

# IS GOD TRULY ALIVE?

It is an indisputable fact that God is alive! He lives everlastingly according to the Holy Scriptures. In all of human history His existence has never at any time been called in question by those who are pure in heart. The wave of godlessness that is sweeping through the earth in this atomic age is not only indicative of the corruptness of man's minds but also portends a world-wide calamity.

The Time News-magazine (April 8, 1966) published in the United States once carried on its cover the startling question: "Is God Dead?" The publishers claimed that no story had been approached with more deliberation than the treatment of what they said to be "the contemporary concepts of God". The project, it was claimed, was under consideration by the editors for nearly a year, and reporters were said to have talked to theologians, philosophers, scientists, artists, teachers and students, among others, discussing notions of God that varied from pop atheism to the faithfully traditional.

The writer of the story stated that the question was no longer a taunting jest of skeptics for whom unbelief is the test of wisdom. He further stated: "Even within Christianity, now confidently renewing itself in spirit as well as form, a small band of radical theologians has seriously argued that the churches must accept the fact of God's death, and get along without him... The current death-of-God groups believe that God is indeed absolutely dead, but proposes to carry on and write a theology without theos, without God."

There was also a report that a Methodist student magazine Motive had run "an obituary of God" in newspaper style. The ordinary man may be startled by such effusions in irreverent and blasphemous statements from the quarters of those whom the world is looking to for leadership. But with those who in divine knowledge are matured they are nothing strange.

Satan the devil is capable of instilling evil thoughts in men and making them mad to the extent of denying their Creator. This is the trouble with those who relish in atheism and blasphemy. And it is mostly among the worldly intellectuals one finds such characters. What has been described as "contemporary concepts of God" are a web of lies trumped up to mislead simple folks. The sceptics' saying that "God is dead" defeats their own argument that there is no god. In fact if there is not God who ever lived, then the point of his death as the infidels are saying does not arise.

Obviously, the whole exercise of the "death-of-God" notion is useless.

## Creator

In Genesis chapter 1, verse 1, it is written: "In the beginning God created the heaven and the earth." Thus it becomes clear that God is the Architect and Creator of the universe.

The word god is a derivative of an Hebrew word meaning 'a mighty one'. And for the fact that the

great Creator made other mighty ones also known as gods He distinguishes Himself from others by His names and titles. He told Abraham: "...I *am* the Almighty God..." (Genesis 17:1) To Moses in Egypt He declared: "And I appeared unto Abraham, unto Isaac, and unto Jacob, by *the name of* God Almighty, but by my name JEHOVAH was I not known to them." (Exodus 6:3) What is more, Moses himself said to the Israelites: "For the LORD your God *is* God of gods, and Lord of lords, a great God, a mighty, and a terrible, which regardeth not persons, nor taketh reward." – Deuteronomy 10:17

God Almighty is a Spirit Person and, therefore, He is invisible to human eyes. Jesus said: "God is a Spirit". And God told Moses: "...Thou canst not see my face: for there shall no man see me, and live." (Exodus 33:20) He made man in His own image, after His likeness, and so there can be no doubt about His personality – the difference being that while He is a Spirit, man is human or flesh. – Genesis 1:26, 27, Luke 24:39, John 4:24; 1 Corinthians 11:7

Some preachers present God in such a way as to make Him appear vague in the minds of men. The teaching that God is not a person and that He has not a body or is not limited to a shape or form has no foundation in the Scriptures. This baseless teaching contributes in no small way in confusing people about the personality of God. St. Paul described Jesus Christ as "...being the brightness of *his* (God's) glory, and the express image of his person..." (Hebrews 1:3) The apostle further stated that after Christ had purged our sins, through shedding of his blood, of course, he "sat down on the right hand of the Majesty (God Almighty) on high".

In the so-called Apostles Creed it is stated that after Jesus Christ rose from the dead, "he ascended into heaven, and sits at the right-hand of God, the Father Almighty". How would it make sense to say that Christ sits at the right-hand of God, if He (God) has no form or shape, or is not a personality?

It was in answer to the vague ideas of the ungodly, the Psalmist in an outburst of righteous indignation chided: "Understand, ye brutish among the people: and ye fools, when will ye be wise? He that planted the ear, shall he not hear? he that formed the eye, shall he not see? He that chastiseth the heathen, shall not he correct? he that teacheth man knowledge, *shall not he know?* The LORD knoweth the thoughts of man, that they *are* vanity." – Psalm 94:8-11

At one time or another in human history men at the instance of Satan had indulged in blasphemy and launched attack on holy things in various ways. Yet up till today the truth of the eternal existence of the Most High remains like the sun beam unsoiled. But the blasphemers and antagonists of things divine had always ended up disgracefully without achieving their objective and passed into oblivion while the praise of God continues among men still unabated.

## **Lesson**

The life of the late Thomas Paine should serve as a lesson to modern-day atheists and agnostics who are taking pride in blasphemy. Paine reached the pinnacle of worldly fame through his irreligious effusions which provided literary amusements to his friends and admirers. Yet he crashed to the ground and died a wretch!

The biography of Thomas Paine as written by Mr. Alfred Owen Aldridge, a professor of English in the University of Maryland, despite its grains of sympathy, is a clear exposition of the emptiness of a life without God and without Christ. A review of his biography in the "Nigerian Morning Post" (August 20, 1963) brought to view more vividly a few points about his failure in everything.

Concerning Paine it is written: "He lived a life of ducks and drakes which cost him not only his dear wife Elizabeth but also the sale of his property to pay for a debt he owed.

"At the end of his 37th year, Paine's life to the ordinary observer and perhaps to himself, was a dreary series of failure in his profession, in business and in marriage. But later in his life he became very unpopular with the people that built him up. First by defending the execution of Louis XVI found guilty of treason and by his 'Rights of Man'. "He was imprisoned and his book proscribed. "He was practically deserted by his friends and so his death bed, it was left with a woman sympathizer to care for him and to lend her parcel of land for his burial. He died broken-hearted, unnoticed, unrewarded and unsung!"

The death-of-God notion is another strategy of atheists and agnostics some of whom disguise themselves as theologians. It was aimed at taking believers in God by storm as to turn them from their religious beliefs but it has proved to be a failure. All men are not of the same character and all cannot be easy tools at the hands of the devil in his opposition to God and righteousness.

A Russian astronaut was once reported as saying, "Some people say there is a God out there: I saw no God. No God help build our rocket. The rocket was made by our people, I don't believe in God." But Colonel John Glenn of America was the more convinced of his belief in God's existence after his space-travel, and wrote of "the orderliness of the whole universe around us". He asked: "Could this just have happened? Was it an accident that a collection of solid masses of material, like our sun, stars, the planets, etc, suddenly started making these orbits of its own accord? I cannot believe that. This was a definite plan. This is one big thing that shows me there is a God. Some Power puts all this into orbit and keeps it there." – African Challenge, March, 1963.

### **Longsuffering**

One of the qualities of the Almighty God is longsuffering. Thought men provoke Him every day by their utterances and deeds; He keeps calm and still shows mercy. He cannot be tempted or moved to do anything before His due time. And so some men take undue advantage of this to continue to be foolish in their godlessness. But when His appointed time to take vengeance is due what He will do, He will do to bring iniquity to an end.

Pharaoh of Egypt in his pride showed contempt for God, but he in the long run swallowed his pride. When Moses and Aaron were sent to him as to allow the Israelites to go out of Egypt, he blurted out: "...Who is the LORD, that I should obey his voice to let Israel go? I know not the LORD, neither will I let Israel go." (Exodus 5:1, 2) Consequent upon his obstinacy the whole of Egypt was plague so much so that Pharaoh himself was compelled to confess his iniquity. He said to Moses and Aaron: "...I have sinned this time: the LORD is righteous, and I and my people

are wicked.” – Exodus 9: 27

Nebuchadnezzar, King of Babylon, was a man who was also inflated with pride by reason of his material attainment that he had no regard for God. At the height of his counterfeit glory when he was strutting in his palace and boasting of his power wealth and honour, a voice from heaven announced to him: “The kingdom is departed from thee.” He lost his reason and having been driven from among men and made like a beast going on all fours, he ate grass like oxen. – Daniel 4:28-33

At the expiration of his period of punishment, he regained his senses and acknowledged the supremacy of God. As it is written: “And at the end of the days I Nebuchadnezzar lifted up mine eyes unto heaven, and mine understanding returned unto me, and I blessed the most High, and I praised and honoured him that liveth for ever, whose dominion *is* an everlasting dominion, and his kingdom *is* from generation to generation: And all the inhabitants of the earth *are* reputed as nothing: and he doeth according to his will in the army of heaven, and *among* the inhabitants of the earth: and none can stay his hand, or say unto him, What doest thou? At the same time my reason returned unto me; and for the glory of my kingdom, mine honour and brightness returned unto me; and my counsellors and my lords sought unto me; and I was established in my kingdom, and excellent majesty was added unto me. Now I Nebuchadnezzar praise and extol and honour the King of heaven, all whose works *are* truth, and his ways judgment: and those that walk in pride he is able to abase.” – Daniel 4:34-37

### Living God

The Almighty God is self-existent. He is the Source and Giver of life, and is not subject to death. The Psalmist declared: “Before the mountains were brought forth, or ever thou hadst formed the earth and the world, even from everlasting to everlasting, thou *art* God.” (Psalm 90:2) Jeremiah the Prophet also said: “But the LORD *is* the true God, he *is* the living God, and an everlasting king: at his wrath the earth shall tremble, and the nations shall not be able to abide his indignation.” – Jeremiah 10:10

It is sheer intellectual madness for men to conjecture a notion of the “death of God”. The mere fact that a person completes a formal course in theology in an institution of higher learning, is no evidence of godliness or qualification to being a true servant of Christ. Any knowledge or wisdom that makes one blaspheme God or relegate Him to the background is useless. Concerning the worldly wise men Jeremiah stated: “How do ye say, We *are* wise, and the law of the LORD *is* with us? Lo, certainly in vain made he *it*; the pen of the scribes *is* in vain. The wise *men* are ashamed, they are dismayed and taken: lo, they have rejected the word of the LORD; and what wisdom *is* in them?” – Jeremiah 8:8, 9

The facts of God’s existence and eternity are so evident from His creation that no man can be excused or justified for his atheism or blasphemy. Said St. Paul: “His (God’s) invisible attributes, that is to say His everlasting power and deity, have been visible, ever since the world began, to the eye of reason, in the things He has made. There is therefore no possible defence for their conduct; knowing God, they have refused to honour Him as God, or to render Him thanks. Hence all their thinking has ended in futility, and their misguided minds are plunged in darkness. They boast of their wisdom, but they have made fools of themselves.” (Romans 1:20-22, New English

Bible) Jesus Christ said: "For as the Father hath life in himself; so hath he given to the Son to have life in himself;" (John 5: 26) And he also spoke of God Almighty as the Living Father who sent him and to whom he owes his existent. – John 6: 57

There is also the testimony of Paul the apostle to the fact that God is immortal in his epistle to Timothy he wrote: "Now in the presence of God, who gives life to all things, and of Jesus Christ, who himself made the same noble confession and gave his testimony to it before Pontius Pilate, I charge you to obey your orders irreproachably and without fault until our Lord Jesus Christ appears. That appearance God will bring to pass in His own good time – God who in eternal felicity alone holds sway. He is King of kings and Lord of lords; He alone possesses immortality, dwelling in unapproachable light. No man has ever seen or ever can see him. To Him be honour and might forever! Amen." – 1 Timothy 6:13-16, New English Bible

We are now in the age in which the Lord of hosts, God Almighty, will exercise His power to such a degree that the ungodly will find themselves in a spiritual storm and will be compelled to acknowledge His supremacy. Then shall fulfill the prayer of the Psalmist, to wit: "So persecute them (the ungodly) with thy tempest, and make them afraid with thy storm. Fill their faces with shame; that they may seek thy name, O LORD. Let them be confounded and troubled for ever; yea, let them be put to shame, and perish: That *men* may know that thou, whose name alone is JEHOVAH, *art* the most high over all the earth." – Psalm 83:15-18