



Bible Student's Notebook™

The Herald of His Grace

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

Volume 40
Issue 987

"The Overthrow"

by — Otis Q. Sellers (1901-1992)

THE ORIGINAL CREATION

There are seven words in the Hebrew sentence of Genesis 1:1. These seven words tell the complete story of God's creation of the original Heavens and Earth.

In the beginning God created the Heaven and the Earth.

No information is given here concerning the methods used by the Divine Architect. Nothing is revealed that tells us how much time He used. We are not told whether the Heavens and Earth were called into existence in a split second of time or whether their formation covered a long period. Speculation at this point is useless and irreverent. The bare fact is given as a statement of truth to be received. The believer says with unquestioning faith, "I believe that *In the beginning God created the Heavens and the Earth.*"

We are not told just what this original Heaven and Earth were like, nevertheless, we cannot but believe that these creations were worthy of their Divine Creator. They reflected all of His perfections, and were exceedingly fair in their pristine beauty. The original creation was perfect, it came short in nothing, it was exactly as God desired it should be, and it must have satisfied and delighted Him.

It may seem a commonplace statement, but I am convinced that it is vitally important to any true understanding of the Word of God that we fully recognize and comprehend that the Heavens and Earth as originally created were exactly what God wanted them to be.



THE CHAOTIC EARTH

The student of the Word of God will quickly realize that the Earth, on the morning of its creation, must have been vastly different from the chaotic state described in Genesis 1:2. There we read,

And the Earth was without form, and void; and darkness was upon the face of the deep.

This statement is often taken to be a description of the Earth after its creation, but that is an error. Traditional beliefs and teachings, deeply imprinted upon the mind by childhood Bible stories, make it exceedingly hard for most people to see that there was a period of original creation, followed by a period of ruin, then a work of restoration before Adam ever appeared upon the Earth. Most people confound the primitive creation of Genesis 1:1 with the ruin into which it had fallen as described in Genesis 1:2.

In harmony with the truth revealed in other places and in harmony with the Hebrew, Genesis 1:2 should be translated, "*And the Earth became waste and empty.*" A translation such as this is true to the truth and true to the Hebrew. The same Hebrew construction appears in Genesis 2:7, "*man became a living soul*"; Genesis 9:15, "*the waters shall no more become a flood*"; Genesis 19:26, "*became a pillar of salt.*"

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Bible Student's Notebook™

Paul Our Guide – Christ Our Goal

ISSN: 1936-9360

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Scripture education in a weekly format!

This free electronic publication is dedicated to:

- the absolute sovereignty and deity of God (Romans 11:36);
- 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 through the death, burial and resurrection of Christ (I Timothy 2:3, 4; 4:10; Titus 2:11);
- the universality of death and resurrection (I Corinthians 15:21);
- the unique gospel of Paul – which he calls "my gospel" (Romans 2:16; 16:25; II Timothy 2:8; I Corinthians 15:1-4; Acts 13-28; Acts 20:24);
- the "preaching of Jesus Christ, according to the revelation of the mystery, which was kept secret in ages past" (Romans 16:25);
- the epistles of the present Secret Administration being Ephesians & Colossians (Ephesians 3:2, 9; Colossians 1:25);
- true freedom and liberty apart from law (Galatians 5:1);
- the organic nature of the One Body (Ephesians 4:16);
- the Secret Administration, being the operational revelation for today (Ephesians 3:9);
- the unprophesied, Celestial hope and calling of the One Body (Colossians 3:4);
- the distinct message and ministry of Paul, the apostle to the nations (Ephesians 3:1-3);
- 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 and ascended seated position among the celestials (Romans 6; Ephesians 2:6);
- adult sonship position (Ephesians 1:5).

This publication is the product of humble efforts of ordinary men intended to stimulate the earnest study of Scripture. We do not claim infallibility for the contents of this publication; thus they are not meant to imply finality on any subject discussed, or that further research would not add further light from the Word of God. God's storehouse of truth is inexhaustible, so draw on its wealth by prayerful study. 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."

We are always open for discussion, but never for disputation. – André Sneidar

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The words, "without form and void," are the Hebrew words *tôhû va bôhû*. These two words appear in Isaiah 34:11 where they are translated "confusion" and "emptiness."

The word *tôhû* also appears in Isaiah 45:18, where the context speaks of creation and emphatically declares, "He created it not *tôhû*." So, whatever *tôhû* means, it is evident that God did not create the Earth *tôhû*. Therefore, it must have become so, at some time, and in some way, after its creation.

To sum up, Genesis 1:1 reveals an original Heavens and Earth that were as perfect as their Creator. Genesis 1:2 reveals an Earth that was waste and empty.

The order that existed in Genesis 1:1 was overthrown and the Earth became waste and barren. This necessarily leads us to a more careful consideration of the overthrow, or disruption, of the order that God had created in the beginning.

"THE OVERTHROW"

When God created the Heavens and the Earth, He did not merely create two realms. He created and established an order, a system or an arrangement. This

order was also perfect, and it satisfied God.

We do not know just what the order was, but unity was its chief characteristic, just as division is the main characteristic of the present order. "The Heavens and the Earth," in the beginning, were like two great main gears in an intricate piece of machinery. The teeth of the gears meshed perfectly and moved together harmoniously. This divine order, divine system, or divine arrangement, revolved around "the Heavens and the Earth." This was an inhabited order, but not by human beings.

The Greek word used to designate such an order is the word *kosmos*. This word appears many times in the New Testament where it is usually translated "world."

THE TESTIMONY OF II PETER 3

One of the most important passages bearing upon this theme is II Peter 3:4-14. The reader should have his Bible open as we consider this passage as lack of space forbids its full quotation.

Scoffers ... saying ... all things continue as they were from the beginning of the creation.

This is not true. These are the words of a scoffer. Nev-



Rightly Dividing Israel's Prophetic Kingdom – With Special Emphasis on The Overlooked Pre-Millennial "Kingdom of the Heavens" (A Comprehensive Compilation)

Editors: Clyde L. Pilkington, Jr., André Sneidar

There are enormous amounts of prophecy that were given to Israel in the Hebrew Scriptures that are yet to be fulfilled. Most believers simply follow some version of Christendom's eschatology, futilely attempting to force the enormity of Israel's prophetic scene into a few extremely abridged time periods. From this shallow vantage point, it is believed that more time has passed in God's ages than remains. This couldn't be further from the truth. Multiplied millennia remain, more than have yet transpired, for the fulfillment of all of the glorious plans that God has revealed in His Word. Far from being near the "end" of something prophetic, the span of God's eonian plan is immense, and our placement is early in its timeline. Much more of God's prophetic program remains than man's feeble eschatologies allow.

342 pages
1st Ed., A4 (8.3" x 11.7"),
87 chapters, with charts
and appendices, from 22
authors.

See [order form](#) under
"Compilations."

The intention herein is to present an alternative view to the confusing message of the traditional Evangelical concept of prophecy, thus opening the door to a consideration of the idea of a Pre-millennial Kingdom as the fulfillment of many of God's promises to Israel to have their kingdom in the Earth.

All of the material in this book, taken together, is a wonderful resolution to the confusion of the conventional religious theology that has muddled the minds of sincere Bible students for centuries. While we may live in the Secret Administration, that doesn't necessarily mean that God's Word regarding His plans for Israel must be a mystery to us.

Nevertheless, this has become the belief of many who claim to believe the Bible. Even some, who will admit a great change in the Earth since the original creation, refuse to admit that there has been any change in Heaven. They insist that this continues as it was from the beginning of the creation.

That by the Word of God the heavens were of old, and the earth standing out of the water.

This is a description of the original creation set forth in Genesis 1:1. The land mass was one great island – not broken up as in its present condition of continents and islands, and intersected in every direction by the seas. The land was a unit, raising itself through the waters.

Whereby the world (*kosmos*) that then was being overflowed with water perished. In :5 Peter speaks of the Heavens and Earth that “*were of old*.” In :6 he speaks of the “*world*” or “*order*.” This shows that the Heavens and the Earth formed the *kosmos* or *order*. If either one is affected the order will be disrupted or overthrown. That is what happened between Genesis 1:1 and 1:2. The Earth became barren and waste. The land mass was overflowed with water and disappeared beneath it, the Earth was swathed. This caused that order to perish, or be destroyed.

Some have asked, “Since the waters did not overflow the Heavens, how could this have destroyed the order?” In answer I would say, “Break one tooth from a main gear in any machine and the whole working order will be disrupted.”

In the last part of Genesis 1:2 God begins the work of restoration and brings in a new order (*kosmos*). The waters that swathed the Earth are separated from

it by an expanse (“*firmament*”), and the land mass is made to arise through the waters that covered the earth (Genesis 1:7-9). In this new order the Heavens and Earth are separated by space. Heaven does not dominate the Earth, unless some contact is made between the two.

By the same Word are kept in store, reserved unto fire against the day of judgment and perdition [destruction] of ungodly men.

The present Heavens and Earth will continue throughout the Millennial Kingdom. Although they will be purged of all things that give offense, nevertheless, they are not permanent.

Nevertheless we, according to His promise, look for a new Heavens and a new Earth, wherein dwelleth righteousness.

This sets before us a new Heavens and a new Earth, God’s own new order, created by Him to replace the creation that was in the beginning. This is the third Heaven and Earth.¹

Thus, we have:

- The Heavens and the Earth of old (II Peter 3:6);
- The Heavens and the Earth which are now (3:7);
- The Heavens and the Earth that shall be (3:13).

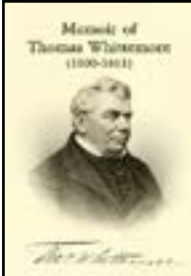
The same truth may also be stated in these words.

- The world that was. It was destroyed.
- The world that is now. Reserved unto fire of judgment.
- The world that shall be. Promised by God.

The word “*world*” does not mean this globe or “Earth.” It includes the Heavens. We often say, “Heaven and Earth,” but who would think of saying “Heaven and World?” It is better to translate *kosmos* by some such word as “order” or “system.” Then it will appear as follows:

- The order that was.
- The order that is.

1. [Editor:] For more on this, see, – [The Third Heaven](#), Bible Student’s Press, on the [order form](#) under “Compilations.”



Memoir of Thomas Whittemore
by — John G. Adams
390 pages, PB (See [order form](#) under “Biographies.”)
An untiring worker, Thomas Whittemore (1800-1861) was a staunch defender of Universalism, both as a preacher, writer and editor.

- The order that shall be.

“BEFORE THE OVERTHROW OF THE ORDER”

I trust that my readers will not consider these truths to be unimportant. Their importance becomes evident when we come to passages such as Ephesians 1:4. There we find the phrase “before the foundation of the world.” The Greek word here translated “foundation” is *katabolē*. “Foundation” is not a correct translation of this word, as can be easily demonstrated. It means to cast down, overthrow or disrupt. It refers to that great cataclysmic change which caused the Earth to become waste and barren, destroying the order that then existed. The time “before the overthrow of the order [kosmos]” would be that time before Genesis 1:2. In the New Testament certain things are declared to be “before the overthrow” and certain things to be “since the overthrow.”

- The Son of God was given great glory, and was loved by the Father, before the overthrow of the world (John 17:24).
- The Lord Jesus was foreknown as the Lamb of God (therefore, a sacrifice) before the overthrow of the world (I Peter 1:19-20).
- The church which is His Body was, before the overthrow, chosen to be separate and without offense before God (Ephesians 1:4).

The entrance of sin into the universe caused the overthrow, but the entrance of sin must not be confused with the overthrow. These are two different events. The entrance of sin and evil came first, and this resulted in the order being overthrown and destroyed.

“SINCE THE OVERTHROW OF THE ORDER”

Things “since the overthrow of the order” are referred

to in Matthew 13:34-35; 25:34; Luke 11:49-51; Hebrews 4:3; 9:26; Revelation 13:8; 17:8.

Some truths have always been open, but some have been kept secret *since the overthrow*. The kingdom was prepared *since the overthrow*. Many prophets have been slain *since the overthrow*. The Lamb was slain *since the overthrow*. Names have been written in the Book of Life *since the overthrow*.

The words *disruption* and *overthrow* are identical in meaning. Both of these refer to that cataclysm that took place sometime after the creation of “the Heavens and the Earth” in Genesis 1:1. That cataclysm brought about the condition described in Genesis 1:2 – “the Earth became waste and empty.”

There was a “world” (“order”) before the disruption. That “world” was destroyed by the disruption. It does not exist now. The *present* “world” is a corruption of that which God made when He restored the creation and placed Adam in the garden of Eden. The “world” is now what it is because of the entrance of sin and death into it. The Pre-Millennial and Millennial Kingdoms clean up the present “world,” while in the New Heavens and New Earth we have a new and different “world” (“order”). **BSN**

— *The Word of Truth*
Vol. 6, No. 5 & 6 (1943)
(abridged & Edited)

Note: For more information on the theme of this article, see:
– [The Disruption of the World: A Compilation](#), Bible Student's Press (on the [order form](#) under “Compilations”).

TOPICS:

Major: Disruption; Earth; Heaven(s)

Minor: Creation



The Third Heaven - Our Celestial Destiny

A Comprehensive Compilation

11 authors, 31 chapters. Author's include: Arthur P. Adams, Oscar M. Baker, John H. Essex, J.H. Evans, Vladimir Gelesnoff, Donald G. Hayter, A.E. Knoch, William Mealand, Clyde L. Pilkington, Jr., Frank Neil Pohorlak and Charles H. Welch.

212 pages

See [order form](#) under “Compilations.”



Representative Prophetic Passages #4

by — Clyde L. Pilkington, Jr.

Isaiah 33:20-24

Look at Zion, the city of our appointed festivals. **Your eyes will see Jerusalem, a peaceful pasture, a tent that does not wander; its tent pegs will not be pulled up nor will any of its cords be loosened. For the majestic One, our Lord, will be there ... For the Lord is our Judge, the Lord is our Lawgiver, the Lord is our King. He will save us ... and none there will say, "I am sick."** The people who dwell there will be forgiven their iniquity (HCSB).

For the majestic One, our Lord, will be there (:21)

For the Lord is our Judge, the Lord is our Lawgiver, the Lord is our King (:22)

- Its inhabitants have good health
none there will say, "I am sick" (:24)
- Its inhabitants are forgiven

The people who dwell there will be forgiven their iniquity (:24)

Kingdom Phase: Millennial

Characteristics:

- Revitalized Jerusalem

Zion, the city of our appointed festivals. ... Jerusalem, a peaceful pasture, a tent that does not wander; its tent pegs will not be pulled up nor will any of its cords be loosened (:20)

- The Lord present as judge, lawgiver, and king,

Isaiah 42:1-7

This is My Servant; I strengthen Him. This is My Chosen One; I delight in Him. I have put My Spirit on Him; He will bring justice to the nations. He will not cry out, or shout, or make His voice heard in the streets. He will not break a bruised reed, and He will not put out a smoldering wick; He will faithfully bring justice. He will not grow weak or be discouraged until He has established justice on Earth. The islands will wait for His instruction. This is what God, Yahweh, says -

“Also”

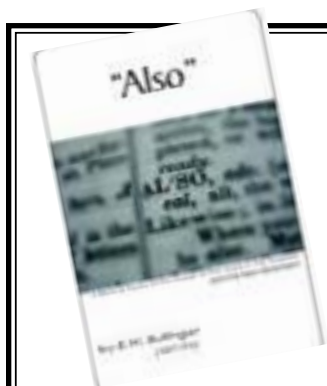
by — E.W. Bullinger

This work consists of a listing and explanations of 378 New Testament passages where the word “also” may be ambiguous or misleading to the English reader.

www.EWBullinger.com

85 pages

See [order form](#) under “Bullinger.”



Who created the Heavens and stretched them out, who spread out the Earth and what comes from it, Who gives breath to the people on it and life to those who walk on it – I, Yahweh, have called you for a righteous purpose, and I will hold you by your hand. I will keep you and appoint you to be **a covenant for the people and a light to the nations, in order to open blind eyes, to bring out prisoners from the dungeon, and those sitting in darkness from the prison house** (HCSB).

Kingdom Phase: Pre-Millennial

Characteristics:

- Christ will establish worldwide justice (Israel and the Nations)

He will bring justice to the nations (:1)

He will faithfully bring justice (:3)

until He has established justice on Earth (:4)

- This is done without His personal presence [*Parousia*]

He will not cry out, or shout, or make His voice heard in the streets (:2)

- It is performed with softness, tenderness and gentleness

He will not break a bruised reed, and He will not put out a smoldering wick (:3)

This cannot be “*the Day of the Lord*”!

II Thessalonians 1:7-10

*And to you who are troubled rest with us, when **the Lord Jesus shall be revealed from Heaven with His mighty angels, in flaming fire, executing retributive justice on them that know not God, and that obey not the gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ: who shall incur the justice of age-lasting destruction** from the presence of the Lord, and from the glory of His power; **when He shall come** to be glorified in His saints, and to be admired in all them that believe.*

Kingdom Phase: Millennial

Characteristics:

- Begins with age-lasting (eonian) destruction of the ignorant and disobedient

them that know not God, and that obey not the gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ: who shall incur the justice of age-lasting destruction (:8)

- Thus, there will be

- No unbelievers in the Millennial Kingdom
- No disobedient in the Millennial Kingdom
- So, from the Second Coming on through the Millennial Reign everyone alive knows God and obeys the gospel.

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TOPICS:

Major: II Thessalonians 1:7-10; Isaiah 33:20-24; Isaiah 42:1-7; Millennial Kingdom; Pre-Millennial Kingdom; Prophecy



The Disruption of the World

A Compilation

A broad study of the crucial, but all-too-often overlooked teaching of Scripture of the events between Genesis 1:1 and Genesis 1:2. Sometimes known as “The Gap,” The Overthrow,” or “The Disruption,” this key event in God’s ages lays the important foundation for the ministry of Paul, the Apostle.

148 pages

See [order form](#) under “Compilations.”

This critical compilation of 13 chapters from 8 authors will be an essential part of a Bible student’s library. Authors include: E.W. Bullinger, A.E. Knoch, Edward Clayton and John Essex.

OBITUARY.

Kenneth R. Whittemore, Jr. (1937-2023)



Ken of Fort Myers, FL, formerly of Grass Valley, CA, was a dear and precious brother, as well as a faithful supporter of our work. He valued the advancements of this periodical, while suffering the last two decades of his life from Parkinson's.

His life was arrayed with a variety of occupations: US Airforce, a Porsche foreman (manufacturing tubular race car chassis), a gold seal flight instructor for Japan Airlines, and finishing out his career as a private-practice chiropractor for over three decades (having graduating Summa Cum Laude from Palmer College of Chiropractic). His hobbies had been diverse: ice and roller dancing, motorcycling, and ham radio.

Ken was raised in a traditional fundamental religious environment, which resulted in many unanswered questions as an adult. He would begin to get his answers when a fellow flight instructor introduced him to the writings of A.E. Knoch. For the next 30 years he kept a *Concordant Version* and related books and booklets in his waiting room free for the taking. Interestingly, he would later find out that he was a relative of Thomas Whittemore (1800-1861),¹ an author who staunchly defended

1. Born in Boston, Whittemore was brought to Universalism by Hosea Ballou in 1820. Founder and editor of *The Trumpet and Universalist Magazine* (1828-1861), he had also been successor

biblical Universalism.

Last September, Hurricane Ian, the deadliest hurricane to strike the state of Florida since 1935, destroyed Ken and his wife's home. In fact, it leveled their entire neighborhood.

Ken had a steadfast passion for the Scriptures and was quite a vigorous student. He voiced his value of our literature when, a few years back he wrote, "I'm realizing that every time I have a serious question about Scripture, Clyde Pilkington has covered it somewhere."

He is survived by his wife Lynne, as well as four daughters.

"Good night, our dear brother. We will see you in the morning!" **BSN**

TOPICS:

Major: Obituary; Whittemore, Ken

of Hosea Ballou's *Universalist Magazine* (1822-1828). He served as Cambridge's representative in the Massachusetts legislature (1831-1836). His papers are in the library at Harvard Divinity School. His republished works, can be found on our [order form](#) under "Thomas Whittemore."



Suffering: God's Forgotten Gift

by — Clyde L. Pilkington, Jr.

Two gifts given to the believer are mentioned by Paul in Philippians 1:29. The first is "to believe on Him." This is a glorious gift. Every believer has been given this gift from God. Those who possess it may not even fully recognize it as a gift from Him, but indeed faith is God's wonderful gift to us. Faith is a rich gift from God, but there is also another gift from God to the believer, mentioned by Paul in Philippians 1:29, that is equally as glorious. The second gift is "also to suffer for His sake." This, too, is a glorious gift. Every believer has been given this gift from God as well, but those who possess it often do not fully recognize it for what it is. Indeed, suffering for His sake similarly is God's wonderful gift to us. Paul teaches us to embrace this second gift as well as we do the first!

100 pp., PB

See [order form](#) under "Pilkington."

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