

the
PLAIN TRUTH
a magazine of understanding

**IS OUR
ENVIRONMENT
DRIVING US
"BANANAS"?**

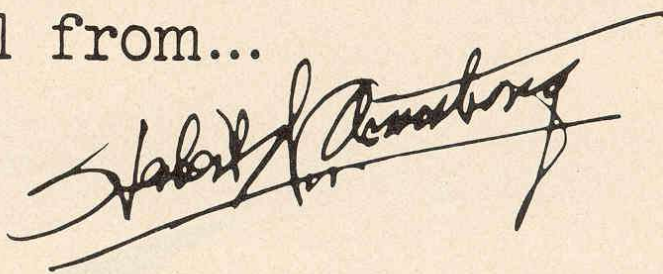
THE ORIGIN OF ASTROLOGY

"MY RESPONSIBILITY AS AN AMERICAN"

25 YEARS TO DOUBLE FOOD PRODUCTION

Here I give you a glimpse into a private "Bible study" I had one day with our little traveling group. It happened to get into a very profound question that has puzzled scholars and theologians, as well as millions of people, for many centuries. Yet the answer is plain and simple, but of staggering importance to humanity.

Personal from...



Today, I find myself back in the same hotel room in Rome where I had an invigorating "Bible study" with my little traveling group several weeks ago. We remember things by association. This room brought that particular study lesson back to mind.

I had selected by chance two separate chapters in the Bible of which I was very fond. And it so happened that they were the very two chapters that mentioned this very disputed and almost NEVER UNDERSTOOD subject of "predestination." But now I want to devote this "Personal" to making clear the true meaning of that perplexing question.

DOES this disputed biblical teaching say that we are PREJUDGED before we are even born? Are humans judged guilty or innocent BEFORE they act?

Most novels, movies, or TV series are built around the "good guys" and the "bad guys." The hero and heroine always appear wholesome, honest, sincere, and upright. But the villain or the sinister seducing female can be quickly identified by their evil expression, manner, and attitude. But are all humans PREJUDGED by an angry God, even before birth, to become one of these "good guys" or "bad guys."

I had chosen on that day in this same hotel room to go through and expound two favorite chapters — Romans 8 and Ephesians 1. I chose Romans 8 because it is the "holy spirit" chapter, the chapter on the incredible destiny of man. That is the subject about which I have written a series of articles appearing for over a year in *The Plain Truth*. I chose Ephesians 1 because, in the Moffatt translation, I have felt for

THE TRUE MEANING OF PREDESTINATION

many years that it is one of the most beautiful, uplifting, and inspiring pieces of literature I have ever read.

When I sat down to my typewriter to begin writing this "Personal," I did not have in my briefcase with me a copy of the Moffatt translation. But I did have a copy of this translation in the bookcase above my desk in my G-II jet aircraft. So I telephoned our plane's steward in his hotel room and asked him to make a quick, special trip to the airport and bring me the book. He arrived with it before I had written this far, although I took out time for lunch.

Listen to this beautiful bit of literature: "Paul, by the will of God an apostle of Jesus Christ, to the saints who are faithful in Jesus Christ: grace and peace to you from God our Father and the Lord Jesus Christ. Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ who in Christ has blessed us with every spiritual blessing within the heavenly sphere!" (Eph. 1:1-3, Moffatt.)

It is important to note carefully to whom the apostle is speaking. He includes himself with those addressed — the saints who are faithful in Jesus Christ. He is *not* speaking of EVERYBODY.

Continue: "He chose us in him ere the world was founded..."

(verse 4). God did the choosing. Jesus said to His disciples that they had not chosen Him but that *He* had chosen them! But *whom* did God choose? Not the world, not everybody — ONLY those addressed with Paul and the "saints who are faithful."

When were they chosen? "Ere the world was founded" — before they were born. But WHY? To be PREJUDGED and sentenced to an eternity of being burned alive — yet never burning up — in the "hell fire" that some people teach? NEVER! Then WHY were they chosen?

Continue on: "...to be consecrated and unblemished in his sight, destining us in love to be his sons through Jesus Christ" (vs. 4-5).

The King James Version has: "having predestinated us." In the KJV the word "adoption" is *wrongly* translated and should be rendered "sonship" in the English, for it is speaking of becoming *begotten* and *born* sons of God, not adopted sons. *Real* sons! Nothing is said about predestinating sons to "be lost," condemned or punished. But "destining us in love," not in anger or hate.

Read on, and I shall emphasize the words I want you to especially notice: "Such was the purpose of his
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For example, John could have reasoned this way: "I don't know whether this ad really promises a genuinely advantageous business venture or not. It *might*. Then again, it might *not*. Now if this outfit really is on the up-and-up, it still might be years before my end of the business would get established, and I would be making as much as I do now. Furthermore, since *most* small businesses have a very rough time of it and many fail, there is a good probability that even if this company were honestly seeking independent outlets for their product, I could still have a lot of financial problems. On the other hand, maybe I don't have the talent for running my own business. Maybe the company will make demands on me that I don't know about now. If things don't work out, I will lose my job, and possibly I could be left 'up a creek.' Do the potential benefits of having my own business outweigh the risks? I've got to examine all the facts and get some more advice."

By a hardheaded calculation of benefits and costs — the same process that Christ alluded to when he spoke of "counting the cost" — John would have come out of things much better off.

Again, the Proverbs impart a judicious warning: "The simple believeth every word: but the prudent man looketh well to his going" (Prov. 14:15).

— *The You-Are-Your-Own-Worst-Enemy Principle*. In order to impress someone else, to assuage one's ego, or to massage one's vanity, we will often be tempted to pursue a foolish course of action to our own hurt.

In John's case, he went out and bought a new van when the family income was at a low ebb: \$150 more a month is, quite literally, the price of pride. John should have asked himself whether the joys of cruising around in his personal macho-mobile were worth the added financial hardship to his family. Had he even attempted to make a right decision in a calm, clear-headed way, there is little doubt the outcome would have been different.

The "Plan Ahead" Principle

Human beings are not leaves to be blown around in the wind. We have

been given minds with which to think. We can plan ahead before we act, look at what has gone before us, calculate the benefits and the costs, weigh the risks and the gains. We can, in short, approach life rationally.

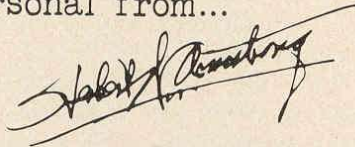
The typical negative response to this approach is to denounce it as too cold and calculating, as robbing life of its rich, warm spontaneity. It is summed up in the "mañana" approach to life: live for the moment, soak up the "now," bask in the immediate. Rationality, thought, and planning sound dull and laborious and too much like work.

The problem is, reality isn't so

pliable. Today's *now* was yesterday's "mañana." The fact that we have to pick between the lesser of two evils today is because we didn't care about today while it was still yesterday. The "mañana" philosophy makes life even more difficult because events end up controlling us, causing many of our aspirations to go unrealized.

In fact, it is only when we are able to control the events around us, when we actually try to guide our lives according to some sort of rational, coherent pattern — wise decision making, if you please — that we'll ever have enough freedom to be spontaneous anyway. □

Personal from...



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will, redounding to the praise of his glorious grace *bestowed on us* in the Beloved, in whom we *enjoy* our redemption, the forgiveness of our trespasses, by the blood he shed. So *richly* has God *lavished* upon us, granting us complete insight and UNDERSTANDING of the open secret of his will, showing us how it was the *purpose of his design* so to order it in the fulness of the ages that all things in heaven and earth alike should be gathered up in Christ — in the Christ in whom we have had our heritage allotted us (as was decreed in the design of him who carries out everything according to the counsel of his will), to make us redound to the praise of his glory by being the *first* to put our hope in Christ" (Eph. 1:5-12, Moffatt).

Let me give you verses 11 through 12 in the King James Version: "In whom also WE have obtained an inheritance, being predestinated according to the purpose of him who worketh all things after the counsel of his own will: that WE should be to the praise of his glory, WHO FIRST trusted in Christ."

Our inheritance — true Christians are right now only HEIRS — was PREDESTINATED "that we should be to the praise of his glory, who

first trusted in Christ" (verse 12).

To whom is the passage speaking? Only to the saints who were faithful. Note well these points. Predestination has only to do with being called to the inheritance of becoming sons of the living God, and those PREDESTINATED are said to be the *first* SO CALLED.

Jesus Christ said plainly, "NO MAN CAN COME TO ME, EXCEPT THE FATHER WHICH HATH SENT ME DRAW HIM" (John 6:44). The 11th chapter of Romans explains that only a FEW are called to repentance, faith in Christ, and spiritual salvation with eternal life *NOW*.

Since none *can* come to Christ — become spiritually converted — "EXCEPT THE FATHER DRAW HIM" ("called" refers to those being so drawn by the Father) — it becomes PLAIN that those PREDESTINATED are those FEW predestinated to be called *NOW* — the FIRST to be "called" — to be drawn by the Father to Christ and to the inheritance of becoming begotten and born sons of God.

OTHERS are to be called *later!* Predestination refers to those *pre-called* — NOT prejudged or precondemned. Nothing in this passage nor in Romans 8 says anything about being prejudged or precondemned. Therefore, it has only to do with *WHEN* some are specially called and only to do with those *first* called before the world in general, as explained in Romans 11.

Repeatedly I have said that to try to understand the Bible from *today's*

vantage point is like going into a movie or turning on a movie on TV with the picture half over. Not having seen what went before, you *simply don't understand what you are seeing now!*

Let me give you the big picture from the beginning — *very* briefly. Begin with John 1, verses 1-3: “In the BEGINNING was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God.” Here were from eternity *two* individual *beings*, one called the Word, the other, God. But the Word was also God. Let me compare it with someone saying, “I saw Garner Ted, and Garner Ted was with Armstrong, and Garner Ted was (also) Armstrong.” In the beginning from eternity the Word was *not* the son of God as Garner Ted *is* the son of “Armstrong” — if you are referring to myself. But later, verse 14, it is stated that “the Word was made flesh, and dwelt among us. . . .” At which time, born of the virgin Mary, the Word became Jesus Christ, and at that time He became the son of God!

But from eternity — which means ALWAYS — there were the two, and we are made in the image and likeness of God — His form and shape — and have been given minds like — though inferior to — God, and since we think out and plan the things that we design, the Word and God first thought out, designed, and planned what was to follow.

First they designed and created *angels*. Apparently that was before the creation of matter. The fact of radioactivity proves there has been no past eternity of matter. God CREATED matter. But He created angels first. The Bible says MUCH about angels. They are spirit beings composed of spirit, not matter. Next we come to Genesis 1:1 — compared to John 1:1: “In the beginning GOD [Hebrew *Elohim*, meaning more than one person forming one God — that is the God family] created the heaven [‘heavens’ in the Hebrew] and the earth.” This was after the creation of angels because God says (Job 38:7) the angels “shouted for joy” at the creation of the earth.

Now we read of the “angels that sinned” (II Peter 2:4), and verses 5 and 6 place the time of this angelic sin as *prior* to the creation of Adam,

that is, before the span of time from Adam to the Flood. The angels were led into sin (the transgression of God’s law — I John 3:4) by their king Lucifer. Lucifer (Isa. 14:12) was a great archangel, a cherub, the very most supreme type of being capable of being created. He was PERFECT and created full of wisdom, perfection, and beauty (Ezek. 28:14-17). He administered THE GOVERNMENT OF GOD over angels — over the earth that then was. But “iniquity” was found in him (Ezek. 28:15). The government of God was based on the spiritual *law* of God. Any government is the administration of a law, and without law there can be no government. The law of GOD is spiritual. It is *different* from any man-made law. It is A WAY OF LIFE — in fact THE way of life that produces PEACE.

There are only TWO basic, primary ways of life. God’s way — God’s spiritual law — is a way of love, that is, an outgoing concern toward others. Toward God it is actually a return of His love given to us, expressed in love, adoration, obedience, and worship. Toward fellowman, it is *outgoing concern* for the good and welfare of others equal to self-concern. The other way of life I simplify by the word “GET.” It is toward *self*. It is vanity, lust, and greed. Toward others it is envy, jealousy, rivalry, competition, and strife. It is resentment of any authority — whether God’s or man’s. It is revengeful, hostile, and violent.

God created *minds* in angels. He gave them the free moral agency to think, reason, form opinions, and make choices. Otherwise there could have been no personality, individuality, or character.

Lucifer was a supreme archangel, trained at the very throne of God. His wings spread over the throne of the universe (Ezek. 28:14 with Ex. 25:8, 18-22). He was thoroughly trained in the administration of the GOVERNMENT OF GOD.

But Lucifer reasoned — and falsely. He concluded that GETTING was to him more desirable than GIVING. So when he led his angels into rebellion against God and God’s way, THE GOVERNMENT OF GOD ceased to function on the earth.

Few know that the government of

God once existed on earth. God could create, automatically by fiat, no *greater* than Lucifer. This left God — not limited to one person — the *only* being who had set Himself inexorably never to violate His LAW, the ONLY being who *would not*, and therefore *could not*, sin — that is, violate His GOVERNMENT. The solution that the Word and God had planned — undoubtedly long before — was that God would now reproduce Himself, and the Word God would now reproduce HIMSELF! (All of this was covered in the series on the “*incredible human potential*” published in *The Plain Truth*.)

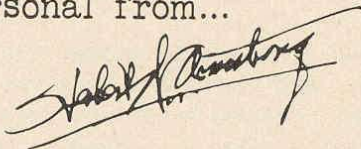
Angels had been placed here for creative purposes of improving the earth. Instead they defiled it, brought it to the state of decay, confusion, waste, and emptiness implied by the Hebrew words *tohu* and *bohu*, which are translated “without form and void” in the King James Version, “void and vacant” in the Moffatt translation, “waste and empty” and “chaotic and in confusion” in other translations.

Psalms 104:30 says: “Thou sendest forth thy spirit, they are created: and thou *renewest the face of the earth*.” In Genesis 1:2, the watery surface of the earth was covered with *darkness*. God is the author of LIGHT — Satan of DARKNESS! The spirit of God “moved upon the face of the waters.” And, verse 3, “God said, LET THERE BE LIGHT.” In six days God RENEWED THE FACE OF THE EARTH FOR MAN — for God’s purpose of *restoring His government* on earth by reproducing HIMSELF by creating man in His image to have the potential of being begotten and born into the family of God.

But now Lucifer, whose name meant “shining star of the dawn” or “bringer of light,” becomes Satan the devil — whose name means “adversary.” He is immortal, as are all angels. He must remain on earth UNTIL a successor qualifies to restore the government of God on earth and is *inducted into office*.

In Genesis 1:26, God said, “Let US [not me] make man in *our* image.” God created man male and female (Gen. 1:27). He instructed them in His way to qualify to restore the GOVERNMENT OF GOD. It

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was necessary for Adam to *reject* Satan's WAY of GET and prove he could develop the character never to turn from God's way. God offered them SPIRITUAL SALVATION. Satan was not allowed to get to Adam and Eve until God had instructed them. Then Adam was put to the test to see whether he would *believe* what God said and choose God's way or whether he would reject God's way, and choose the *self-centered way* of hostility to God and His law. ADAM DID NOT BELIEVE WHAT GOD SAID! He took to himself the knowledge of what is GOOD and what is EVIL.

Sin is simply the transgression of GOD'S LAW (I John 3:4). God's law, is the way of peace, and when Adam and Eve took to themselves the decision of what is right and what is wrong, they rejected God's WAY and broke God's LAW.

The 7,000-Year PLAN

The first six millennial "days" are for man to go about deciding for himself which is the better way. God adopted a HANDS-OFF policy — except that He intervened in certain instances for His *purpose*, as in the Flood, in the lives of Abraham, Isaac, Jacob, and Joseph, in the nation Israel, in sending prophets, in sending CHRIST, and in raising up apostles and His church.

What we have, therefore, is a world of man's making. And THIS is where WE CAME IN — in this true "movie" of God's *purpose* and DESIGN from the very beginning.

Satan is VERY POWERFUL. He can do nothing God does not ALLOW — but to fulfill GOD'S PURPOSE it must be PROVED by 6,000 years of human suffering, violence, and death that Satan's WAY is *NOT GOOD FOR US*. We have had 6,000 years during which humanity *has cut itself off from God*, under the invisible and unrealized sway of Satan, trying to organize his OWN SOCIETY, his OWN GOVERNMENT, his OWN RELIGION by the way that seems *right* to man.

During this period, God has *NOT*

tried to save this world spiritually. Only Abel, Enoch, and Noah turned to God's way during the first 1,900 odd years. After the Flood, Abraham obeyed, believed, and relied on God. God never promised the nation Israel spiritual salvation. If they would obey His government, God promised them national wealth, greatness, and power, but *NOT* eternal life.

Through all these millennia *only the prophets* were given God's spirit — and they only in order to *carry out an assignment from God*.

Jesus came with essentially the same teaching God taught Adam and Eve. But they *did not believe him*. Many "believed on Him" but did not BELIEVE HIM. To those who believed on HIM (John 8:30) Jesus said, "But ye seek to kill me, because my word [His gospel message] hath no place in you. . . . Because I tell you the truth, *ye believe me not*" (verses 37, 45).

After 3½ years of Christ's own preaching, *only 120 believed him* (Acts 1:15). After 25 years or so, Christ's gospel message was SUPPRESSED (Gal. 1:6-7). AND THE WORLD DID NOT HEAR IT UNTIL 1933 WHEN I FIRST PROCLAIMED IT OVER THE AIR!

THIS IS NOT THE TIME WHEN GOD IS DESPERATELY TRYING TO GET THE WORLD TO BELIEVE HIM, TURN TO HIM, AND "BE SAVED SPIRITUALLY." This is NOT the time when God is sending His ministers on "SOUL-SAVING CRUSADES." There is *no contest* between God and Satan. Satan is POWERFUL, but he can do ONLY what God ALLOWS — and for God's purpose. But today, we are very near the end of the 6,000 years allowed man to go his own way — the 6,000 years allotted to Satan to *deceive the whole world*.

Jesus said that WHEN "this gospel of the kingdom shall be preached in all the world for a witness unto all nations" (Matt. 24:14), then shall the end of this age come. I am proclaiming that very gospel message all over the world. Satan knows it, and he's ANGRY. He therefore knows he has but a short time yet (Rev. 12:12). But most men *do not know it!* Do YOU?

At the end of this 6,000-year period Christ, who qualified to restore the

government of God on earth, shall return to earth in all the supreme power and glory of the great God to bring us world peace at last.

Why would God call only a *few* now and then call ALL later on? I think I have explained. God has let man *prove* that Satan's way of "GET" is not good for us.

He called, chose, and gave His holy spirit to the prophets. WHY? Because He *had a job for them to do*. WHY is He calling some FEW today and opening their minds to SPIRITUAL TRUTH which seems like so much FOOLISHNESS (I Cor. 2:14) to the world — but "the wisdom of this world is foolishness with God" (I Cor. 3:19)?

Those called NOW are called for *the purpose of getting a job done*. They are given the HOLY SPIRIT for that purpose. God has committed to me His GREAT COMMISSION — to proclaim Christ's gospel message of the KINGDOM OF GOD worldwide. He has called a few thousand to *help me get that job done*.

Those predestined to be called now — instead of later when the whole world shall be called — are given the job of assisting me by heart-rending PRAYER, by their encouragement (and I need it), and by their tithes and offerings. And THIS RESPONSIBILITY is God's means of *developing in us His own righteous character*. Christ was required to reject Satan's way and overcome Satan to qualify to restore the GOVERNMENT OF GOD and to raise up the KINGDOM OF GOD. So are WE who are to qualify to *rule with HIM*.

I've said to US — those called NOW — that to him "that overcometh [Satan and his way] will I grant to sit with me in my throne, even as I overcame [Satan and his way]. . . ." "And he that overcometh, and keepeth my WORKS unto the end, him will I give POWER OVER THE NATIONS [of earth], and he shall RULE THEM" (Rev. 3:21; 2:26-27).

When Christ comes, SATAN SHALL BE TAKEN AWAY. When Christ sets out to SAVE THE WORLD (spiritually), there will be no Satan to overcome, but they shall not be qualifying to sit with Christ on *His throne* ruling and saving during the millennium.

THAT is the true meaning of "pre-destination." □