

the
PLAIN TRUTH
a magazine of understanding

VOL. XXII, NUMBER 3

MARCH, 1957



—Wide World Photo

THE CEDARS OF LEBANON

Sunlight and shadow and the famed snow-covered Cedars of Lebanon transform the mountain slopes into a winter paradise—a foretaste of the promised Millennium of peace and happiness.

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VOL. XXII

NO. 3

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By the Radio Church of God



—Wide World Photo

Working on the banana plantation at Ramath Yohanan, a settlement near Haifa, Palestine. If the Jews, who have forgotten God, can cultivate bananas in once arid Palestine, how much MORE will God prosper them when they are converted during the Millennium?

NOTICE: Be sure to notify us immediately of any change in your address. IMPORTANT!



—Wide World Photo

A tractor helps prepare ground for future vegetable gardens at En-Gedi, a historical oasis by the Dead Sea (mentioned in Ezekiel 47:10). These Jewish settlers are trying to make the land bloom as a rose.

What Is MAN?

**How can you PROVE what happens to man at death?
Does man inherently have eternal life abiding in him?**

by Herbert W. Armstrong

MAN KNOWS what other things are—the things around him, *but he knows very little about himself.*

Almost nobody knows what man is. Man devotes himself, it seems, to learning about almost everything *except himself.* And so, we find this world today steeped in various and contradicting beliefs derived from fallible human reasoning.

The Common Assumption

The ancient pagans taught, and it has continued to be taught for many, many centuries, that man is a spiritual being—that he really is an immortal soul which is composed of spirit—and that this immortal soul is housed in what you might call a house of flesh—that the human body is merely the house we dwell in, or the cloak we put around us temporarily—and that the real you is not the body, but an immortal, invisible soul, and yet a soul that knows, that thinks, that hears, that sees, and that will live on consciously forever.

Then, the theory is, that at death, you leave the body, you go to a heaven, or a hell, or a purgatory, or a "happy hunting ground" of some kind. Others teach that the body merely goes to the grave. Many others believe in some phase of the doctrine of the transmigration of souls, that you, yourself, after death will become, perhaps, a butterfly, a mosquito, a fly, or a dog, or something perhaps in the plant kingdom.

There is no authority for any of these beliefs. *Nobody has ever provably come back from such a place or such a condition to tell us about it.*

Unless there is a Supreme God Who is the Creator, Who created us all, and unless such a divine, supreme, superior intelligence Who is the Creator exists, and unless such a personal, divine Being has revealed His knowledge to us, *then there is no way whatsoever that man can know.*

You will find that one religion be-

lieves one thing, another believes something altogether different. Even in this Western world of professing Christianity, one denomination believes one thing, and another sect believes something entirely and altogether different.

And since these various religions are combinations of various beliefs put together, each in a different way, CAN ANY OF THEM BE RIGHT?

Unless there be such a God, and unless there is some divine Revelation from that God revealing the truth in all of its purity, THEN YOU HAVE NO BASIS WHATSOEVER FOR ANY KNOWLEDGE OR BELIEF AS TO WHAT YOU REALLY ARE.

There Is a God Who Reveals What Man Is

I have proved to you in previous articles that there is such a God, the supreme Intelligence. I have proved to you that the religious writings of Christianity, the inspired Holy Bible, is that divine revelation from God.

Unless God is speaking through that Book, and reveals what is the truth, you have no basis for knowing what you are, or for that matter, what the laws of life are, and what makes for happiness or discontent, fear, and worry. No other book, none of the other religious writings, the Sacred Writings, or the Scriptures of any other religion quote any such God who is able to foretell all of the future, to pronounce sentence on nations, on cities, on great states, and even whole empires, and to bring it to pass. No other God is able to foretell their future for thousands of years and to bring it about so that it occurs. No other religious writing shows a God with such power, with such authority, Who has demonstrated by actual history the power and the authority that He wields.

The infallible authority of the Bible stands absolutely proved. If you have not read my booklets about this subject, I want you to write in for the proof,

because I have it now in printed form, "Does God Exist?" Can you prove that the Holy Bible is the inspired revelation of the Creator God Who created not only matter, but all force and all energy, yes, and even all life, and all the physical laws of nature that exist, and Who sits at the controls, Who sustains and upholds the universe by His very power, and Who DOES DETERMINE the outcome of all struggles with nations, with empires, and with the whole world, because He created it all. God rules all. He is the Most High, the Supreme Ruler. The world seems to have forgotten that, until God is not real to this world anymore.

Unless you can believe what is in the Holy Bible, then you have no source of belief whatsoever. It's the Bible, then—OR NOTHING.

The Bible does *not* reveal the ideas that men have come to in various religions. The Bible does *not* reveal any such thing as an immortal soul in a house or in a body of flesh, though I know many men have tried to read such a meaning into the Bible.

What is the truth?

Science Reveals Only Part of the Secret

Consider the proofs of science, whatever they may be in this regard, and then secondly, the truth of the Scripture.

Now science deals with the material universe, with only matter—material substance. Science knows of no life apart from matter. No scientific authority believes that life in plants or animals is a separate entity which may exist apart from, or outside of the matter of a flower, or of a plant, or an animal. Science has demonstrated that all living substance, or matter, arises only from other substance already living. The Law of Biogenesis proves that life comes only from life. When life ceases, it is dead matter. Nothing is more certainly proved by science than

the utter impossibility of the appearance of life in a resurrection through any powers inherent within itself.

There is the reproductive process, reproduction in plants, and reproduction in animals and humans. But there is no way to extend the life of that particular individual, and nothing inherent within the individual that can bring life back to it after death, or any resurrection of life in any manner whatsoever, that is inherent within the plant, the animal, or the human being.

All living matter, then, is mortal matter, with a temporary existence. Flesh is matter, and man is flesh.

What about this doctrine, then, of the immortality of the soul? Science has never found any such soul within any man.

THERE IS NO WAY THAT SCIENCE CAN OBSERVE ANY SUCH THING. There are no scientific evidences whatsoever of any such thing as an immortal soul that leaves the body at death, and that departs with all the store of knowledge that has been accumulated in the lifetime, a soul that can think, can see, can hear, taste, smell, and reason, or talk apart from the human body. There is absolutely no evidence of it whatever in the realm of science.

So now, let's see what the Bible actually says.

If we can believe, then, what the Holy Scripture reveals, we may have a basis of knowing. If you can't, you have no basis whatsoever for knowledge of this most important of all subjects.

What the Bible Reveals

In the Bible, Jesus Christ, the very Son of the Living God, is quoted as saying under inspiration in John 3:6, "That which is born of the flesh is flesh." That's what it is. "And that which is born of the Spirit is spirit." He said that man is born of flesh. That's what man is. And then again, "Except a man be born" of the Holy Spirit of God, "he cannot enter into the kingdom of God."

Jesus Christ taught that man can enter into the very family, the very Kingdom of God, **BUT HE MUST BE BORN OVER AGAIN.** He has been born once, and he is flesh. He must be born again, as a spirit being—this time, born of God. Then he shall become spirit.

That's what Jesus Christ was saying in John 3:6-8. Man is flesh, not spirit. Man is *not* a spiritual entity, but flesh, pure and simple.

In Genesis 3:19 God said to Adam, "For dust thou art." He said this *to the man.* He said, "In the sweat of thy face shalt thou eat bread, till THOU return unto the ground; for out of it wast THOU taken"—not just the man's body. He said, "For dust THOU art, and unto dust shalt thou return," and the THOU was the conscious man to whom He was speaking.

He didn't say "your body," He said, "THOU."

Man Is a Soul

In Genesis 2:7, we read this: "And the Eternal God formed *man* of the dust of the ground." Now man was formed, but of what substance? Out of what was he made? Man was formed "of the dust of the ground," *not* out of spirit. Next, God "breathed into his nostrils the breath of life"—air that goes in and out of the nostrils—and "man became a living soul." It does not say that God put inside of him an immortal soul. God put the breath of life into him, that is, air, or wind, and *man became a mortal soul.* So man *is* a soul, not that he *has* a soul. **HE IS A SOUL.**

In the 146th Psalm, verses 3 and 4, notice: "Put not your trust in princes, nor in the son of man, in whom there is no help. His breath goeth forth, **HE returneth to his earth.**" It doesn't say "his body." *He*, it is *he*, that returns to his earth; "in that very day his thoughts perish." He doesn't think anymore. In that same day he quits thinking. His thoughts perish. *He* goes to the earth. His breath goes forth.

What God gave at creation is the breath. God breathed into his nostrils the breath of life. Then the breath leaves him at death. *He*, not just the body, but *he* returns to dust. Dust *he* is, to dust *he* returns.

That's the teaching of your Bible! That's the teaching of the very Book that is proved to be the Word of the God who is proved to exist!

Now turn to the 104th Psalm, the 29th verse: "Thou hidest thy face, they are troubled: thou takest away their breath, they die, and return to their

dust." The breath, is what God gave. The breath goes forth at death. God takes away the breath. *He*, the person, dies. *He* returns to the dust, and simply becomes dust again.

Next turn to the book of Ecclesiastes, chapter 3, the 19th on to the 21st verses: "For that which befalleth the sons of men," — human beings — "befalleth beasts." God is speaking here of men and animals. "Even one thing befalleth them: as the one dieth, so dieth the other; yea, they have all one breath." The same breath in the nostrils of animals is in the nostrils of every human being.

Continuing, "So that a man hath no preeminence above a beast: for all is vanity. *All go unto one place;*"—that's both man and beast—"all are of the dust, and all turn to the dust again." And that's man and animal alike.

The Bible continues with a question: "Who knoweth that the spirit of man," —here the English word "spirit" is from the same Hebrew word that has been translated "breath" "air" or "wind," in the other passages already mentioned.

To continue with the question, "Who knoweth [whether] the spirit of man," that is, the breath of man, "goeth upward, and the spirit of the beast," or the breath of the beast, "goeth downward to the earth?"

Well, does anyone know of it? It's a question. Who knows it? The answer is, "Nobody does."

What Returns to God?

Now we come to the passage in the Bible that nearly everybody uses in the Christian world. Ecclesiastes 12:7: "Then shall the dust return to the earth as it was"—that's not just the body, that's the *whole* man as we have seen. "And," it continues, "the spirit shall return unto God who gave it." People take this word "spirit" to mean here an immortal soul. But the word inspired in the original Hebrew language is exactly the same word that is used elsewhere as the "breath" that is breathed into the nostrils of animals, as well as men. It is air or wind. It's the same precise word in the Hebrew language, that is the "breath" of animals. The breath of man and animals returns to the power of the God who gave it.

In the Genesis record, and just before the flood, the same word is used again [Genesis 7, verses 21 and 22]: "And all flesh died that moved upon the earth, both of fowl, and of cattle, and of beast, and of every creeping thing that creepeth upon the earth, and every man." Notice, animals and men are put together, "All in whose nostrils was the breath of life." The same word is used here for "breath" that is translated "spirit" in Ecclesiastes 12. "Of all that was in the dry land, died." They all had the same breath. That's what God gave when they were born. They all die *when the breath leaves them*. There it is!

The Bible absolutely refutes the idea of the immortality of the soul. What God gave at birth is the breath. He breathed into the nostrils of animals and of man alike—breath. The breath leaves them, they die. They return to dust.

What Is the LIFE of Man?

The spirit of mortal man here is his breath. And what is the function of the breath?

First, the breath goes into your lungs. The blood flows through the lungs on the way back to the heart as it is pumped through the veins, and the arteries, and the body. And the breath, the air, the oxygen in the air oxidizes the blood. That creates a burning, an energy that keeps up the body heat that gives you energy, that produces life. **THE LIFE IS IN THE BLOOD, AND THE BLOOD NEEDS THE BREATH OF LIFE TO KEEP IT ACTIVE AND ALIVE.** The life, however, is in the blood.

In the 9th chapter of Genesis, the 4th verse, you read this, "But flesh with the life thereof, *which is the blood thereof*, shall ye not eat." This verse explains that we are not to eat blood. It condemns our eating the blood of animals.

Now man is flesh and blood. He is flesh that has life by blood. His life is in the blood, oxidized by the breath of life, not by an immortal soul.

How to Gain Immortality

We find in I Corinthians 15:50: "Now this I say . . . that flesh and blood," that's a mortal man, "cannot inherit the kingdom of God." Jesus

Christ talked about the Kingdom of God and being born again, born into that Kingdom. He said in effect, "You can't enter that Kingdom as long as you are mortal flesh." And here, flesh and blood—that's what we are—cannot inherit the Kingdom of God. No, we can only be an heir to eternal life now in this life. "Neither doth corruption inherit incorruption. Behold, I shew you a mystery; we shall not all sleep, but we shall all be changed, in a moment, in the twinkling of an eye, at the last trump: for the trumpet shall sound, and the dead shall be raised incorruptible, and we shall be changed." Paul is speaking here of a resurrection from the dead, and an instantaneous changing of those who are alive at that time. "For this corruptible must put on incorruption, and this mortal must put on immortality."

You don't have immortality now. That is the teaching of the Bible from Genesis to Revelation! That is why we must be born again!

There is a future life. But that life lies *in a resurrection*, not in an immortal soul. *It lies in A NEW BIRTH as an immortal spirit being in the very family of God.*

Thank God, the life after death that is offered to man is not to become some dumb animal, a fly or a mosquito, by transmigration, or anything of that sort!

God Almighty offers man His glorious grace to elevate man high above all animals, even above the angel kingdom, into the very Kingdom of God, the very creative Kingdom above all. That is the opportunity that God Almighty offers to everyone of you.

It is not a reforming of some immortal soul that the great Creator God offers to you or to me. *It is a new birth* onto a far higher plane, being born of the Spirit Who is God, born of God, a very child of God, born into the Family of God, the Kingdom of God. Oh, how incomparably more wonderful is that than the false ideas of man's reasoning.

Who Has Immortality?

And yet, many twist all of these Bible passages about death to apply to the body, clinging to their idea of an immortal soul which is nothing but a fallacy. There are no such words in

the Bible as an "immortal soul." The word *immortal* occurs ONLY ONCE in all the Bible. That's in I Timothy 1:17. There it refers to Christ as the King who is made immortal, who *now* is immortal, and very God, made immortal God by a resurrection from the dead as you read in Romans.

The word *immortality* in the English language occurs five times in the Bible. *First*, God only has it, not man. That's in I Timothy 6:16. *Second*, Christ brought it to light through the gospel, so that man can have it, *and put it on in a resurrection*. That's II Timothy 1:10.

We are also told that we must seek for it. You don't seek for what you already have. It's something we don't have. It's THE GIFT OF GOD, Romans 2:7.

The 4th and 5th places are in I Corinthians 15:50-54. The righteous, those who have salvation, are changed from mortal to immortal. They come under God's grace, put immortality on at the resurrection—*by the resurrection from the dead*—and not before.

Did Adam Have Immortality?

Was man created immortal in the very beginning?

Notice Genesis 3:22. This is the story of the very first man and woman that God created.

It says, "And the Eternal God said, 'Behold, the man is become as one of us, to know good and evil,'"—that's after the man had disobeyed God. God is the Supreme Ruler. God put this first man and his wife, the woman He made for him, in a beautiful garden in Eden.

And God spoke to the man, and He "commanded the man, saying, 'Of every tree of the garden thou mayest freely eat: but of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil, thou shalt not eat of it.'" God didn't give that to the man. That belonged to Him. "For in the day that thou eatest thereof thou shalt surely die."

The man was mortal, or he would not have been able to die. Yet God said "*You will die.*" The man was *created mortal*.

Along came a devil in the guise of a serpent. He beguiled the woman into reaching out and taking the forbidden

(Please continue on next page)

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 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!

(Continued from page 9)

fruit by lust and vanity, and stealing what was not hers, having another god before the true God. This amounted to rebellion, disobedience, dishonoring her only parent. She gave it to her husband, and he did eat, willingly and knowingly.

Now God said, "... Man is become as one of us, to know good and evil: and now, lest he put forth his hand, and take also of the tree of life," that is immortal life, lest he gain eternal life, "and eat, and live for ever,"—lest he live forever—"therefore the Eternal God sent him forth from the garden of Eden to till the ground from whence he was taken." So he drove out the man from all access to immortality, "and he placed at the east of the garden of Eden cherubim, and a flaming sword which turned every way, to keep the way of the tree of life." Why? *Lest he go back and gain eternal life.*

You see very plainly man had no immortality. The man did not have immortality at all. Adam had no "immortal soul" either!

No Immortal Soul!

The Hebrew word for *soul* is *nephesb*. In Genesis, three times it applies to fish, fowl, and creeping things *before it is used to apply to man*. In other words, *animals*, then, *are souls*, the same as men. *They are not immortal*. That means the soul is not immortal.

Notice what the Bible says in Ezekiel 18:4, "Behold, all souls are mine; as the soul of the father, so also the soul of the son is mine: *the soul that sin-*

neth, it shall die." The soul that sins—or disobeys the laws that God Almighty gave in His great love for us—the soul that does that shall die! So *a soul is mortal*. It is also mentioned in the 20th verse. Twice your Bible says the soul is mortal! *It shall die!*

No part of man is immortal, according to the Holy Bible. That is proved to be the very Word of God by I John 3:15, "Whosoever hateth his brother is a murderer." Now in time of war, there are millions upon millions of soldiers who hate their enemy brothers across the lines, and most of the people back home supporting them learn to do the same thing. Thus most of the people on earth come to hate their brothers, "And you know that *no murderer hath eternal life abiding in him.*" That's almost everybody on earth.

Now a man that just hates his brother is certainly flesh and blood, and it says that he does not have eternal life. No such person has eternal life abiding in him. If he had an immortal soul in him, he would have eternal life abiding in him, but he has no such thing abiding in him any where.

That is why God said: "In the day that you eat thereof you shall surely die." God meant that the man was mortal. Man has merely a temporary existence, and *no hope of future life inherent within himself*. God gives him that hope as His gift, but man does not possess it apart from God.

Flesh is mortal. Flesh is matter. Spirit, however, is immortal. In II Corinthians 4:18 you read that the invisible things that are spiritual are eternal, but man is mortal. The only hope of ever having eternal life and living past this life is thru a new birth, from new life that can be imparted to us from God. That is not imparted at our natural birth, but is imparted during and thruout our lifetime if we have repented, believed, and been baptized. It comes fully *at a resurrection*, and by a resurrection from the dead. And it's God's great gift—a new life from God, a birth, not of human parents, nor from human parents, but from God, Who only has immortality to give.

This is the greatest hope of all life. It is the greatest fact in life. There is no salvation, there is no hope, there is no eternal life unless or until you re-

ceive the begettal of the Holy Spirit of and from God as His gift. But there are terms and conditions.

God Sets the Conditions

In Romans 8:9-11 we read: "Ye are not in the flesh, but in the Spirit, if so be that the Spirit of God dwell in you. Now if any man have not the Spirit of Christ, he is none of his." He's not a Christian. "But if the Spirit of Him that raised up Jesus from the dead dwell in you, He that raised up Christ from the dead shall also quicken"—that means make immortal—"your mortal bodies by His Spirit that dwelleth in you."

Christ brought this colossal message from God. He said in effect, "Repent of disobedience to God's rule, and God's laws." He said, "Believe in Jesus Christ. Believe the message that He brought about the Kingdom of God, and how we may be born into it, and about God's rule and government. Then you shall receive this very gift of the Holy Spirit which is immortal life inherent, or the presence of it within you—the very life, the very nature, the very character of God, the very love of God in your heart."

If you then overcome through a life of overcoming and growing in grace and knowledge of God, you shall be made immortal at the second coming of Christ, by a resurrection from the dead, or, if you are living, and if you exist at that time—as most of you probably will because we are coming right now to that time—you shall be changed to immortal spirit and live forever.

* * * *

Be sure that cannot be right that a man is the worse for having.

—WILLIAM PENN

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.
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