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The Grace Proclamator and Promulgator

To testify the gospel of the grace of God.. Acts 20:24

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THE HEAVENS DECLARE THE GLORY OF GOD

BILLY HOLLADAY

In Psalms 50, verse 21, God brought the charge against a people that their thoughts of him were no higher than themselves; they thought he was just like they were. If anything, man's estimation of God has declined since that far off day, and man's attitude would have to show marked improvement just to bring God back to the level of mere equality.

Even saints have trouble forming a proper conception of God. He is so totally unique, there is simply no frame of reference worthy of him. That's what God himself said in the rhetorical question posed in Isa 46:5, "To whom will ye liken me, and make me equal, and compare me, that we may be like?" It seems that God would have us think on that truth often for he repeats it several times: Isa 40:18, "To whom then will ye liken God? or what likeness will ye compare unto him?" Verse

25, "To whom then will ye liken me, or shall I be equal? saith the Holy One." Psalms 89:6, "For who in the heaven can be compared unto the LORD?"

So, on the one hand, when we read Psalms 19:1, "The heavens declare the glory of God," we know that whatever may be seen in the skies is altogether unworthy of God, and, on the other hand, our attention is directed to the heavens for at least a glimpse of this infinite glory. Indeed, limited though they may be, perhaps nothing else in creation declares his glory quite so thoroughly and comprehensively as the heavens - the universe with its incalculable distances, innumerable stars, undefinable



powers, and awe-inspiring beauty; plus the fact that it is not at all what it appears to be to the casual, superficial observer.

This, then, that I invite your attention to is not the fantasy world of astrology, nor the “twinkle, twinkle little star” world of children. Psalms 89:37 refers to the sun and moon as “a faithful witness in the heaven.” Surely anything that God identifies as a faithful witness unto himself ought to be carefully considered: how do these heavenly orbs witness of him? Looking far beyond the sun, Amos mentions a couple of the constellations and admonishes, “seek him that maketh the seven stars and Orion” (chapter 5, verse 8). The idea is, when one has thoroughly considered these starry constellations, common sense and logic will tell him he ought to seek out and worship the one who put them there! (Doesn’t Romans 1 say essentially the same thing?)

There is nothing contrived about this line of reasoning - wasn’t our Saviour spoken of prophetically as a Star that should come out of Jacob? (Num 24:17) The first thought that should have come to an Israelite’s mind upon reading that was, “In what way or ways is he to be like a star?” Perhaps there is more

connection than we realize between passages such as this and the account of that most unique star that once led some wise men to him (Matt 2:1, 2). In the last chapter of Scripture, the risen and glorified Lord refers to himself as “the bright and morning star” (Rev 22:16). Surely, then, as we look into the starry heavens we ought to be reminded in some way - in many ways - of him, and see something of his glory in them.

“Is not God in the height of heaven? and behold the height of the stars, how high they are!” (Job 22:12). Height speaks of the great distances to the stars and, hence, the inconceivable expanse of space. Marvelously do the mind-boggling distances of the stars testify to the divine infinitude of God. By that I simply mean he is infinite - without bounds, without limits!

Beginning with the closest star to us, our sun, let us do some figuring and comparing. The sun is approximately 93,000,000 miles from earth; the earth is 25,000 miles around at the equator; light travels at a little more than 186,000 miles per second. Light could travel around the earth 7-½ times in one second (if light could travel in a curved path). Light travels the 240,000 miles from earth to the moon in less than 2 sec-

E. CATHOLICISM

Webster defines the word “catholic” thusly: “Universal; all-inclusive; of the universal Christian church; of the Christian church as a whole; of the Western (Roman) Christian Church as distinguished from the Eastern (Orthodox) Christian Church; hence, of the Christian church headed by the Pope; Roman Catholic; of any of the orthodox Christian churches, including the Roman, Greek Orthodox, and the Anglo-Catholic, distinguished from the Reformed or Protestant churches” (p.232).

The English “catholic” is from the Greek *katholikos* (general, universal). The so-called Catholic church, then, is the universal “church” or “world-wide” church.

The “Catholic” church has two main branches: (1) The Roman Catholic Church with its headquarters in Rome, which has the “Pope” as its titular head; (2) The Greek Orthodox, which broke with Rome in 1054 A.D.; it now includes the churches that recognize the primacy of the patriarchs of Constantinople, Alexandria, Antioch, Jerusalem, and others. These deny the supremacy of the pope.

F. ORIGIN OF THE DENOMINATIONS

As before stated, both the Bible and church history prove that churches with the sentiments of Baptists have existed in every century since the days of Christ on earth. Strictly speaking, then, Baptists are not a denomination in the same sense as other groups. ♦

(Holladay continued from page 9)

and worlds came into existence! He decreed and the world was populated with life! But, with all reverence, more than the fiat of his word was required to redeem a sinner; more than his sovereign decree was necessary to reclaim a soul. The very Son of God must take the sinner’s part, die in the sinner’s place, and be raised to life again on behalf of the sinner. According to Ephesians 1:19, 20, that required more power than the creative acts of God, and it is that same measure of power that is brought to bear in the salvation of every sinner-become-saint! Well may every child of God repeat the rhetorical question put to Abraham, “Is *anything* too hard for the Lord?” ♦

a “de- nomination” is a group that has been named, either after a man, an event, or a practice in history.

In the strictest sense, Baptists are not a denomination. It is true that many words did come from men or events (as we shall show later); however, Baptists are not denominationalists in the same sense as are the many Protestant groups.

The chief error among writers, expositors, and people in general is that Baptists are only “one of the various denominations.” This idea is unscriptural, and tends to minimize the importance of the Lord’s assemblies by placing them on equal par with other groups. But, as one author noted, “Baptists are either unique, or they are nothing.”

D. PROTESTANTISM

Webster gives this definition of the word “protestant”: “Originally, any of the German princes and free cities that formally protested to the Diet of Spires (1529) its decision to uphold the edict of the Diet of Worms against the Reformation. Any Christian not belonging to the Roman Catholic or Orthodox Eastern Church: in the 17th century the term was restricted to Lutherans and Anglicans” (P. 1171).

The word “protestant” means “one who protests.” In the broad sense of the word, Baptists have always been “protestants”--against false doctrines, false practices, etc. But in the narrow sense of the word, BAPTISTS HAVE NEVER BEEN PROTESTANTS! Baptist churches (under various names) have existed from the days of Christ to the present; Protestant churches (so-called), however, have begun since that time--first with Martin Luther in the 16th century.

Briefly put, Baptists began with Christ; Protestants began with men, as Luther, Calvin, Wesley, etc. Though these men protested against the trappings of Rome, they brought out many heresies of the mother church, and continue to practice them to the present.

onds. Yet, the travel time for light from sun to earth is *500* seconds, more than 8 minutes!

Looking at it another way, our space shuttles to the moon travel at an average speed of about 3000 miles per hour, taking a little more than three days for the trip. Traveling at the same speed, a trip to the sun would require more than 43 *months*! That’s a long way - and we’re practically in the sun’s front yard. Light requires 5-½ hours to travel from the sun to Pluto, the outermost planet. Our 3000-MPH space craft would take about 140 *years* to go that distance!

Yet, the distances within our solar system are but as nothing compared to “outer” space. It takes light from the sun’s nearest neighbor-star more than 4 *years* to reach us! That’s about 25,398,400,000,000 miles! How about interstellar travel? At the normal 3,000 MPH, about 980,000 *years* would be required to travel to the *nearest* star! The maximum speed our space ships attain is about 25,000 MPH, soon after lift-off to break gravity. Such speed cannot be sustained very long because of the enormous quantity of fuel required. But, assuming a space craft could maintain a constant speed of 25,000 MPH, the journey to the nearest star

would still take about 115,900 years!

I’m well beyond the limit of my comprehension already, and we’ve hardly looked into the heavens at all. Looking beyond the nearest star to the brightest - Sirius, the dog star, is about twice as far, 9-½ light years (a light year is the distance light travels in one year, about 6,000,000,000 miles; the light we see tonight from Sirius started on its journey 9-½ years ago). Moving out to those constellations Amos and Job spoke of, the seven stars of the Pleiades are about 250 light years from earth, and Orion is further yet at 1,600 light years. Within our own Milky Way galaxy, some stars are 60,000 light years from us. The Milky Way is said to be a discus-shaped galaxy about 100,000 light years across; stars on the outer edge are that far from stars on the opposite edge!

Far beyond the Milky Way are other galaxies, and beyond those, still more. The galaxy Andromeda, which astronomers consider to be within our “local group,” lies about 2,000,000 light years from us! According to the astronomers, the current limit of observable space is about 2,000,000,000 light years. What’s beyond that? More, no doubt, more! The cover story in the June 3,

1991 issue of *Newsweek* announced a line of new-technology telescopes and electronic devices for the nineties that will “look” far beyond anything yet!

As far as man is concerned, the heaven of the stars is simply infinite! Yet, I Kings 8:27 tells us the heaven of heavens cannot contain him who created them! Doesn't that exalt him and humble us?! “For as the heavens are higher than the earth, so are my ways higher than your ways, and my thoughts than your thoughts,” is the way Isaiah expressed it in verse 9 of chapter 55. It also magnifies his mercy to us-ward as perhaps nothing else in creation. In Jer 31:37, God sets forth the immeasurableness of heaven as a guarantee that he will never go back on his promise, break his word, cast off his people! Then in Psalms 103:11 & 12, he offers this assurance, “..as the heaven is high above the earth, so great is his mercy toward them that fear him. As far as the east is from the west, so far hath he removed our transgressions from us.” How high are the heavens above the earth? How far out in space is the east from the west? I can only shake my head in bewildered but reverent awe and exclaim with David, “Such knowledge is too wonderful for me; it is high, I cannot attain unto it” (Psalms

139:6). Indeed, the heavens declare the glory of God in his divine infinitude - HE is “the high and lofty one that inhabiteth eternity” (Isa 57:15).

The heavens declare the glory of God's omniscience by the sheer number of stars. By omniscience I mean his perfect, all-wise, infinite mind; God has a mind unlike anything we can conceive of.

This may surprise some of you - under ideal viewing conditions from any spot on earth, a maximum of about 3000 stars are visible to the naked eye (I haven't counted them, but I did read that in 2 or 3 texts on the subject). Galileo's telescope (1609) revealed that what may be seen by the unaided eye is only a fraction of what is really out there. Thomas Dick, an 1880's astronomer, estimated the total number of stars at 100,000,000 “if all the regions of the sky were thoroughly explored” (quoted by C.H. Spurgeon in *The Treasury of David*). By the 1930's, only 50 years later, 500,000,000 could be seen and 1,000,000,000 could be photographed. Texts of that period estimated 300,000,000,000 stars in the entire heaven.

Such figures soon become like our national debt - just numbers; we don't pay much more attention to

B. CHURCH HISTORY

The term “church history,” or “history of the Christian church,” is one which produces a lot of varied opinions. “Church History,” in the strictest sense, refers to the acts of the Lord's churches from the first century to the present. The Book of Acts is actually the “Acts of the Lord's Churches” in the N.T. age.

Protestant and Catholic scholars, along with many ecumenical-minded Baptists, view “church history” as the history of all groups within Christendom--as though all of these varied groups--Catholics, Lutherans, Methodists, Presbyterians, Baptists, and others--make up the “one church of God.” Such reasoning is fallacious, and has no warrant from Scripture or true history. True “church history” refers ONLY to those churches which have held true to the doctrines of the Word of God, and who have contended for the faith which was once-for-all delivered to the saints (Jude 3).

Church history, then, as a study within itself, refers to the long line of churches from Christ to the present. As we shall see later in this study, these churches, by whatever name or label, have held to the principles of true Baptists.

In the broad sense of “church history,” one must include the happenings of the apostate groups, especially Catholicism. In this area of study, we will show the origin of false doctrines among the Catholics and Protestants, and how these errors have affected Baptists.

The study of “church history,” then, is “the study of the churches of the Lord from the time of Jesus to the present.” This study covers the basis of this thesis--THAT BAPTIST CHURCHES HAVE EXISTED IN ALL AGES SINCE CHRIST!

C. DENOMINATION

Webster defines the word “denomination” thusly: “A name; the name of a class of things; a religious sect; as, a Protestant denomination” (New World Dictionary of the American Language, p. 392). Simply put,

“universal, invisible church” can be found. Rone says of these disputed passages: (1) The Church referred to as an institution. But in application the generic and abstract become particular, individual, and concretely evident; (2) The Church referred to as “in glory,” i.e., prospective rather than actual (Eph.5:27; Heb. 12: 23). He notes from Carroll: “The Greek term ‘Ecclesia’ is never used in Biblical or classical Greek in an unassembled sense” (Baptist Faith and Roman Catholicism, p. 108). Note: this writer does not see the value of this second category (church in glory). It is his opinion that all 93 uses are of the “church” as an institution, used generically or abstractly. Either case, however, does not promote the false idea of a “universal” or “invisible” church.

It is interesting to note that Jesus employed the word *ekklesia* 23 times--three times in Matthew (16:18; 18:17) and twenty in Revelation. The twenty references in Revelation are definitely of local, visible bodies in gospel order (Ephesus, Smyrna, Pergamos, Thyatira, Sardis, Philadelphia, and Laodicea). Why, then, should anyone presume, unless beset with prejudice or preconceived ideas, that Jesus used the word TWO DIFFERENT WAYS? Surely Jesus knew what *ekklesia* meant! Let us not be so foolish as to charge God with lack of omniscience.

Briefly, then, the word *EKKLESIA* has this meaning in the N.T. (the 111 occasions noted): the assembly of the Lord found at any given place which is composed of converted, baptized believers in gospel order. This definition, when properly understood, contradicts and disproves the Catholic and Protestant claims to an “unassembled, universal, invisible church.”

In approaching this study of CHURCH HISTORY, the proper understanding of the Lord’s “*ekklesia*” is imperative. One who errs at this critical point will be in error on other issues of ecclesiology. The Lord did not place a DENOMINATIONAL NAME on His institution, but simply referred to it as “My Church” (Matt. 16:18). One chief purpose of this study is to identify this institution of the Lord through the centuries to the present. History verifies the teachings of Scripture--that the Lord has perpetuated His *ekklesia* through the centuries to the present, and that there have always been a people who have held, and do hold, tenaciously to the doctrines which Jesus taught.

300 billion than to 500 million. There is a tremendous difference, however. To help put these figures in some kind of perspective, consider how long it would take to count to a million, and then to a billion. Assume that one could count at the rate of two counts per second for 12 hours a day, seven days a week. The count would progress at 120 per minute, 7200 per hour, 86,400 per day. To count to a million at that rate would require a little over 11-½ days, but to count to one billion would take 31-½ years!

Remember the promise God made to Abraham in Gen 22:17? “..in multiplying I will multiply thy seed as the stars of heaven..” Gazing skyward on a clear desert night, Abraham must have been staggered - how can it be?! But God did not say, ‘I will multiply thy seed as the stars *you see* in the heaven.’ There simply is no comparison between what Abraham saw in the promise (as great as that was) and what God saw in it! Don’t you suspect that that’s true of his promises to us as well? We sometimes sing the words of a song, “Count your many blessing, name them one by one, and it will surprise you what the Lord has done.” Were it possible to count every blessing we are aware of, God would still be counting long after we stopped!

Very likely, our conception of promised blessings reserved for eternity falls as far short of what God sees in them as did Abraham’s conception of the number of stars!!

To get back to the star count, by the 1940’s, astronomers had given up on even trying to give the total number. More recent books say there are “many billions” *in our own* galaxy; one text even puts the figure at 1 *trillion* within the Milky Way. Here we go with numbers again - a trillion is 1000 billion; to count to a trillion at the rate discussed previously would require over 31,700 years!

As noted earlier, our Milky Way is only one of many galaxies in the heaven of the stars. Astronomers have discovered so many that, for convenience, they group them according to general location. By 1973, 9700 clusters had been cataloged, with each cluster having a minimum of 200 galaxies, and each galaxy having 200 billion or more stars!! Later texts say that about 2 million galaxies have been counted. (You could multiply 200,000,000,000 by 2,000,000 for a low estimate of the number of stars we’re talking about).

All authorities agree that what is known is but a drop in the

bucket; the more they see and learn, the more there is to see and learn! Isn't that a fitting and faithful witness to God? Only those who know precious little about God and his Word think they've seen it all. Those who have indeed studied his Word and been instructed by it see it as infinite - an inexhaustible reservoir. The more they see, the more they realize that what they've learned, through even a lifetime of study, pales in comparison to what is there to learn!

God's promise to Abraham was that his seed should be as the stars of heaven *and* as the sand upon the sea shore (Gen 22:17). For long centuries people scoffed at such comparisons set side by side. *The very idea* that anyone would even mention the number of stars in heaven in the same breath with the number of grains of sand on the sea shore! How can the two be compared? Incredible, they said. They aren't saying that any more! Sir James Jeans, a British mathematician and astronomer who died in 1946, is quoted as estimating the total number of stars in the universe as probably as great as the total number of grains of sand in all the sea shores of the entire world! (Quoted by T.C. Lyon in *Witness in the Sky*).

To help keep all this in per-

spective, set a five-gallon bucket of sand in front of you (you don't have to really do it, but just "play like" you do). Spread out the sand, give a name to every grain, and catalog how each grain differs from all the others. You may have a little trouble giving a name to each grain, for I'm told an unabridged dictionary of the English language contains only something over 500,000 words, and where is the person who has a working knowledge of all of them?

One writer referred to "galaxy NCG 1594," and then wrote, "It is not a pretty name, but man cannot find a pretty title for every star and nebula found by now.." I appreciate his honest confession, but I know someone who can, and who has! "He telleth (determines) the number of stars; He calleth them all by their names" (Psalms 147:4). Can you fathom that?! God set the number of them - precisely! He gave each one its own individual name. His *naming* the stars carries the idea of prescribing their characteristics - God has determined and knows *exactly* how each 'differs in glory' from all the others (I Cor 15:41)!

If all of that doesn't declare the glory of God's incomparable, omniscient mind, then nothing in creation can. What great comfort the

lar use among the Greeks, at Ephesus, and has no reference to the Lord's ekklesia. Note: it is important to see that the translators have properly translated the word in these three verses; (3) The remaining 111 times where ekklesia is employed refer to the Lord's N.T. organization, HIS CHURCH (Matt. 16: 18).

Thus, of the 115 times the word ekklesia is employed in the N.T., 111 of them refer to the Lord's "assembly" or "congregation." As previously noted, the translators have used the word "church" to translate ekklesia. Unfortunately, "church" DOES NOT translate the word, but has served to confuse the meaning of ekklesia. The English "church" is from the Greek kuria-kos (belonging to the Lord). Various forms of this Greek word are evident: kirk, church, etc. Of these 111 uses, some 93 of them refer, without question, to a local, visible body of believers in gospel order--such as the Church at Jerusalem, Corinth, Ephesus, Pergamos, Laodicea, etc.

The problem in exegesis and ecclesiology, therefore, lies with the use of the remaining 18 places where ekklesia is used. See Matt. 16:18; Acts 20:28; I Cor. 10:32; 12:28; Eph. 1:22; 3:10,21; 5:23,24,25,27,29, 32; Col. 1:18,24; I Tim. 3:15; Heb. 2:12; 12:23.

What about these 18 passages? Do we have a different meaning to be attached to ekklesia? Do we have as a result TWO KINDS of churches in the N.T.? Does ekklesia mean a local, visible body in one place and in another place a universal, invisible, mystical body? The answer will become evident as the passages are investigated: EKKLESIA IN ALL 111 OCCURRENCES REFERS TO A LOCAL BODY OF SAINTS IN GOSPEL ORDER. The confusion which has arisen through the centuries has come from Catholic (universal, visible idea) and Protestant (universal, invisible idea) ideas of "church." Sadly, many Baptists have parroted the commentators in this area without investigation. The result has been devastating to the understanding of ecclesiology (study of the church).

The argument, therefore, centers around the 18 uses, as previously mentioned. Yet, these give no trouble to the careful expositor of the Scriptures. As with all words, ekklesia here takes on the generic or abstract usage. Certainly, these 18 uses are not a "loophole" in which the so-called

THE CHURCH

JARREL HUFFMAN

CHAPTER 1

THE DEFINITION OF TERMS

In the study of any subject there is the necessity of defining certain terms and expressions. The chief ones in relation to this particular study will now be discussed.

A. CHURCH

The English word “church” appears eighty (80) times in the N.T. in the singular, and thirty-five (35) times in the plural. Of these 115 times we have the following breakdown: (1) Three of these are found as subscripts--to Romans, II Timothy, and Titus, and are not a part of the inspired text; (2) One of these (Acts 19:37) is from the Greek word, hierosulos, which means “spoiler of a temple;” (3) The remaining 111 occurrences are from the Greek word, ekklesia, which means “assembly” or “congregation.” This last word, ekklesia, is the one to be discussed in detail in this study.

The Greek word, synagogue (English, synagogue), which means “a gathering together,” refers primarily to the Jewish meeting places. This word is employed a total of fifty-seven (57) times in the N.T., and is translated “synagogue” 55 times, “congregation” (referring to the synagogue) 1 time (Acts 13:43), and “assembly” 1 time (James 2:2). The last use alone (James 2:2) refers to saints in church capacity.

It is with the Greek ekklesia that we must speak in particular. The translators (King James Version) translated the word ekklesia by the English “church” 112 times and by “assembly” 3 times. The breakdown of these uses is very important: (1) One time (Acts 7:37) refers to Israel gathered before Jehovah in the O.T. times, and has no bearing on the N.T. ekklesia; (2) Three times (Acts 19:32,39,41) the word is translated “assembly,” and refers to the secu-



knowledge of his omniscience should be to his people. If God knows all about the stars, how much more his concern for his beloved people, whom he gave his only begotten son to die for! “..the foundation of God standeth sure, having this seal, The Lord knoweth them that are his” (II Tim 2:19).

The heavenly bodies also declare the glory of God in his omnipotence, remembering that all power belongs to him, and there is no power apart from him.

“It is as legitimate to speak of a pound of heat as of a pound of iron, but a pound of heat would be sufficient to raise 20 million tons of rock by more than 2500 degree centigrade, and convert it into incandescent lava. The sun is losing by radiation 4,200,000 tons of heat every second.” (*Astronomy*, Russell-Dugan-Stewart, quoted by T.C. Lyon, *ibid.*)

The sun is so powerful that at 93,000,000 miles, its energy radiated in all directions, attenuated by distance, dust, and the atmosphere, it can still literally cook the human body in a matter of hours! Yet, the earth receives only about one billionth of the sun’s energy output. Scientists calculate that it continuously radiates the equivalent of

70,000 horse power per square yard over its entire surface! (Its surface area is about 12,000 times that of the earth’s). It gives off more energy in one second than all people have produced during all man’s stay on earth. It consumes 4,000,000 *tons* of hydrogen fuel every second, and is so huge it can continue to use itself up at that prodigious rate for 5,000,000,000 more years!! (By comparison, if the earth’s store of fuel were consumed at the same rate, it would all be burned up in 3-4 days).

Scientist-astronaut Ed Gibson in Sky Lab 3 filmed a solar flare on the surface of the sun that was brighter than the sun’s surface. It exploded outward at more than a million miles an hour. The estimated temperature of this mere “bubble” on the sun was “tens of millions of degrees.” Compare that to one of the hottest temperatures known on earth, estimated at “more than 3600 degrees, Fahrenheit,” in the core meltdown at the Chernobyl nuclear power plant in the USSR. Scientists estimated the explosive power in the solar flare as equivalent to one *billion* hydrogen bombs all fired at once!

Although it could hold more than 1,000,000 earths, our sun is counted about “average” in size and temperature. A red supergiant in

Orion named Betelgeuse could hold 35,000,000 suns! It is so huge that if it were in the position of our sun, it would fill the solar system beyond the orbit of Mars! Antares in Scorpio constellation is almost twice as large, and Epsilon Auriga could hold more than a dozen the size of Antares. The largest star listed in the texts I consulted has a volume of almost 7,000,000,000 times that of the sun!

At the opposite extreme, some stars are so small that many thousands of them could be contained within the volume of the earth. But what these heavenly mid-gets lack in size, they make up for in their density and power of gravity. Scientists estimate that a matchbox full of matter from a white dwarf would weigh eight *tons*! A person exposed to such gravity would be immediately crushed by his own weight. British astronomers recently reported the discovery of the first known (or suspected) planet outside our own solar system. The planet is believed to be about three times the size of the earth and orbiting a neutron star deep in the Milky Way (30,000 light years away). A neutron star is even smaller and denser than a white dwarf. The one the “new” planet is orbiting is thought to be about 20 miles in diameter, but so dense that a thimble-full of its matter would

weigh-in at 10,000 tons! Scientists believe that the “black holes” in space are burned-out stars that have condensed, and whose gravity is so powerful that not even light can escape.

The most luminous objects in the heaven of the stars are the quasars. They are also the most distant. Those who study these things say that one quasar releases enough energy in one second to supply all of earth’s present electrical needs for a billion years. A single quasar emits more energy than a trillion suns!

Multiply all of this by the billions upon billions of stars; the sheer power involved here is even more mind-boggling than the distances and numbers - if that is possible. Where did it all come from? What is the source of such tremendous energy and power? A theory in vogue among many astronomers, scientists, and astrophysicists since the 1920’s says that 12 to 20 billion years ago there was one “primeval atom,” and it exploded. Gases and dust were shot outward in all directions in prodigious quantities. Eventually, some particles of dust were attracted to other particles by mutual gravity, and joined to become larger particles. This increased their gravitational force to attract other particles,

etc., etc., until a huge mass of dust and gases was formed. As this dust-ball grew, pressures became so great at its center that nuclear fusion resulted, igniting the hydrogen gases, and, presto, a star was born! (And *they* think *we* believe in fantasy!) Admittedly, this is an oversimplification, but, in the main, it is the gist of the “big bang” theory. It doesn’t say where the “primeval atom” that exploded came from, or how such potential energy came to be in the first place.

The “big bang” theory has been rejected by some “experts” in recent years. The fact of the matter is that new knowledge is raising havoc with man’s old theories concerning the origin of the universe. The *News-week* article (ibid) suggested that some of the new data are so contradictory to old theories and “so beyond our understanding that theorists dismiss them for the time being - hoping they’re an illusion.”

This all reminds me of man’s religious “theories” since the days our Lord walked the earth. As knowledge increased and man became more “enlightened,” he was more or less forced to acknowledge the mythological nature of the gods and goddesses of the Romans and Greeks, and abandon them. But what

he replaced them with were no better - just different! Anything is more acceptable than the truth. So, it seems, is the case with those who study and theorize about the origin of the stars and the universe. Where did it all come from? Doubtless, more theories that leave out God will be forthcoming, but all of them put together will not change the fact that “In the beginning God created the heaven and the earth.” Nor will the following passages be made void by their theories, “Praise ye him, sun and moon: praise him, all ye stars of light. Praise him, ye heavens of heavens, and ye waters that be above the heavens. Let them praise the name of the LORD: for he commanded, and they were created” (Psalms 148:3-5); “To whom then will ye liken me, or shall I be equal? saith the Holy One. Lift up your eyes on high, and behold who hath created these things, that bringeth out their host by number: he calleth them all by names by the greatness of his might, for that he is strong in power; not one faileth” (Isa 40:25, 26).

Ephesians 1:19 speaks of the “exceeding greatness of his power,” and indeed the heavens testify to it. But, all the mighty power of the stars is overshadowed by his mighty power “to us-ward who believe”!! He spoke

(Holladay continued on page 15)