



# Bible Student's Notebook™

## The Herald of His Grace

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Volume 25  
Issue 622

# The Mystery and Its Hope

## God's Highest Purpose in this Present Interval

by — J.H. Evans

No truth is so little known as the truth of "the Mystery." It is the only thing that will lead the heart away from all of the systems of religion, because we can see how inconsistent they are with such a line of things as is revealed in connection with "the Mystery." The truth of "His Body" is a very practical thing; and will admit of nothing that does not agree with the glory of its exalted "Head." We cannot bear testimony to this truth if we are in any way linked with that which denies our unity with Him where He is. We have been chosen in Him before the overthrow of the world; we have been marked out beforehand for Sonship; we have been quickened, raised and exalted together with Him; we are accepted in the Beloved One; we are God's workmanship created in Christ Jesus unto good works; we grow up in Him and are looking forward to be like Him.



through the coming ages. Here we are lifted up from the Earth into a heavenly scene; we are outside of the sphere and scene of the Davidic Kingdom. Here man and all of his religious forms and ceremonies are unknown. Here God is concerned alone with His own purpose, His own will, His own Son, and it is in these only that we are truly blessed.

It is in the Prison Epistles that the believer today, who has been enlightened as to "the Mystery," will find everything that will fortify him against all of the various winds of teaching, which are through the sleight of men in unprincipled cunningness, with a view to systematize error (Ephesians 4:14), as opposed to the purpose and counsel of God set forth in His Word. *God's highest purpose in this present interval is plainly expressed in Ephesians, Philippians and Colossians*, and relates to a plan which is beyond and above the question of a millennial rule of heaven over the earth. The purpose has to do with Christ as the future Head of the Universe, and His Body as His fullness (*plērōma* [Ephesians 1:23]). All that we have in Philippians 3:14, 20-21 will have to be fulfilled before the more public scene of the *parousia*, which, owing to the unbelief of Israel, had to be postponed, not abrogated, for the meeting in the air of the *parousia* will, after some years, follow upon Philippians

(see *HOPE*, page 5397)

All of these things we get in the epistle to the Ephesians, which also gives truths descriptive of the age in which we live. There we find a description of the "New Man," the work of God, through Whom we are united to His Son in glory, and are made joyful partakers of His abounding grace. A blessed God, blessing His called ones with every spiritual blessing in the heavenlies in Christ. As to time, before the overthrow of the world; as to place, in the celestial realms; as to position, Sonship; as to condition and state, holy and without blame before Him in love; as to acceptance, in the Beloved One; as to standing, in the Christ; as to instrument, His precious blood; as to the future, to the praise of His glorious grace

The Mystery and Its Hope.....	5393
The Book of Job - Part 3: The Evil that Came upon Job .....	5394
Editorial: Time and Writing .....	5398



# The Book of Job

Part 3:

## The Evil that Came upon Job

by — Vladimir Gelesnoff (1877-1921)

We are now approaching the great central part of the Book of Job (1:6-42:11), in order to learn the process, means and agents through whose instrumentality the “end of the Lord” was brought about.



consists of two pairs of visions. The first of each pair is a vision “in Heaven;” and the second of each pair is a vision “on Earth.”

The present installment deals only with the first section of this great part; namely, the one describing Satan’s role.<sup>1</sup> This consists of four visions – alternate scenes in Heaven and on Earth – and we must get a complete view in order to embrace them all, and view them as a whole. Related to each other, these visions stand thus:

### 1:6-12. Vision in Heaven.

Satan before Jehovah.

### 1:13-22. Scene on Earth.

Satan destroying Job’s property.

### 2:1-6. Vision in Heaven.

Satan before Jehovah.

### 2:7-10. Scene on Earth.

Satan smiting Job.

From this arrangement we glean that this section

1. [Editor:] see:

– *The Role of the Adversary in God’s Purpose*, James A. Webb, [Bible Student’s Notebook #280](#).

If we examine these more closely, we shall find that they are correlative: viz., the vision “in Heaven” is preliminary to, and explanatory of, the events which follow “on Earth.”

Things are seen “in Heaven,” and words are uttered which prepare us for what is about to take place “on Earth.” Each vision “in Heaven” is preparatory to the scene afterwards witnessed “on Earth,” and what is seen “on Earth” is the carrying out of the vision seen and the words heard “in Heaven.”

This alternation of heavenly visions with earthly scenes institutes a parallel between the visible and invisible spheres.

The procedure in the latter is mirrored in the former, and the movements of our globe seem but echoes of events transpiring in the adjacent supernal spheres.

These visions “in Heaven” (1:6-12; 2:1-6) translate us to the invisible realms. The curtain of limitation is momentarily lifted, and we catch a glimpse of fact on a level to which our experience is foreign, and an ex-



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This reprint of two historical works from the 19th century examines Scripture passages taking the reader through a logical train of thought proving universal reconciliation.

hibition of transactions on a plane to which our sight is unaccustomed. Heaven's court is in session, and the Lord is surrounded by the assembly of holy ones.

The sons of God<sup>2</sup> pass in review before the throne, and report on the situation of the provinces under their charge. Satan comes among them, and is questioned as to his whereabouts and intentions. Job's case is broached: his future is in the balances.

Satan proposes an implacable trial which Jehovah approves.<sup>3</sup> The word goes forth from God,

*Behold, all that he hath is in thine hand (1:12).*

Armed with this decree, Satan darted to the land of Uz, and in a single moment concentrated the forces at his disposal to bring about a colossal ruin which reduced Job from a state of opulence to one of absolute pauperism.

Let us now glance at these earthly scenes and note their unique construction.

### Satan Is Sent to Test Job Chapter 1

:14	Arrival of the first messenger.	<i>Blow from Earth</i>
:15a	Incursion of the Sabceans.	
:15b	Oxen and asses stolen; servants slain.	
:15c	Only I am escaped.	
:16a	Arrival of the second messenger.	<i>Blow from Heaven</i>
:16b	The fire of God.	
:16c	Sheep and servants consumed.	
:16d	Only I am escaped.	
:17a	Arrival of the third messenger.	<i>Blow from Earth</i>
:17b	Incursion of the Chaldeans.	
:17c	Camels stolen; servants slain.	
:17d	Only I am escaped.	
:18	Arrival of the fourth messenger.	<i>Blow from Heaven</i>
:19a	Storm blast.	
:19b	Children killed.	
:19c	Only I am escaped.	

- [Editor:] *I.e.*, angels; see:
  - *Companion Bible* appendix 23, *The Sons of God*, Bible Student's Press (see order form); also *The Spirit World*, A.E. Knoch, [Bible Student's Notebook #520](#).
- [Editor:] For more information on God's absolute sovereignty over the spirit realm see:
  - *The Deity of God, Part 4: God and Satan*, John Essex, [Bible Student's Notebook #350](#), or the entire book, *The Deity of God*, John Essex, Bible Student's Press (see order form).

This beautiful parallelism affords an insight into the administration of the kingdom of darkness, and shows the extensive and complete network of its organization moving with clockwork precision. These four inflictions (alternate blows from Earth and Heaven) throw an interesting light on Satan's strange personality and work.

It shows Satan's manipulation of the "course of the world" and using it for the promotion of his schemes; and as "the prince of the power of the air," hurling the elements against the victims of his rage.

The second scene on Earth (2:7-13) is much simpler in structure and describes the physical sufferings of Job under the direct touch of Satan's hand.

The severe experiences of the patriarch have proved a source of perplexity to many. Their perplexities, we are persuaded, arise from attempting to separate process from aftereffect, which are inseparable in the very nature of things, and consider them *per se*.

The process is mysterious and inscrutable; the aftereffect is patent and palpable. If therefore the end is certain and beneficent, the process – however perplexing and apparently incongruous – is justified from the results achieved. The scientific experimenter may not know why a certain mode of complex probing is necessary; he knows the results and so submits to the laborious process with resignation and devotion. The husbandman, too, does not know why death must take place before fruit-bearing, but he knows the fact.

The inevitableness of death is unsearchable – the harvest is real; mysteries all, and yet established facts, patent to the most ignorant, while defying the explanation of the most learned. We have learned by experience and observation that processes are indispensable, and so judge of their value in the light of aftereffect. We ask, then, if this principle is widely recognized, and acted upon, with respect to the affairs of this life, why should it not be equally recognized in dealing with spiritual problems?

Seen by itself, from the ordinary point of view, Job's "captivity" is meaningless; considered in the light of the "end," it is full of purpose. The way was ►

rugged, the end happy; the process painful, the issue wholesome; the pathway dark, the goal glorious. Who would not willingly submit to Job's ordeal, if he could only be brought to the same "end"? Job stood in danger of overestimating the accessories of life, and Jehovah made use of Satan to divert his life to divine courses. The ordeal was no more ruthless than the danger it averted.

The work of Satan, the prince of evil, in reference to the saints may be gathered from the case of Peter. Satan obtained him by asking (as he obtained Job long before) that he might sift him as wheat (Luke 22:31). Peter, full of self-assertion, retorted:

*Lord, with thee I am ready to go both to prison and to death (Luke 22:33).*

To this the Lord rejoined,

*I tell thee, Peter, the cock shall not crow this day, until thou shalt thrice deny that thou knowest Me (:34).*

It was Peter's privilege – nay his duty – to examine himself in the light of the Master's Word and judge his self-assertion. Had he done so, the sifting

would have been averted; for Satan has no power over a saint walking in self-judgment. However, as Peter, in spite of the Master's warning, persisted in his course, Satan was employed to administer the lesson which the Word could not impart because of Peter's stubbornness. The divine purpose is that the saints should become "*conformable unto his death;*" and if they fail to reach this place of blessing in communion with Him, God will empower Satan to bring them there.

Satan's blows were meant for evil, but God "turned" them to Job's blessing and Satan's defeat. The inconsistent tactics of the evil one which frustrate his own plans are not due to any *faux pas*<sup>4</sup> of his, but God is the author of his confusion of mind; Satan and his emissaries are *forced* to carry out the divine will, even though it will lead to the downfall of his authority over humankind.

*(to be continued)*

**TOPICS:**

**Major:** Job; Satan; Spiritual Warfare; Sovereignty; Free Will; Suffering  
**Minor:** Angels; Spirit World

4. *i.e.*, blunder.

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**HOPE** (continued from front page)

3:21, which will have its culmination in the *completion* of "the Mystery."

To be translated into the kingdom of the Son of His Love; to be of the "New Man," members of His Body; to be of the spiritual unity; to be taken outside of the sphere of signs and wonders, and where symbols and shadows, carnal ordinances and ceremonies, have no place; to be complete in *the Christ*; to be expecting at any moment our calling above; to be looking forward to the time when we shall be manifested with Him in glory; to be of the spiritual circle where spiritual worship can be offered from the hidden man of the heart; and where faith, hope and love reign supreme. It is there that things unseen and eternal, especially the Living God Himself, fill the mind with peace, and the heart with wonder and delight, so that we rest entirely satisfied. Can the heart of man conceive or formulate anything more glorious than the love, the riches of grace, and the transcendent glory which are still being offered to the sons of men, as set forth in the epistle to the Ephesians? Every saint will enjoy God in the relationship in which He has made Himself known, if he will but understand the dispensation in which he is placed.

Let it be ours to heed the teachings of the Holy Spirit by Paul. He did not reckon that he had practically learned everything that had been revealed unto him,

... but this one thing I do, forgetting the things which are behind, and reaching forth to those things which are before, I press toward the mark for the prize of the calling on high of God in Christ Jesus. As many, therefore, as are perfect [initiated] should be of this mind, and if in anything ye think differently, this God will reveal unto you (Philippians 3:13-15).

It is more evident than ever that Satan's attack will always be directed against the purpose of God as revealed in this present "Dispensation of the Mystery," and with this in mind we desire to fix our attention on Paul's Prison Epistles and learn for our warning and safety what is revealed therein. We can thank God for the grace that has called us into the enjoyment of these grand truths connected with our place in Christ in the heavenlies, although they entail suffering even from those who profess to be His children (II Timothy 3:12).<sup>1</sup>

— *The Mystery and its Hope* (1850), pages 58-62 (edited)

**TOPICS:**

**Major:** Mystery; Hope; Ephesians; Paul's Epistles; Purpose  
**Minor:** Glory; Identification; Headship

1. [Editor:] For an expansive article covering some of these themes see,

— *Love Transcendent*, A.E. Knoch, [Bible Student's Notebook #615](#).



72 pp, BK.  
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## *The Myth of Easter* "The Christian Mythology" Series

by — Clyde L. Pilkington, Jr.

There are many myths in Christendom. They have managed to master their own form of mythology. Easter is an example of such a religious fable.

If Easter is the celebration of the historical fact of our Lord Jesus Christ's resurrection, then why does its date change every year? Historical dates do not fluctuate; but Easter Sunday can fall anywhere between March 22 and April 25. Have you ever wondered why?

It is one of the glaring clues that something is seriously wrong with Christendom. The Western Christian religion can't seem to get anything right when it comes to even the simplest of Scriptural truths.

Have you ever really considered if there is any scriptural basis of Good Friday or Easter Sunrise Services that are so commonly observed by the religious community? Additionally, have you ever considered what Easter Rabbits and Easter Eggs have to do with the resurrection of Christ or teachings of God's Word?

Although millions of people are of the opinion that Easter and all of its customs are Christian and originated as a result of Christ's resurrection, it is a historical fact that the observance of Easter long antedates Christianity by centuries.



# Editor's Desk

## Time and Writing

For me, writing is an arduous process. I've seen authors typing away at frantic speeds, with flood-like thoughts flowing through to their keyboards. For me, my keyboard is utilized at a snail's pace, not for lack of skill, as I took typing class in high school. Instead, it is the slow, meticulous thought-process that slows me to a near crawl. I can spend many hours on a single page, causing me to feel inadequate in this time-consuming process.

For the past few years I have been reading my way through the bound copies of the *Unsearchable Riches* magazines. Imagine my surprise when I reached volume 18, from 1927, and read these words penned by A.E. Knoch (1874-1965):

Few can imagine the amount of work involved in the writing of the articles. We have spent more than a day in preparing a single page.

What comfort I found in reading these two sentences; for, at times, a week's worth of my writing efforts can be taken up by a single article. Now, granted, Knoch was quite the superior wordsmith, which is adequately demonstrated by his material. Nonetheless, these intimate lines regarding his personal labors inspired in me a measure of relief and encouragement.

As I reflect on my own writing efforts, I ceaselessly thank God for the humbling call to express to others small glimpses from His grand storehouse of truth. In turn, I am continuously grateful for those few who faithfully co-labor with me in gracious giving. Their sacrificial ministry grants me time to devote to writing. God turns our "mites"<sup>1</sup> – both yours and mine – into a lasting investment which will never be diminished. Let us never forget that we're depositing wealth into the divine treasury, thus assuring us true capital lasting for the ages.

Your indebted co-laborer,

Clyde L. Pilkington, Jr.

1. Luke 21:2.

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- the "preaching of Jesus Christ, according to the revelation of the mystery, which was kept secret in ages past" (Romans 16:25);
- true freedom and liberty apart from law (Galatians 5:1);
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