

Volume 26 Issue 644

The Pre-Creation Era of the Universe

by — M. Jaegle

God Alone - All in God

Introduction

When we approach the Sacred Scriptures with the sincere desire to discover the very earliest revelation of God's plan, our spirits will go back far before the first of Genesis.

God gives us a view of a vast area which lies previous to the creation there revealed. It is a most glorious scene, in which the searching spirit finds the most precious treasures of knowledge.

In the light of God's Word we are privileged to perceive how all began with God, when it was still in Him. It is encouraging to our faith to see a clear picture of God's glorious goal for His entire creation.

These divine declarations concerning the universe, even before He created it, belong to the most glorious gifts of grace found in the treasuries of revelation.

GOD ALONE

Out of Him and through Him and for Him is All (Romans 11:36).

God, the Father, out of Whom all is (I Corinthians 8:6).

On this revelation, all out of God, we may see God's solitary existence at the beginning. Because all is out of God it must have been in Him before this. It was hidden in God, without any outward visible existence; hence there was nothing and no one apart from God.

According to this, we must banish from our thoughts concerning that primordial era everything in existence, visible and invisible, and prostrate in deepest reverence before this grand and overpowering thought: God alone.

It is a marvelous sanctuary into which God, the Father, allows believers in Christ to enter, there where He, in solitary majesty, sits enthroned. This is the farthest back that the light of God's Word leads our spirits. Beyond this lies a domain in which we cannot tread, of which God has revealed nothing.

GOD BY HIMSELF WITHOUT A BEGINNING

All else but God has had a beginning, He only has none. God without a beginning! There is, perhaps, no other truth that so fully transcends our mental faculties, and stuns the operation of our brains, and shows how limited we are in our thoughts as to the boundlessness of God's existence. Here the searching spirit comes to a barrier which it cannot surmount without danger of its own destruction.

In this revelation we have the best possible commentary to the many Scriptures which emphasize the fact that there is only one God (Deuteronomy 4:35; 32:39; II Samuel 7:22; I Chronicles 17:20; Isaiah 44:6, 8; I ▶

Corinthians 8:4-6).

ALL IN GOD

No God but Him, and none beside Him! This is already apparent in the very first part of the era before the creation. No one else has no beginning, and no other can share this exclusive grandeur with Him.

In the past, as in the future, God has no bounds, only with this difference: that He came out of the limitless past alone, but, in the future, His heart of love shares His endlessness with His creatures.

Yet this is only one of the infinite attributes of the Deity. According to the declaration of His Son in John 4:24, God is spirit. That is His real essence. According to this revelation, God possesses, in addition to His boundless existence, unthinkable greatness and power, as well as invisibility.

All of this creates a deep chasm between Him and us. This shows us how distant and unapproachable God is except when we see Him as the Father, through Christ, His Son and Mediator.

Notwithstanding the fact that these superhuman proportions expose our own nothingness, sound faith will welcome these overwhelming revelations of the Deity, in the recognition that such a God, Who cannot be confined on any side within the sphere of human imagination, is the only assurance of the success of all that He has undertaken.

Here we pause in order to give thanks for the high honor bestowed upon us in giving us a glance into His pre-eonian solitude.

However, this is not all that the spirit has revealed concerning God in this primeval period. According to I Corinthians 2:10 it is searching all, even the depths of God. Up to this point the principal subject was the revelation of the divine externals, but not, however, His inner being. Now we are granted a deeper insight, for the spirit teaches us what it has discovered in the depths of God, that is, the whole universe!

The creation which God planned did not exist merely in His purpose, but was actually and really included in Himself. This leads us to the next point.

The truth that "All is out of God," without any special commentary, implies this precious fact, that all was in God. In order to proceed out of anything it is necessary to be in it beforehand. That is a self-evident axiom, and requires no process of reasoning to establish it.

HIS HOLY OF HOLIES

Yet it is well to accept this indirect conveyance of divine knowledge, and the introduction to it with discrimination, and not tactlessly ignore the reserve with which it has been revealed. The primordial portal which led to His innermost recesses has been shielded against all publicity, so that it is not apparent to the casual glance, for it is the entrance to His holy of holies.

This can only be done with deep, reverential awe, in order that we, to whom this grace is granted, humbled by a consciousness of what we are, may be allowed a glance into His innermost essence.

It is a most precious and lovely picture which is unveiled to us by the spirit, the universe reposing in the heart of its Father, God. What a treasure trove of deepest divine knowledge to discover the ultimate source of all creation, securely stowed until the time of its creation!

This includes all that exists without exception. In the original Greek, "all," or "the all" is in the plural, and might be literally rendered "the alls." Although this expression is hardly admissible, it shows very clearly that everything that exists, whether matter, elements or living creatures was in Him. Absolutely nothing existed outside of God at that time.

Besides this, "all in God" has a very personal message

- 1. [Editor:] For more information on "God's Sovereignty," see:
 - Now We are Aware [Romans 8:28], James Coram, Bible Student's Notebook #510;
 - God in Everything, William Sibthorpe, Bible Student's Notebook **#527**;
 - God Determines, Not Permits, Norman Grubb, Bible Student's Notebook #528;
 - What God Wills, Happens; What He Wills Not, Won't, George Howe, Bible Student's Notebook #334;
 - What a Sovereign God Will Do and Will Achieve, Peter Feddema, Bible Student's Notebook #335;
 - Daily Goodies (Book), Clyde L. Pilkington, Jr. April 28 May 28 (see order form).

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for us, for through this truth we discover the first intimation of our own existence long before we were born. What a depth of bliss to learn of the blessed location, where we also find ourselves, the place of our origin! Yea, what strengthening for our faith and joy to find ourselves in God! We really cannot wish for a more satisfactory answer to the question whence we are.

In view of this divine declaration, we may well ask, "How is it possible that the whole creation could, at one time, be in God?" The Word of God gives us several solutions for this difficulty.

Since faith is "a conviction concerning matters which are not being observed," according to Hebrews 11:1, no believer should or will doubt the truth of this divine revelation but will take it to himself without reserve. However, God has not left it without further proof but fostered the faith which honors Him by examples that help us to understand this glorious truth, that many are often included in a single one. In fact, God has made this a principle in His citation.

Responding to the Word of the Creator, the earth sprouted with verdure,² herbage and fruit trees whose seeds contained within them all those that have ever appeared since. It is hardly possible to put into words all that this implies. All of the harvests since then until now, and in the future, were really included in these originals, and they have come out of them. Therefore, even nature, with its elementary and constricted revelation, gives us a good example which explains how all could be in God at the beginning.

Even a plainer proof of this principle is seen in the race of mankind, for every last one of the human species was at one time in Adam, the forefather of us all.

VITAL UNION WITH GOD

This revelation of the inclusion of all in God withdraws the foundation from all speculative reasoning as to the whence of the universe, for God alone is its source. By its inclusion in God the whole creation was *vitally united* with its Creator. Notwithstanding its later separation by sin and judgment, the roots of this union have not been disturbed and, as the basis for the accomplishment of His plan of salvation, have retained their undiminished value and significance.

2. [Editor:] green vegetation (American Heritage Dictionary).

EVEN SATAN

This original inclusion of all in God is so all-embracing that no creature can claim any independent origin. This unassailable truth leads us involuntarily to think of one unique and mighty being, Satan,³ the adversary of God. He also had his beginning in God.

The disclosure of this, his origin, is of many-sided significance, for it gives us the proper basis for a correct understanding of his career and activity, and provides the key for the solution of the problem of evil in the world.

Satan's position and his relation to God in that primeval condition must be held fast and impressed upon our faith. There he was absolutely subject to God, figuratively speaking, as the unconscious clay in the hands of the great Potter, Who not only gave him his outer form, but provided him with his character and authority.

Consequently, if Satan, as he is, were not as God intended him to be, then he actually has counteracted God's plans in creation against His will, to His detriment and that of His Anointed. Besides, he would not only himself have originated the necessity of salvation, but would at the same time, have condemned it to a comparative failure.

There is no exit from this dilemma. In this case the Creator would have made a serious mistake. His connections with this creature would be like a fundamental failure which would stamp His creative plan as a losing game from the very beginning. God would have started out with missing the mark, and this is the figurative definition of sin.

A skillful doctor, due to his knowledge of the physical structure of the human body, can often foresee eminent crises and diseases and take steps to prevent them, with varying measures of success. If the human spirit is capable of doing this, how much more thorough is God's knowledge of the innermost essence of all of His creatures, not only since they were created, but already when they were still included in Himself.

- **3.** [*Editor:*] For more information about the creation of evil, Satan and the purpose of sin, see:
 - The Problem of Evil, A.E. Knoch (1874-1965), see order form;
 - The "Fall" of Satan, A.E. Knoch, Bible Student's Notebook #547;
 - The King of Tyre, E.H. Clayton, Bible Student's Notebook #569.

Even the psalmist knew of this divine insight, for he said,

My embryo Thine eyes did see (139:16).

The prophet Jeremiah makes the astonishing statement,

Ere I formed you in the belly I knew you (1:5).

These are only little hints, fragments of God's mighty preview of the period before the creation. The roots go much deeper than the mere foreknowledge of all things and the development of the creation. Unavoidably do these definite declarations lead to the conviction that God sketched out and laid down the way to the minutest as well as the mightiest of His creations according to a predetermined plan. In carrying it out nothing unforeseen will bar His way, for,

He is operating all according to the counsel of His will (Ephesians 1:11).

Only He is the primary and concluding cause of all that can happen. With this sovereign, many-sided, unique and absolutely complete creative might, He would never have overlooked a crisis in which an exalted creature could act independent of and contrary to Him and create evil and turn into His bitterest foe, and so do His creation endless and irreparable damage.

The desire to see the origin of evil in Satan is the equivalent of a deep-seated denial of the absolute deity of God, and is a great hindrance to a life of victorious faith, because it throws a dark shadow on the glorious consummation at the very beginning.

Where is His omnipotence if even one creature is able to disturb His plans? He Who "frustrates the counsel of the nations" and "repudiates the devices of the peoples" (Psalm 33:10), Who "makes void the counsel of Judah and Jerusalem" (Jeremiah 19:7), is He powerless in the presence of the plan of a single one of His many creatures? How that would eclipse Paul's admiring praise of God's wisdom and knowledge!

O, the depth of the riches and the wisdom and the knowledge of God! How inscrutable are His judgments, and untraceable His ways! (Romans 11:33).

The deep meaning of the revelation that "all is of God" does not allow any opinion to the effect that any creature may do as he pleases. Rather these also, alone, with all others were included from the beginning in a settled and unchangeable divine plan.

The proof of this lies in the fact that, in reality, the adversary only carries out the intention that was deeply anchored in God's love, and he is what he is in order to fulfill the high purpose of the divine affections. That is the satisfactory solution of this difficult problem. Its correctness is continually confirmed in the Word of God.

THE INSEPARABLE AND VITAL UNION BETWEEN GOD THE CREATOR AND HIS CREATION

The inclusion of the universe in God before its actual creation shows how strong the ties are which bind it to its Creator. Not outside of Him, without any near relation to Him was it created, but it has come forth from Him. It originated in and came out of Him. So there is, from the very start, an inseparable union between God the Creator and His creation. How deep the roots of this union go we can hardly tell. Yet when we think of how it is in human generation, we may get some inkling of the earliest impulses of God's love in calling forth the universe.

The phrases "in Him" and "out of Him" suggest a much closer union than the "through Him" (Romans 11:36). What a man makes with his hands has come into existence outside of him and has no vital relationship to him.

However, with his descendants, who were in him and are out of him, he is in a close and vital union. To him they are the nearest, loveliest and best, his greatest and most valuable possessions. Such a relationship with the universe has been established by God by the fact that, at first, He carried all in Himself. His ownership of the creation is not, first of all, based upon its creation, but this is because it was first included in Him. That is what gives Him the original title to the whole universe. He is its only true Owner. Based upon this truth it was that Paul justified the statement of an unbelieving Greek poet,

For we are also His offspring (Acts 17:28).

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In this primeval revelation is found the necessity and root of universal reconciliation, for on these, the earliest divine declarations concerning the universe, God's glorious purpose of love is based and anchored. A clear conception of these inmost relations between the Creator and the creation, as evident in the statement that "all is of God," leaves room for no other conclusion, for the establishment of such an esoteric union can be founded only on love.

Seen in the beams of these earliest unfoldings the doctrine of endless damnation of most of God's creatures becomes impossible of belief, for it overlooks and altogether ignores the essential love of God's heart, which has already made itself manifest. But this must be given the greatest consideration, all the more as God has given the same imperishable love to His creatures, to be with them and in them on their way.

THE PATTERN OF PATERNAL LOVE⁴

The divine institution of the family for the propagation of the human race is the means by which God reveals His creative love to His creatures. Because children are the fruit of the bodies of their parents there results a wonderful and unique love of the generators for the generated, of parents for their offspring, which proves to be a strong and mighty bond. The breaking of such a bond through the loss of a child is the cause of greatest sorrow.

Even if children are led astray by Satan or deceived by the world, and are severed from their parents, or are in distress, it breaks their hearts. If the misfortunes of their offspring do not cause them any pain, and they continue in pleasures without the least show of sorrow, we would rightly condemn them as unloving and heartless.

We take for granted that sinful humans feel such losses deeply, and we understand them when they no

- 4. [Editor:] For more information on "love," see,
 - The Greatest of These Select Readings on Love (Part 1 Bible Student's Notebook #131; Part 2 – #147);
 - Love Transcendent, A.E. Knoch, <u>Bible Student's Notebook #615</u>;
 - Love Is God (Love Defined), Clyde L. Pilkington, Jr., Bible Student's Notebook #93;
 - Love is of God: Love's Source, Clyde L. Pilkington, Jr., Bible Student's Notebook #82;
 - Love Is the Greatest, Clyde L. Pilkington, Jr., <u>Bible Student's</u> <u>Notebook #291</u>;
 - Perfect Love, Clyde L. Pilkington, Jr., Bible Student's Notebook #178.

longer have much joy in living. It is considered proper among men, or at least good form, to express sympathy to those who suffer the loss of relatives. We can see this evidence of sorrow even among animals. It is touching to behold the grief of one robbed of its young.

Yet to God, Whose love for His creatures is unutterably greater than parental love (which also comes out of Him), such feelings are supposed to be foreign! Shall we charge Him with being more heartless than His creatures, that He can with equanimity look upon the great majority of them in endless agony? When Zion said.

Jehovah has forsaken me, and the Lord has forgotten me.

God answered His erring people with the words,

Forgets a woman her unweaned child, not to have compassion on the son of her belly? Even these a woman is forgetting, Yet I will not forget you (Isaiah 49:15).

Here already, in the prophets, although the whole of His plan of salvation had by no means been made known, God assures us that He will never forget those who have been in Him.

In the bright light of God's love, the doctrine of eternal torment⁵ of the most of His creatures is exposed as a false deduction and heresy, greatly dishonoring Him.

To the enormous loss that He would suffer we must add the inconceivable pain of His loving heart. Why is not this pain pressed in discussing this theme, as well as God's deep and genuine compassion? Men treat their fellows more considerately than even some of God's saints talk of Him! It is astonishing how hard and cold is their insistence on this doctrine, and they defend it as if it brings God great honor and glory. Few realize the effects it would have on God's loving heart.

The misled, mistaken faith in eternal torment, on ▶

- 5. [Editor:] For a look into the subject of judgment, see:
 - Judgment: Its Nature and Purpose, A.P. Adams, <u>Bible Student's</u> <u>Notebook #388</u>;
 - Father's Judgments Are Remedial (Kolasis: A Word Study),
 Clyde L. Pilkington, Jr., <u>Bible Student's Notebook #308</u>.

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the part of those who trumpet it abroad, as well as those who prefer to put on the soft pedal, is consequently an unintentional, and partly an unconscious, defamation of the Deity's disposition and a distortion of His limitless love.

The consummation of God's creation presented by this doctrine would transform heaven itself into a house of mourning. Should the majority be robbed of the happiness which God desires for them, then He, the most loving of all, would be the most sympathetic and the chief Sufferer.

If parents are deeply moved by the sight of their children's misfortune, how much more is God affected! His heartache and grief for the innumerable hopelessly suffering beings which He once carried in His heart, as well as the sorrow of the few who are saved over their relatives, would be so great that probably none could really enjoy heaven's happiness themselves.

Anyone who has tasted of God's grace, yet nevertheless thinks he can enjoy the fullness of bliss under such conditions, has not earnestly considered the nature of such a consummation, for it would be a conclusion with endless agony, not only for the damned, but also for God and Christ and those who are His, for "love never lapses" (I Corinthians 13:8).

Now if parents, as above stated, in their unfailing love go after their children, discipline them for their offenses, and the children find their way back to their parents with a constant immutable devotion, with deeper affection than before, surely no one would have anything to say against it. On the contrary, all would rejoice with the parents and consider them as exemplary in such a case.

This simple example is a feeble illustration of what God has in view with His creation. His longing for the return of His erring creatures will also be satisfied. It may not be without heavy and severe judgments, but these are used only as means to gain His end. The joy that will fill God's heart is evident in all of the promises which have already predicted the triumph of His love – and it is even now the portion of all who have believed His Word concerning the sublime conclusion with the reconciliation of all.

From this it is evident that God's Word, with its deep declaration that "all is of God," desires to reveal much more than the origin of creation and the resultant connection with a Creator. It involves His love relation to it. His love for His creatures did not begin after they had fallen away from Him, but existed while they were still included in Him. This primitive and esoteric union of the Creator with His creatures must necessarily have had an effect on them. It must have impressed and endowed them with some sign of their high pedigree. This seal, which is immanent in them, is "all is for God."

In a few words this verse in the eleventh of Romans – "out of Him and through Him, and for Him is all" – embraces the commencement, the course and the consummation of creation. It is God's great motto which binds together the origin with the object, and illuminates the beginning with the light of the conclusion.

"All is for God," by revealing the mark at which God is aiming, shows us the inner disposition which God implanted in His creatures, and the constitution which leads them on the way. It brings them back to the Creator. It may be that they have detoured on a road which leads away from God, but this hidden trend never can be entirely lost. What is all of the endeavor in the world seeking for, if not, the lost paradise?

It is not the unconscious groping and longing of the heart for happiness which is wrong, for these were implanted by the Creator Himself, but the slavery to sin which has His creatures in its grip and which leads them to seek to satisfy their cravings *apart* from their Creator.

Even before creation, God's heart harbored in itself the great Leader Whose steady hand will bring all those astray to His glorious goal. This will not be gained by sidestepping sin but with a restoration, a homecoming to the Father's house. It is a deep reality, as will be seen in the literal rendering of the original, which reads "all is **into** Him."

Righted by means of judgment and conquered by God's love, His creatures do not literally return into Him as their blessed beginning was, but with a heart subjected to Him as their Father, and in response to His great love, they harbor Him in their hearts so that He becomes their "All."

This renewed union of heart to heart is summed up in a few words,

God All in all (I Corinthians 15:28).

In fullest harmony, free from any discord, the beginning and the end of God's plan for creation and reconciliation are connected together as follows:

In the beginning: All in God.

In the conclusion: *God All in all.*

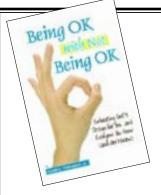
These are the two all-embracing poles on which the universe rests secure, and by which the whole development is already determined by the glorious goal. Truly, we cannot imagine or conceive of a more sublime and exalted consummation which will harvest so much honor for God as this: that all of the creatures who were in Him in the beginning, and came out of Him, should reach their destiny with willingness and acquiescence, giving God His proper place in their hearts, so that He may be "All in all."

Even if the way which leads to this illuminating end should be ever so frightful, so hard and dark and sown with sin and judgment, at long last all of this must serve in reaching this glorious goal and in revealing God's adorable operations.

If we should seek to cross the boundaries set by "all in God" and "God All in all" on both sides, we would find a sublime contrast to that phase in which God, coming out of the past, was alone. His love-filled heart could never be satisfied with this condition. If we ask what it was that He longed for, we will find the answer in the glorious goal in wondrous reality presented to our spirit, that is, God with His renewed and reconciled creation, which serves Him voluntarily, all united into one.

The estrangement between God and His creation by means of the entrance of sin will be overcome gradually by the sacrifice of Christ. After His resurrection, Christ began His great task of leading all back to God. Through His wise and effective operations, every administration brings forth fruit. Continually creatures, conquered by His love, are eager to enter into fellowship with Him. To begin with, there is only scattering success, but gradually a greater proportion are reached. Then, at the conclusion of the eons, we see the work of Christ crowned with complete success, for not a single soul is found out of harmony with God.

Let us hold fast to the conviction that 1 Corinthians 15:28 does not contain merely the highest and best ideas of men, but God's own Words, which demand nothing from us but faith. God is responsible, and can carry out what He has promised. He, as well as those who believe Him without reserve, eventually will ▶



134 pp., PB

See order form.

Being OK with Not Being OK-

Embracing God's Design for You ... and Everyone You Know (and Don't Know)

by — Clyde L. Pilkington, Jr.

For now, you're broken, and you aren't going to be "fixed." Granted, you may have some days that are better than others, some circumstances that seem to indicate that you are "OK," but the wearisome cycle simply will recur.

Thus it is by design – by divine design. Father is bringing you to a place where you are OK with not being OK, where you simply rest in His current purpose and plan in your training and development for that grand and magnificent culmination that He has so wonderfully and skillfully designed especially for you – in your next life.

I have read it completely three times. I always refer back to certain chapters. - FL

When I read it, it was like I could breathe again. Your calming words lead me to a greater realization. - OH

Thank you for this! It brought such peace and rest to me, and brought a greater understanding of God's great love for all His creation. That He alone is in control of everything is mind boggling to say the least! - NM

So fantastic! Such peace!! – Australia

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be justified by the factual fulfillment of God "All in all"!

This is His final and permanent result of His primeval purpose.

THE CONSUMMATION⁶ COMMENCES A NEW BEGINNING

In reviewing the whole work of God, we see this universal harvest as the conclusion and the goal; however, it is far more than the mere ending of His plan of salvation. The consummation is related, not only to the past, but to the future. It inaugurates an overwhelmingly great fresh start and new beginning.

Though we may be allowed to speak of such a commencement, we must emphasize the fact that God has revealed nothing concerning the further development of His work of love. We are enlightened, in His Word, as to His operations up to the conclusion of the eons, though no further.

However, if God, during the eons in which there is so much opposition to Him, displayed the riches of His love in Christ, we get a slight intimation of what the

6. [Editor:] For more information on the consummation, see:

- The Consummation, Bob Evely, Bible Student's Notebook #603.

future has in store. What will it be when all have recognized God as their Father and are coerced by love to be subject to Him, endowed with unimaginable qualifications and capabilities in order to do His will, for His joy and delectation?

This beginning will be basically different from that of Adam's in paradise. In the future the lesson of good and evil will be thoroughly understood, and the experience of evil will operate as a help to the fullest happiness, known and recognized by all.

We could not even grasp anything that God has in view for that day, yet the very thought of these transcendent prospects causes our heart to leap in anticipation of all of the glories which are still before us.

— Unsearchable Riches, Volume 41, 1950

(edited & abridged)

Brother Jaegle was a German associate of A.E. Knoch, contributor to the periodical *Unausforschlicher Reichtum*.

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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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