

of the latter-day Assyrian in Micah 5, and that the prophet must be referring to the latter-day occupant of ancient Assyria. I realise that acceptance of the above would mean a major shift in the general thinking of the Brotherhood in regard to what happens next in the Middle East, and hope to be able to read some response from readers.

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that He can enable His messengers, and His Son Jesus, to travel at whatever speed is necessary to accomplish the task at hand.

I agree with Brother Edwards' statement that almost all of this speculation has little or no relevance to our prime concern, which is our salvation, but thought these observations might have some interest.

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What of distant planets?

I found the short item of the above title by Brother M. Edwards ([Jan. 2006, p. 10](#)) quite interesting and would like to add the following comments.

Messages from the earth have been radiating into space for a little over a hundred years now in the form of radio and, since World War 2, television broadcasts. Mankind has continued its habit of polluting every environment it comes in touch with. We have already been told what will transpire here by the Lord, whom the heavens glorify, and will very soon receive a more direct reply from outer space beyond our planet in the return of our Lord Jesus.

Brother Edwards' statement, "Some brethren have postulated that the angels are able to travel at the speed of light and that they may have come from a distant planetary system", is interesting in that it reflects the limitation imposed by Einstein's Theory of Relativity, that nothing can travel faster than the speed of light. There is apparently a considerable scientific minority who disagree with this hypothesis and believe that there are observations of faster-than-light velocities. Einstein made the speed of light a constant in his equations and varied the rate at which time goes by. It may perhaps be that *time* is a constant and that the speed of light may vary, perhaps caused by travelling through the varied strengths of electromagnetic or gravitational fields. That much, both positive and negative, has been accomplished based on Einstein's Relativity has, in my opinion, little bearing on the supposed absolute truth of his hypotheses, as much was also accomplished using Newton's laws of gravity, which preceded the discovery of electromagnetic forces.

The foregoing could mean that there are absolutely no restrictions on the speed at which angels can travel across the universe, since they have been created to the Father's specifications. The heavens declare the glory of the Lord and there are no limitations to His power. This means

Jesus' "perfect sacrifice"

I would like to comment on Brother Bill Guy's letter in the January issue (p. 25). Although we are exhorted to be perfect, even as our Father in heaven is perfect (Mt. 5:48), we all realise that true perfection can only be ours when, by grace, we have put on incorruptibility and immortality (1 Cor. 15:53).

In the same way, the Lord Jesus Christ could not have been truly perfect while still in his earthly form, marred as it was by the weight of the sin he bore for us. He did learn obedience by the things he suffered (Heb. 5:8), but was he "made perfect", becoming the author of our salvation (v. 9), before or after he actually laid down his life? Jesus himself told his disciples, "and the third day I shall be *perfected*" (Lk. 13:32), using the same Greek word *teleioō*, meaning 'ended' or 'completed', as is used in Hebrews 5:9. In Luke 13:32 it must refer to his resurrection. In his great prayer of John 17 he declared that he had "finished [Gk. *teleioō*]" the work which his Father had given him to do (v. 4), but it was not until he was about to yield his spirit that he was able to say, "It is finished [Gk. *teleō*]" (19:30). I therefore agree with Brother Bill Guy's suggestion that our Lord was not perfected until he had risen from the grave, looking so different that he is described as being "in another form" (Mk. 16:12), in which even his followers could not recognise him (Jno. 20:14).

Whether or not we can say that Christ's sacrifice was "perfect", it is wonderful to contemplate the fact that, by his one offering, our Saviour has "perfected for ever them that are sanctified" (Heb. 10:14), and in that day to come will be able to "present [us] holy and unblameable and unproveable . . . perfect in Christ Jesus" (Col. 1:22,28).

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