

essential.

**Principle 2.** The same literary laws must be allowed (and used) in the Bible as in other literature. Speech figures, idioms, and linguistic peculiarities are common to all language and need understanding in every work. When Scripture speaks of "the four corners of the earth," it is not teaching that the earth is square and flat but is using a speech figure to describe the extremities of the earth. This is how we use the term "iron curtain." How absurd it would be to denounce a radio commentator as having a false view of geography because he thought an "iron curtain" went around part of Europe. The Bible does not teach that the earth is flat unless it is not allowed to use the same language devices that are allowed universally for other literature. Recently I heard a critic attack the Bible on this very point. He objected to the supposed teaching in the Bible about the sun's going around the earth. Great stress was laid on the fact of the sun's "running his race" (Psalm 19) and coming up and going down. It was called to his attention that if this teaches that the sun goes around the earth, the same charge could be made against the Naval Almanac, where plain reference is made to "sunrise" and "sunset." In the Almanac the skeptic could readily accept figurative language, but he would not allow this in the Bible. We call this prejudice against the Bible: prejudice that would not stand if the right literary laws were followed.

41

**Principle 3.** It must be remembered that things beyond our understanding are not to be discarded for want of explanation. This applies especially to the miracles and mighty works. Some think anything is implausible unless they have either seen it or can see how it could have been. William Penn, we are told, once silenced a doubting foe who refused to believe in the supernatural because he could not touch it nor feel it. Penn wondered how that person could