

WHEN GOD WAS ALONE BEFORE CREATION WAS BEGUN

The Incomprehensible One.

From Only One Standpoint Can Divine Wisdom and Love Be Discerned In Connection With Mankind.



St. Petersburg, Fla., Jan. 8. — Addressing a large and attentive audience Pastor Russell asserted that the Scriptures declare a "beginning of the creation of God," and this evidence the fact that God was previously alone — the self-existent One. His qualities and attributes then were the same as they are now, for the Scriptures declare his unchangeableness — "the same yesterday, today and forever."

Moreover, the completeness of the Divine perfection is such that companionship was not necessary to the happiness of Jehovah. The only one who inhabiteth eternally in self-centered. The creation of angels and of men was indeed his pleasure, because, benevolently, he desires to do good, to give capacity for pleasure and to afford it opportunity for gratification. Furthermore, the highest good of his creatures called for an exhibition to the full of all the elements of the Divine character—Divine Justice, Love, Power and Wisdom. The scope of the exercise of Divine power is the Universe, but it is difficult for our finite minds to comprehend the meaning of his word—Universe.

Astronomers tell us that by the aid of photo-astronomy they can see nearly 125,000,000 suns—solar systems like our own, with supposedly more than a billion of worlds more or less like our earth. These, we may assume, are in process of development, are in preparation for inhabitants whom the great Creator will in due time provide. From Scriptural standpoint, however, the great work of Creation began with our earth. What a boundless thought we have in the bare suggestion that the billion worlds are to be peopled, and that the lessons of righteousness and sin, of life and death eternal, now being taught to humanity, will develop the teachers and instructors in righteousness for all those worlds.

It is not necessary to assume that in all of those worlds there will be similar experiences to those which have come to our earth—the reign of sin and death, a Redeemer, a redemption, a restitution, etc. In this connection Pastor Russell believes we should consider that there is a depth of meaning to the Apostle's words, "we are made a spectacle unto angels and unto men"—the great spectacle of sin, degradation and death, exhibiting justice on the one hand, and the further spectacle of redemption and restitution manifesting love Divine on the other hand. We should consider this a notable object lesson in the instruction in righteousness, not only of the angels and of men, now its witnesses, but also a great lesson for the uncreated millions of inhabitants of all the worlds of the Universe; and indeed there may be many times a billion worlds, for astronomers admit that there is no end of space, and no end of worlds filling that space. How mighty, how wonderful is this great One who inhabiteth eternally, whose name is Jehovah and who from eternity to eternity "is the self-existent God!"

The Permission of Evil.

From only one standpoint can Divine Wisdom and Love be discerned in connection with the history of mankind. It must include the Ago about to be ushered in—the period of Messiah's reign of righteousness; the time in which every member of Adam's race, sharing the penalty of sin and death because inheriting his weaknesses, will be set free from these; the time when the full knowledge of the glory of God shall be granted to every human being; and when a full opportunity will come to each by obedience to gain life everlasting.

The lesson thus far taught is the goodness and the severity of God—his goodness in bringing us into being, and his severity in the punishment of father Adam's willful transgression; also, to both men and angels, Justice, unswerving Justice. The next lesson will be that God is love. The foundation for these lessons is already laid in the ransom sacrifice of Jesus, through and on account of which he becomes the world's Redeemer and Restorer. A few can believe this message by faith; but not many have the ear of faith nor the eye of faith. Only the saints are able to appreciate this great fact at the present time.

But, said Pastor Russell, that which is now secret and understood only by the few is shortly to be made manifest to every creature in heaven and in earth. All will then see and be able to appreciate the great fact that the redemption accomplished by the sacrifice of Jesus is wide and means a full deliverance from the sin-and-death condemnation, which passed upon Adam and all of his race, to all who will accept the same as a gift from God. The remainder will be destroyed in the "Second Death."

The Scroll With Seven Seals.

The Divine purpose, originally known only to Jehovah himself, was indeed declared through the prophets and in the Law. —at those who declared it understood not their own visions and prophecies. Not until Jesus appeared and received the anointing of the holy Spirit at his baptism did the Divine Plan begin to be unfolded; and then it was unfolded to Jesus through the holy Spirit which came upon him, witnessing his consecration to death and begetting him to a new life, beyond the veil.

This is shown symbolically in the picture of Revelation. During the time preceding the understanding of the work by Jesus the announcement was made everywhere, "Who is worthy to take the scroll and to unloose the seals thereof?" None was found worthy. Many were found perfect, but something more was required—the testing and demonstration of loyalty to God, even unto death, even the death of the cross. Until Jesus came into the world and vowed his consecration to death, no one had been found worthy even to understand the great Plan of the Ages which Jehovah God had purposed in himself before the foundation of the world. As soon as Jesus made his consecration and began his work, to him the scroll of the Divine Purpose was committed and the announcement was made, "Worthy is the Lamb that was slain to receive honor and dominion and might and power" (Revelation 7: 9). And to him was given the scroll with full authority to read, to understand and to fulfill its glorious prophecies, which specially related to the blessing of our race.

In the opening of this scroll, in the revelation of the Divine purpose, God's love would be manifested both to angels and to men—the love which he had before he began his creative work, but which there was no intelligent creature to understand; the love which God had even when he permitted sin and death to mar the happiness of Eden—the love which neither angels nor men could fully see and appreciate during all the centuries

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DINING ROOM IN CONNECTION

W. D. EVANS, Prop.

Discourse on Girls.

Howard Rann, editor of Manchester (Iowa) Press: The Chicago papers have been making a great fuss over the statement that a girl ran away from her home in Central Illinois because her mother made her work too hard. A Chicago preacher made the affair the subject of a touching sermon on filial cruelty, and thereby drew real tears from a hard-shell deacon who had driven two wives to the grave with a stove poker. No doubt the facts in the case were a whole lot different. The chances are that a job in the chorus of some barn storming troupe looked softer than doing the dishes and making the beds. A girl from Keokuk, who was so tall that if she caught cold in June she could not sneeze until October, ran away with a flat-headed runt of an actor, who was so short that he had to talk to her on his fingers and she gave the excuse that he wanted her to do up her own hair. She stayed with the show until they billed her as the female giraffe, and then she loped back to the old home where she was greeted with the aff side of a hair brush, applied to that portion of her anatomy where grandpa used to bustle. She got up at four o'clock next morning and had breakfast ready for the hired man before sunup, which was such a shock to her mother that she fainted in the sink and clogged the drain pipe. The trouble is that most girls have too much rope. The best wives are always the girls who have been flattened out across the parental knee about once a week and whose heads are not padded up with store hair until they look like a buck sheep at shearing time. Nothing will straighten up the lovesick girl who makes googoo eyes at every traveling man in sight sooner than an old fashioned spanking at the proper point of contact. The girls' whose daily labor consists of brewing fudge and making the trains is about as useless to a man who has to work for a living as a hip pocket in a nightie.

MAKING BRAKEMEN ON O. S. L.

Pocatello Tribune Dishes Up Done on Initiation of a Rookie.

The following is interesting dope for railroad men. It is taken from the Pocatello Tribune.

"Of all the corporations that hire workmen, the railroad companies use the greatest per cent and in the train and engine service the men are carefully selected by the trainmaster or master mechanic to perform services which are responsible for thousands of dollars worth of freight and equipment in their daily tasks, to say nothing of the precious lives that are entrusted to their care.

"The recruit will apply for a job and if he looks 'husky' and the 'big boss' thinks there is material in him for a good brakeman he is told to go into the next rooms and fill out an application blank. Laboriously he sits down and starts to fill in the answers on a printed form. The average man fills this out in about 30 minutes, but some who have railroaded before do much thinking before filling out

the form which asks that a true answer must be inserted for the past five years' service.

"He then goes to division surgeon W. A. Wright or Assistant Surgeon Steely, who are the examining surgeons for the Short Line, here the recruit or 'rookie,' as he is sometimes called, is put through a stiffer examination than the United States army requires for its soldiers. He is given a strict eye and ear test and there are many devices with which the physical fitness of the man is tried before he is passed. In the doctor's office are miniature semaphore and switch lights, on which the recruit must tell the color of the light. There are several combination lights run in which make the semaphore appear a bright red, then yellow, then green or maybe white, and each one he must answer, and answer quickly, for the doctor allows him no time to study.

"The examination passed in good shape, he reports for work to the trainmaster, who writes his name on a small card and puts it in a rack along with the names of hundreds of others.

"He is told that he will be put to work the next day. Bright and early he goes down to the freight yards the next morning and presents a note of introduction to the conductor on a local freight, who says, in a gruff tone, 'Huh, another student; well, son, you better be ready to leave town in 30 minutes, and don't miss the train.' He then humbly asks where the train is located, and is told in a very short answer, 'Track 7.'

"Track 7 might be in China or South Africa for all he knows, and after much inquiry he locates the track and train. Stowing his good clothes in locker of the caboose, he dons his overalls and goes up ahead trying to make himself useful. He introduces himself to the rest of the train crew and is ordered by the head 'brakie' to ride with him in the engine.

"When nearly to the next stop the train slows down with a sudden grinding of brakes and the recruit looks from one to another of the crew trying to learn the cause of the sudden stop. The head brakeman runs back alongside the train, the recruit following, not knowing what he may find, but he wants to be 'Johnny on the spot' in any event.

"Well, we've got a lung pulled out," says the old-timer as he surveys a drawbar lying on the ground. Go back to the 'crummy' and get a couple o' chains, and hurry up or No. 2 will be putting us in the clear in a hurry.' He has learned that 'crummy' is the caboose, and he carries two chains to the seat of trouble and watches the older hands as they throw a figure 8 around the remaining drawbar and on to the trucks of the injured car.

"Most of the signals he will learn by observation and he is usually a little help when there is a car to 'kick' into a siding or spur. He is told by the conductor how to connect the air hose and is given explicit instructions in order that the angle cock be turned the right way so that the air brake will not fall to work.

"He is allowed to see the running orders, or block card, which gives his train rights over all others as far as the next station, and gradually he 'gets next'.

"He is next given the job for a few minutes as flagman and must take red flag and torpedoes back down the line from half a mile to a mile and stop all trains which comes his way.

"After two round trips, as a rule,

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GRAND VIEW

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he is either O. K.'ed or is turned down by the conductor and when he steps into the trainmaster's office the next day with a letter stating that he will do, he is feeling in high spirits."

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