

Science and Creation

"In the beginning God created the heaven and the earth."—Genesis 1:1

Scientists continue to learn more and more of the immensity and complexity of the universe. Many of them freely acknowledge that the more they explore it, the more they are convinced that responsible for all its grandeur is a Supreme Intelligent Creator. This was apparent long ago to the Prophet David, who wrote, "The heavens declare the glory of God; and the firmament showeth his handiwork. Day unto day uttereth speech, and night unto night showeth knowledge."—Ps. 19:1,2

The Prophet Isaiah assures us that God "formed the earth ... he created it not in vain, he formed it to be inhabited." (Isa. 45:18) Clearly, God formed the earth to be inhabited. And the Genesis record of creation reveals that the principal resident of earth was to be man.

When creating our first parents, God said to them, "Be fruitful, and multiply, and replenish [Hebrew "fill"] the earth, and subdue it: and have dominion over the fish of the sea, and over the fowl of the air, and over every living thing that moveth upon the earth." (Gen. 1:28) But to fully receive this inheritance it was necessary that man prove his loyalty to divine law. Adam failed in this and came under condemnation to death.

But this does not mean that God's purpose failed. The Bible reveals that, through Christ, God provided redemption for fallen man. "As in Adam all die, even so in Christ shall all be made alive." (1 Cor. 15:21) Man will be reclaimed from his disobedience and given an opportunity to prove worthy of living in the marvelous home which his Maker provided. The earth will be fully inhabited, not by a dying race, but by a race restored to perfect life, and fortified against sin by an experimental knowledge of the dire results of disobedience.

This great project of restoring the dead and dying human race is described in the Bible by the word "resurrection." Also, Peter termed it "times of restitution" which he says were spoken of by God's holy prophets since the world began. (Acts 3:19-21) Just as the opening chapters of the Bible state the essential facts concerning the creation and fall of man, so the remainder of the Bible reveals the Creator's plan for the restoration of those whom he created to have dominion over the earth.

It should increase our faith in the Bible as the revelation of God's design for us, as we realize how accurately it describes many of the essential facts concerning the earth. For example, the ancients believed that the earth was flat, but it is now established that the earth is a spheroid. This fact was referred to by the Bible 3,000 years ago. In the Book of Isaiah we read of "the circle of the earth."—Isa. 40:22

The ancient sages of India taught that the earth was supported on the back of an elephant which stood upon a tortoise. The Greeks were noted for their great wisdom, but the best theory they could deduce was that the earth rested on the back of Atlas. The Bible proclaimed the truth on this point long before it was discovered by human wisdom. The

Prophet Job said concerning the Creator, "He stretcheth out the north over the empty place, and hangeth the earth upon nothing."—Job 26:7

The Earth's Foundations

The Creator asked Job, "Where wast thou when I laid the foundations of the earth? declare, if thou hast understanding." And again, "Whereupon are the foundations thereof fastened? or who laid the cornerstone thereof?" (Job 38:4,6) In the light of geological truths now established, it appears that these questions refer to definite characteristics in the formation of the earth. Man's home does have "foundations" which are firmly established on what is believed to be a solid mass of nickel-iron substance which forms the hard core of the earth's center.

The "cornerstone" of the earth is somewhat like the chief "cornerstone" of a pyramid, except that instead of being on top it is in the center. Thus the entire weight of the earth presses down upon its central core. In "The Making of the Earth" (*Encyc. of Modern Knowledge*, pp. 192, 193), Prof. J. W Gregory mentions seven massif foundations which support the upper crust of the earth. They are located in North and South America, Asia, Africa, Australia, and two in Europe. While the oceans have a tremendous weight, and are well shored up by a floor of heavy basaltic material, the Lord has provided for additional support for the continents. No wonder the psalmist wrote concerning the Creator, "He hath founded the earth upon her bases, that it should not be removed forever."—Ps. 104:5, margin

Measurements

God asked Job another important question concerning the earth: "Who hath laid the measures thereof, if thou knowest? or who hath stretched the line upon it?" (Job 38:5) Measurements are vital to an architect when designing a building. Not only must the building itself have proper proportionate measurements, but these must be related to the surrounding objects and circumstances.

So it was in the design of the earth. The great Architect chose "measurements" in every way suitable to the purpose of his design. The diameter of the earth is approximately 8,000 miles. The importance of this measurement is appreciated only when it is compared with the smaller size of the moon, and with the much larger sizes of Jupiter and Saturn.

The earth's oceans, it is believed, resulted from water vapor thrown out in earth's early stages of formation when it was a hot mass. The diameter of the earth would therefore determine the amount of this vapor as related to its surface measurement. In the case of the moon, being much smaller, the amount of water resulting from its gases was so small that it was completely dried up as the moon cooled, with the result that there is no water on the moon. Scientists tell us, on the other hand, that planets the size of Jupiter and Saturn gave off such huge quantities of water vapor that their land masses are completely submerged under great depths of either water or ice. If the earth was to be habitable for man, it had to be the correct size, and the Divine Architect knew what that measurement would need to be.

Also, the distance from the sun had to be just right in order that the earth might be properly warmed, but not made too hot. The sun is about 91 million miles from the earth. Scientists tell us that should the sun be removed to 120 million miles away, we would all freeze to death. Or, if the sun were brought to within 60 million miles of the earth, we would all be burned to death; that even vegetation would be destroyed by the heat.

How meaningful were the questions the Creator asked Job—"Who hath laid the measures thereof, if thou knowest? or who hath stretched the line upon it?" These were not idle questions. They were designed by the Creator to reveal his wisdom and love in providing this wonderful home for humanity.

How Created

The Bible does not explain how God accomplished his creation. The Bible simply states that "God created the heaven and the earth." However, it is generally agreed by scientists that regardless of the origin of the material which composes the earth, there was a time when its surface was a hot, molten mass, which afterward slowly cooled to what it is today.

In broad terms the Bible describes this by the simple statement that the earth was "without form, and void," that is, shapeless. (Gen. 1:2) It is from this time, when the earth was as yet unsuitable for life, that the first chapter of Genesis is concerned. This record of "creation" refers to six stages, days or eras of progress in bringing the earth to its present habitable state.

Creation

Geologists have discovered this orderly development, and while they do not make the same number of divisions of time as in Genesis, their discoveries as to what occurred during the various stages of development are in remarkable harmony with Genesis. Scientists give us four main eras, which they subdivide into shorter periods.

There is no need to be too exacting in noting the harmony between the periods established by the scientists and the "days" of Genesis. After all, the Bible's record of how the earth was prepared to sustain life is stated in thirty-one short verses, whereas almost countless volumes have been written by scientists concerning that mighty work. The six general divisions were apparently all that the Creator deemed necessary to mention in order to give his reverent people the information needed to maintain their faith.

The First "Day"

In the beginning of the first "day" God's Spirit—his almighty power—"moved upon the face of the waters." (Gen. 1:2) The Hebrew word here translated "moved" means to *brood*, as a bird brooding over its nest. As we know, there are several stages in the "brooding" process. Twigs are gathered to form the nest. These are lined with grass or other softer materials, and finally with a soft down for the comfort of the young birds. Then there is the laying of the eggs, and keeping them warm until the baby birds are hatched.

In a general way this is a fitting illustration of how the Spirit, or power, of the Creator brooded over the waters of earth, that eventually a home might be made ready for the myriad creatures he had in mind for the earth, and especially for man. That "brooding" began at the outset of the first "day," when "darkness was upon the face of the deep," and continued until man, male and female, was made in his image at the close of the sixth day.

Darkness

When God's Spirit began to "brood" over the waters "darkness was upon the face of the deep." Since this was prior to the time when land and water were divided, the earth's surface was one vast ocean. God asked Job, "Who shut up the sea with doors, when it brake forth, as if it had issued out of the womb? When I made the cloud the garment thereof, and thick darkness a swaddling band for it?"—Job 38:8,9

God's question might well suggest the manner in which the sea came into being. Scientists agree that as the earth mass cooled a more or less solid crust formed on the outside. For a time this crust kept the hot gases confined, or, as God's question suggests, "shut up ... with doors." But the confined gas would build up a tremendous pressure and "brake forth" through innumerable small craters, spread over the earth's surface, then cool, condense and fall upon the hot surface of the earth. Thus the sea was "born," God likening it to an issuing out of the womb.

Light

The Creator said, "Let there be light," and as a result of this decree "there was light." It is clearly established by scientists that the sun was created long before the earth, and probably was the light referred to in the Creator's decree, although it did not penetrate the clouds of vapor and gas that encircled the earth with the same degree of brightness as it did later.

Genesis 1:4,5: "And God divided between the light and between the darkness. God called the light Day, and the darkness he called Night." (Margin) It was the earth itself that made the division between the darkness and the light. The side of the earth that faced the sun would be light, in comparison with the darkness on the other side of the globe.

Not Twenty-four Hours

As the light of the sun began dimly to penetrate the dense canopy of moisture that surrounded the earth, the first era of God's brooding over the planet came to an end. The record states, "The evening and the morning were the first day." (Gen. 1:5) Some have been misled by the word "day" used in this statement. It is a translation of the Hebrew word *yowm*, pronounced, yome. While often in the Old Testament this word is applied to a literal day of twelve or twenty-four hours, the sacred writers did not thus limit its use.

In Exodus 13:10, Leviticus 25:29, Numbers 9:22, and in other places, the same Hebrew word is translated "year." In Genesis 40:4 and Joshua 24:7 it is translated "season." In Genesis 4:3 and 26:8, and many other places, *yowm* is translated "time." These references

reveal clearly that the meaning of this Hebrew word is not limited to a twenty-four hour day.

Besides, the Bible often uses the word "day" in a broader sense. The period of forty years the Israelites spent in the wilderness is referred to as "the day of temptation in the wilderness." (Ps. 95:8) Isaiah refers to the era of Christ's kingdom on earth as a "day." (Isa. 11:10) And in Genesis 2:4 the entire period of creation is "the day that the Lord God made the earth and the heavens."

It is clear, then, that the Hebrew word *yowm* simply denotes a time, season, or era during which certain events take place, or a particular work is accomplished.

We read that "the evening and the morning were the first day." The Hebrew word here translated "evening" literally means "dusk" or darkness. What the Divine Author evidently wants us to understand is that each of the creative periods had an obscure, "dark" beginning, and the completion of the work of each age was a morning of brightness. It was literally true of the first "day" that it began in darkness, and ended with the divine decree, "Let there be light."

The Second "Day"

During the second creative period the earth's atmosphere was formed. "And God said, Let there be a firmament [margin, expansion] in the midst of the waters, and let it divide the waters from the waters." (Gen. 1:6) This division of the waters by the "expansion" meant that the main body of water remained on the earth, while a tremendous quantity of vapor water was held suspended in the upper atmosphere.

Scientists tell us that the remaining gases which came from the hot earth, much of which condensed to form an ocean of boiling water, were now used to make the atmosphere. But these gases had to be adjusted by Divine wisdom to provide exactly the right amount of oxygen necessary for the many breathing creatures of earth which later would be created.

The Prophet Isaiah wrote, "He stretcheth out the heavens as a curtain, and spreadeth them out as a tent to dwell in." (Isa. 40:22) What a beautiful way of describing the expanse of atmosphere that surrounds the earth!

The earth's atmosphere is vital to life, not only because of the oxygen which it provides for all breathing creatures, but also because it allows the circulatory system by which the earth is supplied with water. The sun turns the water of the oceans into vapor, it is lifted into the atmosphere, and it falls to earth as rain or snow. God asked Job, who caused it "to rain on the earth, where no man is; on the wilderness, wherein there is no man; to satisfy the desolate and waste ground; and to cause the bud of the tender herb to spring forth? Hath the rain a father? or who hath begotten the drops of dew? Out of whose womb came the ice? and the hoary frost of heaven, who hath gendered it?"—Job 38:25-29

The atmosphere holds billions of tons of water in suspension, ready to be "sprinkled" upon the earth. What a marvelous watering system! How it reveals the wisdom of the Divine

Architect! And how simply it is described—"God made the firmament, and divided the waters which were under the firmament from the waters which were above the firmament: and it was so. And God called the firmament Heaven." (Gen. 1:7,8) The Hebrew word here translated "heaven" is the same one which is also translated "air" in this chapter. It would therefore be just as correct to say that God called the "firmament" air.

With the forming of earth's atmosphere completed, that era came to an end. "And the evening and the morning were the second day."—Gen. 1:8

The Third "Day"

During the third "day" or epoch the land surfaces of the earth appeared. "God said, Let the waters under the heaven [or air] be gathered together unto one place, and let the dry land appear: and it was so. And God called the dry land Earth, and the gathering together of the waters called he Seas: and God saw that it was good."—Gen. 1:9,10

Proverbs 8:29 says the Lord "gave to the sea his decree, that the waters should not pass his commandment: when he appointed the foundations of the earth." It's been said that if all the continental masses of the earth would be leveled off, the entire land surface of the earth would be from one to two miles under the ocean. Apparently this was the case prior to the third creative day.

By divine decree, and under the control of divine power, there began a buckling of the earth's surface, which was as yet a somewhat soft crust, deepening the ocean beds, and heaving up our continents. As expressed in Job, "Hitherto shalt thou come, but no further: and here shall thy proud waves be stayed."—Job 38:10,11

"Thou hast set a bound that they may not pass over; that they turn not again to cover the earth [as the oceans originally did]."—Ps. 104:5-9

Early Plant Life

Also in the third creative period God said, "Let the earth bring forth grass, the herb yielding seed, and the fruit tree yielding fruit after his kind, whose seed is in itself, upon the earth: and it was so." (Gen. 1:11) Thus is described the earlier forms of vegetation.

While the Hebrew word here translated "grass" was later applied to literal grass, apparently in this text it is used to describe a more general form of tender vegetation. Rotherham translates it "vegetation." The fruit trees created in the third "day" did not bear edible fruit. Trees bearing edible fruit were not produced until much later in the creative week.

The third creative era embraced what scientists describe as the Carboniferous and early Permian Periods. It was at this time that the rank vegetation growing up into veritable forests furnished the material for the coal deposits of the earth.

Species Fixed

Let us pause here to note the profound significance of the expression, "After his kind." This is the Lord's way of saying that all species of life are fixed, that there is no evolving from one to the other. There may be many varieties of each species. For example, there are many varieties of roses and dogs, but they are all roses and dogs. Darwin himself, in his "Origin of the Species," made this frank admission: "In spite of all the efforts of trained observers, not one change of species into another is on record."

Concerning the higher forms of plant life as known today, Mr. Darwin is reported as saying in a letter to Sir Joseph Hooker, "The rapid development so far as we can judge of all higher plants within recent geological times is an abominable mystery." (*The Evolution of Plants*, p. 42, Dr. D. H. Scott, M.A., L.L.D.) This was an "abominable" mystery to Darwin simply because it was a denial of his theory of evolution.

Scientists as a rule are not yet ready to give up their theory of evolution, but they do admit that so far as geological records found in the rocks are concerned there are inexplicable gaps all along the line, from the lowest forms of plant and animal life to the highest. In other words, there are many "missing links," which is freely admitted by such noted scientists as Wells, Huxley, Dana, and others. Some scientists speak of "rapid transition," and "discontinuity," meaning that there is no evidence of one species having evolved into another.

Wells and Huxley recognized the difficulties. However, they proceeded upon the basis of sheer imagination, to make "bridges," admitting that these were "tentative" and "speculative." Geologists estimate that this speculative bridging spans a time gap of at least 500 million years. The unfortunate part of this is that the lay reader of the works of these eminent men fails to discern between what they actually establish as facts by the records of the rocks, and their speculative "bridges."

We might sum up these thoughts by a quotation from the French professor, E. Perrier, as found on page 75 of his book "The Earth Before History." He writes: "The comparatively abrupt appearance of so many organic forms has sometimes been regarded as evidence against the evolutionary theory. Again and again it has been proved that a new flora and fauna have suddenly appeared in some geological stratum after the complete disappearance of older ones preserved in the strata immediately antecedent." This, Perrier observed, has been "considered an unanswerable argument in favor of independent creations."

The Fourth "Day"

The fourth "day" involved the sun, moon and stars. The text reads, "God said, Let there be lights in the firmament of the heaven to divide the day from the night; and let them be for signs, and for seasons, and for day, and years ... God made two great lights; the greater light to rule the day, and the lesser light to rule the night: he made the stars also."

The casual reader might easily get the impression from the record that it was during this period that the sun and moon were created, but this is not the case. The sun and the moon

were actually created "in the beginning" when "God created the heaven and the earth." They are a part of the "heaven."

The Hebrew word here translated "made" has a much wider meaning and usage than this. It is rendered "appointed" in Psalm 104:19, God "*appointed* the moon for seasons: the sun knoweth his going down." God's work in the fourth day was not creating the sun and the moon, but appointing them "to rule over the day and over the night," and that they might be for "signs, and for seasons, and for days, and years."

As we noted earlier, it was the light of the sun which dimly penetrated the "swaddling band" of darkness that surrounded the earth in the first creative epoch when God said, "Let there be light."

Clearly some sunlight reached the earth prior to the fourth creative "day," for it was needed by the vegetation that grew in the third epoch. But the sun and the moon did not then "rule" in the sense of producing seasons, evidenced by the fact that the huge trees deposited to form our coal beds do not show any rings to denote the years of their growth.

The Fifth "Day"

The fifth epoch was devoted to bringing forth marine life and "fowl that may fly above the earth." (vs. 20) In the King James Version we read that God created great "whales, and every living creature that moves, which the waters brought forth abundantly after their kind."—vs. 21

The Revised Version says "sea monsters" instead of "whales." Strong's Concordance informs us that the Hebrew word could also be translated "land monsters." Verse 21 probably refers to those huge monsters to which scientists have given such names as Dinosaurs, Diplodocus, and Tyrannosaurus, meaning huge lizards. Scientists suggest that while these monsters could live on land, their tremendous weight made it easier for them to move about in the water, for the water would help to bear up their weight.

The expression "every winged fowl" need not be limited in its application to the feathered birds. Geologists find that during this period there were huge winged creatures that were not feathered, their wings being constructed somewhat like those of a bat.

Whether it be the huge lizards of this period, the creatures which lived exclusively in the sea, or the feathered or unfeathered birds of the air, each species was created "after his kind." This is confirmed by geologists, who freely acknowledge that from the testimony found in "The Book of the Rocks" each of these species appeared suddenly with no evidence of having climbed an evolutionary ladder.

The Sixth "Day"

At the close of the sixth "day," God created man, in his own image. Appropriately, it was during this era that the land animals which were to contribute to human needs were also

created.

While vegetation appeared during the third "day," new species of plant life continued to appear, the flowering and fruit trees being created during the sixth day. Geologists have found that with the appearance of the flowering plants and trees came also the honey bee. It was at this point that the bee was needed for pollination purposes, and prior to this the bee would not have had its proper supply of food. The Creator saw to it that the bee's "natural" desire for food would automatically cause it to serve the flowering plants and trees in their process of reproduction.

The crowning feature of God's earthly creation was man. Creation's Architect designed the earth and all its appointments for man. In unfolding the truth concerning man's creation the sacred writer takes us behind the scenes, as it were, and lets us hear the God of all creation talking to his beloved Son, the very "beginning" of his creation. Genesis 1:26: "Let us make man in our image, after our likeness: and let them have dominion over the fish of the sea, and over the fowl of the air, and over the cattle, and over all the earth, and over every creeping thing that creepeth upon the earth."

It was doubtless a great joy to both the Father and the Son to know that now the great objective of all that had been accomplished by the "brooding" of divine power throughout the preceding five "days" was about to be realized. No matter how wonderful the previous works of creation had been, there was still no suitable representative of the Creator who could be appointed king of earth.

"Male and female created he them." (vs. 27) This brief statement of fact is detailed in the second chapter. Here we learn that the male was created first, and that there was some lapse of time before the female was created. Concerning the male, the record states: "The Lord God formed man of the dust of the ground, and breathed into his nostrils the breath of life; and man became a living soul."—Gen. 2:7

Two scientific truths are here set forth concerning human anatomy. (1) Man's organism is composed of chemical elements inherent in "Mother Earth." (2) He lives by virtue of the oxygen which he breathes into his lungs. Leviticus 17:11 says "the life of the flesh is in the blood." It is now known that the oxygen taken into the lungs is carried by the blood to every part of the body, and thus the body is kept alive. How wonderful that this knowledge should be recorded in the Bible so far in advance of its discovery by man!

A Living Soul

"Man became a living soul." A living soul is a living being. In Genesis 1:21 and 24 the same Hebrew word is translated "living creature," referring to the lower animals. This lack of uniformity in translation may reflect the desire of the translators to uphold the "immortal soul" tradition, which claims that humans have a spark of indestructible life hidden somewhere within their anatomy which, when the body dies, escapes and survives death.

While the "immortal soul" tradition is not at all implied by the expression "living soul," the translators evidently thought it sounded better than the expression "living creature," which they used when the reference was to the lower animals. Had they used either the words "living soul" or "living creature" in both instances, students of the King James Version would have been much more likely to know that the "immortal soul" tradition is not taught in the Bible at all. They would have been more inclined to accept the simple truth set forth in Ecclesiastes 3:19-21, where Solomon explains that man and beast have one and the same breath, that as "the one dieth, so dieth the other."

The Garden Home

Genesis 2:8,9 furnishes further details about the Creator's loving provision for man. "The Lord God planted a garden eastward in Eden; and there he put the man whom he had formed. And out of the ground made the Lord God to grow every tree that is pleasant to the sight, and good for food; the tree of life also in the midst of the garden, and the tree of knowledge of good and evil."

Since man was created in the image of God he could appreciate the higher things of life. While all of God's works are perfect, and therefore beautiful when viewed in their true light, nothing is said in the opening chapter of Genesis about the beauty of God's creation. The reason is obvious. The lower animals were not able to appreciate beauty. But after man was created it was different. Now emphasis is placed upon beauty, even ahead of food requirements. Man was not to live merely to eat; so the Creator provided trees in the Garden of Eden which were "pleasant to the sight."

Temptation and Disobedience

Since Adam was created in the image of his Creator, and was to be king of earth, he was afforded an opportunity to become acquainted with his dominion. He was given the responsibility of naming "all cattle:" and "the fowl of the air," and "every beast of the field" (Gen. 2:19,20) In the process of doing this, it became evident that there was no suitable companion, or "helpmeet" for Adam. So, in his own wise way, God created Eve.— Gen. 2:18, 21-25

Shortly after Eve was created, Satan the Devil approached her, working through the serpent, and challenged what God had said concerning death as the penalty of sin. "Ye shall not surely die," he said to Eve, and added, "God doth know that in the day ye eat thereof, then your eyes shall be opened, and ye shall be as gods, knowing good and evil."—Gen. 3:1-5

God, in his infinite wisdom, was capable of knowing in advance what course Adam and Eve would take without interfering in any way with their free choice. Knowing they would disobey, God permitted it. God knew that only thus could the human race obtain a practical knowledge of good and evil.

As forewarned, Adam's disobedience resulted in the penalty of death, and by heredity it

passed to all his progeny. It has brought much sorrow and suffering. But through this experience, mankind is learning the terrible results of disobeying the Creator's law.

But God continues to love his human creatures, and "though he cause grief, yet will he have compassion ... for he doth not afflict willingly ... the children of men." (Lamentations 3:33)

Because God loves his human creatures, he provided redemption for them through our Lord Jesus Christ. Thus Paul wrote, "Since by man came death, by man came also the resurrection of the dead. For as in Adam all die, even so in Christ shall all be made alive."—1 Cor. 15:21,22

This work of restoring the human race to life on the earth will be accomplished during the thousand years of Christ's kingdom. (Matt. 19:28, Rev. 20:6)

A New Creation

Meanwhile, beginning with the first advent of Jesus, another creative work has been in progress. We might speak of this as a "new creation . " The Apostle Paul gave us the clue to this when he wrote, "If any man be in Christ, he is a new creature: old things are passed away; behold, all things are become new." (II Cor. 5:17) Jesus himself became a new creature on the divine plane of life, and his true followers, dedicated wholly to do God's will, are assured that they will also be exalted to be with him, and with their Heavenly Father.—John 14:2,3; 17:24; Rev. 3:21; 2 Pet. 1:4

A New Day At Hand

A new day will be ushered in by the rising of "the Sun of Righteousness." (Mal. 4:2) The Sun of Righteousness is Christ, and his faithful followers will be with him. These are brought forth from death in the "first resurrection" to live and reign with Christ. (Rev. 20:4) These are "the righteous" who will "shine forth as the sun in the kingdom of their Father."—Matt. 13:43

Meanwhile man will have the opportunity to learn the advantages of obedience. Eventually all will be awakened from the sleep of death. Then, armed with the knowledge gained through experience with evil, those who accept the provisions of life made for them through Christ and obey the laws of the kingdom then in force, will be restored to human perfection. Then man, the king of earth, will dwell in the light of his Creator's countenance forever, enjoying the blessings of peace, health, and everlasting life.