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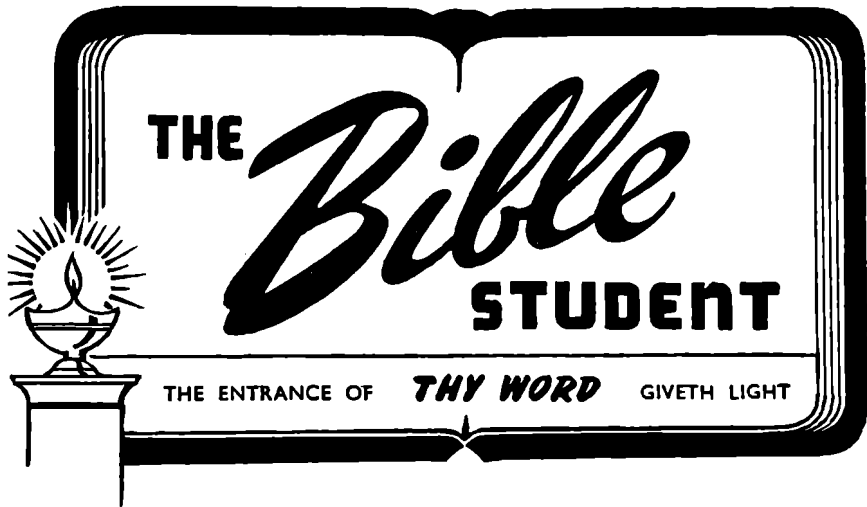
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New Series
Vol. XXVI. No. 1

JANUARY
1955

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Editor: A. McDONALD REDWOOD

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NEW SERIES

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VOL. XXVI No. 1

'A NEW CREATION'

(Galatians 6:15)

By the late C. F. HOGG

At the opening of a new year it is customary usually to greet each other with the familiar words 'a Happy New Year!'

There are conditions, however, for only in the new creation is true happiness to be found and experienced. On the old creation sentence of death has been passed; it but awaits execution. Shall this year see the beginning of the end? Who knows, save God? But the wise are prepared. The happiest thing that can happen to any man, woman or child in this New Year is that in it he should pass out of death into life, out of the old creation into the new.

This old creation is patent enough; the new, though not so evident is as real, and with this difference in its favour, that whereas the old is doomed and must pass away, the new remains new for ever.

When we speak of anything as 'new' one or both of two ideas may be intended. We may mean new in time, or new in character. The Greek language has two words, however, where we have but one. When the Lord spoke of new wine in Matt. 9:17, He used

[The above message was sent to us by the late esteemed servant of God whose name it bears and appeared in the 'B.S.' for January 1933. By a simple coincidence it came to our notice again as we were going to press with this issue: it has lost nothing of its intrinsic values, we think, hence it is sent forth again in the belief that its message is as relevant for us today, in the present world conditions, when every true believer is being challenged to manifest '*the life that is life indeed*'.—Ed.]

the word that means newly produced, but when He spoke of the new 'fruit of the vine' in the Kingdom of God He used the word that describes character, for that wine will differ in kind from the wine of this world. It is with the second of these words we are concerned: that which tells not only of what is new, but of what is *better* because it is new.

1. The Christian is one who has been brought into the new creation by the communication to him of a *New Life*, which is 'the gift of God . . . in Christ Jesus our Lord'. Henceforth his 'life is hid with Christ in God'. Indeed Christ Himself is our life, for life is not imparted save as faith brings us into living union with Him. In so saying the Apostle seems to have in mind words spoken more than once by the Lord, 'I am . . . the life.' To those who are united to Christ by faith, life is imparted by the Holy Spirit; they 'have passed out of death into life', they are '*born anew*.' A Christian, then, is not merely one who has been forgiven he is a new creature in a new creation. For him 'the old things . . . are become new' (John 14:6; Rom. 6:3; 2 Cor. 5:17; Col. 3:3, 4).

2. The Christian has a *New Aim* in life, for whereas his former ambition was to please himself, now he 'makes it his aim to be well-pleasing unto his Lord' (2 Cor. 5:9).

3. The Christian acts from a *New Motive*; a double motive, indeed, for while 'the love of Christ constraineth' him, he bears always in mind 'the fear of the Lord', that is, the sense of responsibility to Christ at His Judgment-seat, where he fain would hear his Lord say, 'Well done, good and faithful servant; thou hast been faithful over a few things, I will set thee over many things; enter thou into the joy of thy Lord' (Matt. 25:21; 2 Cor. 5:11, 14).

4. The Christian measures himself by a *New Standard*, for whereas before he was satisfied to compare himself with those around him, now he takes for his pattern One Who, being 'meek and lowly in heart', washed the feet of His disciples and said, 'I have given you an Example that you should do as I have done to you'. Only by acquiring His mind, and following His steps can we 'attain unto . . . the measure of the stature of the fullness of Christ' (John 13:5; Eph. 4:13).

5. Whereas the Christian was at one time under a law that wielded the power 'of sin and of death' he has been 'made free' therefrom by being brought under a *New Law*, 'the law of Christ;' the law by which Christ Himself walked, the law of Love. That law Christ defined when He said, 'A new commandment I give unto you, that ye love one another; even as I have loved you, that ye love one another. By this shall all men know that ye are my disciples, if ye have love one to another.' (Rom. 8:2; 1 Cor. 9:21; Gal. 6:2).

6. The Christian is not discouraged by these high ideals, for a *New Power* has come into his life. He prays that he 'may be strengthened with power through His (God's) Spirit in the inward man' and knows that his prayer is heard and answered. Nor does he doubt the adequacy of the promised power, since it is the same 'strength of His (God's) might which He wrought in Christ, when He raised Him from the dead', that now works in the Christian to enable him to live 'soberly and righteously and godly in this present age' (Eph. 2:19, 20; 3:16; Tit. 2:12).

7. And whereas before the Christian was either careless of the end of the journey, or haunted by a 'certain fearful expectation of judgment', now he rejoices in a *New Destiny*. He is numbered among those who confess that they are 'strangers and pilgrims on the earth . . . who seeking after a country of their own, . . . desire a better country, that is a heavenly.' He looks for 'the City which hath the foundations, whose Architect and Builder is God', where are 'the Throne of God and of the Lamb' and where 'His servants shall do him service; and they shall see His face; and His name shall be on their foreheads'. And not only does he look for a new environment, he knows that he himself shall be 'fashioned anew', 'conformed to the image of (God's) Son': with the 'many brethren' beholding and sharing in the glory of the Firstborn in the day when every knee shall bow and every tongue 'confess that Jesus Christ is Lord to the glory of God the Father.' (Heb. 11:10, 14-16; Rev. 22:3; Phil. 2:10, 11; 3:21.)

As we salute the new year we ask ourselves in what sense will it be A NEW YEAR to us? Will it be new merely because the old has faded away? Will it be a year like that just gone, with its

memories of faithlessness and defeat, of suffering shirked, of self-will and disloyalty, of pride and covetousness, of following the Lord afar off, of having a name to live yet in ways bordering on spiritual death? Or shall it be, in the grace, wisdom and power of God, a *New Year*, a different kind of year, a year dominated by a *purpose to walk with the Lord and to be well-pleasing unto him?*

THE PROPHECY OF EZEKIEL

H. L. ELLISON, B.A., B.D.

The Bloody City (22: 1-16)

The word 'blood' occurs no less than seven times in these sixteen verses. One gets the impression that in the vision accompanying the words Ezekiel saw the city he knew so well through a shimmer of blood.

Because of that concreteness in Hebrew outlook which made it natural for one factor to be considered at a time, as though it were the whole of the truth, many Western expositors have been misled into thinking that verses like Lev. 17:11, Gen. 9:4, etc., teach that the life principle is peculiarly in the blood. But as a fundamental passage like Gen. 2:7 clearly implies, the Old Testament equally recognizes the role of breath, or spirit, in giving and preserving life.

But while a man's breath symbolized above all man's life being lived, e.g., Is. 2:22, Job 27:3; 33:4, for it is from a man's breathing that we best know him to be alive, and the more vigorous that life the deeper the breathing, his blood symbolized above all his life taken by violence*. God is the giver of life, which is outside man's power to bestow. For that reason the taking of life, symbolically expressed by 'the shedding of blood', except by God's permission or command was supremely an insult to Him.

* There is an excellent treatment of this subject in Stibbs: *The Meaning of the Word 'Blood' in Scripture* (Tyndale Press).