

The PLAIN TRUTH

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Did You Ever PROVE whether the Bible is INSPIRED?

Many assume divine revelation without PROOF. Others scoff. Here is a blistering challenge. Here is astonishing PROOF.

by **Herbert W. Armstrong**

HAVE YOU ever stopped to really *prove* whether or not the Bible is *divinely inspired* by a Creator? Would you be able scientifically to *prove* whether or not this world's best seller and most-read book is an actual *revelation* from the Supreme Creator to mankind?

I am going to give you the *proof*. And I am going to tell the skeptics how to disprove the Bible, if it's *not* inspired, and how to disprove the very existence of God, IF THERE IS NO GOD.

It Dares to Foretell the Future!

Here is a book—The Holy Bible—that dares to write out the future history of this world in advance—that dares to prophesy what is actually going to *happen* within 15 or 20 years to specific nations, including Russia, the British Commonwealth, China, the United States, Italy, Turkey, Ethiopia, and many others—most of the major nations of this world.

But *would you believe it* if I told you what this Book predicts? If I told you what it predicts about *your* nation? Would you believe it?

You know, we have gone away from believing that the Bible means what it says. We may not be ATHEISTS. We may not *ridicule* the Holy Bible. But we are

living now in an age of SKEPTICISM. We are living in an age of doubt.

Very few people have stopped to prove whether or not the Bible is really the inspired Word of God. Very few people TREMBLE before what it says or regard it as having REAL AUTHORITY.

Most highly educated people, and men of science, *assume* that the Bible is *not* the infallible revelation of a Supernatural God, and they *assume* this WITHOUT THE SCIENTIFIC PROOF that they demand on material questions.

Most fundamentalist believers *assume*, on sheer faith, *never having seen proof*, that the Holy Bible *is* the very Word of God. Christ is quoted in the Bible as saying, "The Scripture cannot be broken."

But *can* it be broken? Did you ever try to break it? Did you ever really put it to the test? Did you ever really prove it? Isn't it about time that we stop and seek out the proofs one way or the other?

How Could You Prove It?

Some people seem to think that Jesus' miracles were recorded to *prove* His divine messiahship. But the skeptics don't believe those miracles ever occurred.

Some people will say, *answered prayer* is the proof of inspiration. But the skeptic has had no prayers *answered*. He doesn't believe that *anybody ELSE* has.

There is, however, one source of *irrefutable* PROOF!

The Bible itself purports to be the infallible, divine revelation of truth, revealed by the very Creator and Divine Ruler of the entire universe. In your Bible, *One is quoted*, claiming that **HE is God**, speaking in the first person, saying that He can make and unmake nations, that He can carry out His judgments over millenniums of time, claiming that He can foretell infallibly the future of cities and empires, but that *no MAN* can.

TAUNTING the Skeptics

WHO IS *this*, quoted as saying, "I am God, and there is none like me, declaring the end from the beginning, and from ancient times, the things that are not yet done, saying, my council shall stand"? One is quoted saying those very words in Isaiah 46:9-10.

Skeptics say the Bible is merely the religious writings of a small ancient Jewish race, groping in the darkness of human ignorance and of superstition trying to develop a concept of God.

But is it?

Who is this claiming to foretell the future?—Is it merely some ignorant, ancient *human* with no power to make good his boast, who wrote *this* blistering challenge to the skeptics, recorded in Isaiah 41:21-23, "Now the Eternal cries, 'Bring your case forward.' Now Jacob's king cries, 'State your proofs.'"

Yes, *state your PROOFS!* "Let us hear what has happened in the past that we may ponder it, or show me what is *yet to be*, that we may watch how it turns out. Yes, let us hear *what is COMING*, that we may be sure that you are Gods. Come, do something or other that we may marvel at the sight. Why, *you* are things of naught. You can do nothing at all."

There is the taunt of the One *quoted* as being God, and quoted in the first person, taunting to skeptics, saying, "Why, *you're* nothing at all. Come on! Let's hear your *proofs* that we may watch whether it turns out. Predict what is going to happen in the future, and let us watch and see whether *you* can foretell. Have *you* the power to bring it about? Are you a God? Do *you* rule the universe? Can you *make and unmake nations*? Can you pronounce a sentence or a decree on a nation, and *bring it to PASS?*" *That* is the taunt of the GOD of the BIBLE to the doubter.

Prophecy is the PROOF of God

Prophecy is the proof of *divine revelation!* If One, in the Bible, speaking and claiming to be God, can make prophecies and tell what is going to happen in the future to nations, to cities, to empires, then if it actually happens *in every case*, and without a miss, you'll know *that* was a real God speaking.

But, if it were some person writing this, some *human mortal* writing in ignorance, groping in superstition, making great boasts, and claiming that he could foretell what was going to happen to proud cities, to nations, to great empires, and then it never happens, you know that *that* man was merely writing make-believe *out of his own imagination*.

Yes, prophecy is the proof of God, the *proof* of the divine revelation of the Bible. Prophecy is a taunting challenge that the skeptic *dares not accept!*

So here is the challenge to the skeptic. How long has New York City been in existence? About 300 years. About 300 years ago New York City was a little village. Now it has grown to a great city of over 8 million population.

Suppose that some human prognosticator made a prophecy that New York will very soon, inside of 15 years, be totally destroyed, never again to be rebuilt. Would any *human* be able to bring that to pass? Would anybody be-

lieve it if someone would make such a prophecy? *Is there ANY MAN on this earth that could speak with authority*, and make such a prophecy about a great city like New York?—AND BRING IT TO PASS?

The City that CONFOUNDS the Skeptics

Now Notice! Over 2500 years ago, there existed a great city that already, *then*, was more than 1500 years old. That city was the mistress of the seas—of the whole world; it was the commercial center of the world. It was beautiful, rich, and stable. That city was ancient Tyre on the Mediterranean. It was located on the eastern coast of Phoenicia.

In the year of 604 B.C. the nation Judah had been invaded by the Chaldeans under King Nebuchadnezzar, of the Chaldean Empire. The Jews had been conquered and taken captive, in a *series* of sieges between 604 and 580 B.C. The people of Tyre were looking with greedy eyes on *Judah*; and they were laying plans to go down and take part of the spoil, now that their rival king had invaded, and conquered it.

Can This Decree Be Broken?

We read of Tyre in Ezekiel 26:1-3, the Moffatt translation, in a little plain-English:

"In the 11th year, on the first day of the month"—now this was in 585 B.C.—"This word from the Eternal came to me." *Ezekiel* was writing this. He is just a human mortal man, one of the prophets who wrote this, but this man who wrote this prophecy said that the very *Word of God* came to Him, and he wrote it down. Now this is what *God* is quoted as saying—One who is quoted in the *first person* as being GOD, the very Creator, and the very Ruler of all the universe. He said:

"Son of man, since Tyre has gloated over Jerusalem, 'AHA! this door into the nations is broken down! It lies open to me. I shall prosper, *now she* is laid waste.' Therefore, the Lord, the Eternal utters this sentence: 'Tyre, I am against you . . . I will bring *many a nation* against you,—as the sea brings *many a wave*.'"

Who was this speaking? Was it some ignorant human, or was it *God Almighty* who pronounced this fate on this commercial metropolis, this New York of the ancient world, this great proud, *mighty* city of Tyre, because of its evils, and because it was threatening to take a spoil of this kingdom of *Judah*?

What God Said Would Happen

Let us begin with this third verse from the King James, or the authorized

translation, and read on including the fifth verse.

"Therefore, thus saith the Lord God. Behold, I am against thee, O Tyre. And I will cause *many nations* to come up against thee *as* the sea causeth his waves to come up. And they shall destroy the walls of Tyrus, and break down her towers. I will also scrape her dust from her, and make her like the top of a rock. It shall be a place for the spreading of nets (fishers nets) in the midst of the sea, for I have spoken it, saith the Lord Eternal, and it shall become a spoil to the nations."

Here is One quoted in the Bible as saying, "I am God, I have spoken it. This is going to happen to that great city, one of the two greatest cities of the world, as great in the world in that day as *New York* or *London* is today."

I want you to notice these *points*, in what this One who *claims to be God* has said. He said that *many nations* would come up against this Tyre, and attack her. But how were they to come? He said *like the waves of the sea*. Now the waves of the sea come *one after the other*, not all together. These attacking nations would come *one after the other*. He said that they would destroy the walls; they would break down the towers and demolish the buildings of that city. He said then that they would *scrape the stones, the timbers of the demolished buildings and even the top soil into the Mediterranean Sea*. He said that this city would become like the *top of a rock*; it would become a *place to spread nets on*; and it would become a spoil *to the nations—MORE than one nation—many nations coming ONE after the OTHER like the waves of the sea*.

For over 1500 years the armed forces of other cities and nations had attacked this proud city of Tyre, but never had any army been able to batter down its walls or actually to invade the city. Now *could* some mere human mortal, just writing in the religious works of the ancient Jewish race—*could* some mortal man pronounce such an astounding fate on so great a city AND BRING IT TO PASS?

But let us read on, beginning with *verse 7* of Ezekiel 26—verse 7 on through *verse 11*. "For thus saith God Eternal (here is God quoted as speaking directly, and in the *first person*): "Behold, I will bring upon Tyrus NEBUCHADNEZZAR, the king of Babylon."

This becomes quite a *specific* prophecy. It tells distinctly the *name* of the king and of the *nation* that God is going to bring against this city of Tyre, *a king of kings* "(because he was an emperor over a number of nations from the north)" with horses, with chariots, and with horsemen, and companies, and with



DESOLATE RUINS OF OLD TYRE. This city, once the mistress of the seas, dares the skeptic to defy Bible prophecy. Just as prophesied, the dust of old Tyre was cast into the sea leaving the city's rock foundation barren, as you see

above. In the background lie a few pillars giving mute testimony that not even mighty Rome could defy God's decree: "Never shalt thou be rebuilt!" (Ezek. 26:14.)

—Westminster Films Photo

much people. HE shall slay with the sword thy daughters in the field . . . HE shall set engines of war against thy walls, and with his axes, he shall break down thy towers . . . HE shall enter into thy gates . . . and with the hoofs of his horses shall he tread down all thy streets. HE shall slay thy people by the sword, and thy strong garrisons shall go down to the ground," —or, "your strong pillars" as the margin has it, "shall go down to the ground."

How there it is specifically speaking of *Nebuchadnezzar*, what HE shall do. Notice it was what *he* will do all the way through; but remember God has said that *many nations* shall come, *not just one*, but many nations, one after the other like the waves of the sea.

Notice! *Nebuchadnezzar* was *not* to take *all* of the debris, *all* of the stones, the timber, and the top soil and dump it into the Mediterranean. God has said *many nations* would come.

Tyre's FATE Sealed

Let us read on. Notice how this prophecy becomes even *more specific*, begin-

ning with verse 12 on through verse 14. "And THEY," no longer does God say, "and HE"; it is speaking of "They."

This would mean OTHER NATIONS to follow *Nebuchadnezzar*. "They shall make spoil of thy riches, and make a prey of thy merchandise, and they (that means other nations following *Nebuchadnezzar*) shall break down thy walls and destroy thy pleasant houses. They shall lay thy stones and thy timber and thy dust IN THE MIDST OF THE WATER." There it is!

God says, "I will cause the noise of thy songs to cease, and the sound of thy harps shall be no more heard, and I will make thee like the top of a rock, and thou shalt be a place to spread nets upon. THOU SHALT BE BUILT NO MORE; for I, the Eternal, have spoken it, saith the Lord God!"

THERE is *authority!* There is One quoted, speaking in the *first person* with *great authority*, pronouncing a dire sentence upon the great city of the world at that time. Was there any God existing about to do it?

Notice this prophecy said *they* would

lay the stones, the timber, the soil in the Mediterranean, and after that, Tyre was to be completely destroyed and BUILT NO MORE, NEVER AGAIN TO BE BUILT!

Was this the very *Creator God* passing sentence? Was the *Ruler of the universe* able to bring it to pass, or was this mere HUMAN conjecture?

Here is the challenge to tell whether or not this Bible was *inspired*. There is no other book where you can find one speaking, saying, "I AM GOD," and speaking to nations and to cities, and pronouncing sentence in that fashion, and then centuries later *bringing it to pass!*

Notice! This same God is telling what is going to happen to our modern nations today, yes, Russia, Germany, Great Britain, the United States, Australia, Italy, China, all of the great nations of the world, and many of the *minor* nations of the world, pronouncing sentence on us—warning of things that are to happen to us in the next 20 years. *Can He do it?* Was He able to do what He said about ancient Tyre?

Is this Bible inspired? Can you prove (Please continue on page 9)

The CRUCIFIXION was not on "Good Friday"!

EASTER does not commemorate the resurrection! Here are SEVEN IRREFUTABLE PROOFS from history that the resurrection was not on Sunday morning—that Christ did not die on a "Good Friday!"

by Herman L. Hoeh

YOU HAVE probably taken for granted the "Good Friday-Easter Sunday" tradition—and no wonder! So have the theologians and scholars!

Yet most of them know that, in the year in which Jesus was crucified, *the passover*—the day of the crucifixion—**WAS NOT ON A FRIDAY!**

Theologians have tried every way to solve this enigma—this contradiction of fact. They have attempted to **CHANGE** the *year of Jesus' birth*; they have attempted to **CHANGE** the *year that He began his ministry*; they have attempted to **CHANGE** the *length of his ministry*; they have attempted to **CHANGE** the *day of his death*, and they have attempted to **CHANGE** the *day of his resurrection*.

Resurrection Sunday a TRADITION

The common conception that the resurrection occurred early on Sunday morning is only a *tradition*. There were no human eyewitnesses to the resurrection. The *only* source of information to which later church writers had access was the historic account revealed by the angelic messengers and preserved by the gospel writers.

The churches have failed to understand the simple Biblical record. But **YOU CAN UNDERSTAND!** If you want the **COMPLETE** proof, *from the Bible itself*, that the resurrection was not on Sunday morning, you need to write immediately for Mr. Armstrong's challenging free booklet "*The Resurrection Was NOT on Sunday!*"

In *this* present article, however, we give you the undeniable *record of history* that the crucifixion could not have been on Friday—that the resurrection was not on Sunday!

How It All Began

It was the "apostolic fathers" steeped in pagan traditions, who began to teach that the crucifixion occurred on Friday. Yet they admitted that the ancient custom of fasting on *Wednesday*—the actual day of the crucifixion, as we shall prove—probably was derived from "the

day on which Jesus was betrayed" and "on which the Sanhedrin decided to kill him"! (*Schaff-Herzog Encyclopedia of Religious Knowledge*, art. "Fasting.")

What an admission!

These same teachers of the second and third century, in their attempt to establish the Easter-Sunday tradition, greatly disputed about *the year of the crucifixion*. They even varied from one and one-half years to twenty years in their dates of the length of Christ's ministry! What contradictions!

It's time we studied to see what really happened.

The Evidence of Scripture

Before we examine the seven absolutely irrefutable proofs from history, let's note for a moment the evidence from the Bible.

Jesus was teaching his disciples, according to Mark's account, that he would "be killed, and *after* three days rise again" (Mark 8:31).

Although the critics are in consternation about what Jesus meant by the expression "after three days," we need only turn to *Jesus' own interpretation*. These three days, at the completion of which Jesus would rise, are explained in Matthew 12:38-40 to include *three days and three nights*. Since Jesus in other scriptures also said that he would "rise the third day" after the day of His crucifixion, it is obvious that the resurrection must have occurred *precisely at the completion of the third day following his burial*.

Jesus was buried *before sunset* on the day of the crucifixion (Luke 23:54). Then the resurrection must have occurred *near sunset* three days later. When the women came to the tomb, early Sunday morning, *Jesus had already risen*. The angel said, "He is risen: he is *not here*" (Mark 16:6).

Jesus could not have risen later than near sunset Saturday afternoon—because He was *not* at the sepulchre Sunday morning. Three days before Saturday would place the crucifixion on *Wednesday*, the preparation day. Thursday of

that year must have been an *annual sabbath*, the first annual sabbath in the days of unleavened bread.

So we would know that *that sabbath* which followed the crucifixion was not necessarily the weekly sabbath, John was inspired to call it a "high day" (John 19:31), which means an annual sabbath which may occur *during the week!*

Mark picks up John's account by adding that **AFTER THAT SABBATH**, which was a high day, the women *bought* sweet spices to use in anointing the body of Jesus (Mark 16:1). This purchasing of the spices could not have been on Thursday, the annual sabbath: it must have been Friday!

Having made their purchases, the women *prepared* these ointments "and rested the sabbath day *according to the commandment*" (Luke 23:56). This was the *seventh day sabbath* upon which, near its close, Jesus was raised from the dead.

Thus the Bible proves that the resurrection was *not* on Sunday, the crucifixion *not* on Friday. **THERE WERE TWO SEPARATE SABBATHS THAT WEEK!**—one, an *annual sabbath*, the other, a *weekly sabbath*.

Matthew 28:1 Proves It!

A vital text proving that there were two sabbaths in that week has been obscured by almost every translation into English. Only Ferrar Fenton's version has this point correct.

Turn to Matthew 28:1. In the common versions it says, "In the end"—or more correctly, "*After the sabbath.*" Notice that both of these renderings use the singular—sabbath. *But in the original Greek the word is in the PLURAL.* Fenton renders it correctly by saying, "After the Sabbaths," although the remaining part of the verse he has not translated correctly. In a footnote to this text, he says, "*The Greek original is in the plural, 'Sabbaths'*"—which all the scholars know!

Another verse causing the Bible apparently to contradict itself is found in

Mark 16:9. Open your Bible to this verse. This verse does *not* prove the resurrection was on Sunday. In the common versions, the comma is placed following the word "week" making it *appear* that Jesus arose on Sunday morning. But the use of commas in the Bible did not develop until about *fourteen centuries after* this was written.

Here is the explanation.

In the original Greek the phrase "early the first day of the week" can be *grammatically* connected either with the words "having risen" or with the words "he appeared first to Mary Magdalene." The *Expositor's Greek Testament* says the phrase "early the first day of the week" may be either "connected with [having risen], indicating the time of the resurrection, or with [appeared], indicating the time of the first appearance."

Other Scriptures, which we have already noticed, prove that *it could not refer* to the time of the resurrection. As *it could refer* to the first appearance of Jesus to Mary (John 20:14), this text in Mark 16:9 should have been translated, "Now having risen, early the first day of the week he appeared first to Mary Magdalene."

The translation of this verse in the Revised Standard Version is absolutely incorrect.

Proof One: The CALENDAR Tells When

On which day of the week did Jesus' final passover fall? This simple question has perplexed theologians and historians for centuries, but the answer is so plain a child can understand it.

First, since Jesus died on the passover, we must examine the passover dates which occurred about the year of his crucifixion. This will determine with finality on *which day of the week* Christ died.

Jesus observed the *true passover* at the proper time—on the eve of the 14th of God's first month, called Nisan or Abib. You can read it in Matthew 26:2. To this agree all the gospel writers.

Matthew, Mark and Luke are thought by scholars to contradict this, by placing the crucifixion on the first day of the *feast* of unleavened bread, the 15th of Nisan. These three gospel writers say no such thing. They merely mention that the passover was also a day on which unleavened bread was used. In some versions the word "feast" is wrongly inserted in italics in Matthew 26:17.

The Jews in Judaea, but not the Galileans, were taking their own—the *Jewish*—passover a day later than God commanded (John 18:28)—which they wrongly do to this very day!

On which day of the week, then, did Jesus' final passover fall?

The passover is calculated by astronomical computation as many know. The chart which follows gives the dates of the various passovers (Nisan 14) which occurred in and near the year of the crucifixion.

Three years ago, when we published this same chart, we had available for reference only the *contradictory* comparative dates as found in *Hasting's Dictionary*, the *Encyclopedia Britannica*, the *Encyclopedia Biblica* and others. As I wrote then: "None of these references are *wholly accurate*." I have now a correction to make in that chart. Would that the theologians would be honest enough to make the same correction!

Here is the chart ABSOLUTELY CORRECT ACCORDING TO THE NEWLY REVEALED EXACT AND INSPIRED ASTRONOMICAL COMPUTATION PRESERVED SINCE THE DAYS OF MOSES!

Passover Dates:

- A. D. 29, Saturday, April 16
- A. D. 30, Wednesday, April 5
- A. D. 31, Wednesday, April 25
- A. D. 32, Monday, April 14
- A. D. 33, Friday, April 3

The correction is that for A. D. 30, which theologians have *PURPOSELY* placed on Friday to support their unprovable theory!

To place the passover on a Friday in 30 A. D. is to violate one of the *inspired rules* of the calendar—that no common year of the sacred calendar may have 356 days. Common years of twelve months may be only 353, 354 or 355 days long—a fact you can verify in the *Jewish Encyclopedia*. Theologians place the passover of 30 A. D. on Friday, April 7—356 days after the passover of 29 A. D. Count it for yourself! This date is two days late. The passover in 30 A. D. was only 354 days after that of 29 A. D.

These scholars forget that God had His sacred calendar, together with the Bible, preserved since the days of Moses to this very day—and that every date of the passover may be infallibly determined!

Moreover, astronomers recognize that the 14th of the month Nisan could easily have occurred on Wednesday in 30 A. D.—but the theologians will not receive their testimony because of their human traditions.

Thus, *if you want to believe that the crucifixion were in 30 A. D.*—which it was *NOT*—*you would still have to admit that Friday is NOT the day of the crucifixion!*

For the year 31 A. D. several references mistakenly give the passover, Ni-

san 14, as Monday March 26. But this is one month too early. The year 30 was intercalary—that is, it had 13 months—thus placing the passover thirty days later in 31 A. D., and on a Wednesday! During the time of Christ the passover could not occur earlier than six days after the vernal equinox—which in that year occurred on March 23, about 3 a.m. Greenwich time. Remember, in Jesus' day the equinox did *not* occur on March 21, but on March 22 or 23, because the Roman world was using the *Julian* calendar. Since March 26 was only *three* days after the equinox, it could *not* have been the passover. Hence in 31 A. D. the passover was 30 days later on a Wednesday—and *this is the ONLY POSSIBLE YEAR in which Christ could have been crucified*, as we shall PROVE.

It would take a pamphlet to explain in full detail the simple methods of computing the dates of the passover according to the sacred calendar—which most people call the "Jewish calendar"—and as there is not room in this article for it, you will have to patiently wait until it is later published.

Proof Two: the Decree of Artaxerxes

There are several basic dates from which the exact year of Christ's death may be determined. These dates are so precise that there can be no doubt that the passover upon which Jesus was crucified occurred on Wednesday, April 25, A. D. 31.

The first date is the year in which Artaxerxes issued his decree to restore and build Jerusalem (Ezra 7). It is recorded in Daniel 9:25-26 that there would be sixty-nine prophetic weeks (7 + 62) till the Messiah would come, after which he would be "cut off"—crucified—"not for himself" but for the sins of the whole world. Sixty nine prophetic weeks equals 483 years (69 x 7).

When we determine the year in which this decree was issued, we can locate the exact year, 483 years later, when Christ—the Messiah—began his ministry.

In recent years an abundance of documents from the era of Ezra and Nehemiah—business records giving exact dates according to the Persian, Egyptian and Jewish calendars, and astronomical tablets recording eclipse cycles in the years of kings—have been translated. These records continue fundamentally to corroborate the chronological table of Persian kings recorded in Ptolemy's canon.

Records, preserved in world-famous American and foreign libraries, have been found that were written in the very month that Artaxerxes—under whose reign the decree was issued—

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came to power. The death of Xerxes occurred in late December 465 B.C. and his son, Artaxerxes, came to throne in that month.

According to the Persian spring-to-spring reckoning of regnal years—as these business documents clearly show—Artaxerxes' first year extended from April 464 to April 463 B.C. These same business documents show that the Jewish autumn-to-autumn mode of reckoning, used by Esra and Nehemiah, placed the first year of Artaxerxes from September 464 to September 463 B.C. The period of time from the day the new king ascended the throne to the first year of his reign was called his ACCESSION YEAR and was regarded as completing the last regnal year of the previous king.

The astronomical tablets containing over a dozen precise records of eclipses prove that the first year of Artaxerxes, according to the Jewish reckoning, was from 464 to 463 B.C. You may verify these facts in any of the latest thorough books on archaeology.

The seventh year of Artaxerxes—the year in which he issued his decree (Ezra 7:8)—would extend from about September 458 B.C. to September 457 B.C.

From the first month to the fifth month of God's calendar—from the latter part of March to the latter part of July, 457 B.C.—Ezra journeyed to Judaea in the seventh year of Artaxerxes at which time the decree went forth to build Jerusalem as the capital of the revised Jewish nation.

And just 483 years later would bring us to the autumn of A. D. 27—the year when the Messiah would appear.

Although the date of the issuance of this decree is amply proved from astronomy, dozens of business documents, and the Canon of Ptolemy, historians

sometimes mis-interpret the facts to suit their pet theories. Then theologians quote from whatever historical sources suit them in order to change the true date for the beginning of Christ's ministry.

But the true date—457 B.C.—is absolutely fixed by the most accurate records of history written at that very time.

Some religious sects would incorrectly put this decree as late as 455 B.C. in order to have the crucifixion occur on Friday in 33 A.D.! Such a date is totally rejected by ALL historians today!

Age of Jesus at His Baptism

Jesus, according to Daniel's prophecy, was anointed the Messiah in 27 A.D., which was 483 years after the decree of Artaxerxes to restore Jerusalem. The next fact that we need to understand is the age of Jesus when he was baptized and entered upon his ministry.

The only historical account of this was written by Luke to Theophilus (Luke 1:1-4). In this account it is plainly stated that when Jesus began his ministry "he was about thirty years old." (Luke 3:23).

Luke did not say, "about 29," or "about 31." He said "about thirty"—and he meant it, for he was an inspired historian. Either this record is true or you might as well discard the Bible.

As Jesus was about 30 years old in the autumn of 27 A.D., then he must have been born in the autumn of 4 B.C. as we shall now prove.

Proof Three: The Death of Herod

The time of Jesus's birth is important. Jesus was born before the death of Herod the king (Mat. 2:15). When did Herod die? Again the critics are in utmost confusion because they have refused to weigh all the facts.

According to Josephus, the Jewish historian, Herod died, "having reigned, since he had procured Antigonus to be slain, thirty-four years; but since he had been declared king by the Romans, thirty-seven" (*Antiquities*, XVII,viii, 1).

The two dates for the beginning of Herod's reign are not disputed, but given

as 37 B.C. and 40 B.C. respectively. Reckoning as Josephus does, the last year of Herod's reign extended from about April 4 B.C. to April 3 B.C.

Although Herod's death is commonly dated in April 4 B.C.—or even as late as 2 B.C.—neither of these dates is correct. Simple subtraction ought to prove that! Herod died just prior to the beginning of spring in B.C. 3!

Notice!

Josephus, in *Antiquities of the Jews*, XVII, vi, 4, mentions an eclipse of the

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DAILY TV

Plans have been made to put The WORLD TOMORROW on Television DAILY—or at least five times a week. In order to create the special fund required to make this possible, we have cancelled the weekly TV series temporarily. Announcement will be made as soon as we are back on DAILY. A national radio network in Australia is now being added, besides weekly TV on the only station in Manilla, Philippines.

moon before the death of Herod. That eclipse, as calculated, occurred about March 13, 4 B.C. Yet it was *after* this that Herod went beyond the river Jordan to be cured of his diseases. Finding that the physicians couldn't cure him, he still revived sufficiently to return to Jericho. There, he gathered together and contrived the death of the principal men of the *entire* Jewish nation. And as if this were not enough, Herod had his son Antipater killed five days before his own death. Since these and other events occurred *after* the eclipse mentioned by Josephus, *and since Herod died just prior to a passover according to Josephus, that passover must have been THIRTEEN MONTHS AFTER THE ECLIPSE and not one month later.* Thus Herod died in B.C. 3, the *only* date that agrees with all the known facts.

As Jesus was about thirty years old in the early autumn of 27 A.D., then he must have been born in the early autumn of B.C. 4, about half a year before the death of Herod. *Jesus could not have been born before this time,* or he would have been more than thirty years old at the beginning of his ministry. Neither could he have been born later in B.C. 2 as some assume, for he would have been only twenty-eight years old. But Luke plainly said that he was *about* THIRTY years of age.

When Did the Wise Men Arrive?

But what are we going to do with the statement recorded in Matthew 2:16 that just before his death Herod had all the children in Bethlehem killed "from two years old and under"? This would appear to indicate that Jesus may have been born one year earlier than he really was born.

Most people carelessly read this account by *assuming that Herod knew the date of Jesus' birth.* They think he had all the children killed because Jesus must have been between one and two years old.

Think for a moment how illogical this would be. Would a murderer like Herod wait for at least one whole year after the Magi left before attempting to kill the child Jesus? Of course not.

The truth is that *Herod did not know the time of Jesus' birth.* Notice what the Scriptures states: *As soon as Herod saw that the Magi didn't return to him he became very angry, ordering all those little children butchered "from two years old and under, ACCORDING TO THE TIME WHICH HE HAD exactly LEARNED of the magi"* (Mat. 2:16).

Now what was the *exact time* that he learned from the magi? Was it the date of Jesus' birth?

No!

Notice verse seven of this same chap-

ter: "Then Herod privily called the magi, and learned of them exactly the time of . . ." what? The birth of Jesus? No. But "*of the appearing star.*"

Of course!

The wise men or magi had come a great distance from the East and the star had appeared *some time before the birth of Jesus* in order for them to prepare to make their journey to Bethlehem while Jesus was still very young. Since the star appeared more than one year previously, Herod took no chances but had every infant killed up to two years of age.

Jesus was slightly less than six months old at the time of Herod's death. The latest possible date for the birth of Jesus was the autumn of B.C. 4, before winter arrived (Luke 2:8). This places the commencement of the ministry of Christ, thirty years later in the autumn of the year 27.

Proof Four: Temple Under Construction 46 Years

Here is another clinching fact.

Jesus was about thirty years old when he began his ministry in the autumn of 27 A.D. The *first passover* in his ministry must have occurred the next spring, A.D. 28. It was at that time that the Jews told Jesus that the temple of Herod was already "forty-six years in building" (John 2:20).

Herod began constructing the temple, after three years' thorough preparation, in the very last part of his 18th year according to Josephus (*Antiquities* XV, xi, 1). Since he reckons this 18th year from the spring of B.C. 37, the 18th year would be 20-19 B.C. The temple was begun in the months immediately preceding the passover, B.C. 19. The major part of the construction was completed by the autumn of B.C. 18 (*Antiquities* XV, xi, 6) in about 1½ years.

Forty-six full years from B.C. 19 would bring us to the beginning of A.D. 28, just before the first passover in Jesus' ministry.

If the ministry of Christ began in any other year than the autumn of A.D. 27, then the temple would *not* have been exactly 46 years in building by the time of the passover in the spring of 28 A.D.

Proof Five: The Reign of Emperor Tiberius

One of the most vital keys to the chronology of Christ's ministry—and yet one of the most universally misunderstood dates—is the 15th year of the reign of Tiberius Caesar. Luke tells us that John the Baptist began to preach in his 15th year (Luke 3:1).

When was this fifteenth year?

The trouble arises from the fact that

there are at least *two dates* from which the reign of Tiberius Caesar may be counted—the *first* commences with his being made co-ruler with Augustus Caesar, at the very end of A.D. 11 or the beginning of A.D. 12. The exact month is not known, but it is not essential anyway. The *second* date begins with his sole rule in August, A.D. 14. Luke could have used either date and been historically correct. But which one *did* he use?

To be consistent with all the other facts, Luke must have used the earlier date as the beginning of the reign of Tiberius. In fact, for the word "reign" Luke uses a Greek word meaning "government" in general, indicating that he did not mean his sole emperorship, but merely his elevation to joint authority—about the end of A.D. 11 or beginning of A.D. 12.

In determining the emperor's regnal year, Luke used the customary Jewish form, practiced also by Josephus. "Josephus also . . . in order to avoid making the last year of one emperor coincide with the first year of his successor, reckoned the final year of each emperor as continuing to the end of the current year, and made the first year of his successor begin [in] April following his accession," says the competent scholar W. M. Ramsay in his book *Was Christ Born at Bethlehem?*, page 223.

This method *which has but recently been understood*, was used by Luke also to determine imperial *joint reigns*. The first year of the joint reign of Tiberius would extend from about April 12 A.D. to April 13 A.D. His fifteenth year would extend from about April 26 A.D. to April 27 A.D.

In this 15th year John the Baptist began to preach repentance all about the Jordan River before Jesus was baptized by him. *John's ministry occupied several months* in which he prepared the way for Jesus.

Notice how this dovetails with the next proof.

Proof Six: When Was Pilate Governor?

Luke names Pontius Pilate as governor of Judaea when John received his call (Luke 3:1). "Now in the fifteenth year of the government of Tiberius Caesar, *Pontius Pilate being governor of Judaea . . . the word of God came unto John.*" Pilate ruled *for ten years*. Many historians give his dates as 26 to 36 A.D., but this is a mistake.

Pilate was deposed a few months before the passover at the close of his tenth year. He *hurriedly* sailed for Rome to appeal to Emperor Tiberius. On his way news came that Tiberius died. You
(Please continue on page 15)

Right: Recently excavated remains of a Roman amphitheater built at ancient Tyre. Here you see ancient Rome's vain attempt to thwart God's infallible decree: "Thou shalt be built no more!" The crumbled walls and foundation testify to the atheist that all the might of man could not rebuild a city against the ALMIGHTY power of the living Ruler of the universe.

—Westminster Films Photo

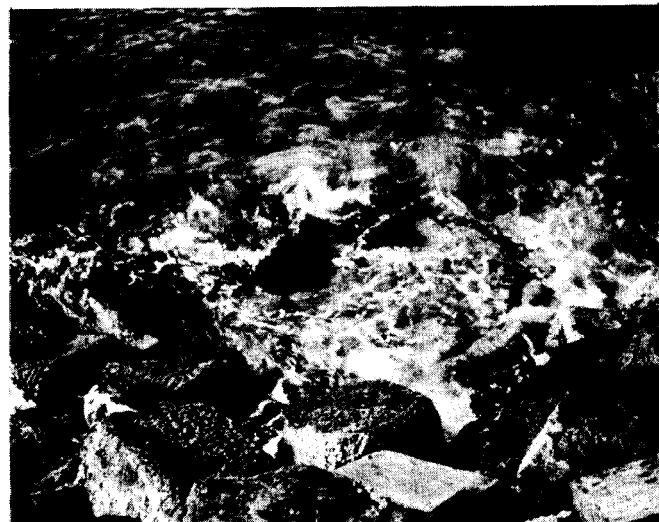


Left: Pillars from an ancient Roman temple at Tyre. If you look carefully, you will notice that these pillars have recently been cemented together—in order to be photographed! They were found lying with many other fragments in the plain surrounding the site of old Tyre. A small tent, barely visible behind the first pillar, is the only dwelling to be seen.

—Westminster Films Photo

Right: These moss-covered hewn stones were once a part of the fabulous buildings of the "New York" of the ancient world. Though old Tyre had withstood enemies for over 1500 years, God decreed through the prophet Ezekiel: "They shall break down thy walls, and destroy thy houses: and they shall LAY THY STONES IN THE MIDST OF THE WATER" (Ezek. 26:12).

—Westminster Films Photo



Did You Ever PROVE whether the Bible is INSPIRED?

(Continued from page 3)

it? Do Bible prophecies *mean* what they say?

For over 1500 years, this great city, *Tyre*, had defied all of its enemies. Many had approached it and tried to attack and invade it, but none had ever been able to succeed. Now notice! Could some ignorant *man* write out this decree and CAUSE THIS VERY DECREE TO BE CARRIED OUT?

It Happened as Prophecied!

Very soon after that, there was a 13-year siege by King Nebuchadnezzar ex-

actly as this had been foretold, as the one speaking and saying "I am God," *said* it would happen! Finally, he took the city. It has never happened before. He demolished the city. And *it has never been rebuilt!*

However, the people of the city fled, and built a *new* city on an island only half a mile off shore from OLD TYRE. Now the original Tyre became known *then* as OLD TYRE, and the *new* city of the island became known as NEW TYRE.

Many skeptics may say that that prophecy wasn't written in 585 B.C.

before this happened, but that it was written *after* it happened. How can you prove that Ezekiel wrote it then?

There is *ample proof* of it, but that factor is only the *first link* in the chain of this prophecy. This prophecy had said *many nations* will come like waves of the sea. It foretold many other things to happen. Only part of those things were to be done by Nebuchadnezzar, to be brought about by him. The prophesied events of *New Tyre* were not *completed* until the beginning of the *14th century*.

What Historians ADMIT

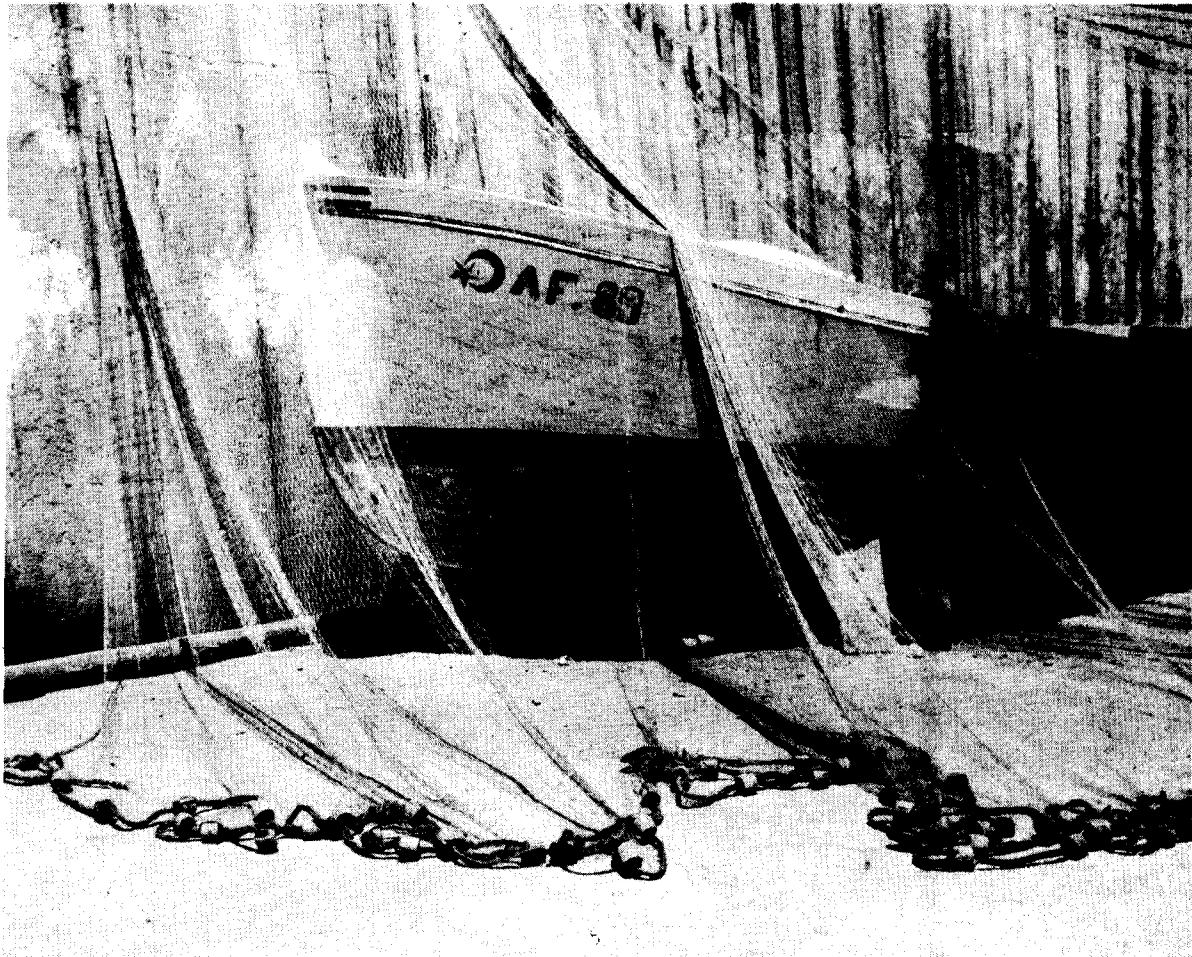
Let me quote for you a little of the unchallengeable *history* of these events from the *Encyclopedia Britannica*, volume 22, the latest edition of the *Encyclopedia Britannica*, under the article

(Please continue on page 12)

A LARGE FISHERMAN'S NET and a fishing vessel near the site of old Tyre. While Tyre was still a mighty commercial metropolis, Ezekiel—under inspiration—prophesied that it would

become "like the top of a rock" and that it would be a "place to spread nets upon" (Ezek. 26:14). In the photo below you see the fulfillment of this very prophecy.

—Westminster Films Photo



Did Jesus' Miracles Really HAPPEN?

**Here is a CHALLENGE to the skeptic and the "modernist."
It is time this doubting world realizes that true
Christianity is based on FACT!**

by Roderick C. Meredith

A HELL-BENT world will pause this month to commemorate the death and resurrection of Jesus of Nazareth. Millions will at least pay lip service to the risen Christ.

Yet most of these same millions *doubt* the validity of the very thing they are commemorating. Modern churchmen are not at all *certain* of the *literal* death and the *literal* resurrection of Jesus Christ.

Miracles Proved?

It has never occurred to most people that some *miracles* can be PROVED. But when they think about it, it seems rather certain they they can NOT be proved. So men have reconciled themselves to the fact that they must accept on "faith" the miracles and statements of the Bible.

Most moderns readily admit that they have no such faith in the wholly divine inspiration and infallibility of the Bible. Many attend church because it is "the thing to do." But their belief in what is supposed the *basis* of true Christianity—the Holy Bible—is hedged about with doubts and fears.

Man has lost faith in God. Now he is beginning to lose faith in *himself*. His cynical, doubting "intellectualism" has left him *hopeless* and *helpless* in the face of mounting world *cataclysm*.

This attitude of DOUBT is the very thing that is robbing most of *you* of the happiness, and joy, and peace of mind that should be yours. God seems unreal and *far away*, doesn't He?

The God of POWER—the living, active, *Creator* that Jesus prayed to, the God that healed the sick, and raised the dead, and performed great MIRACLES—that God seems *mythical* to most people. They would *like* to believe that God could supernaturally intervene and help them, as He did in Jesus' time, but how can they *know* He will?

People today want PROOF!

Is it possible to *prove* that the God of Jesus Christ is a *living, active* God NOW? Can the Bible be *proved* to be COMPLETELY RELIABLE in its statements?

God's Answer

God himself says that we should require PROOF for our beliefs—"Prove all things; hold fast that which is good" (1 Thes. 5:21).

But is it possible to *prove* whether or not the statements made in God's Word are true?

YES, it is possible!

There are many, many parts of the Bible which can be put to an acid test as to their validity—and, if *proved* to be true—they will necessarily demonstrate that the men who wrote these scriptures *were inspired* as the Bible claims. This is so because the fulfillment of many Bible statements could *not* have been brought about by human power—but *only by divine intervention*.

One of the most obvious and effective ways you can test the Bible is in the fulfillment of its *prophecies*. Could men living hundreds of years ago predict *accurately* and *in detail* events that would happen long after their deaths?

Mr. Armstrong has been giving the startling PROOF that these prophecies are *divinely* inspired on The WORLD TOMORROW television and radio programs, and in the pages of this magazine. Study his article, "Did you ever PROVE whether the Bible is INSPIRED?" in this issue. That the amazing, detailed prophecies concerning the great cities of Tyre, Sidon, Babylon and others have been *dramatically fulfilled* even down to the minute details stands *proven*.

Any one of these *miraculous* fulfillments of prophecy—often written hundreds of years before the prophesied event actually came to pass—ought to be proof enough to an honest mind that a SUPERNATURAL GOD inspired these prophets and *is backing up His Word*—NOW!

Entire Bible Inspired

How foolish it would be to imagine that the same men who were *inspired by God* in writing these remarkable prophecies should suddenly become liars and engage in the basest kind of deception

when they wrote of the laws, the promises, and the *miracles* recorded in the Bible.

And who, by the way, is going to say that the *continuous* and *exact fulfillment* of prophecies written hundreds of years in advance is not a MIRACLE of the very highest caliber in itself? It is indeed difficult to look back through the centuries and *prove conclusively* that a miracle—or *any* historical event, for that matter—took place in the exact manner described. But year by year, history continues to confirm the *inspired prophecies* written by the same men who tell us of the *miracles* God performed through His servants.

However, there is *one miracle* to which countless prophecies point, about which scores of books have been written, and which proves difficult for even atheists to deny. It has stood through many generations as a PROOF of God's power to supernaturally intervene in human affairs and save man even from the grave.

And once you accept this miracle, you will see that by its very nature it demonstrates the validity of countless others, and of God's *promise* to miraculously intervene in our lives *now*.

A Basic Miracle

The very heart of Bible prophecy concerns a subject which too many people take for granted, without realizing it should be PROVED. This is the subject of Jesus Christ, His *reality*, His *life*, His *teachings*, His *miracles*, and His own RESURRECTION.

More than three hundred prophecies and references to Christ in the Old Testament are expressly cited in the New Testament as predictions fulfilled in Him. These prophecies were all written *hundreds of years* before Christ was born. Taken all together, they form a bond of *truth* which cannot be broken or disproved.

In the fifty-third chapter of Isaiah a series of remarkable, and seemingly paradoxical statements is made about the coming Messiah. It is stated that He

was to be cut off from the land of the living, a young man without offspring, yet He shall prolong His days. He was to be put to death as a criminal, to make His grave with the wicked, and yet the sepulchre of the rich was to be His tomb. He was to pour out His soul unto *death*, and yet *He would live* to make intercession for transgressors.

Before Jesus appeared, it seemed impossible that one man should fulfill all these incongruous requirements. Yet He fulfilled them so naturally that we have ceased to observe how paradoxical these prophecies must have appeared beforehand.

Almost from the beginning of His own ministry, Jesus taught His own disciples of this coming great event of the ages—His *literal* DEATH, and His *literal* RESURRECTION from the dead. Notice Mark 8:31: "And he began to teach them that the Son of man must suffer many things, and be rejected of the elders, and of the chief priests, and scribes, and be killed, and *after* three days *rise again*."

When the doubting Pharisees asked Jesus for a supernatural *sign*—a MIRACLE—as *proof* of His Messiahship, Jesus pointed to the same event. He answered: "An evil and adulterous generation seeketh after a sign; and there shall no sign be given to it, but the sign of the prophet Jonas: For as Jonas was three days and three nights in the whale's belly, so shall the Son of man be three days and three nights in the heart of the earth" (Mat. 12:38-40).

Jesus staked His very Messiahship on a *miracle*—His RESURRECTION from the dead *after a definite period of time*.

You either believe in *this* MIRACLE—or you are without a Savior!

Historical Proof

Here are the FACTS: As we have just seen, Jesus repeatedly told His disciples that He would be *killed*, and would *rise again* after three days. Yet, when it actually happened, they seemed to have given up hope and were slow to believe it (Luke 24:11; Mr. 16:13). Doubting Thomas was *sure* there was a mistake somewhere, and did not believe until he touched Jesus with his own hands (John 20:27).

These men had to be *shown!*

Thus, the men who later risked their very lives to preach the story of Jesus' resurrection were at first unable to believe it, determined *not* to believe it without *proof*, and finally came to believe it in spite of themselves. This belief so filled their lives that they henceforth went out and dedicated their lives to preaching Jesus' message, and acting as "witnesses" of His *resurrection*.

The story of Jesus' life is basically the

same in both sacred and secular history. It is acknowledged that Jesus was a real person who came to have a large following in Judea, that He was put to death in Jerusalem by authority of the Roman governor, Pontius Pilate. No contemporary or successor contradicts the story. Not even Jewish writers try to deny it.

Neither the Roman historian Pliny in the first century, Celsus in the second, Porphyry in the third, nor Julian in the fourth questioned the authenticity of the New Testament, or insinuated that Christians were mistaken in the authors to whom they ascribed the New Testament. But all agree that in the reign of Tiberius Caesar a growing band of people risked their lives to propagate a new religion, sustaining unheard-of persecutions and sufferings with amazing faith and courage—and that one of the central tenets of their message was their belief in the *literal* RESURRECTION of Jesus Christ *from the dead*.

More Evidence

And there is much more evidence!

If Jesus did not really rise from the dead, what became of His body? If enemies stole it, they would have shown it at every opportunity, for they did everything in their power to discredit the story, and killed many of those who told it. If Jesus' disciples stole it, they were then preaching a LIE. But MULTITUDES of men do not become martyrs for what they know is untrue.

Was Jesus really dead? His disciples certainly believed that He was. Their trouble was in believing His resurrection at first. And the Roman soldiers and Jews certainly believed He was dead. They were only concerned about the disciples stealing away His body (Mat. 27:64).

Was the resurrection, as some skeptics claim, a later addition to the story of Christ, invented years later to glorify a dead hero? As we have shown, sacred and secular history alike clearly state that the great religious movement known by Christ's name was *begun* by people who preached of His *resurrection from the dead*. This joyous belief was not an addition to the Christian faith, but one of the primary *causes* of it. The apostles did not rest their faith on records, *but on what they had seen with their own eyes*.

When questioned about this belief, the apostles chorused: "We are his WITNESSES of these things" (Acts 5:29-32).

There is no conceivable way to account for the origin of the story of Jesus' resurrection except that it was an ACTUAL FACT. This miracle is as well established as any fact in history!

May God grant you the wisdom, in

this age of *skepticism* and *modernism*, to see that this *miracle* is as *real*, as *literal*, as *factual* as anything you know.

Basis of Faith

Once you really grasp the fact that the resurrection of Christ was quite *literal* and *miraculous*, you will in all honesty be forced to acknowledge that Jesus really was what He claimed to be—the Messiah, the Son of God—and that His *many other* predictions and promises and teachings must be just as *true* and *literal* as that of His death and resurrection. Would God raise from the dead and show as His Son one who had told the *truth* part of the time, and *lied* part of the time?

Let's be *honest* and *reasonable* about these things!

Were the apostles telling the *truth* about Jesus' resurrection—as we have *proved* they must have been—and *lying* when they told of His other miracles? And of His promises? And of His teachings?

Clearly, the factual, historical **PROOF** of the *divine inspiration* and *present fulfillment* of the prophecies in God's Word, and of the *miraculous resurrection* of Jesus Christ demonstrate that God's Word means *exactly* what it says—that God is the Living, Active, Creator-Ruler of Heaven and earth **NOW**, and that His *instructions*, His *prophecies*, and His *promises* are in effect right now—*today!*

God help you to grasp what this means!

First of all, it means that the *instructions* and spiritual *laws* contained in the Bible are—in **FACT**—*God speaking to you!* You need to *study* and *obey* His Word—to "*live by every word of God*" (Luke 4:4).

Concerning God's promises, this complete faith in His *Word* and in His *present power* will enable you to *trust* God as you never did before to *supernaturally intervene* in your life when you need Him.

And don't be deceived by the modernist teaching that miracles were only for the days of Christ and the apostles. If that were so, why did God perform such great miracles through the hands of Stephen and Philip, who were never called apostles? (Acts 6:8; 8:6).

What about the "signs" that Jesus said "*shall follow them that BELIEVE*"? (Mr. 16:17-18). Have those that *believe* ceased to exist?

Rely on God's Word

The sad truth is that most so-called "Christians" *deny* by their words and their deeds the promises and teachings of God's Word. They have lost sight of

God's present power to miraculously intervene and back up His word—whether it be a prophecy or a promise.

For instance, God says in James 5:14-15: "Is any sick among you? Let him call for the elders of the church; and let them pray over him, anointing him with oil in the name of the Lord: and the prayer of faith shall save the sick, and the Lord shall raise him up."

Why don't people believe and claim that promise today?

Because, as most of you, they have just never been taught that kind of faith in God's Word. Or, perhaps, they have seen God's promise to heal counterfeited or perverted by some group of people who make a religious racket out of this sort of thing.

But this is God's promise. It doesn't require a lot of mental conditioning or emotional gymnastics—only sound-minded, simple, persevering FAITH in

God's Word. If you would like to understand more about this particular promise—of divine healing—write today for Mr. Armstrong's free booklet, "Does God Heal Today?"

On the WORLD TOMORROW program, and through the pages of The PLAIN TRUTH, we absolutely prove in a clear, sound-minded, factual manner that God is present RULER of the world—and that He binds himself by His Word, the Bible.

Once you fully grasp this truth, and begin to act on it, you will join hundreds of others who know by personal experience that miracles do happen today. And you will learn to trust and obey God as never before, thereby reaping all the blessings of His divine intervention on your behalf now—and preparing yourself by spiritual growth for the gift of eternal life in the world tomorrow.

the rest of Syria it passed into the hands of the Muslims in the 7th century. The crusaders captured it (1124), and made it one of the chief cities of their kingdom of Jerusalem. After the fall of Acre, the Muslims destroyed it." So New Tyre, finally, was destroyed just some 500 years ago, at the beginning of the 14th century, NEVER TO BE REBUILT.

Today, Old Tyre is like the top of a rock. It had originally, a rocky foundation, and they had imported a vast amount of top soil in order to build the city of Tyre there about 4,000 years ago. All of that top soil and the stones and timbers at Old Tyre had been scraped by Alexander into the sea. Now there is nothing but the rock foundation left. To this day, you can go there and you will find the fishermen's nets spread out upon Old Tyre, precisely as whoever wrote this saying—"I am God" and "there is none beside me"—in Ezekiel 26 SAID it would happen! Old Tyre has never been rebuilt to this day.

Today, Old Tyre is like the top of a rock. There is no top soil, though there is rich soil surrounding it. Ample water is there. You can go there and see the fishermen's nets spread out to dry.

Now today, a small new town, called Sur—in a different location out on the peninsula, and inhabited by fishermen—is erroneously designated as Tyre on some maps; but it is not Tyre. Ancient Tyre has NEVER BEEN REBUILT.

How Skeptics Could Disprove the Bible!

Was the writer of this prophecy a human man, or God Almighty? There is one of hundreds of such prophecies, many of which have already come to pass. Every year, EVERY DAY, yes, EVERY HOUR that site of Old Tyre remains a desolate top of the rock for spreading of fishermen's nets—every hour that it remains uninhabited, and no city is built there, it is SHOUTING the PROOF of divine revelation of the Bible to skeptics.

And now, just a word to the skeptics. Here is how you can disprove the Bible, and the very existence of God—if there is no God, and IF the Bible is not inspired! Just go over and build a small city on the site of Old Tyre. There is rich soil all around it. An ample water supply is available. It has wonderful harbor possibilities with a little dredging. A collection of a dollar each from all of the American skeptics alone would be ample. Whoever inspired Ezekiel 26 dares the skeptics to try to do it.

Now there is nothing to prevent them from building a city there on the site of Old Tyre, except that the Bible they scoff at says they CAN'T!

Here is living, dynamic, PROOF that the Bible is divinely revealed.

Did You Ever PROVE whether the Bible is INSPIRED?

(Continued from page 9)

"Tyre." Here it says: "Tyre, the mistress of the seas, in the 6th Century, B.C., endured a 13 years siege from Nebuchadnezzar." During this siege it was demolished and destroyed.

Nebuchadnezzar, as we read in verses 7 to 11 in Ezekiel 26, did everything that was prophesied for him, as you can read in the *Encyclopedia Britannica* or any other ancient historic authorities. But, he did not move the stones, the timber or the soil into the Mediterranean. For about 250 years after Nebuchadnezzar had invaded Tyre, it seemed improbable that that prophecy ever would be completely fulfilled. About two and one half centuries passed!

Then, after two and one half centuries, Alexander the Great came down in his swift march conquering everything before him.

Now, let me quote for you from the *Encyclopedia Britannica* in this same article, "The siege of Tyre by Alexander the Great, 332 B.C." (He had won his battle at Issus, his first great battle in conquering the Persian Empire, in 333 B.C. at Issus.) "New Tyre was built on a small island about half a mile from the main land upon which the old city stood . . . Alexander demolished Old Tyre, and with the debris built a mole 200 feet in breadth across the strait so that he turned that island actually into a peninsula and it became therefore a part of the main land. The reduction of Tyre was not but a matter of time . . . Alex-

ander . . . scaled the city walls. Thus after a siege of seven months the city was taken, 8,000 of the citizens were slaughtered, 2,000 later on were executed, and 30,000 sold into slavery."

What Skeptic's Can't DENY

New Tyre was built right back up again. And later, the Roman Empire at its height of world power attempted to rebuild OLD Tyre. But after constructing a costly amphitheater and two or three large buildings, on the site of OLD Tyre, on the original main land, THE ROMANS WERE FORCED TO ABANDON THE EFFORT, and the amphitheater and the buildings lie in desolate ruins today—mute testimony to the inspiration of the Bible. NOT EVEN THE MIGHT OF ROME AT ITS HEIGHT OF ANCIENT GLORY, COULD BREAK THE SENTENCE pronounced by whoever inspired the prophecy of Ezekiel 26!

Here, in brief, is the history of New Tyre, from the time of Alexander's siege quoted from the same article *Encyclopedia Britannica*: "However, Tyre, with the marvelous vitality of those early times, recovered in a comparatively short time. The city passed under the sway of the Seleucids (198 B.C.) and the Romans (68 B.C.). Herod the Great endowed it with a temple. St. Paul spent a week there while the ship 'unloaded her burden' on his journey from Ephesus to Jerusalem. By the 2nd century it had become the see of a bishop. With

The Handwriting is on the Wall of America NOW!

This nation is being weighed in the balance and found wanting. Here are the shocking FACTS!

by Herbert W. Armstrong

PEOPLE would be *stunned* if they could really see the startling significance *behind* today's world happenings. It's time you get your eyes opened to the staggering prophecies about the United States, and our Western World—events that are going to happen in the next 10 to 20 years.

The handwriting is on the wall of America, Britain and Europe, now. This nation is being weighed in the balance and found wanting!

The prophecies have not been understood. They've been a deep mystery. Even the prophet Daniel who wrote one of the important books of prophecy in the Bible didn't understand all the prophecies that he wrote.

NOT a Mere Child's Story

For centuries, it has been supposed that the account of Belshazzar's feast was a mere child's Bible story. But actually, IT IS A LAST-MINUTE MESSAGE STRAIGHT FROM GOD TO OUR PEOPLES TODAY, and it's a message and a warning dealing with our national life, with *your home*, your family, the next 15 or 20 years.

THIS IS A PROPHECY, and it's a *warning for us, TODAY!* It's a red-hot *staggering* warning for NOW—FOR OUR TIME!

Do you realize that approximately one-third of your Bible is prophecy? That is the neglected one-third, the one-third that you seldom hear preached, and almost never read. And yet, that's where you actually find tomorrow's NEWS HEADLINES written in advance, and explained—their real meaning brought forth, their true significance revealed.

Do you know that no news analyst can understand world events unless he knows the divine purpose being worked out here below? Unless he understands Bible prophecy? And how many news analysts do you know who really understand the prophecies of the Bible?—who understand God's purpose that is being worked out here below.

Now this prophecy of Belshazzar's feast was *not* a message for that day *only*. Do you realize that even Daniel

didn't understand what he was inspired to write? Notice it in Daniel the 12th chapter, the 8th and the 9th verses:

"And I heard, *but I understood not*. And then I said, 'O my Lord, what shall be the end of these things?'" Daniel wrote what an angel had been revealing to him. The angel said, "Go thy way, Daniel, for the words are closed and sealed *till the time of the end*." Even Daniel didn't understand what he was inspired to write.

A WARNING for Today!

Do you realize that the Jews were already *in captivity* when Daniel wrote? This prophecy of the handwriting on the wall was *not* for them. It came too late to save them. They were in this land of Babylon—slaves, and captives. They weren't having their religious services as they had been accustomed to previously in the land of Palestine.

This strange incident is recorded in the 5th chapter of Daniel's prophecy beginning the first verse, from the Moffatt translation, which is a little plainer English than the Authorized Version:

"King Belshazzar gave a great banquet to a thousand of his lords. He was drinking his wine in front of a thousand of them, and when carried away with the wine, Belshazzar gave orders for the gold and the silver vessels that were removed from the temple of Jerusalem by his father Nebuchadnezzar to be brought in so that the king and his lords, his consorts and his concubines might drink out of them."

Bear in mind, these vessels were sacred to Old Testament worship of the Most High Ruler of this entire universe. Now let's look into the next two verses, the 3rd and the 4th:

"The gold and the silver vessels which had been removed from God's house at Jerusalem were brought, and the king and his lords, his consorts and his concubines drank out of them. They drank their wine, and they praised their gods of gold and of silver, of iron and of wood, of bronze, and of stone."

Just stop and think a moment. *What's WRONG with THAT?* Is God jealous? Is God angry? Does He have injured feel-

ings? Is he mad at them?

WHY God Intervenes

Let's understand! When the Creator first formed man, He *created laws*, not merely visible matter as we understand it. He created force and energy. God created every law that we know, the laws of physics, the laws of chemistry—they were created for our happiness.

Also, God created *man* in His image, in the very shape of God. God put *mind* in man, a mind like God's, and yet, MAN'S MIND IS INCOMPLETE. Man's mind is not perfect like God's. It's incomplete. Man was made to need something that he was not created with—that *you* were not born with. Man was made to need contact with God Almighty, to need the very *Spirit*, the very *nature* of God, implanted, infused within, the material mind of man. The human mind is derived from matter, and it can know only material knowledge.

Do you realize that you know *only* that which is transmitted to the mind through the five senses? Our minds, then, are not perfect. We need—yes, the greatest need of man is—the guidance, the knowledge, the wisdom, the love, and the other attributes that come only with contact from God Almighty—with the Most High Ruler who controls every force, every energy, every law that operates in the entire universe. That's the most important truth in all life. That's the lesson that man has not learned. *And that's the living fact that Belshazzar had known, but had rejected, and had put from his mind.*

Now do you realize that man is incapable of governing himself toward peace, toward happiness, toward universal prosperity? Do you doubt that? Nearly 6000 years of human experience has demonstrated that fact! That's the way the Creator designed it. God made man *insufficient* unto himself. God made the human mind fallible, *imperfect, incomplete*.

Man's Mind Incomplete

The human *mind* was made to need the enlightening of the Spirit of God. God made this contact with Him

available. He freely offered to Adam and to Eve His Holy Spirit, symbolized by the tree of life. But also, God made man a free moral agent, and God *decreed*, as the Supreme Ruler of the entire universe, that *man must CHOOSE WHICH WAY* he is going to go, whether he will obey God, and will, voluntarily, put himself under the government of God, and enjoy the blessings of that government, or whether he will reject it, and go the way that *seems right to his imperfect mind and suffer the consequences!*

God had revealed all of this to Adam. He had revealed this basic truth to His nation Israel. He had revealed it to Nebuchadnezzar and to Belshazzar. He had revealed that God's way of life is for OUR GOOD. But you will notice in Deuteronomy 5:32-33, Moffatt translation:

"Be mindful," says God, "to do what the Eternal your God has ordered you. Always follow the straight road of life which the Eternal your God has laid down before you that you may live, and THAT THINGS MAY GO WELL WITH YOU."

Isn't that what *we ALL want*, that things may go well with us? That's what God's law is *for*. When are we going to wake up?

The first two commandments of God's way of life guard against idolatry, because *idolatry separates man from God*, and man NEEDS God and everything he can receive from God.

Belshazzar and the lords that he had with him were mocking God. They were turning from God. They were turning from *their own good*, from the good of the whole nation they ruled! THAT'S why God was concerned.

How about *you*? How about America, Britain, the peoples in Continental Europe, and in South Africa today? Is God concerned with us?

Notice how the great God of love moved swiftly, even as He had, in the life of Nebuchadnezzar, that men might learn the vital lesson—*that WE might learn, in time TODAY*, before our ways bring destruction on *our* nations.

Why This Warning Was Written!

This warning came TOO LATE to save Belshazzar. This account was written FOR YOU AND FOR ME TODAY! It wasn't written for the Jews of that day. It was written for us today, and WE HAVE TIME TO HEED. We have time to escape the destruction that is now threatening you and me—if we wake up.

Notice how the miracle-working God acted to bring saving knowledge at that time. Notice Daniel 5:5 once again. But let's read right on down to the 23rd verse just skimming over it.

"Now that very hour the fingers of a man's hand appeared, writing on the

plaster of the royal palace opposite the lampstand. The king saw the palm of the hand as it wrote, and the king's fresh color paled. His thoughts alarmed him. The muscles of his thighs relaxed, and his knees struck one against another."

I'd think they WOULD, wouldn't you? What would happen to you if you'd see just a hand, *no body* with it, just a hand writing on your wall in some language you couldn't understand?

"The king cried aloud for the enchanters, the astrologers, to be brought in. But not one of the king's sages could read the writing or explain the meaning of it to the king. At this, king Belshazzar was greatly alarmed. His color paled, and his lords were *at their wits' end!* Then the queen mother came into the banquet hall. The queen mother said, 'O king, live forever. Within your realm is a man wherein is the Spirit of the god's divine.'" They didn't know about the true God. They thought there were many gods. "In the days of your father," she said, "king Nebuchadnezzar made him master of the magicians. Let Daniel be called, and he will explain the meaning of this." Then Daniel was brought into the king's presence. And the king said to Daniel, 'So you are the Daniel belonging to the exiles of Judah whom the king, my father, brought from Judah. I hear that the spirit of the gods themselves is in you, the light of learning and rare wisdom is found in you.'

I think I detect a little bit of sarcasm in that, don't you? Now he said,

"If you can read the writing and let me know the meaning of it, you will wear a purple robe, and wear a chain about your neck, and you will rank third within the realm'."

The REAL MEANING

"Then Daniel made answer to the king, 'Keep your gifts for yourself, and give your rewards to someone else. However, I will read the writing for the king, and let him know the meaning of it. O king, the *Most High God* gave king Nebuchadnezzar, your father, the realm'."

He is showing here once again that *God* is the Most High Ruler. *He* makes and unmakes nations. *God* is the Most High Ruler. *God* is the One who reigns and who rules over the nations of this world, whether we realize it or not.

God has made us free moral agents. Up to a certain extent, God certainly allows us to go our own way; but when God chooses, *He can intervene* in the affairs of nations, and He does cause the rise and fall of nations. He did seat Nebuchadnezzar upon that throne. God seems to have gone away, and we don't realize these things today any more than they seemed to realize them then.

So he said, "The *Most High God*

gave Nebuchadnezzar, your father, the realm with its greatness and glory and majesty, and owing to the greatness that He bestowed upon him'" (that is, the greatness that GOD bestowed upon Nebuchadnezzar) "'all races, nations, and folk and tongue, trembled in fear of him. But when his mind became proud, and his spirit became defiant so that he bore himself haughtily, he was deposed from his royal throne and deprived from his glory. He was driven away from human beings. His mind was made like *the mind of an animal* TILL HE LEARNED THAT THE MOST HIGH GOD RULES OVER THE REALM OF MEN, and that He'" (that is, *God*) "'SETS OVER IT ANYONE THAT HE CHOOSES. And yet you, his son, Belshazzar, have not humbled yourself. THOUGH YOU KNEW all this, you uplifted yourself *against* the Lord of heaven by having the vessels of His house brought in before you, and from them, you and your lords, your consorts, and your concubines have drunk wine, praising gods of silver, and of gold, and of bronze, iron, wood, and stone which can neither see, nor hear, nor understand."

Don't you see that Daniel is showing that the true God has mind, *perfect* mind, almighty power; who sees, who knows, who directs things, who MAKES AND UNMAKES NATIONS?

"You," he said, "*have not glorified the God who HOLDS IN HIS OWN POWER your breath and your life and all your destiny!*"

Do YOU realize that the same God holds YOUR *very breath* and YOUR *very life* in His own power?

Think of it! Here were supposedly intelligent men, rulers over a world-ruling empire, forsaking and rejecting the living God whose help they needed so sorely, foolishly toasting, and praising an *inanimate* object which could not see, could not speak, had no intelligence, a thing made by the hands of man.

Human beings try to *create God*, when actually *God created US*, and we need to realize it.

God Has NOT Gone Away

I want you to realize the *purpose* of this very dramatic incident. God is here shaking man into a realization that the Creator is the SUPER RULER of *almighty, divine power* FOR OUR GOOD. God hasn't gone way off. God Almighty is vitally concerned with YOUR WELFARE!

King Belshazzar had fallen into the illusion that grips most of *you* TODAY. God had become UNREAL! God seemed to be FAR OFF! God seemed like a *myth*. Their minds were turned only to the things that they could see, *material* objects, the things of *materialism*. A material mind only knows material

things, and God *does* seem like a myth, far off.

God ENDED *that world-kingdom!* God makes and unmakes nations and empires. God Almighty *rules* over all government and God *right now*—this very fateful hour—is weighing our Christian-professing world in the *balance*, and *we are being found WANTING.*

Today we are going the way of ancient Babylon. Today, we admire, we adore, we serve *idols* of *wood* and of *metals* in the FORM of automobiles, new gadgets, labour-saving devices; new forms of entertainment, new, more modern homes—while we think only of God Almighty for about one hour on Sunday. As God prophesied of some of our people, we PROFESS godliness, and Christianity, as you read in Isaiah 48:1. We SWEAR by the name of the Eternal, and we make mention of God in our prayers, but not in truth, not in righteousness.

Our lands everywhere are dotted with churches, and yet, as we read in Isaiah 2:7-8—and this is certainly true of us today: "Their land is full of silver and of gold, neither is there any end of their treasures. . . . Neither is there any end of their chariots. Their land is also full of idols, and they worship the work of their own hands, that which their own fingers have made."

Think of it. *That fits our Christendom today.* We sanctimoniously practice a form of godliness, but as you read in II Timothy 4:5, we DENY *the power of God.* And it's prophesied in Isaiah 7:14 that we *never* put our *hearts* into our prayers.

Crime is mounting in our land. Juvenile delinquency is running rampant. Homes are broken up in divorce. We are hell-bent on a moral toboggan slide.

Plunging Headlong to Destruction

Are we any better than Belshazzar? Are we any better than ancient Babylon? We are going the way of Babylon, and we are going the way of Rome—to a fall. We are plunging *head-on* to the greatest fall that any nation has ever suffered *and we're not aware of it!*

We are so smug and complacent, we are so well satisfied with ourselves, we fancy that we're good Christians. Yes, we attend church. We sit there and imagine that we're worshipping God while we hear some beautiful music and a 25-minute sermon.

What an *awakening* is going to jolt this nation very soon, if we don't heed God's last warning and come to our senses.

I tell you on the authority of Jesus Christ, we're going to be *catastrophically* punished very soon for our own good unless we wake up.

Notice the prophecy in Isaiah 13:19-20:

"And Babylon, the glory of the kingdoms, the beauty of the Chaldees excellency shall be as when God overthrew Sodom and Gomorrah."

This prophecy was delivered before this happened to Babylon. This was before Judah's captivity. Isaiah was writing it. He said, "It [that is, Babylon] shall *never be inhabited*, neither shall it be dwelt in from generation to generation, neither shall the Arabian pitch tent there, neither shall the shepherds make their folds there."

Do you realize *that has ABSOLUTELY happened.* There is nothing but barren waste over there now. A superstition exists among Arabs against pitching a tent there in ancient Babylon. No Arab will do it.

It WILL Happen to US — Unless . . .

Do you know that for centuries the site of ancient Babylon has been TOTALLY DESOLATE? Only ancient ruins remain. *God Almighty said in Bible prophecy that Babylon would go down.* It would be destroyed. It would never be rebuilt again.

It happened!

Do you realize that God Almighty said of Egypt when it was the *greatest* power, the *greatest* nation on earth, that it was going to be INVADED and CON-

QUERED—that Egypt would go down to a second rate power and that *never again* would it be ruled by a native-born Egyptian—and THAT HAPPENED!

Egypt is still a second rate power, and from that time on down to now, there has never been a native born Egyptian ruling over Egypt.

Do you realize that God said of Tyre, which was the New York of the ancient world, the greatest commercial seaport city of the world at that time, that no man would ever live there, that its rock, its timber, and stone would be thrown into the Mediterranean Sea, and it would become a place for the spreading of *fisher's nets?* THAT HAPPENED. I have shown you pictures on Television of it with the fisher's nets there today.

Of Rome—even before it was built—God foretold its doom, its fall. There would be seven resurrections, and today we are waiting for that seventh resurrection—but even worse, *today we are going the way of ancient Rome!*

The *handwriting* is upon the wall of America, of Christendom, this hour. There is protection for you if you will open your eyes to God's prophecies—if you will study your Bible, *if* you will surrender your life to your Creator, *if* you will only come to Him in *obedience* in living faith through Jesus Christ!

The CRUCIFIXION was not on "Good Friday"

(Continued from page 7)

will read this in Josephus' *Antiquities* XVIII, iv, 2.

Since Pilate was in a *great hurry* to reach Rome, he must have left shortly before the death of the Emperor which occurred in March, 37 A.D. Ten years before this is about the beginning of A.D. 27 at which time Pilate began his procuratorship.

Here is what the *International Standard Bible Encyclopedia* says in its article "Pilate": The assumed date for Pilate is usually "from 26 to 36 A.D. . . . Tiberius died on March 16, 37 A.D. Such a delay [in Pilate's journey to Rome] is inconceivable in view of the circumstances; hence . . . the period of his procuratorship [is] 27-27 A.D."

The *New Schaff-Herzog Encyclopedia* states, under the article "Pilate": "He probably succeeded Gratus 27 A.D. and ended his procuratorship early in 37; it is not likely that Pilate required more than a year for his return journey to Rome . . . and he arrived there after Tiberius' death, which took place Mar. 16, 37."

Now notice. As Pilate did not begin his governorship till about the commencement of 27 A.D. and as Tiberius' 15th year ended about April of that year, *John the Baptist must have begun his ministry in the first few months of 27 A.D.*

Jesus, therefore, could *not* have begun his ministry earlier than the autumn of 27 A.D. Neither could his ministry HAVE BEGUN AFTER THE PASSOVER in the spring of A.D. 28 because the temple was already 46 years in building. Therefore Jesus must have begun to preach in the autumn of A.D. 27. THERE IS NO OTHER DATE THAT WOULD BE CONSISTENT WITH ALL THE PROVABLE FACTS.

To find the date of the crucifixion, we now need only find how long the ministry of Jesus lasted.

Proof Seven: How Long Was the Ministry?

The prophet Daniel foretold that the length of Christ's ministry *at his first coming*—to confirm the new covenant

—would be one-half of a prophetic week of seven years. In the midst of that prophetic week he caused the need of sacrifices for sin to cease by offering himself for the sins of the world. He was "cut off" in the midst of the week, making the ministry at his first coming *three and one-half years* (Daniel 9:26, 27). "Know therefore and understand, that from the going forth of the commandment to restore and to build Jerusalem unto the Messiah the Prince shall be seven weeks, and threescore and two weeks"—69 prophetic weeks or 483 years in all—"And after threescore and two weeks shall Messiah be cut off, but not for himself. . . . And He shall confirm the covenant with many for a week"—this prophecy is not yet completely fulfilled—why? because "in the midst of the week He shall cause the sacrifice and the oblation to cease"—He died for the sins of the world in the middle of the week.

In a sense this is a dual prophecy. Christ died in the midst of the prophetic week of seven years, after 3½ years of ministry; but He also died *in the midst of the week—Wednesday!*

Now let's turn to the gospels to find the proof that Jesus Christ's ministry was exactly three and one-half years. There would have to be three passovers during the three years of his ministry, and a fourth on the last day of his earthly life—the crucifixion.

The first passover occurred in A.D. 28 and is recorded in John 2:23. "Now when He was at Jerusalem at the passover, during the feast, many believed

in his name." During the following months Jesus spent time baptizing in Judaea (John 3:22). "After these things came Jesus and his disciples into the land of Judaea, and there tarried with them, and baptized."

The next note of time is found in John 4:35, which indicates a *lapse of time of eight months*—bringing us to December A.D. 28. *It was only "four months"* until the NEXT HARVEST season which always began about the week following the passover each spring—approximately the beginning of April. Notice Jesus' wording: "Say not ye that there are yet *four months*, and then cometh *the harvest?*" If you read on you will observe that Jesus told them the spiritual harvest of souls was ripe already, even though the literal physical harvest was still four months away.

In John 5:1 Jesus again appears at Jerusalem to celebrate a festival. "After these things was a feast of the Jews; and Jesus went up to Jerusalem." The festival is not named. It could have been a passover or a later festival in A.D. 29. Under no circumstances could this feast have been any of the autumn festivals of A.D. 28 because they fall in the months of September and October—months which were already passed according to John 4:35.

Two passovers have now occurred. Again in John 6:4 is another passover which brings us to a Wednesday in the year 30 A.D. "Now the passover, the feast of the Jews, was nigh." This was the third passover in Jesus' ministry. The fourth and final passover is recorded by

all the gospel writers (John 11:55). "Now the passover of the Jews was near: and many went up to Jerusalem out of the country before the passover, to purify themselves."

This last passover completed a ministry of three and one-half years—from autumn of A.D. 27 to the Spring of A.D. 31—THE VERY YEAR WHEN THE PASSOVER UPON WHICH CHRIST WAS CRUCIFIED FELL ON WEDNESDAY.

Since Jesus began his 3½-year ministry not later than 27 A.D., he could not have been crucified so late as 33 A.D. *There was therefore no passover which occurred on a Friday during his entire ministry!*

Yes, history proves false the tradition that Jesus was crucified on Friday and rose on Easter Sunday!

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!

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