stay was not long in Athens, but we were able to see all the Bible places connected with Paul's ministry.

On to Rome

As we flew over the Mediterranean, across the boot of Italy, along the coast of Italy, the Bay of Naples and then to Rome, we were contemplating staying no longer than two days; we were now one week ahead of schedule. However, when we arrived May 18th, we called the hotel in London by telephone to try to advance our reservations there five days, but found they were crowded and no space was available until Friday, May 25th; so we stayed the full week in Rome.

The city is so very interesting. We spent every day in historic places. On Thursday, May 19th, we drove to Naples along the Appian Way where Paul entered Rome after landing near or in the Bay of Naples. It was a very beautiful drive to Naples with many interesting places to see.

Here is a view of Pompeii, the city buried beneath nearly 40 feet of ash and dust in the eruption of Vesuvius in 79 A.D. The entire area has recently been excavated.
After seeing Naples, we drove to the ruined city of Pompeii. This was the most startling place we have seen. In the year 79 A.D., Pompeii was completely covered with ashes from Mt. Vesuvius. It was a city of twenty-thousand people. While thousands escaped from the city to the sea, hundreds perished in their homes and in the streets.

In the year 1860, excavations began. We walked down the narrow cobblestone streets worn by chariot wheels and saw public buildings still standing. Only the walls remained. The roofs were gone—fallen in from the weight of the ashes and cinders.

We entered the doors of many homes and saw, in some, their household gods. These were near the entrance to the homes. We saw the bodies of the victims that have been found preserved in the ash. These were in the museum. Even the expression on their faces are preserved. One dog still with the chain around his neck was twisted with his head under his body, showing the agony it suffered before it died.

There are two loaves of bread preserved and hardened. Here was bread two thousand years old. There was also the body of a woman with her arm over her face to protect it. An expression of stark fear and agony was on her face. Some of the bones of the hand and leg were showing through the encrusted body.

We walked past their pagan temples and through the city center. One has to visit the place to really understand. It was overwhelming. One feels shocked beyond expression and has a great pity for these people, even though they have been dead over eighteen hundred years. It is impossible to realize that it happened so long ago when you are there and viewing their bodies.

The Cult of Mary

We drove back to Rome. On the way we passed a funeral in one of the villages. The hearse was a highly decorated, immense, horse-drawn affair; and the whole funeral procession was more like a parade.

When we entered the suburbs of Rome, we got into a traffic jam that seemed hours before we moved. When finally we began to inch along, we found what had held up traffic. It was a life-sized idol called Mary that was on a brightly lighted truck used in a political campaign. An election was coming up and the Catholics were urging everyone to vote to defeat the Communists.

It seemed that wherever an idol called Mary was seen in Rome, many worshipers would stop and stare in worshipful awe. They will even stop city traffic.

Jupiter Transformed into Peter!

We went through St. Peter's Cathedral again, once more watching people as they pass the statue of Jupiter Olympus seated in the cathedral, and kissing its big toe. One after another they kissed the big toe, even lifting up little children. Whether diseased, dirty, or clean, all were crossing themselves and kissing the toe that was now worn to a nub from years of this procedure.

A halo has been placed over the head—or perhaps it's called a crown, and huge keys made and fastened in the hand of Jupiter. It is now called "St. Peter" with the keys to the Kingdom of God.

We went through the treasury in the church and saw millions of dollars worth of jeweled religious robes, crowns, and all sorts of things that we did not know the names of. Among them was the triple crown of the Pope. In some jeweled objects were bones, small bones, or piece of bone from some Pope or "Saint."

We went through the Vatican Museum. (Please continue on page 23)
Can a WEALTHY Person be a Christian?

Is it true that only poor people are likely to be "saved"?

WHY are some people rich—and some poor?

by Roderick C. Meredith

Abraham Lincoln is reputed once to have said: "God must love the poor because He made so many of them."

Was Lincoln right?

It is commonly assumed that—because of certain Biblical passages, and because the poorer classes as a whole seem naturally to be more religious—God must prefer the poor to the rich. In fact, many people feel that material wealth itself is "sinful," and a certain feeling of spiritual superiority often displays itself as they discuss the mistakes of their well-to-do neighbor whom they describe as "filthy rich."

Are the poor, then, more righteous than those who have material wealth? Is the possession of riches a sin in itself?

As true Christians, growing in the grace and knowledge of Christ—as overcomers, preparing for positions of responsibility in the kingdom of God—we need to ask, and find the answer, to these vital questions affecting our everyday lives.

God "Calls" the Poor

Regarding the poor, the apostle James was inspired to write: "Hearken, my beloved brethren, hath not God chosen the poor of this world [to be] rich in faith, and heirs of the kingdom which he hath promised to them that love him?" (James 2:5).

Notice James' statement that the poor are to be "rich in faith." The man with few material possessions naturally finds it easier and in fact almost necessary to develop faith in a higher power to work all things out for good. Without this faith, his brooding anxieties about the future might easily cause him to have a mental or emotional breakdown and possibly commit suicide!

On the other hand, the exact opposite is true of the wealthy man. Instead of faith, he is very likely to have what modern religio-psychologists term "self-confidence." When stripped to its basic definition, this word means confidence in self instead of in God.

This same pitfall of the rich is emphasized in Mark 10:17-31 in the account of the rich young ruler. He was given the tremendous opportunity of becoming one of Jesus' disciples—and later, possibly one of the apostles in the church of the Living God. But when he refused because of material interests, Jesus made this statement: "How hardly shall they that have riches enter into the kingdom of God" (verse 25).

When asked if the rich could be saved at all, Jesus replied, "With God all things are possible" (verse 27).

Describing the Christian calling, the apostle Paul stated: "For ye see your calling, brethren, how that not many wise men after the flesh, not many mighty, not many noble, are called: but God hath chosen the foolish things of the world to confound the wise . . . that no flesh should glory in his presence" (I Cor. 1:26-29).

God has chosen those—with a few exceptions—who are not the great, the mighty, the wealthy, the important men and women of this world. Rather, He has opened the minds and hearts of those who are less successful in this material life, who realize that they have little strength or ability, who have very little to glory of in themselves.

Because they realize their own inadequacy, these are just about the only kind of people who will now accept God's precious truth when it is offered them, who will be willing to REPENT of their ways and submit to God and His ways. By hard, cruel experience these people have come to know their great need of God and His wisdom and love.

But is the rich man a great sinner because his abilities in material things keep him from fully understanding this need for God? Is it God's will that all his people be poor?

God Promises Blessings for Obedience

In Psalms 1:1-3, God describes the righteous man who obeys His laws, and gives him this promise: "He shall be like a tree planted by the rivers of water, that bringeth forth his fruit in his season; his leaf also shall not wither; and whatsoever he doeth shall prosper" (verse 3).

God promised to ancient Israel material blessings for obedience (Deut. 7:11-15). If Israel would obey His righteous laws, God promised: "And He will love thee, and bless thee, and multiply thee: He will also bless the fruit of thy womb, and the fruit of thy land . . . Thou shalt be blessed above all people" (verses 13-14).

In reading the lives of such men of God as Noah, Abraham, Isaac, Jacob, and Joseph, you will notice that as these men served God they were granted an abundance of material possessions and wealth.

Later, when God sent his Son Jesus Christ into the world to redeem mankind, He said: "I am come that they might have life, and that they might have it more abundantly" (John 10:10). Christ came to show us the way to happy, joyful, abundant living!

Recorded as an example to us all, the apostle John was inspired to write Gaius: "Beloved, I wish above all things that thou mayest prosper and be in health, even as thy soul prospereth" (III John 2).

Prosperity, then, may often be God's
express will for a true Christian once he has learned to put the kingdom of God first in his life. But prosperity does not usually come by chance. There are definite reasons why some men prosper and others do not.

How Does Prosperity Come?

Who is the most fantastically wealthy person in the universe? Do you know? Why, God is of course!

"Whatsoever is under the whole heaven is mine," says God (Job 41:11). The silver is mine, and the gold is mine, saith the Lord of hosts" (Haggai 2:8).

But what is the reason for God's right to control all this immense wealth and power? "For all those things hath mine hand made," God might well answer (Is. 66:2).

God has worked—God has labored—He has produced, created and brought into being everything in this universe. "My Father worketh hitherto, and I work," said Jesus (John 5:17).

God is a worker—a laborer! He is busy—on the job 24 hours a day.

He does His work with zeal. "The zeal of the Lord is an expression used many times in the Bible.

And every real, Spirit-filled Christian is to be like God!

"Let this mind be in you, which was also in Christ Jesus" (Phil. 2:5). The very mind of God which we receive through the Holy Spirit is the mind of the Planner, Creator, and Builder of the universe and of the One who sustains the universe and keeps it operating continuously in perfect order and harmony.

The product of God's mind reflects diligence, perseverance, ability, knowledge, and wisdom. It reflects the mind of one who has great understanding and self-mastery.

This is the kind of mind which can work for and produce great material wealth and can then wisely use and direct that wealth.

As true Christians — overcoming "self" and growing in the grace and knowledge of Christ—we are to develop that kind of mind. And as we yield to God's Spirit within us, we should grow in knowledge and wisdom to the point where greater material reward will automatically come our way.

Prosperity, then, usually comes through the exercise of wisdom, knowledge, zeal, and perseverance in our work or profession. These are not evil qualities—to be looked down on by those who are "just poor, humble folk."

False Idea of Humility

We should take time right here to explain the false concept some people have which actually causes them to be proud of their poverty. Many such people notice that very few of the rich are called to spiritual truth—whereas more of the very poor are. They also see and hear of a few examples of men who became wealthy through dishonesty and greed.

These poor people automatically assume, then, that all wealth is "tainted"—and is probably the result of sinful acts and thoughts. This idea produces in them a feeling of spiritual superiority, or—in plain language—spiritual pride and vanity.

Being blinded to the real nature of this feeling—as most of us are to our own sins—they fail to see this vanity in themselves. More often than not, they come to regard their lack of material goods as being synonymous with humility. Thus they often speak of themselves as "just poor, humble folk."

Such an attitude is not humility, but vanity—which God condemns. And such people would do well to repent and be really humble, and meek, and teachable. Then they might learn through God's Spirit how to exercise the good qualities of diligence, perseverance, dependability, and wisdom which those who have material goods have had to employ—even though they have sometimes misdirected their qualities and abilities because they lacked God's Spirit to guide them.

The right use of material wealth—and of the qualities which help produce it—is not wrong. Remember, God is no pauper!

On the contrary, the right use of wealth is fulfilling part of the very purpose for which we were placed on this earth. It is helping us to grow in right mental direction and character to become like God—like Christ, worthy of being born of the Spirit into the Supreme, Divine, world-ruling kingdom and family of God!

Jesus Christ said: "Be ye therefore perfect, even as your Father which is in heaven is perfect" (Mat. 5:48).

Develop Right Qualities

In the book of Proverbs, God warns us against the habits that would tend to produce poverty. He shows that an upright and diligent man will have a reasonable amount of material wealth.

Proverbs 6:6-11 gives us the example of saving ahead for a rainy day—and warns us against laziness: "How long wilt thou sleep, O sluggard?" (verse 9).

God continues: "He becometh poor that dealeth with a slack hand; but the hand of the diligent maketh rich" (Pro. 10:4). "The hand of the diligent shall bear rule . . . The righteous is more abundant than his neighbors . . . The substance of a diligent man is precious" (Pro. 12:24, 26-27).

Notice how often Solomon was inspired to use the word "diligent" in describing a man who would be successful. This thought is repeated in Proverbs 13:4: "The soul of the sluggard desireth, and hath nothing; but the soul of the diligent shall be made fat."

We are further instructed on how to do our work in Ecclesiastes 9:10: "Whatsoever thy hand findeth to do, do it with thy might."

Even the New Testament abounds with instruction on doing our work with zeal. Notice Colossians 3:22-24: "Servants [for laboring men], obey in all things your masters according to the flesh; not with eyeservice, as men-pleasers; but in singleness of heart, fearing God. And whatsoever ye do, do it heartily, as to the Lord, and not unto men. Then Paul continues to show that we are bound to be rewarded by God for our efforts—and we are to look to Him for our reward: "Knowing that of the Lord ye shall receive the reward of the inheritance: for ye serve the Lord Christ" (verse 24).

In this age of strife and jealousy between labor and capital—when the prevailing attitude is to "get as much as you can and give as little as you can"—
how many men really do their work with zeal, with wisdom, with diligence, and with all their might?

The Eternal God in His Word instructs us to do our work in this manner. If we yield to Him and develop these qualities within ourselves, He promises us material blessings here and now—and spiritual, everlasting blessings as well.

As the apostle John wrote: "I wish above all things that thou mayest prosper and be in health." God has shown us the way to achieve that prosperity.

Why Desire Material Gain?

But many will ask, "Why should Christians want material wealth? As long as we have food, shelter, and clothing, we should desire nothing more except the spiritual gifts of God, shouldn't we?"

The answer to this question is both "yes" and "no." Certainly Paul was inspired to write Timothy: "And having food and raiment let us be therewith content. But they that will be rich fall into temptation and a snare" (1 Tim. 6:8-9). Then he continued: "For the love of money is the root of all evils" (verse 10, as correctly translated by Panin and others). The excessive love of money is often the cause of nearly every conceivable evil—of war, murder, robbery, kidnapping, adultery, lying and so on.

But Paul also wrote: "I know both how to abase, and I know how to abound: everywhere and in all things I am instructed both to be full and to be hungry, both to abound and to suffer need. I can do all things through Christ which strengtheneth me" (Philip 4:12-13).

In other words, there are times when a true child of God may have to give up his job, or flee persecution, or for some reason have to forsake his worldly possessions and rely on God for His promise of food and raiment—and perhaps not have much else for a time.

But there are many other times—under more normal circumstances—when a real Christian may best serve God by having a modest amount of material wealth, and by using it to be a good neighbor, to help those in need, and to give generously to the work of God.

Money is power. It can be a power for good—or for evil. In the hands of God—or in His work—it is a tremendous power for good, resulting in thousands of people being really converted as begotten children of God. But when used for a selfish or greedy purpose, it can be a great power for evil—often resulting in the spiritual wreckage of its owner.

What Our Goal Should Be

As real Christians—with the true understanding of God's great purpose in our lives—our objective in this matter should be two-fold. First, we should develop and exercise the qualities of diligence, dependability, and wisdom in our work because this is in itself a part of our Christian growth and character development—because these qualities will make us more like God, and more worthy of a position of great responsibility in His kingdom.

Second, we should apply these qualities in our jobs because we want to rightly employ the material wealth which they will bring us in compensation. We should want to serve and help others, and realizing the tremendous mission of God's church is to preach His true message as a witness to every nation under heaven—we should earnestly desire the opportunity and ability to pay God larger amounts in tithes, and to give more generously in free-will offerings.

Jesus said: "Lay up for yourselves treasures in heaven . . . For where your treasure is, there will your heart be also" (Mat. 6:20-21).

In II Cor. 9:7-8, the apostle Paul exhorted the Corinthians to give bountifully. He wrote: "For God loveth a CHEERFUL giver. And God is able to make all grace abound toward you: that ye, always having all sufficiency in all things, may abound to every good work." In other words, if your motive in getting material wealth is to give, then God will cause you to ABOUND so that you might better serve in this manner. Of course, you have your part in this by working hard, and by asking God for wisdom and guidance.

Remember, most of you who read this have NOT been blessed with even an average amount of material wealth. This is because God is—as a whole—calling those of more humble circumstances at this present time.

But once we have come to God in repentance and humility, realizing our own weakness—then we should with a right motive begin to develop those traits of character that automatically make us more of a leader, more zealous, more dependable.

Asking God for guidance, serving Him in all things with our might, we shall then be blessed in material as well as spiritual things—and thus be able to play an even bigger part in His work through paying tithes and giving generous offerings.

Even our faithfulness in obeying God's tithing law brings a promise of further blessings and prosperity! For God has said: "Bring ye all the tithes into the storehouse, that there may be meat in mine house, and prove me now herewith, saith the Lord of hosts, if I will not open you the windows of heaven, and pour you out a blessing, that there shall not be room enough to receive it" (Mal. 3:10).

Let us learn to grow, to work, to give—that we may be worthy of the immeasurable blessings our gracious God and Father wishes to bestow upon us.

Never forget, however, that even a justly earned prosperity may be stripped away from us if this prosperity causes us to forsake God, or if in His perfect wisdom He chooses to punish us in this way for any reason. So whether in times of prosperity, or in times of persecution and want through which all righteous Christians must go, remember Jesus' command: "Seek ye first the kingdom of God and His righteousness; and all these things [our material needs] shall be added unto you" (Mat. 6:33).

My Answer to an Atheist

(Continued from page 10)
Here are two striking views of ancient Pompeii. For nearly two thousand years the street below and the public baths to the right have been preserved beneath volcanic ash. You see here a glimpse of the past grandeur of the Roman Empire.

Mrs. Armstrong's Diary

(Continued from page 19)

Our long, long trip over Egypt, Iraq, Syria, Lebanon, Jordan, Israel, Turkey, Greece, and Italy was over. The English seemed like home folks. London looked so good.

Here we finally had letters from home, and at last good clean food and comfortable beds, and, of course, George Meeker and Frank Longuskie.

WHY THE PLAIN TRUTH HAS NO SUBSCRIPTION PRICE

So many ask: "How can you publish a magazine, without subscription price, and without advertising?"

The answer is simple. The GOSPEL must go to the whole world, and it must go FREE. It must not be sold like merchandise. "Freely ye have received," Jesus said to His disciples whom He was sending to proclaim the Gospel. "Freely GIVE." Without money and without price, is God's way. We proclaim a FREE salvation. Therefore, we cannot put a PRICE upon the PLAIN TRUTH.

We have been called of God to conduct this work. It is not our work, but God's. We have set out to conduct God's work God's way. We rely, in FAITH, upon God's promises to supply every need.

God's way is the way of LOVE—and that is the way of giving, not getting. God expects every true child of His to GIVE of His tithes and offerings that His work may go FREE—that His true ministers may GIVE the precious Gospel to others. We simply TRUST GOD to lay it on the minds and hearts of His people to give of their tithes and offerings that we may be enabled to GIVE the good things of God's Word to the hundreds of thousands who hear the Message over the air, and the scores of thousands who read The PLAIN TRUTH.

Many times our faith has been severely tried, but God has never failed us. We must not fail HIM!
had just passed age 30 when God forced me into this study of His Word, and total surrender to Him and His rule over my life.

From then on, I studied the Bible ON MY KNEES. Time after time it corrected me. Repeatedly I had to suffer reproof, and acknowledge I had been wrong in my beliefs and desires. God chastened and corrected me, not only thru revealing His Truth in this way, but by continual circumstances.

I had been conceited, proud. But now by bitter experience, by suffering, by circumstance, and by God's Word, I was brought low and humbled. But also I began to experience the unmatched joy of learning truth NEW to me, as God little by little, yet more and more, revealed TRUTHS so wonderful they produced spiritual ecstasy. For the first time in my life I found what HAPPINESS really is!

God launched me in His work, and after my first evangelistic effort in a church in Harrisburg, Oregon, I experienced the greatest thrill of my life so far, upon realizing a few precious lives had been brought to repentance, to surrender to God, to FAITH in Jesus Christ—CONVERTED—CHANGED! Truly it is more blessed to give than to receive!

That process of being corrected, of GROWING in grace and the KNOWLEDGE of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ, has continued, now, lo these 30 years—more than a quarter century. And it is still continuing! God grant it shall forever!

No, MEN did not teach me what I preach to you. I was not taught of men, but of GOD! I do not speak to you by authority of men, or any politically organized church of men—but in the name, and by the AUTHORITY of JESUS CHRIST, the living HEAD of the true CHURCH OF GOD!

These words of Christ, which He received from the Father—the very words and Gospel of CHRIST which I speak and write to you—they are SPIRIT, and they are LIFE!

---

Short Questions

(Continued from page 18)

saved from death—secure for all eternity. At that time—after the resurrection—we can correctly say, "once saved always saved."

Should Christians Swear By an Oath?

The teaching of Jesus and of the early inspired true New Testament Church was not to swear under any circumstances. The Scriptures are very plain on this point: "But above all things, by brethren, SWEAR NOT . . . but let your yes be yes; and your no be no; lest ye fall into condemnation" (James 5:12).

Jesus Himself personally instructed: "I say unto you, Swear not at all; neither by the heaven, for it is God's Throne; neither by the earth, for it is the footstool of His feet; nor toward Jerusalem, for it is the great King's city. Neither shalt thou swear by thy hear, for thou canst not make one hair white or black. But let your word be, "Yes, yes; No, No:" " and whatsoever is more than these is of the evil one'—or of sin. " (Mat. 5:33-37).

Here Jesus warns against swearing because we cannot perform the oath and we would be taking the name of God in vain!

Not only is it wrong to lie under oath, but we as mortal human beings are so prone to mistaken judgment or lack of knowledge that any error we would make under oath would be to take the name of God in vain. It is sin!

We are merely to say, "Yes," or "No," to the best of our understanding. Then we are not guilty of using God's name in vain. It is the law of the United States to permit affirmation—that is, say yes or no—without raising the hand to swear.

If men are not to swear by an oath, how are we to account for the fact that God swears by Himself? (Hebrews 6:13-17; Psalm 110:4; Luke 1:73.) In Isaiah 45:23, God has sworn that every knee shall yet bow to Him.

The answer is simple. The right to take an oath belongs to God. God alone has infallible judgment. When we are made immortal members of the God family, prophecy proves that we shall swear by God because we shall be God—members of the God family. Then we shall have the power to perform our oaths. This we cannot do now.

Jesus, while in the flesh, did not swear, setting us an example. Men in Old Testament times did swear, but it was not revealed to them that God alone can rightly exercise such a duty. It remained for Christ to make the law honorable and magnify it (Isaiah 42:21). People are held accountable according to the knowledge possessed. We now know from the very words of Jesus that it is wrong for mortal men to swear by an oath at any time. Taking an oath is a divine prerogative.