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The Herald of His Grace

Presenting *every man* perfect in Christ Jesus. Colossians 1:28

Volume 24
Issue 597

The Premonition

The Best Is Yet to Come

by — Clyde L. Pilkington, Jr.

We recently had a guest with whom we rejoiced together in the glorious consummation, with God being “All in all.” Roy Morano – concert pianist, playwright and producer – asked us at the dinner table if we knew what was on Frank Sinatra’s tombstone. Of course we didn’t. He informed us that on the top were these words, “The Best Is Yet to Come.”



THE PREMONITION

Well, it’s Paul who gives us the answer. All creation has a *premonition* of something far greater, an *intuition* that *the best is yet to come*.

Notice these literal translations of Romans 8:19.

For the premonition of the creation is awaiting the unveiling of the sons of God (Concordant Literal Version).

For the premonition of the creation is receptively oriented toward the unveiling of the sons of God (Dahbar Literal Translation).

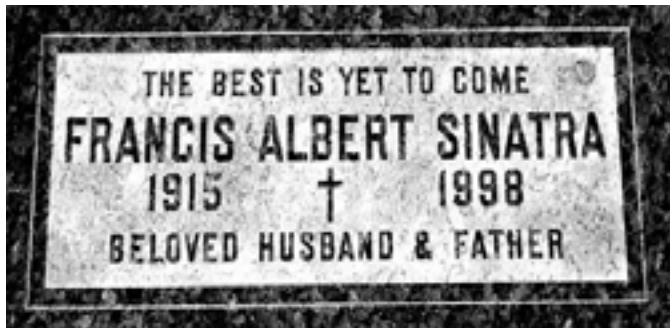
Apokaradokia

“Premonition” in these two literal translations is the Greek word ἀποκαραδοκία (*apokaradokia*). It’s a compound word, made up of three parts

- (1) ἀπό, *from*,
- (2) κάρα, *head*,
- (3) δοκέω², *seem*.

Thus, FROM-SKULL-SEEM (Knoch³).

(see **PREMONITION**, page 5182)



Of course, *The Best is Yet to Come*¹ was the name of a popular song recorded by Sinatra in 1964, and the last song he sang in public; but why would this, of all things, be the epitaph on his gravestone?

Did Sinatra somehow have a meaning in mind beyond that of the title of the song? Did he, or members of his family, somehow have an expectation of better things to come?

It’s true, in fact, that *the best is yet to come*; but did Frank Sinatra even have an inkling about it? If so, how?

2. Οἱ δοκεῖν (*Thayer’s Greek Lexicon, Vincent’s Word Studies*).

3. *Concordant Keyword Concordance*.

1. Composed by Cy Coleman, with lyrics written by Carolyn Leigh.

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The Ants

by — Clyde L. Pilkington, Jr.

Go to the ant ... (Proverbs 6:6).

THE MEASURELESS GRANDEUR OF GOD

To truly think of God in His fullness is to press the human capacity beyond measure. Relatively, we have such a small view of the Almighty. His greatness and vastness are truly incomprehensible to mankind. How could it be otherwise?

At best He has granted us merely a slight glimpse of Himself, and that only by revelation and faith. The revelation is found in His creation and His Word; the faith to see and believe that revelation is a divine gift.

This revelation of God is literally everywhere, since “*all is of God*” (II Corinthians 5:18). All of creation stands as a masterfully designed revelation of the Creator.

The heavens declare the glory of God; and the

firmament shows His handiwork. Day unto day they utter speech, and night unto night they show knowledge. There is no speech nor language, where their voice is not heard. Their voice is gone out through all the earth, and their words to the end of the world (Psalm 19:1-4).

Yet the revelation of the natural creation pales in comparison to the final revelation of the “*Word*” – both the person (the Lord Jesus Christ¹) and the written (the Scriptures²).

Isaiah, the prophet of Israel, described the vast chasm between God and mankind:

1. “*The Word was made flesh, and dwelt among us, (and we beheld His glory, the glory as of the only begotten of the Father,) full of grace and truth ...*” (John 1:14).
“*God ... has in these last days spoken unto us by His Son ...*” (Hebrews 1:2).
2. “*All Scripture is given by inspiration of God, and is profitable ...*” (II Timothy 3:16).



OUR BLOGS

We have themed blogs, which are collections of *Daily Email Goodies* based on common topics.

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Various, Uncategorized:

<http://choicecleanings.wordpress.com>

For My thoughts are not your thoughts, neither are your ways My ways, says the LORD. For as the heavens are higher than the earth, so are My ways higher than your ways, and My thoughts are higher than your thoughts (55:8-9).

Paul, the apostle to the Nations, elaborated on this theme:

O the depth of the riches both of the wisdom and knowledge of God! How unsearchable are His judgments, and His ways past finding out! For who has known the mind of the Lord? Or, who has been His counselor? (Romans 11:33-34).

THE LOWLY ANT

When I think of such words as these written by Isaiah and Paul, I can't help but think about ants. The enormous difference between humanity and ants, in my mind, illustrates the immense difference between God and mankind.

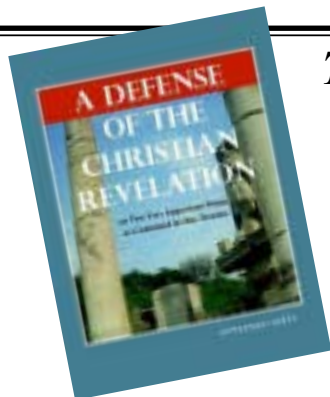
Scripture mentions the ants twice, both as an illustration of their industrious nature (Proverbs 6:6; 30:25). In this regard they are even referred to illustratively as "people."

The ants are a **people** not strong (30:25)

Scientists tell us that ants live in colonies ranging in size from a few dozen to highly organized ones of millions; and that they have castes of specialized groups collectively working together to support these colonies.³ They have remarkable division of labor and communication, and possess the ability to problem-solve.⁴ We are also told that they communicate with each other using pheromones, sounds and touch,⁵ and that they may be the only ones, apart from mammals, where interactive teaching can be observed.⁶

I just know that when I look at an ant hill I see what appears to be a whole *world* unto itself. The ants are busy with life, seemingly unaware of my own world. What do they understand of me and my life? How could they, even if they wanted to?

3. *Caste and Ecology in the Social Insects.* G.F. Oster and E.O. Wilson, Princeton University Press Princeton (1978), pp. 21-22.
A Natural History of the Planet. Tim Flannery, Grove: Atlantic (2011). p. 79.
4. *Proceedings of Biologically Inspired Approaches to Advanced Information Technology,* E. Dicke, A. Byde, D. Cliff, P. Layzell, *Bioadit* (2004), pp. 364-379.
5. *Communication in Ants.* D.E. Jackson, F.L. Ratnieks. *Current Biology*, Volume 16, Issue 15 (August 8, 2006), pp. 570-574.
6. *Teaching in Tandem-Running Ants.* N.R. Franks, T. Richardson. *Nature Journal* (439), (2006) p. 153.



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(See order form, or order online at StudyShelf.com.)

For as long as I can remember, this is what I think about when I see the ants. So, allow yourself to go with me in my thoughts. What if I wanted to communicate with the ants and allow them to know me – to understand me and my world? How would I go about it?

A “SPECIAL ANT”

Well, I would need to send a “special ant” in among them, one who knew me and could communicate with them on a level that they could understand. Even then, what could this “special ant” say to these other ants to help them understand me and my world?

Well, this “special ant” would have to communicate in a way ants could understand. The “special ant” would have to identify itself with the ants, speak their “ant language,” and use appropriate metaphors and illustrations from the “ant world.” The “special ant” would have to find things within the “ant world” that could be used as examples of me and my world. After all, my world and I are so much greater than the ants and their world. How could they possibly understand me and my world apart from ant images and descriptions?

Even when attempting to convey such lofty thoughts of me and my world with ant images, their understanding would be so tethered by the limitations of their own “ant world.”

What could they really understand about me? What could they understand concerning all of the circumstances and activities that even make up my life?

What could they understand about literature: my

love for books and writing? What could they understand about video productions? What could they understand about the arts? How would I explain to them the thrills of a live musical concert? How could they appreciate my being moved to tears by the combination of musical and lyrical composition?

Their little ant thoughts are not anything like my thoughts, and neither are their little ant ways anything like my ways. For my ways are so vastly superior to the little ants’ ways, and my thoughts are so much greater than those of the ants!

Can you follow my thoughts as I look at ants? Can you see where I go in my mind with all of this?⁷

Our Lord Jesus Christ is that “special ant” sent to reveal God to us. He identified with us, lived among us, and spoke our “ant language.” He gave us examples and illustrations of God and His world; but even then, our understanding so pales in comparison to the reality of God and His world. Regardless of how much revelation we have been granted the faith to perceive and believe, it is a mere microscopic understanding of the telescopic God and His world.

At best, all of our grandest insights are but that of “ants” by comparison. All of our realization is only a small ray of light, a minuscule glimmer from God. All of the fullness of our expectation is a mere fragment of the true scope of our future exultation.

7. Of course, as with all analogies there is a breakdown if carried too far. A couple examples quickly come to mind. First, mankind was made in the image of the Creator, whereas the ants were not made in the image of mankind. Second, while mankind is a more sophisticated creature than the ant, they did not create the ants.



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ABUNDANTLY ABOVE

Now unto Him that is able to do exceeding abundantly above all that we ask or think (Ephesians 3:20).

Having the “special ant” among the ants only scratches the surface. After all, the only true way for ants to really grasp me and my world is not for a “special ant” to be among them, but for me to change the ants into my own image and bring them into my world.

If the ants would ever truly understand me and my world, the ultimate solution would need to be found in them ceasing to be ants and leave the “ant world” altogether. They would need to be like me – to become man-like – and then live in my human world.

This, by way of illustration, is in fact the grand plan of God for humanity. We are all destined to be like Him. We are all destined to live in His world. The scope of our future reality is far greater than our human limitation can even begin to comprehend.

This is a revelation which began with God saying,

Let us make man in our image, after our likeness (Genesis 1:26).

It is a revelation that will ultimately find, in the consummation, its fulfillment in all humanity, regardless of birth or calling.

Beloved, now are we the sons of God, and it does not yet appear what we shall be: but we know that, when He shall appear, we shall be like Him; for we shall see Him as He is (I John 3:2).

Concerning which A.E. Knoch (1874-1965) wrote,

Christ in resurrection, *before His ascension*, is an index of what glory awaits the Circumcision in the kingdom. They shall see Him and be like Him.

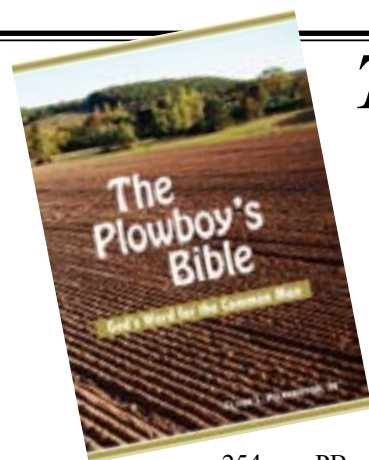
Christ in glory, *after His ascension*, as Paul beheld Him on the Damascus road, shows what surpassing glory awaits us when we are transfigured into the body of His glory.⁸

For our realm is inherent in the heavens, out of which we are awaiting a Savior also, the Lord, Jesus Christ, Who will transfigure the body of our humiliation, to conform it to the body of His glory, in accord with the operation which enables Him even to subject all to Himself (Philippians 3:20-21).

Now, what shall we say concerning these things?

O the depth of the riches both of the wisdom and knowledge of God! How unsearchable are His judgments, and His ways past finding out! (Romans 11:33). ■

8. *The Concordant Commentary on the New Testament (I John 3:2).*



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PREMONITION (continued from front page)

It is defined as:

- “intense anticipation” (Strong’s⁴);
- “persistent expectation” (Thayer⁵);
- “intuitive⁶ opinion” (Knoch);
- “waiting in suspense” (Vincent⁷);
- “an imagination of a future happening that has not been grasped in thinking” (Dahbar⁸);
- “the persistent, hopeful waiting that lives in the subconsciousness of the creation” (Jaegle⁹).

The first part of *apokaradokia* is *από*, which, we are told,

“implies abstraction, the attention turned from other objects” (Vincent), suggesting “abstraction and absorption” (Lightfoot), *i.e.*, abstraction from anything else that might engage the attention, and absorption in the object expected “till the fulfillment is realized” (Alford).⁶

Other versions translate *apokaradokia* as:

4. *Strong’s Exhaustive Concordance* (G603).
5. *Thayer’s Greek-English Lexicon*.
6. Intuitive is defined as “received or obtained by intuition ... discovering truth without reasoning” (Webster).
7. *Vincent’s Word Studies*.
8. *The Holt Writ – The Dabhar Translation*.
9. *Unsearchable Riches*, Volume 42/

- “earnest expectation” (KJV)
- “eager outlook” (Rotherham Emphasized Bible)
- “intense anticipation” (Exegesis)

All creation has been instilled by God with an instinct – an impression, a sense, a notion, a hunch – that there is something far better waiting in the wings. It makes them instinctively anticipative and expectant.

Unlike us, the rest of creation has no revelation of exactly what they are waiting for. Paul shows that it all starts with the sons of God being made manifest. We, the chosen ones of creation, are the *first stage* of the best that is to come *for all of the rest*.

Creation suspects that some type of change is impending, and they have a sense of waiting for it to begin. Lo-and-behold, Paul reveals to us that we, the called, are *the start* – the beginning – of that for which they are intuitively hopeful.

Regardless of how things may appear to be, there is in every creature an *intuition* that this is not all that there is.

Rest assured, however, that it is more than an intuition, for *the best is yet to come*.



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Paul Our Guide – Christ Our Goal

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This free electronic publication is dedicated to:

- the proclamation of the riches of God’s abundant, exceeding grace (Romans 5:20; 11:6; Ephesians 1:7);
- the affirmation that God will save all mankind through the death, burial, and resurrection of Christ (I Timothy 2:3, 4; 4:10; Titus 2:11);
- 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);
- the organic nature of the Body of Christ (I Corinthians 12);
- the distinct message and ministry of Paul, the apostle to the nations (Ephesians 1:1-3);
- the importance of receiving all whom Christ has received (Romans 14-15);
- the recovery of rich Biblical truth that has too long remained hidden under the veils of traditionalism, prejudice, misunderstanding, and fear (Mark 7:7, 13);
- the completeness of the believer in Christ (Colossians 2:10), with:

- total freedom from sins (Colossians 1:14);
- union in His death, burial and resurrection (Romans 6);
- adult sonship position (Galatians 4).

We do not claim infallibility for the contents of this publication. Our readers are asked to be as the Bereans and search the Scriptures (Acts 17:10-11; I Thessalonians 5:21).

This publication is not connected with any “church,” “denomination,” “movement,” “organization,” “mission,” “creed,” “meeting,” “school,” “conference” or “fellowship.”

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