

"In the beginning."

Genesis 1: 1

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JAN/FEB 1965

"In the beginning God" — what a solid foundation for all that follows is found in these words! "*From everlasting . . . Thou art God*" (Psalm 90: 2). He whom we know as Father — "The Father of mercies, and the God of all comfort" is the One who is "from everlasting." "The Lord (Jehovah) . . . a Father . . . the Lord Almighty" (the absolute and Sovereign Ruler), 2 Cor. 6: 17, 18. "Then cometh the end . . . God . . . all in all," (1 Cor. 15: 24, 25). "From everlasting to everlasting, Thou art God."

It is good, at the commencement of another year, that we should have an increased apprehension of the greatness and majesty of our God, the One who has set His love upon us. Several times in the *New Testament* He is referred to as the "Almighty" (Genesis 17: 1); who is known to us as "Father" (2 Corinthians 6), is the One of whom we read in relation to the city in the *world-to-come*, "The Lord God Almighty and the Lamb are the temple of it."

"In the beginning God *created*". These first "five words" of the Bible reveal a glory which is peculiar to God — He is the Creator. He alone has "brought into existence" (created) all that does exist. The word used in Genesis 1 — *Elohim* is a plural word and indicates that the Godhead was engaged in the mighty act of creation (cf. Job 26: 13; John 1: 3 and 10; etc.), and we are assured that a mead of praise will yet be raised to God as *Creator*, He who created all for His own pleasure (Revelation 4: 11; Psalm 150).

Thus whatever may eventuate in this world, we can confidently rest in the knowledge that God can "do everything, and that no thought can be withholden from Thee," (Job 42: 2). Daniel in his day knew the supremacy of God in the kingdoms of men — "His dominion is an everlasting dominion, which shall not pass away, and His kingdom that which shall not be destroyed" (Daniel 7: 14). Nebuchadnezzar, that absolute monarch — the "head of gold" — speaks of "the wonders that the High God hath wrought toward me. How great are His signs! and how mighty are His wonders! His kingdom is an everlasting kingdom, and His dominion is from generation to generation," (Daniel 4: 2, 3). How striking is this testimony from this great Gentile ruler of whom it is written — "God . . . hath given thee a kingdom, power, and strength and glory. And wheresoever the children of men dwell, the beasts of the field and the fowls of the heaven hath He given into thine hand, and hath made thee ruler over them all." How infinitely great is our God!

As we read such Scriptures we are led to exclaim with David — "Great is the Lord (Jehovah) and greatly to be praised" (1 Chronicles 16: 25). "He also is to be feared above all gods." Such holy sentiments engaged also the heart of Solomon his son as he commenced to build the House of God — "The house which I build is great: for great is our God above all gods" (2 Chronicles 2: 5).

This mighty God, He who is "from everlasting to everlasting," has been revealed in Christ in *perfect love*, and His movements in grace towards us are characterized by *what He is in Himself*. That which Moses said of God's earthly people can most surely be known and enjoyed by us in our day — "The eternal God is thy refuge, and underneath are the *everlasting arms*" (Deuteronomy 33: 27). The words of David in Psalm 103 — "The mercy of the Lord is *from everlasting to everlasting* upon them that fear Him" — would also have their comfort for ourselves. In Him there is "everlasting strength;" His promises are established by an "everlasting covenant;" He leads in the "way everlasting," and

finally He says (even to a wayward people), "Yea, I have loved thee with an everlasting love" (Jeremiah 31: 3).

The world through which we are passing is increasingly marked by uncleanness and materialism, the hideous features referred to in Romans 1 are showing themselves on every hand; men are busily engaged in turning "the truth of God into a lie," and the principle of worshipping and serving "the creature more than the Creator, who is blessed for ever" is seen in the materialistic cult which is gaining such headway even in this highly favoured land. In such circumstances we treasure the words of Isaiah, "Thou shalt know that I the LORD am thy Saviour and thy Redeemer, the mighty one of Jacob."

Thus we may tread our way in confidence, knowing that He who "dwellest between the cherubims" is the One who leads His people "like a flock" (Psalm 80: 1). His word, His mercy, His righteousness, His light, His way and His love are as everlasting as Himself, and "this God is our God for ever and ever" (Psalm 48: 14).

"How good is the God we adore,
Our faithful unchangeable Friend,
Whose love is as great as His power,
And knows neither measure nor end.