

ONE OF THE common expressions of our time is that the world is changing. This we will admit. It is obvious in comparing our day with the past that we are changing. Most of the modern conveniences we use have been developed in the last one hundred years.

Because of these changes, many men are advocating that God is not the same. They have suggested that God is dead or that he is as modern as our world. This, then, brings forth the thought that our religion and worship must change to keep abreast of the times.

It is true that we are living in a changing world, but we still have before us as the great Creator and heavenly Father - a changeless God. With the same definiteness, we know that God's Word, the Bible, has not changed in its content. Its message is the same for us as it was for former generations. It is the story about God and his plan for mankind.

Let us examine the Scriptures for assurance that God has not changed. The prophet Malachi was assured that the people of Israel would continue because God had not changed. "I, the Lord, do not change; therefore you, O sons of Jacob, are not consumed." (Malachi 3:6). It was with similar assurance that Jeremiah wrote, "The Lord's lovingkindnesses indeed never cease, For His compassions never fail." (Jeremiah 3:22). James in the New Testament wrote, ". . . coming down from the Father of lights, with whom there is no variation or shifting shadow." (1:17).

Man is constantly subject to change, but God is not. Man has been so since the time of creation. Man is frail. His physical make-up is of such nature that he can do nothing but change. But God is from the beginning—the "I am the Alpha and the Omega ... who is and who was and who is to come, the Almighty." (Revelation 1:8). This is

well expressed in words credited to Moses: "from everlasting to everlasting, You are God." (Psalm 90:2)

Realizing, then, that God is from "everlasting to everlasting," we can better understand the instruction given to Moses. "God is not a man, that He should lie, Nor a son of man, that He should repent; Has He said, and will He not do it? Or has He spoken, and will He not make it good? (Numbers 23:19). That which God has said and spoken will be done. Jesus explained the same thing in a different manner. "I say to you, until heaven and earth pass away, not the smallest letter or stroke shall pass from the Law until all is accomplished."

Almost every person in the world lives in hope. He looks forward to something because of a promise. Many are convinced that world peace can be established by alliances, treaties, and military strength. Whatever it may be, it is based on an agreement or promise. God has made many promises. Because he changes not—is a changeless God—one who will look to God's Word for guidance can be filled with "hope (that) does not disappoint." (Romans 5:5). Paul wrote "the hope of the promise made by God to our fathers" (Acts 26:6). Paul, relating the record of the birth of Isaac, said, "This is the word of promise" (Rom. 9 : 9).

The world is in great turmoil. Certainly the words of Jesus, "Nation will rise against nation and kingdom against kingdom" (Luke 21 :10), are being fulfilled. Some of the nations in the Middle East would destroy Israel. This has been their intent, and still is. But this cannot take place, for God has promised that Israel shall not be destroyed, "O Jacob My servant, do not fear," declares the Lord, "For I am with you. For I will make a full end of all the nations Where I have driven you, Yet I will not make a full end of you; But I will correct you

properly And by no means leave you unpunished." (Jeremiah 46 :28). Not only has God promised to save Israel, but they will be provided with a leader who will liberate (redeem) them from their "captivity," oppression, sin, and living without God.

This will be Jesus of whom the angel told Mary. "He will be great and will be called the Son of the Most High; and the Lord God will give Him the throne of His father David; and He will reign over the house of Jacob forever, and His kingdom will have no end." (Luke 1:32,33),

The first promise of such a ruler was uttered from the lips of Jacob when in Egypt he called all of his sons before him to "tell you what will befall you in the days to come." (Genesis 49:1). Of Judah, Jacob said, "The scepter shall not depart from Judah, Nor the ruler's staff from between his feet, Until Shiloh comes, And to him *shall be* the obedience of the peoples. (Genesis 49:10). Several years later, God promised David that "When your days are complete and you lie down with your fathers, I will raise up your descendant after you, who will come forth from you, and I will establish his kingdom. (2 Samuel 7:12).

It was because of this promise of God—a changeless God—that the "wise men" came asking, "Where is He who has been born King of the Jews?" (Matthew 2:2). This same assurance of promise prompted Zachariah, father of John the Baptist, to say of Jesus, "Blessed *be* the Lord God of Israel, For He has visited us and accomplished redemption for His people, And has raised up a horn of

salvation for us In the house of David His servant” (Luke 1:68, 69).

Yes, the people have changed. God’s “chosen”—Israel—has changed. The world has changed and is changing. God is changeless! Because of such a God, you and I have the promise of being liberated from sin.

The first “hope” of such liberation was given to Eve in the Garden of Eden. “I will put enmity Between you and the woman, And between your seed and her seed; He shall bruise you on the head, And you shall bruise him on the heel.” (Genesis 3:15). Approximately four thousand years later, the promise of the angel to Joseph was, “She will bear a Son; and you shall call His name Jesus, for He will save His people from their sins.” (Matthew 1:21).

Because we worship a changeless God, we have the assurance of salvation. We have the provision of being: “saved by his life” (Romans 5 :10). We know that God has promised that he will “cleanse us from all unrighteousness” (1 John 1:9). All of this and more hinges on the promise of God made to Eve six thousand years ago.

Where is our hope? On what is it based? In a changing world? Absolutely not! The world with all of its charms and many good things cannot give us hope in any future. But God can, has, and does!

No! God has not changed. Let us hear the words of Isaiah. “Behold, the Lord's hand is not so short That it cannot save; Nor is His ear so dull That it cannot hear,” and, our God “saw that there was no man, And was

astonished that there was no one to intercede; Then His own arm brought salvation to Him, And His righteousness upheld Him.” (Isaiah 59 :1,16)

God is keeping his promises. He has caused “the Son” to be born. He will cause him to become the “king of the Jews.” The Son has given his life for the sins of the world. Those who believe on his name are “cleansed from unrighteousness.” Through the Son, according to the promises of God—a changeless God—those who believe on him shall have “eternal life.”

“The one, even Jesus, through whom all the promises are made, has not changed, nor will he. We read Paul's words, “Jesus Christ *is* the same yesterday and today and forever.” (Hebrews 13:8)

The words of Paul express our reason for believing that God has not changed. “Now the God of peace, who brought up from the dead the great Shepherd of the sheep through the blood of the eternal covenant, *even* Jesus our Lord, equip you in every good thing to do His will, working in us that which is pleasing in His sight, through Jesus Christ, to whom *be* the glory forever and ever. Amen.” (Hebrews 13:20,21)

Our great hope of the future is well expressed in the words of Isaiah, “Behold, this is our God for whom we have waited that He might save us. This is the Lord for whom we have waited; Let us rejoice and be glad in His salvation.” (Isaiah 25:9)

A CHANGING WORLD; A CHANGELESS GOD



BY FRANCES BURNETT

“with whom there is no variation or shifting shadow” (James 1:17)

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