



Studies in the Life of the Church

No erroneous doctrine has had a more universal vogue in all branches of the Christian church than that of the inherent immortality of man. Certainly none figures, in some form or other, more persistently in all man's religious concepts from the dawn of history. The "thou shalt not surely die" fallacy, which involves some form of belief in man's immortality, survives and appears everywhere.

When J. Garnier produced his large and remarkable work, *The Worship of the Dead*, he undertook a study of the influence of pagan idolatry "on the fate and fortunes of the human race." All through his fine work there is evidence that the immortality of the soul in some form is fundamental, because "the originals of the pagan gods were human beings who had once lived upon the earth."—*Preface, page vi.*

Many Greek philosophers had fantastic ideas about the soul, Plato setting some of them forth in his *Phaedo*.

Socrates is much more definite and "he endeavours first to prove that the soul existed before birth, and then that it will exist after death."—*Dr. Beet's "Immortality of the Soul," page 2.*

Robespierre, famous and violent lawyer, leader of the Jacobins during the French Revolution, in the year 1794 when he had the worship of reason established, reported to the Convention on the "Relation Between Religious and Moral Ideas and Republican

No. 15. Some Distinctive Doctrines of the Advent Message:

e. Life Immortal in Christ Only

By H. W. LOWE

Principles." In this he "affirmed the immortality of the soul not merely as an idea beneficial to society, but as an idea required by justice." The Roman Catholics claim that in this declaration from the fiery revolutionary "he was thinking and acting as a man . . . whose parents and their parents back through forty or fifty generations had been Catholic, and who had himself received his first idea of religion and morality as a pupil of the Jesuits."—*The Tablet, London, March 18, 1944.*

Now the Book of God nowhere calls man "immortal." Once, and once only, we find the word in the English New Testament: "Now unto the King, eternal, immortal . . ." 1 Tim. 1:17.

Nowhere in the Old Testament can we find either of the words immortal, immortality. So it seems clear that whatever proof the devotees of this doctrine claim, it must rest upon the presumptive evidence of either synonymous words or phrases in English, or of variant translations of the Greek.

Here we do find some words and expressions of interest. God is called incorruptible (Rom. 1:

23); so are the crown of reward (1 Cor. 9:25), the resurrected righteous (1 Cor. 15:52), the Word of God (1 Peter 1:23), the spirit of meekness (1 Peter 3:4),—all come from the same Greek word *aphthartos*. But never do we find it translated to mean an immortal man.

Five times we read in the New Testament of immortality:

Rom. 2:7. God will give it to those who seek it by patient continuance in well doing.

1 Cor. 15:53, 54. Corruptible man must first put on incorruption and mortal man must put on immortality—at the resurrection.

1 Tim. 6:16. God *only* has immortality.

2 Tim. 1:10. Jesus has brought life and immortality to light through His Gospel.

A few other Greek words of similar meaning are found, but not one calls man immortal this side of the resurrection morning.

The plain teaching of God's Word is that God did not create man immortal, thereby running the risk of having immortal sinners in His universe, but that, conditional on obedience to Him in this life, God would give to man at the resurrection the crowning gift of "endless permanence" in the enjoyment of life as it is in Jesus.

"Immortality, promised to man on condition of obedience, has been forfeited by transgression. Adam could not transmit to his posterity that which he did not possess; and there could be no hope for the

fallen race had not God, by the sacrifice of His Son, brought immortality within their reach. . . . And only through Christ can immortality be obtained. Every man may come into possession of this priceless blessing if he will comply with the conditions."—*Great Controversy*, page 533.

Through the completed atonement Adam will be reinstated in his first dominion and all the redeemed will become likewise perfect and immortal.

We do not often before the eighteenth century hear of scholars saying much on the orthodox side of this question. It was exceedingly risky! But Wm. Orme, in *The Practical Works of Richard Baxter*, page 434 (published in London about the time the famous Edward Irving was thundering forth the second advent) says this:

"The doctrine of the immateriality and immortality of the soul, was first attacked in English, as far as I know in a pamphlet, published at Amsterdam, in 1643, and republished, enlarged, at London in 1655. 'Man's Mortallitie, wherein 'tis proved, both theologically and philosophically, that the whole man (as a rational creature) is a compound wholly mortal, contrary to the common distinction of soul and body: and that the present going of the soul into Heaven or Hell is a meer fiction; and that at the resurrection is the beginning of our immortallitie, and then, actual condemnation and salvation, and not before,' etc."

"The author signs himself 'R.O.' . . . I believe he was Richard Overton, one of the fiercest republicans of the commonwealth."

Thereafter more and more courageous men came out boldly in their searches for truth in God's Word. The hour had come for God to re-illumine men's minds on many great truths before He could bring the world to final judgment. The "time of the end" was near and God found earnest men searching His Word. They were concerned about questions such as: Were we in existence before this life? Must we believe the wicked burn for ever? Is hell-fire God's way of deterring men from sin? What does the future hold? And a gracious God never finds men crying out for light without a true and merciful response.

Notes from the Union President

CALENDAR REFORM

A CEASELESS stream of Calendar Reform propaganda has poured forth during the war years. Recently Rear Admiral Beamish held forth on the virtues of the Rational Calendar, which would do a lot of good things, but would also disrupt the seven-day weekly cycle.

In answering him, Mr. Peake, Under-Secretary for the Home Department, pointed out (1) That many churches would strongly object "to any interference with the succession of seventh days as our Sundays." (2) That the Rational Calendar would deprive 500,000 people of their birthdays, etc.

During the comments about "this question of the seventh day," a member asked if the house could be told "about the Seventh-Day Adventists." (*Hansard*, March 17, 1944).

OVERSEAS NEWS

PASTOR W. E. READ writes encouragingly of the progress of the work in his field. He mentions six groups of lepers, and developments in the French islands. We reciprocate his prayerful wishes.

Pastor Stanley Bull has arrived to take charge of the secondary school in Kingston, Jamaica, and we hope his family may soon join him.

IN ARMY CAMPS

A REQUEST from an American soldier for music hymnals reveals the story of two regular weekly services conducted by one of our young men with the chaplain sitting in! One young man is ready for baptism, and another showed real interest when we were with them recently. The young man running the meetings, incidentally is an ex-colporteur College student. All these young men are in medical units and have every consideration for Sabbath observance.

THE PASSING OF TWO PIONEERS

OUR older members will regret to hear that Pastor W. W. Prescott, in charge of our work here many years ago, passed away in his

eighty-ninth year at Washington. A student, and a man of deep religious convictions and Christian culture, Professor Prescott had travelled much and leaves a host of friends and admirers.

Also reported is the death of Ellery Robinson, who headed the first company of colporteurs sent to this country from America. Pastor Bartlett indicates that the prime requisite in those days was not the gift of salesmanship, but a willingness to go out to work for God. He adds that Ellery Robinson was an ideal pioneer leader, a man of sterling character, greatly beloved. He was nearly ninety when he died and leaves a wife to await a glad reunion.

H. W. LOWE.

South England Conference

President: Pastor G. D. King
Office Address: 780 St. Albans Road, Watford
Telephone: Garston (Watford) 2213-4.

Notes from the President

MESSENGER readers will perhaps have noticed that the recent coastal ban affects practically the whole of the coastline of the South England Conference. In actual fact, at least twenty-four of our churches or companies are in the area banned. This represents a large proportion of our membership, and in several of these places there are groups of interested persons preparing for baptism. Needless to say, these are tense days throughout the whole of South England, which has now become in very fact the "second-front" base.

Undoubtedly the coming days of spring and summer will see developments which will greatly affect our membership and work, and we ask you to sincerely remember this fact in your prayers. We continue to make our plans and endeavour to work our programme as under normal conditions, but we must be prepared for any eventuality. We are hopefully praying that coming events will not too seriously jeopardize our evangelistic and Ingathering campaigns, and to that end we invite your prayerful interest.

BRITISH ADVENT MESSENGER

EVANGELISTIC CAMPAIGNS

ENCOURAGING beginnings have been made in the following campaigns:

Bath	L. Shaw
Ealing	W. W. Armstrong
New Malden	G. Roper
Stonehouse	I. McGougan
Cosham	E. Cox

In each of these places the attendances were good and the degree of interest is reported as being excellent. In other places the evangelists are making plans to begin in the middle of April, having been delayed through lack of housing accommodation. This problem has not yet been solved in two large cities where we have managed to secure very suitable halls! The evangelists are courageously moving into temporary quarters in the hope of obtaining better accommodation later.

"Co-operative Courage" is the keynote of our evangelistic workers in South England under the present most abnormal conditions. We are very grateful to the Lord for this manifest blessing of His good Spirit in our midst. He will give us the victory—of that we are confident. G. D. KING.

North England Conference

President: Pastor R. S. Joyce
Office Address: 22 Zulla Road,
Mapperley Park, Nottingham
Telephone: Nottingham 66312

Notes from the President

LAST Sunday, Pastor W. M. Lennox, assisted by Miss E. Mahon, started an evangelistic campaign in Kettering. Two hundred and two attended the opening meeting and fifty-two gave their names for literature. It is many years since a campaign was conducted in this town.

Pastors W. J. Cannon and H. W. McCrow are conducting church campaigns. Their interest is increasing.

The attendance at Huddersfield Sabbath meetings is splendid. It has steadily risen from 47 to 82.

For some time, Sabbath meetings have been held in Oldham. The attendance is increasing. A steady interest in this town should

result in a good harvest in due course.

The meetings in Walsall are now being held in the secondary hall which is packed each week. Plans are being laid to extend the influence of this campaign still farther.

Blackpool Sunday attendances remain over 400. The prospects are excellent.

A reporter attended Brother P. H. Stearman's campaign in Worcester and sent the following report to his paper:

"GUILDHALL SERVICE"

"History's greatest air invasion," was the subject of an address given by Evangelist P. H. Stearman in the Guildhall on Sunday. Tracing the course of air armadas of current history and linking them with Bible prophecy, he said all signs pointed to Armageddon's climax and the second coming of Christ.

"Great preachers of the past had spoken with fervour on the subject of the second advent of Christ, and Mr. Stearman emphasized the need of returning to the firm foundation of scriptural teaching.

"Miss Vera Howard (soprano) of Newbold College, and Miss Green, pianoforte, gave excerpts from the 'Messiah.'"

Nine more campaigns are planned to start in April.

CHURCH BUILDINGS

NORTH England lags far behind the rest of this Union in the number and value of its church buildings. The time has come when something special must be done to change this situation. Have you started a Church Building Fund? All building funds should be held in trust by British Advent Missions. The treasurer will add the interest until a building has been secured.

EDUCATION

WE hope it will soon be possible to start some more church schools in North England. At present there is one at Packwood, attached to the Packwood church, but we need many more.

LAY PREACHERS' HANDBOOK

THIS book is now, unfortunately, out of stock. We hope that a fuller book will be published shortly.

LAY PREACHERS

THERE are 146 lay preachers in North England who are rendering valiant service to the cause. Ten of them are conducting lay-evangelistic campaigns.

OBJECTIVES

WE should always keep in the forefront of our minds that our main objective, as a denomination, is to *prepare a people to meet the Lord.* R. S. JOYCE.

Scottish Mission

Superintendent: Pastor J. A. Mc-Millan

Address: 15 Rowallan Gardens,
Broomhill, Glasgow, W.1.
Telephone: Western 6350

Superintendent's Notes

THE youth of the Scottish Mission had a special feast of good things in Glasgow during the week-end of March 24th to 25th. The Friday evening meeting began the Youth Rally. Pastor J. M. Howard gave an inspiring address on the "Call of the King." This subject sounded the keynote of the services of the Sabbath.

Sabbath-school was conducted by the Glasgow superintendent, Brother J. Logan, and Brother A. H. Watson reviewed the previous week's lesson. Brother H. T. Johnson presented the lesson, dealing with the salient points in the challenge of Elijah on Mount Carmel. Brother K. H. Rosier made the mission appeal, urging strong support for our work in Africa.

The morning service was a solemn and moving one. Pastor H. W. Lowe presented the chief characteristics of the Gospel minister. Brother H. T. Johnson, who has laboured faithfully and with success in Scotland for the past four years, was ordained and set apart to the ministry of the Word. This was a service long to be remembered by all the congregation.

A song service in the afternoon was conducted by Brother A. H. Watson. This was followed by a Bible study taken by the writer. At four o'clock Pastor Howard introduced the new *British Youth Handbook*, which is to teach and inspire the activities of the Advent

youth in the days to come. He praised the work of the men who have laboured to make this, "the best young people's handbook we've ever had."

The evening service, in the closing hour of holy time, was also taken by Pastor Howard. We gathered round the throne of God to worship and to rededicate our lives to the service of the Master.

Recreation and refreshment came as a fitting conclusion to a day of inspiration and blessing. The social hour gave opportunity for the expression of youthful energy, reminding us that enthusiasm in God's cause is as necessary as piety. Thus a full and blessed day ended with joy and gladness.

TITHE REPORT

THE tithe report for the first two months of 1944 shows a decrease of £300 in tithe. Indications at the time of writing these notes suggest that this decrease will disappear as the year rolls on. As you read these lines, ask yourself if you are maintaining your faithfulness to the Lord.

INGATHERING

SOON now, the 1944 Ingathering campaign will be with us. As leaders and local agents, let us plan and organize for the greatest effort we have ever made. This centenary of our Advent movement must be celebrated by greater efforts to hasten the coming of Jesus. We have been too long in the way. "Long has God waited for the spirit of service to take possession of the whole church, so that every one shall be working for Him according to his ability."—*"Acts of the Apostles," page 111.*

The spiritual purpose of Ingathering is to realize this goal. As our spiritual guide has written:

"Everywhere there is a tendency to substitute the work of organizations for individual effort. . . . Individual responsibility, individual effort, personal sacrifice, is the requirement of the Gospel."—*"Ministry of Healing," page 147.*

May the Ingathering campaign find each of us realizing this individual effort that will bring us into contact with the sorrow and

Our Centenary Ingathering Campaign

Begins

Sunday, April 30th.

It will continue throughout the month of May.

Let's crown the years with a month's intensive service in behalf of souls at home as well as overseas.

WHAT TO DO NOW

1. Make a note of the first collecting day, Sunday, April 30th, and plan to collect.
2. Get supplies — box, permit, badge, literature, and information regarding territory.
3. Set personal goal. Hundreds of collectors this year will aim to reach the Centenary personal goal of 100 SHILLINGS.
4. Pray now, and during the campaign that God may bless every collector, enduing each with courage, missionary zeal, and power to give comfort and help as well as secure large gifts for His cause.

AN APPEAL

"AGAIN I appeal to the members of the church to be Christians, to be Christlike. Jesus was a worker, not for Himself, but for others. He laboured to bless and save the lost. If you are Christians, you will imitate His example. He has laid the foundation, and we are builders together with Him. . . . If you are devoting all your strength and talent to the things of this world, your lifework is represented by wood, hay, and stubble, to be consumed by the fires of the last day. But unselfish labour for Christ and the future life will be as gold, silver, and precious stones; it is imperishable.

"My brethren and sisters, awake, . . . It is too late to devote the strength of brain, bone, and muscle to self-serving. Let not the last day find you destitute of heavenly treasure. . . . Seek to enlighten souls, labour for the salvation of your fellow beings, and your work will abide the trying test of fire."—*"Testimonies," Vol. 5, pages 466, 467.*

the need of humanity. Only thus may we be prepared to share in God's love for men, and in His perfection of character.

J. A. McMILLAN.



ROBINSON.—The *Review* of January 27, 1944, brought news of the death of Ellery Robinson, who for some years laboured in the British field. Brother Robinson headed the first company of canvassers sent to this country from America. At that time we never heard of the "art of salesmanship," and when a man had expressed his willingness to go out to canvass for the one book provided for canvassers in Great Britain, *Prophetic Lights* by name, he was simply told to go out and sell the book. The more experienced workers told him that he would learn all about the art by experience. Those who had character and perseverance pulled through; those who were lacking, failed and had to give up the work. Brother Ellery Robinson was an ideal leader for those pioneer conditions. He was a man of sterling character who by faith in God made his own canvassing work a success and by the same qualities he led beginners to success. Later he worked up a large circulation for the *Present Truth* and laboured in various parts of the field. He also spent some years in India before returning to the States. Wherever Ellery Robinson went, his character and unfailing spirit of helpfulness made him beloved by one and all. Not many now surviving can remember him, but I am sure that among the few who can, there is not one who will question my testimony that of all the workers who came to us from the other side of the Atlantic, Ellery Robinson stands among the very best. He was nearly ninety when he died. He leaves his wife to mourn his loss and to rejoice with us in the hope of soon seeing him again. W. T. BARTLETT.

Advertisements

PRINTING.—C. Russell, Newton Street, Macclesfield.

A VACANCY for nurse in General Nursing Home in country district. If S.R.N., salary £120; if not, up to £100 according to experience. Good hours and holidays. Uniform allowance and Sabbath privileges. Apply: Principal, Upper Quabrook, Colman's Hatch, Sussex.

WANTED, help in home for widower, Adventist. Sabbath privileges. Good home and wages to suitable person. Apply: Mr. J. Edwards, 35 Mount Pleasant, Newcastle, Staffs.

SUNSET CALENDAR

Reproduced from the *Nautical Almanac* by permission of the Controller of H. M. Stationery Office.

Lon'n Not'm Car'ff Edin Bel't
April 14th 8.54 9.01 9.07 9.17 9.24
April 21st 9.06 9.14 9.18 9.31 9.38

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