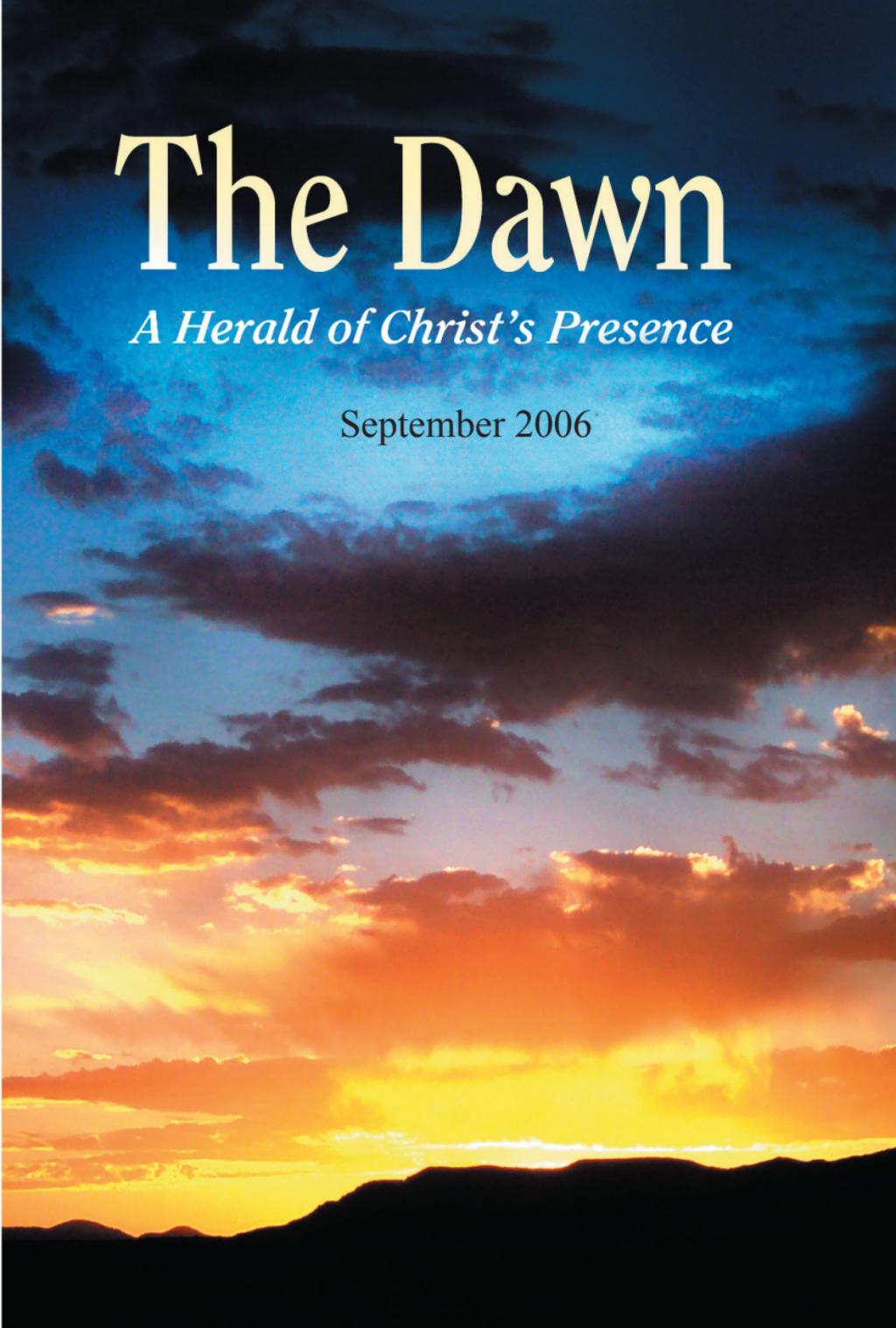


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The Laborer's Struggle

A Day for Reflection

"The labourer is worthy of his hire."
—Luke 10:7

THIS SCRIPTURE AND ITS

accompanying text, "The labourer is worthy of his reward" (I Tim. 5:18), point to

the manner in which all workers may expect to receive a wage for their daily labor. This is one of the basic rules that pertain to those who toil in the workplace to earn a living, as well as with those who set out to employ them.

Laws were explicit regarding a day of rest that was to be set aside for all who labored for their daily bread. "Six days shalt thou labour, and do all thy work: But the seventh day is the sabbath of the LORD thy God: in it thou shalt not do any work, thou, nor thy son, nor thy daughter, thy manservant, nor thy maidservant, nor thy cattle, nor thy stranger that is within thy gates." (Exod. 20:9,10) Significance was thus stressed regarding the Sabbath, and God's relationship with it in the affairs of his human family.

IN THE SWEAT OF THY FACE

Since the dawning of human history over six thousand years ago, man has struggled against the reality associated with the death sentence. The harsh realization was soon manifest, “In the sweat of thy face shalt thou eat bread, till thou return unto the ground; for out of it wast thou taken: for dust thou art, and unto dust shalt thou return.”—Gen. 3:19

Our first parents, Adam and Eve, were disobedient to God and his laws which had been written in the very heart of man, as we read, “They like men [Adam, *Marginal Translation*] have transgressed the covenant: there have they dealt treacherously against me.” (Hos. 6:7) The relationship between man and his Creator became severed. The association between those who sought employment and those who employed them also became tested.

SLAVERY

One of the major evidences by which mankind could be reduced to the level of becoming someone else’s property was carried out in the form of human slavery. Whether voluntary or involuntary, servitude either to an individual or to the state has long been widely practiced. Some of the major factors that reduced a person to a state of slavery and servitude often included war (Joel 3:6), poverty (II Kings 4:1), or crime (Exod. 22:3). Under Jewish Law, the period of bondage, either for a specified time, or in perpetuity, depended upon whether the person was a Jew or a Gentile. (Lev. 25:44-46) When household servants gave birth, their children began life as slaves. They were usually included as slaves along with those who had been bought with money. (Gen.

17:23) Slaves could also be purchased, as in the case of Joseph who was sold to professional slave traders by his brothers.—Gen. 37:28

LAWS PERTAINING TO SLAVES

There were laws, however, that protected slaves from mistreatment by their masters. (Exod. 21:20,21, 26,27) Certain privileges were granted by equitable masters to slaves under the terms of the Law. “The LORD said unto Moses and Aaron, This is the ordinance of the passover: There shall no stranger eat thereof: But every man’s servant that is bought for money, when thou hast circumcised him, then shall he eat thereof.” (Exod. 12:43,44) Slaves were exempt from working on the Sabbath Day (Exod. 20:10), and were privileged to eat from the spilled kernels and unpruned vines. (Lev. 25:5,6) Slaves were also permitted to share in the celebration of the Jewish festivals. (Deut. 16:11-14) Those who lived outside of these laws were often subject to violence on all levels, and suffered bondage unjustly at the hands of their taskmasters.

FEUDALSIM

During the Middle Ages, a pyramidal system existed regarding the right of land ownership, with the Crown occupying the top position of the pyramid together with all the rights and privileges attached to it. Landlords were next in line who, in turn, leased out their holdings to peasants who lived on the land to provide a living for their families, and to grow crops or provide other services as payment of rent to the landlords. In some instances, this land was also subdivided by the tenants to other peasants for their occupancy. In any case, the peasant

laborers were positioned at the very bottom layer of the pyramid with little or no privileges and with little hope of ever owning the land.

During this period before the Industrial Revolution, a peasant had to be skilled in many trades. They had to know something about a lot of things to stay above the system and to provide even a subsistence level of living for those who were dependent upon them. The services they were required to provide aside from the payment of rent, which might be in the way of crops or money, could also include a form of religious duty to be offered for the community, or for military service. These peasant workers made up the majority of the agricultural labor force during the period before the Industrial Revolution.

THE GUILD SYSTEM

During the Middle Ages, workers began to unite under a new system of rules that were called ‘craft guilds.’ By the 11th Century in Europe, associations of merchants began to form for the protection of commerce against the feudal governments that were in power at that time. Those who became members of the guilds were usually divided into categories called masters, apprentices, and journeymen. The masters were the owners of the shops and instructors of the apprentices. The apprentices were thus bound to the masters, and were accepted for a stipulated sum payable to the masters for their training. They received a subsistence wage for several years depending on the type of craft. The journeymen were men who had successfully completed their period of training.

The merchant guilds became very influential and powerful factors in the development of commerce as trade, between peoples from all over Europe, and especially in the area of the Mediterranean and Baltic Sea, was increasing. In England and Germany, merchant guilds exercised enormous power in the growing cities and towns. Some Italian merchant guilds became dominant in their local governments. Commerce was becoming less of a local affair and the guilds in some cases developed into intercity leagues to promote and protect the interests of their trade. Guilds were formed including those that were established for shoemakers, blacksmiths, butchers, weavers and various others.

THE HANSEATIC LEAGUE

One of the most notable of these guilds during this period was the Hanseatic League of Northern Europe. It was begun by German and Scandinavian seafaring merchants in various cities, seeking to extend and protect their trade. At that time, there was no international body to regulate tariffs and trade, and few ports with regulatory authorities to manage their use. The merchants bonded together to establish tariff agreements that provided a common defense, and to insure the safety of the various ports. It extended its influence and eventually covered the entire North Sea area and the Baltic Sea regions; and also stretched hundreds of miles inland along major rivers, such as the Rhine and Volga Rivers.

The Hanseatic League dominated trade in northern Europe for over 300 years. With the rise of nationalism in the West, trade regulations became increasingly subject to royal and national law. During the

15th and 16th Centuries, the guilds in some instances were reduced to a level of subservience. With the appearance of the capitalists and the entrepreneurs, who adapted themselves to the demands of a new age of exploration and expansion, the guild system came to an end.

The feudal landlords sold their surpluses to the merchants who were associated with the Hanseatic League. The landlords forbade the peasant workers to trade directly with the merchants that would have greatly benefited both the peasants and the merchants. The common laborer had little opportunity to better himself or his position.

THE COTTAGE INDUSTRY

The Cottage Industry, or the Domestic System, flourished in many parts of Europe before the Industrial Revolution. During this time, the manufacture of goods was done in the home. Most of the workers belonged to the class of farm laborers known as cotters, and carried out the work in their cottages.

Merchants would purchase raw materials, such as wool from sheep owners, have it spun into yarn by farmer's wives, and then take it to country weavers to be made into textiles. Country weavers could manufacture cloth more cheaply than city craftsmen because they had part of their living from their gardens or small farms. Merchants would then collect the cloth and give it out again to finishers and dyers. The merchants thus controlled the manufacture of cloth from start to finish. Similar methods of organizing and controlling the manufacturing process were also found in other industries, such as in the production of nails, cutlery, leather goods and many others.

The Cottage Industry had certain advantages. It gave merchants a supply of manufactured goods at a low price, and enabled him to order the particular kinds of items that he needed for his markets. It also provided employment for every member of a craft worker's family, and gave jobs to skilled workers who would otherwise not be able to establish a business for themselves.

THE FACTORY SYSTEM

With the invention of a variety of new machinery, and the availability of new resources in the textile industry in England during the mid 1700's, the Cottage Industry came to an end. The displaced labor force thus moved into central locations where the manufacturing of goods took place. This movement involved a mass migration from the previous rural-based economy to one in which employment was available in the overcrowded and squalid cities.

The factory system revolutionized the productive capacity, especially in the textile industry, because of a very large and cheap labor force. The emphasis was on mass production, and men were no longer treated as men but as a commodity by which they could be bought and sold on the open market. In all walks of life, whether peasant, noble, artisan or captain of industry, everyone was affected by the revolution in industry. It totally changed society throughout the industrialized world.

EXPLOITATION OF CHILDREN

During this time, the children of the families who had moved to the crowded cities had their work situation changed abruptly. At home in the rural areas, children would have become accustomed to

long hours of hard work on their family farms, but in the cities these same children were forced to work longer and harder in the factories. They were over-worked, underpaid, received harsh treatment, and experienced a greater likelihood of increased sickness and injury.

To survive in even the lowest level of poverty, families had to have every able member of the family go to work. This led to the high rise in child labor in the factories. Children as young as six years old were required to work 12-14 hours with only minimal breaks. They were expected to operate large, heavy, and very dangerous machinery with little or no consideration for their safety. Many accidents occurred, seriously injuring or killing very young children.

THE FACTORY ACT

The first step to improve these appalling conditions took place in 1833, when Parliament passed the Factory Act which limited the amount of hours children of certain ages would be allowed to work. Specifically, the Act provided that children 9-13 years of age were only to work 8 hours a day. Those who were 14-18 could not work more than 12 hours a day, and children under 9 years were not allowed to work at all. It was also decided that children were to attend school no less than two hours per day. An important part of the Factory Act provided for the government to appoint officials to insure the act was carried out and complied with.

INDUSTRIALIZATION OF AMERICA

The reconstruction years following the Civil War, and until the beginning of World War I, was

known as the Gilded Age in America. It was marked by seemingly boundless economic expansion and the emergence of a new and powerful nation that propelled industry and trade. America had always been seen as a continent of opportunity for the capitalist, as well as for the poor immigrant. The rapid transformation from an agricultural and mercantile economy to industrialization presented unprecedented opportunities for speculators and entrepreneurs.

WORKERS UNITE

The working people of America, however, have had to unite in bitter struggle to achieve whatever gains they have made. Organized labor has played a central role in the elevation of the American standard of living, and the dignity of the working class. The benefits which unions have negotiated for their members are widespread and are also enjoyed by millions who were not part of the labor movement.

Labor won the right to representation using the collective bargaining process in their struggle against bias, discrimination, and the power of the capitalists who would have reduced the skilled labor force to beggary. They had the government and even the army at hand to put down the demands and strikes of the working class. Much blood has been shed in the American labor force's struggle. We now take for granted such hard-won benefits as the eight-hour working day, vacations with pay, holidays, pensions, health and welfare protection, grievance and arbitration procedures. It was organized labor that fought for equal opportunities for women, equal rights for blacks, and other minorities. They also won the right for public education for every child.

LABOR DAY

The origin of the Labor Day celebration in America can be traced back to the Knights of Labor. They organized a parade in honor of the labor movement's struggle for rights which took place in Providence, Rhode Island, on August 23, 1882, with over a thousand workers taking part. Then again in New York City on September 5, 1882, a larger parade was assembled in which there were over 10,000 workers who joined in the parade. The street parade exhibited to the general public the strength and 'esprit de corps' of the trade and labor organizations. This was then followed by a festival for the recreation of the workers and their families. Speeches by prominent men and women emphasized the economic and civic significance of the holiday.

One of the key figures in the early labor movement in America was Peter McGuire, general secretary of the Brotherhood of Carpenters and Joiners. He was a cofounder of the American Federation of Labor, and was one of the principal speakers at both the Providence and New York celebrations. McGuire was also active in the New York City Central Labor Union. In 1887, President Grover Cleveland, a supporter of the Knights of Labor, used the power of his office to proclaim the official date for the Labor Day celebration to be the first Monday in September. The vital force of the labor movement has added tremendously to the highest standard of living and the greatest industrial production that the world has ever known. It has served to bring us all closer to the realization of our inherent dignity. It is thus that Americans pay tribute and respect during this Labor Day weekend to the country's labor force.

THE FUTURE RECONSTRUCTION WORK

The working class has achieved much in the way of better working conditions and benefits. However, in connection with the meaning of our featured text, ‘The labourer is worthy of his hire,’ Luke’s words cannot be compared to the grand work that will take place under the administration of Christ’s kingdom here on earth. At that time, mankind will be set free from the bondage of sin and death, and will together share in the greatest reconstruction work the world will ever know. During that time, justice, equity, and the inherent rights of man will be administered on behalf of the whole human family. Mankind will willingly share their labor to help clean up their despoiled surroundings, for “The earth is also polluted by its inhabitants, for they transgressed laws, violated statutes, broke the everlasting covenant.”— Isa. 24:5, *New American Standard Bible*

During his ministry among the Lord’s people, the Apostle Paul put into perspective the fact that man is responsible for working for his own livelihood. He said, “Yourselves know how ye ought to follow us: for we behaved not ourselves disorderly among you; Neither did we eat any man’s bread for nought; but wrought with labour and travail night and day, that we might not be chargeable to any of you.” (II Thess. 3:7,8) In today’s society, there are some who believe that the world owes them a living, and they may take advantage of others. This attitude will not be tolerated during Christ’s kingdom.

WONDERFUL PROMISES

The psalmist wrote concerning the promises of God, “Blessed is every one that feareth the LORD;

that walketh in his ways. For thou shalt eat the labour of thine hands: happy shalt thou be, and it shall be well with thee.” (Ps. 128:1,2) The Prophet Ezekiel describes the restored earth as being like the Garden of Eden. “The desolate land shall be tilled, whereas it lay desolate in the sight of all that passed by. And they shall say, This land that was desolate is become like the garden of Eden; and the waste and desolate and ruined cities are become fenced, and are inhabited.”—Ezek. 36:34,35

The glorified church, together with the earthly representatives of Christ’s kingdom, will provide the tranquil and peaceful scene described by the Prophet Micah when he wrote, “They shall sit every man under his vine and under his fig tree; and none shall make them afraid: for the mouth of the LORD of hosts hath spoken it.” (Mic. 4:4) The church, as the Mediator of a new and better covenant, will bless all the families of the earth.

“THEY SHALL NOT LABOR IN VAIN”

The cleaning up, beautifying, and rebuilding work is wonderfully portrayed by Isaiah. “They shall build houses, and inhabit them; and they shall plant vineyards, and eat the fruit of them. They shall not build, and another inhabit; they shall not plant, and another eat, . . . They shall not labour in vain, nor bring forth for trouble; for they are the seed of the blessed of the LORD.” (Isa. 65:21-23) Man, together with his neighbor, will work towards a common purpose and goal. They will also share in their desire to learn Truth and righteousness under the administration of the kingdom. They shall no longer ‘plant, and another eat,’ neither shall they anymore ‘labour in vain.’ ■

Finding Security

Key Verse: "I will remember my covenant, which is between me and you and every living creature of all flesh . . . that is upon the earth."
—Genesis 9:15,16

***Selected Scripture:
Genesis 9:1-16***

sight. (vs. 9) God determined to save him and his family—eight souls in all— instructing him to build an ark and to come into the ark, bringing animals in by twos and by sevens, male and female. Also, fowls were brought in, male and female by twos and by sevens, as well as creeping things.—Gen. 6:18-7:3

After the Flood, Noah built an altar offering clean animals and fowls as a sacrifice to God. (Gen. 8:20) This is the first instance after the flood of a blood sacrifice. God remembered Noah, and said he “smelled a sweet savour,” and “said in his heart, I will not again curse the ground any more for man’s sake; for the imagination of man’s heart is evil from his youth; neither will I again smite any more every thing living, as I have done.”—vs. 21

We turn now to the ninth chapter of Genesis. After the waters had abated and man came out of the ark, God reiterated the command he gave to Adam in the

OUR LESSON BEGINS AF-
ter the great flood had destroyed all life on earth except Noah and his family. God had determined to destroy all life because of the extreme wickedness of humanity. (Gen. 6:5-7) Further we read, “The earth also was corrupt before God, and the earth was filled with violence.”—vs. 11

Noah was righteous in God’s

Garden, saying to Noah, “Be fruitful, and multiply, and replenish [fill] the earth.”—vs. 1

We find a great change had come over the earth after the deluge. Now the animals were to be used for food as well as the fowls and fishes. Meat could be eaten instead of just the green herbs. The only prohibition to eating meat was not to eat blood, because the life is in the blood. (vs. 4) Another command was that “Whoso sheddeth man’s blood, by man shall his blood be shed: for in the image of God made he man.”—vs. 6

Next, God tells Noah that he is to establish a covenant with him. (vs. 9) This covenant would be between man and all living creatures, and God says that he will never again destroy all flesh. (vs. 11) Now when it rained there would be a bow in the cloud, and this bow would be the token of the covenant between all flesh “for perpetual generations”—forever.—vs. 12

This peculiar covenant, the Rainbow Covenant, is everlasting. This rainbow was to reestablish the peace and order of physical nature, a sign of God’s love and a witness to his promise. The colors of the rainbow seem to indicate the various features of God’s love for humanity. White is universal of all color, the union of all the rays of light, and is a good symbol of truth and purity. Where many colors are manifest there is portrayed the manifold glory of sunlight from which all colors are derived. Herein lies the appropriateness of the scriptural symbol of the rainbow.

“The bow shall be in the cloud; and I will look upon it, that I may remember the everlasting covenant between God and every living creature of all flesh that is upon the earth.” (vs. 16) God’s Rainbow Covenant assures us that the end of the present order of things, although culminating in a great time of trouble, will not result in the destruction of all flesh prior to the establishment of Christ’s righteous kingdom here on earth, for he will say, “Peace, be still.”—Mark 4:39 ■

Trusting Promises

Key Verse: “Neither shall thy name any more be called Abram, but thy name shall be Abraham; for a father of many nations have I made thee.”
—***Genesis 17:5***

Selected Scripture:
Genesis 17

We know that none can be actually ‘perfect’ in their walk with God. We were brought forth “in iniquity” and “in sin” did our “mother conceive” us. (Ps. 51:5) Also, we are told, “There is none righteous, no, not one.” (Rom. 3:10) What is meant then by this command of God to Abram to walk before him and be perfect? One must strive to be righteous in all his acts before God and man. “As he [man] thinketh in his heart, so is he.”—Prov. 23:7

When God changed Abram’s name to Abraham, it was significant. Abram means ‘high or lofty one,’ while Abraham means ‘Father of a multitude.’ This is connected with the meaning of the covenant that was to be made with Abraham, when God said, “My covenant is with thee, and thou shalt be a father of many nations.” (Gen. 17:4) His promise was, “I will make thee exceeding

HOW OFTEN HAVE PROMISES been made and not kept? We find that only God can be trusted to keep the promises he makes.

In our lesson for today, we find God appearing to Abram when he was 99 years old, and changing his name to Abraham. God was setting a high standard for his servant when he said, “Walk before me, and be thou perfect.” (Gen. 17:1)

fruitful, and I will make nations of thee, and kings shall come out of thee.”—vs. 6

Then God said, “I will establish my covenant between me and thee and thy seed after thee in their generations for an everlasting covenant, to be a God unto thee, and to thy seed after thee.”—vs. 7

This was an everlasting covenant, a covenant that would span ages, and encompass all of Abraham’s descendants, if he was faithful in following God’s instructions. We find he was faithful. See Genesis 22:1-18. God included the promise to give “all the land of Canaan” for a homeland for Abraham’s seed.—Gen. 17:8

There is a secondary covenant, called the covenant of circumcision, that Abraham and his people were to keep. (vss. 10-14) The cutting of the foreskin of the males was to be the mark, the setting apart, of Abraham’s people. The thought of cutting of the flesh also has a much higher meaning to God’s people. True circumcision is the cutting away from all fleshly hopes, aims, and desires. We read, “He is not a Jew, which is one outwardly; neither is that circumcision, which is outward in the flesh: But he is a Jew, which is one inwardly; and circumcision is that of the heart, in the spirit, and not in the letter; whose praise is not of men, but of God.”—Rom. 2:28,29

God then promises Abraham that he is to have a son. “Then Abraham fell on his face, and laughed, and said in his heart, Shall a child be born unto him that is an hundred years old? and shall Sarah, that is ninety years old, bear?” (Gen. 17:17) Abraham already had borne Ishmael, and he asked God to bless him. God tells him that Ishmael would be blessed, but that his covenant would be made with Isaac.—vss. 20,21

In all this we can be sure that God not only makes, but keeps, his promises. Truly we should echo the sentiments of Abraham and Sarah, that they “judged him [God] faithful who had promised.”—Heb. 11:11 ■

Being Mutually Responsible

Key Verse: “Moses came and told the people all the words of the LORD, and all the judgments: and all the people answered with one voice, and said, All the words which the LORD hath said will we do.”
—Exodus 24:3

Selected Scripture:
Exodus 19:1-6, 24:3-8
the words which thou shalt speak unto the children of Israel.”—Exod. 19:4-6

In our Key Verse, the people answered by saying, ‘All the words which the LORD hath said will we do.’ Perhaps, if the nation of Israel had considered all that God was telling them, they might have said, “We will try to keep your ways to the best of our ability.” When God speaks, we must listen and consider before blindly saying we would keep his words. Being mutually responsible is very important with God. He will fulfill his

ISRAEL HAD LEFT EGYPT

and traveled three months to Mount Sinai when Moses went up into the mount and God called to him saying, “Ye have seen what I did unto the Egyptians, and how I bare you on eagles’ wings, and brought you unto myself. Now therefore, if ye will obey my voice indeed, and keep my covenant, then ye shall be a peculiar treasure unto me above all people: for all the earth is mine: And ye shall be unto me a kingdom of priests, and an holy nation. These are

part and it will be our responsibility to fulfill our part.

We especially note God's words to Israel, 'Obey my voice indeed, and keep my covenant, then ye shall be a peculiar treasure unto me above all people.' The Apostle Peter says, "Ye are a chosen generation, a royal priesthood, an holy nation, a peculiar people." (I Pet. 2:9) Peter's words 'a peculiar people' should read, "a purchased people," or "a people for a purpose." The prophet Malachi gives the thought of treasure as "jewels" when speaking of God's chosen people, "They shall be mine, saith the LORD of hosts, in that day when I make up my jewels."—Mal. 3:17

Moses wrote down God's words, built an altar for sacrifice, offered oxen for a peace offering, then took half the blood and sprinkled it on the altar. The building of altars, for sacrifice and the offering of blood, was a very important feature in the religious life of the Israelites. We are told, "The life . . . is in the blood" (Lev. 17:11), and blood ratified the covenant that God was making with the nation of Israel. Moses then took the book of the covenant and read it in the audience of the people. The people answered Moses by saying all that the LORD has said 'will we do' and be obedient. There was no way that the people could have then realized that they could never keep God's perfect law, yet they readily bound themselves to every word of it. Only a perfect man could keep the perfect law of God, and that man was Christ, for "Christ is the end of the law for righteousness to every one that believeth."—Rom. 10:4

As we strive to follow in the footsteps of God and Christ, we all need to be responsible in our receiving of God's words. We must consider our vows that we have made with him. "When thou vowest a vow unto God, defer not to pay it; for he hath no pleasure in fools: pay that which thou hast vowed. Better is it that thou shouldest not vow, than that thou shouldest vow and not pay."—Eccles. 5:4,5 ■

Making Life's Choices

Key Verse: *"If serving the LORD seems undesirable to you, then choose for yourselves this day whom you will serve, whether the gods your forefathers served beyond the River, or the gods of the Amorites, in whose land you are living. But as for me and my household, we will serve the LORD."*
—**Joshua 24:15,**
New International Version

Selected Scripture:
Joshua 24

Joshua gave the account of Israel's bondage in Egypt, and how God had brought them out of bondage and into the promised land. The men of Jericho fought against Israel, but the Israelites had defeated seven nations in battle. In all this, we see that Joshua was showing God's kindness and mercy to a very disobedient nation. Now

AFTER THE DEATH OF MOSES, Joshua led the nation of Israel into the promised land and gave them commands of which they said they would follow, even as they had with Moses. (Josh. 1:16) Moses had warned the people about forsaking the LORD and following idols, but the people were disobedient in following God under Joshua as they had been with Moses.

In our lesson for today, Joshua was getting old (chap. 23:1), and he called for the elders of Israel, their judges and officers, who all came to hear him. (chap. 24:1) Joshua recounted how God had led the Israelites from Abraham's time, and that Terah, Abraham's father, had "served other gods."—vs. 2

God gave a choice to Israel, and said, “I have given you a land for which ye did not labour, and cities which ye built not, and ye dwell in them; of the vineyards and oliveyards which ye planted not do ye eat. Now therefore fear the LORD, and serve him in sincerity and in truth: and put away the gods which your fathers served on the other side of the flood, and in Egypt; and serve ye the LORD. And if it seem evil unto you to serve the LORD, choose you this day whom ye will serve; whether the gods which your fathers served that were on the other side of the flood, or the gods of the Amorites, in whose land ye dwell: but as for me and my house, we will serve the LORD.”—Josh. 24:13-15

The question arises, have we made a commitment to follow and serve God, and yet followed after worldly ways? We note Joshua’s words, ‘choose you this day whom ye will serve; whether the gods which your fathers served’ or those ‘in whose land ye dwell: . . . as for me and my house,’ says Joshua, ‘we will serve the LORD.’

We all make choices every day—what to eat, what to wear, where we live and whom we want to follow. Joshua tells the nation, you cannot serve other idols and God. God is a holy and jealous God. The word jealous has the thought of zealous. Follow me and live in peace, or follow after idols and reap the consequences.

The people did not like what Joshua was telling them, and they said, “Nay; but we will serve the LORD.” (vs. 21) “Put away” then your “strange gods, . . . and incline your heart unto the LORD God of Israel.” Again the people said, “The LORD our God will we serve, and his voice will we obey.”—vss. 23,24

Joshua then “made a covenant with the people,” writing it into the “book of the law.” (vss. 25,26) Our lesson then, is to let us make good choices in our dealings with God, realizing that he who is our Creator and lifegiver is deserving of our utmost praise, honor, obedience, service, and love. ■

CHRISTIAN LIFE AND DOCTRINE

God's Word in Prophecy—Part 9

Mine Eyes Are Upon All Their Ways

“I will bring them again into their land. . . I will send for many fishers, saith the LORD, . . . and after will I send for many hunters, and they shall hunt them from every mountain, and from every hill. . . . For mine eyes are upon all their ways.”

—Jeremiah 16:14-18
Age. This trouble would not be an evidence of his disfavor, but rather as evidence of his favor in shaping their circumstances in such a manner as

IN THIS SCRIPTURE THE

Lord explains that he would send ‘fishers’ to entice, and then ‘hunters’ to compel his people to return to the promised land. He also explains that, even in sending the fishers and hunters among his people, it would be because his eyes were ‘upon all their ways.’ The implication of this prophecy is that God would permit much trouble to come upon his people during the end of the present Gospel

to turn their faces toward the land of promise. This is what was accomplished by the persecutions under Nazi Germany, the hunters who drove them out of Europe during World War II.

BITTER EXPERIENCES

Some may ask , if God's favor was to be returned to his people as a result of the events that took place during and shortly after World War I, why have they since that time, and particularly under Nazi Germany, experienced one of the most severe periods of persecution in their long history? We read, "As I live, saith the Lord GOD, surely with a mighty hand, and with a stretched out arm, and with fury poured out, will I rule over you: And I will bring you out from the people, and will gather you out of the countries wherein ye are scattered, with a mighty hand, and with a stretched out arm, and with fury poured out. And I will bring you into the wilderness of the people, and there will I plead with you face to face. Like as I pleaded with your fathers in the wilderness of the land of Egypt, so will I plead with you, saith the Lord GOD. And I will cause you to pass under the rod, and I will bring you into the bond of the covenant."—Ezek. 20:33-37

According to this prophecy, the Israelites are brought out from the countries where they had been residing by what is described as the Lord's 'fury.' Furthermore, Ezekiel's prophecy declares that in doing this he would be ruling over his people. The prophecy also promises a returning of favor to the Jewish people.

The illustration used in this prophecy gives us the proper understanding. He says, 'I will bring you

into the wilderness of the people,' and again, 'Like as I pleaded with your fathers in the wilderness of the land of Egypt, so will I plead with you.' God's favor was upon his people when, in the person of Moses, he visited them and delivered them from their slavery.

Even so, it was a trying time for the Israelites in times of old. It was necessary for them to experience some of the plagues which came upon the Egyptians in order to encourage them to follow Moses out of bondage. In leaving Egypt, they shortly found themselves in the wilderness where their circumstances were most difficult. However, they did not move directly from Egypt to Canaan, the land of promise.

The prophecy foretold of these experiences when he would bring them out from among the nations wherever they had been scattered. Their uprooting from the Gentile nations would not immediately result in a peaceful and secure settlement in their land. Instead, there was to be a long wilderness experience, a time of uncertainty and insecurity such as we have witnessed, particularly since the events following World War I.

First they were plagued, and since then have experienced much difficulty in connection with their possession of the promised land. By the ruling of the United Nations, the land of Palestine was apportioned, partly to the Arabs and partly to the nation of Israel. It is perhaps this situation that is referred to by the Prophet Joel in reference to the time when the LORD would be restoring his people to their land. The prophecy reads, "In those days, and in that time, when I shall bring again the captivity of

Judah and Jerusalem, I will also gather all nations, and will bring them down into the valley of Jehoshaphat [interpreted in verse 14 as the ‘valley of decision’], and will plead with them there for my people and for my heritage Israel, whom they have scattered among the nations, and parted my land.”— Joel 3:1,2

THE BOND OF THE COVENANT

Judging from this and other relative prophecies, it appears that some time is yet to elapse before God’s full purpose in the restoration of Israel to the land of promise is accomplished. Considering further the prophecy of Ezekiel, it is noted that God’s purpose in uprooting the Israelites from among the nations in which they were living, even as Israel of old was delivered out of Egypt into a wilderness condition, was that they would ultimately be brought ‘into the bond of the covenant.’

This also parallels the sequence of events experienced by ancient Israel when delivered from slavery in Egypt; for at that time they were first brought into the wilderness and then into the bond of the Law Covenant, mediated by Moses at Mount Sinai. The bringing of the Israelites into the bond of the promised New Covenant is the ultimate design of the LORD in the experiences through which he has been directing them.

In fulfillment of this purpose, Israel’s bitter experiences during the end of the present Gospel Age have served merely to point to a beginning, which we have seen to be the granting of Israel the right to return to the land of their forefathers and to establish a national home. It is evident that God’s dealings

with his ancient people will be accomplished in his own due time and purpose.

FOR GOD'S GLORY

Beginning with Ezekiel 36:16, and continuing through chapters 37,38, and 39, various ramifications of God's dealings with Israel at the time of their restoration are presented. In these chapters, God's Word declares his purpose to restore them to the promised land. We read, "Thus saith the Lord GOD; I do not this for your sakes, O house of Israel, but for mine holy name's sake, which ye have profaned among the heathen, whither ye went." (Ezek. 36:22) In verse 21, the LORD tells us that he had "pity" for his "holy name."

In this we are reminded of an interesting aspect of God's dealings with his typical people. The thought is first introduced in a prayer by Moses, in which he reveals his concern for the glory of God's name. The LORD had told him that, because of the Israelites' transgressions, he proposed to destroy them all, but with Moses as a new leader of the people he would build a new nation.

In prayer, Moses replied to this, "LORD, why doth thy wrath wax hot against thy people, which thou hast brought forth out of the land of Egypt with great power, and with a mighty hand? Wherefore should the Egyptians speak, and say, For mischief did he bring them out, to slay them in the mountains, and to consume them from the face of the earth? Turn from thy fierce wrath, and repent of this evil against thy people. Remember Abraham, Isaac, and Israel, thy servants, to whom thou swartest by thine own self, and saidst unto them, I will

multiply your seed as the stars of heaven, and all this land that I have spoken of will I give unto your seed, and they shall inherit it for ever.”—Exod. 32:11-13

In response to this prayer, God did change his mind about destroying Israel. In another account of this episode, we learn that Moses asked the LORD to pardon his people Israel, and he responded by saying, “I have pardoned according to thy word: But as truly as I live, all the earth shall be filled with the glory of the LORD. Because all those men which have seen my glory, and my miracles, which I did in Egypt and in the wilderness, and have tempted me now these ten times, and have not hearkened to my voice; Surely they shall not see the land which I sware unto their fathers.”—Num. 14:20-23

Concerning the time that God delivered Israel from Egyptian bondage, we read, “So didst thou get thee a name, as it is this day.” (Neh. 9:10) Moses emphasized the point at issue in connection with the glory of God’s name by referring to the oath-bound promise that had been made to Abraham concerning the land of Canaan as being an everlasting possession for this people. Moses was concerned as to how this promise could be fulfilled if God was to destroy the Israelite people and then establish a new nation.

If God were to thus allow this people to die in the wilderness, it would prove either his unwillingness to fulfill his promises, or his inability to do so. But to him to whom a thousand years are but as a “watch in the night when it is past” (Ps. 90:4), the ability to pardon and to save his people in the wilderness was only a temporary consideration. If he was to

maintain the glory of his name and the integrity of his promises by keeping this people alive and eventually giving them the land of promise as an everlasting possession (Gen. 13:15,16), it would have to be accomplished through long centuries of time. This would be even as it was during their experiences in the wilderness, despite their many sins and transgressions against him.

The Jewish people have always been a persecuted minority. Almost any other people under similar circumstances would have given up their determination to continue their identity as a people, and would have been assimilated by the larger, and more favored, nationalities and races. God's protection has kept them intact as a people by restoring them to the promised land when his due time came, and he could continue to magnify the glory of his name.

THE RESURRECTION

The glory of God's name in connection with the restoration of the Jews to the promised land involves much more than the returning of a small percentage of the present generation to the land of Palestine. This will be a token fulfillment of his promises, and the returned exiles will be in the Holy Land ready to receive the blessings of the kingdom at the beginning of the time when the whole earth will be under the administration of Christ's kingdom. The work of restoration will continue even on behalf of all those who have died in past generations.

We will fail to appreciate the full significance of God's promises if we overlook the resurrection feature of his plan of the ages. As we have seen, the Israelites were uprooted from the many countries in Europe, and elsewhere in which they were

dwelling, just as he brought up the ancient people of Israel from Egyptian bondage. Thus far, as then, his people have entered merely into a ‘wilderness.’ However, the grander objective is to bring them into the bond of the New Covenant, in fulfillment of the words of the Prophet Ezekiel.

This will be true of those who have died, as well as those who are now living. The resurrection of the Israelites is described as a ‘bringing again of their captivity,’ not merely from captivity to other nations, but from the captivity of death. In this connection, the LORD further promises, “I will establish my covenant with thee; and thou shalt know that I am the LORD.”—Ezek. 16:53-63

Of the living generation of Israelites who are restored to the land of promise, the LORD said, “Then shall ye remember your own evil ways, and your doings that were not good, and shall lothe yourselves in your own sight for your iniquities and for your abominations.” (Ezek. 36:31) This will be true, not only of the then living generation, but also of those who are raised from the dead thereafter.

Further in Ezekiel’s prophecy, in chapter 16, we read, “When I shall bring again their captivity, the captivity of Sodom and her daughters, and the captivity of Samaria and her daughters, then will I bring again the captivity of thy captives in the midst of them: That thou mayest bear thine own shame, and mayest be confounded in all that thou hast done, in that thou art a comfort unto them.”—vss. 53,54

ALL HAVE SINNED

The Israelites as a people, or nation, have perhaps been no more or less righteous than any other race or nation. As members of the fallen race, all have

sinned and come short of the glory of God. In this and other respects, God has been pleased to use them as symbolic of the whole world of mankind, among which a few individuals—one here and one there—have been loyal to the LORD while the vast majority has not been.

The prophecy of Ezekiel 16:53-63 reveals that when the Israelites are brought forth from the captivity of death they will at first be ashamed and confounded. The prophet Daniel reveals that this will occur following the great time of trouble with which the present Gospel Age comes to an end.

Through Daniel, the LORD said, “At that time thy people shall be delivered, every one that shall be found written in the book. And many of them that sleep in the dust of the earth shall awake, some to everlasting life, and some to shame and everlasting contempt. And they that be wise shall shine as the brightness of the firmament; and they that turn many to righteousness as the stars for ever and ever.”—Dan. 12:1-3

Daniel’s people who were promised deliverance from death, are God’s people. All are in the book of the LORD in the sense that they are assured an awakening, in due time, from the sleep of death. Many of them will come forth to shame as the Prophet Ezekiel pointed out. This will not be unending shame, however, for the word here translated ‘everlasting’ simply denotes bringing to a conclusion, or completion. When their shame has accomplished its purpose in humbling them it will pass, as it will also be true of all nations and people.

As we have noted, God’s promise to Abraham concerning the land was unconditional. Later, he placed a condition upon the high honor of being his

representatives in the teaching and blessing of the world. This condition was obedience to the covenant of statutes and laws. “If ye will obey my voice indeed, and keep my covenant, then ye shall be a peculiar treasure unto me above all people: for all the earth is mine: And ye shall be unto me a kingdom of priests, and an holy nation. These are the words which thou shalt speak unto the children of Israel.”(Exod. 19:5,6) In the original setting forth of these conditions, no mention is made that later a spiritual seed of Abraham was to be developed, also based upon the conditions of faith and obedience as explained by the Apostle Paul.—Gal 3:27-29

Throughout the ages of the past, prior to the time of our Lord Jesus’ First Advent, many were faithful to God’s Law, and thus qualified to be his special servants under the terms set forth in Exodus 19:5,6. Those who preceded this Law and were likewise faithful were thus proven worthy of that “better resurrection” outlined by the Apostle Paul in Hebrews 11:35.

A SPIRITUAL CLASS

Beginning with Jesus and Pentecost, a spiritual class began to be developed under the terms of faith and obedience. The first of this class was selected exclusively from the natural seed of Abraham. But, because of Israel’s disobedience, the invitation was extended to Gentiles to make up the foreordained number of the spiritual seed. Throughout the present Gospel Age those of the Lord’s people who have faithfully met the proper conditions of consecration, and continue to be submissive to the will of God, will thus participate in the *(Continued on page 35)*

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(Continued from page 31) future work of blessing both Israel and the whole world of mankind. The LORD, through the Prophet Isaiah, speaks symbolically of two classes that will assist fallen mankind in the ways of Truth and righteousness under the administration of Christ's kingdom. He says, "It shall come to pass in the last days, that the mountain of the LORD's house shall be established [prepared, *Marginal Translation*] in the top of the mountains, and shall be exalted above the hills; and all nations shall flow unto it. And many people shall go and say, Come ye, and let us go up to the mountain of the LORD, to the house of the God of Jacob; and he will teach us of his ways, and we will walk in his paths: for out of Zion shall go forth the law, and the word of the LORD from Jerusalem."— Isa. 2:2,3

TWO PHASES OF THE KINGDOM

In the concluding portion of this wonderful prophecy, we note that Isaiah specifically mentions two separate classes, one spiritual and the other fleshly, who will carry out the will of God under Christ's kingdom, 'for out of Zion shall go forth the law, and the word of the LORD from Jerusalem.' Zion represents the glorified spiritual class who will share, as the Mediator of the New Law Covenant, in the administration of Truth and righteousness over the affairs of mankind. The revelator also speaks of this faithful class, "I looked, and behold, the Lamb was standing on Mount Zion, and with Him one hundred and forty-four thousand, having His name and the name of His Father written on their foreheads."— Rev. 14:1, *New American Standard Bible*

The earthly representatives of Christ's kingdom will share in dispensing the Word of God to the people. These worthies of old lived prior to the time of our Lord's earthly ministry, and Apostle Paul explains, "These all, having obtained a good report through faith, received not the promise: God having provided [foreseen, *MT*] some better thing for us, that they without us should not be made perfect."—Heb. 11:39,40

In harmony with these two phases of Christ's kingdom, we recall Jacob's dream in which he saw a ladder that reached from earth to heaven. He also saw God standing above it while his angels ascended and descended upon it. (Gen. 28:12,13) Jesus explained the meaning of Jacob's vision to Nathanael, "He saith unto him, Verily, verily, I say unto you, Hereafter ye shall see heaven open, and the angels of God ascending and descending upon the Son of man."—John 1:51

Under these two groups—the spiritual class and the earthly class—mankind will learn to know and to serve the LORD. What a glorious prospect for the poor groaning creation of the present time. "The Spirit and the bride say, Come. And let him that heareth say, Come. And let him that is athirst come, And whosoever will, let him take the water of life freely."—Rev. 22:17 ■

OBITUARIES

The following brethren have recently finished their Christian course. We wish to express our sincere sympathy to their family and friends in the loss of these dear ones.

Sister Viola Cooper, Boise, ID—July 6. Age, 81

Brother Ed Futchkar, N. Fort Myers, FL—July 21. Age, 75

The Philippian Mission

“They went through the region of Phrygia and Galatia, having been forbidden by the Holy Spirit to speak the word in Asia.”

—*Acts 16:6, Revised Standard Version*

IN ACTS, WE ARE TOLD

the Apostle Paul had been prohibited from taking the Gospel message to Asia. Instead, the Lord commissioned him to introduce the Gospel into Macedonia. “A vision appeared to Paul in the night; There stood a man of Macedonia, and prayed him, saying, Come over into Macedonia, and help us.”—Acts 16:9

The Asia that the Lord would not allow Paul to enter was, at that time, the westernmost province of what is now known as the continent of Asia. Macedonia was the easternmost province of Europe. It was at Philippi, Macedonia’s capital city, that the paganism of the East and the paganism of the West met. Philippi was ripe for the introduction of the Gospel message. In Paul’s day, it was the fulcrum upon which was balanced Eastern and Western thought. Though missionary work would subsequently continue in the East, the introduction of the Gospel message into Macedonia by Paul and his

brethren would tip the balance toward the West. The Gospel would thereafter begin to spread throughout Europe, affecting pagan perceptions everywhere, thereby completely reshaping Western thought and practice.

The Apostle, understanding the strategic potential of his commission, responded without hesitation. “After he had seen the vision, immediately we endeavoured to go into Macedonia, assuredly gathering that the Lord had called us for to preach the gospel unto them.” (Acts 16:10) Paul took with him Silas, a Jew; Luke, a Gentile; and, quite probably, Timothy, a son of mixed Gentile and Jewish parentage.

It is Luke who chronicles the main experiences of the little missionary band. Philippi is the “chief city of that part of Macedonia, and a colony: and we were in that city abiding certain days.” (vs. 12) Philippi was more than a Roman garrison outpost. It was a colony whose intended purpose was to expand and perpetuate the Roman presence in that area and thereby maintain the peace. Rome’s looming presence influenced almost everything that occurred in Luke’s account.

In their colonized circumstance, the Jewish custom was to gather on the Sabbath in a public place to pray. Upon arriving in Philippi, Paul, Silas, Luke and Timothy did likewise, seeking an opportunity to preach the Gospel. “On the sabbath we went out of the city by a river side, where prayer was wont to be made.”—vs. 13

A PYTHON SPIRIT

Satan, no doubt, also keenly aware of the strategic potential of Paul’s missionary journey to Philippi,

and ever eager to thwart the spread of the Gospel, set an obstacle in the path of the missionaries. "It came to pass, as we went to prayer, a certain damsel possessed with a spirit of divination met us." (vs. 16) The woman was a demon-possessed slave for whose prophesies and pronouncements her masters charged money. The *Marginal Translation* of the *King James Version* identifies the demon which possessed the woman as a "Python spirit";—a spirit ascribed to those who worshipped the ancient Greek pagan god, Apollo. She and her masters followed the men who were preaching the Gospel. As she did, she shouted, "These men are the servants of the most high God, which shew unto us the way of salvation." (vs. 17) Luke tells us, "this did she many days. But Paul, being grieved, turned and said to the spirit, I command thee in the name of Jesus Christ to come out of her. And he came out the same hour."—vs. 18

Paul demonstrated that he wanted no affiliation with the slavemasters' moneymaking schemes, nor did he wish to attract the attention of the Roman authorities by having his presence and mission announced. He sent the 'Python spirit' from the slave woman. Irate at losing their lucrative source of income, the slavemasters reported Paul and Silas to the local magistrates. Though they had hypocritically aided and abetted Paul and his friends for days in the same endeavor, allowing their slave to proclaim them men of God, the slavemasters accused Paul and Silas, both Jews, of the very serious crime of introducing a new religion. That was forbidden in Philippi. Rome did not countenance civil contention over religious issues, especially among the Jews.

Religious strife made governing more difficult and could lead to insurrection. Unrest was bad for the Roman economy.

A FORESEEN ADVANTAGE

Luke and Timothy, being non-Jews, escaped the following brutal scenario. “When her masters saw that the hope of their gains was gone, they caught Paul and Silas, and drew them into the market-place unto the rulers, And brought them to the magistrates, saying, These men being Jews, do exceedingly trouble our city, And teach customs, which are not lawful for us to receive, neither to observe, being Romans. And the multitude rose up together against them: and the magistrates rent off their clothes, and commanded to beat them. And when they had laid many stripes upon them, they cast them into prison, charging the jailor to keep them safely.” (vss. 19-23) Exceeding their authority on this occasion, the local magistrates caused a serious breach of the Roman legal process. This would redound to Paul and Silas’ advantage later. No doubt, it was all foreseen and arranged by the Lord.

Both Paul and Silas possessed Roman citizenship; a valuable possession in their day, subject to special consideration under Roman law. As Roman citizens, they should have been remanded to the Roman authorities. Instead, they were beaten by the local authorities before they had a trial; another breach of Roman law. The two could have claimed their rights as citizens under Roman law and every one involved in the cruel and illegal brutality perpetrated against them would have suffered a severe,

perhaps fatal, response from the strict Roman system. However, Paul and Silas told no one of their Roman citizenship at that time. As a result, they experienced much pain, abuse and eventual incarceration. They withheld that information and endured the unjust cruelty for the love of their newly emerging brethren in Philippi.

MISSIONARY OPPORTUNITY

After having beaten Paul and Silas to mollify the crowd, the magistrates charged the jailer with holding them until their fate was decided. Roman law stipulated that a jailer could be made to serve the sentence of any prisoner who escaped during his watch. If the prisoner was serving time, the jailer could be made to serve the remainder of the prisoner's sentence. If the prisoner was awaiting death, the jailer could be put to death in his stead. Paul and Silas' jailer took the matter very seriously. The jailer, "having received such a charge, thrust them into the inner prison."—vs. 24

In Roman times, prisons were appalling, fetid places. Dank, unlit, and usually infested, inner prisons were the equivalent of modern maximum security areas. The worst prisoners were put there. Paul and Silas' jailer imposed a punitive measure even beyond that of the inner prison. He "made their feet fast in the stocks." (vs. 24) Stocks were usually iron-bound wood with several holes in a row. The prisoner's feet were put into those holes. The amount of discomfort the jailer could inflict upon the prisoner was determined by the distance he put between the prisoners' feet. One imagines Paul and Silas' jailer placing their feet quite far apart and the

painful effect that would soon have on their hips and backs, especially since they had earlier experienced a severe beating. Their prospects seemed dismal indeed.

SINGING THE GOSPEL

Covered with welts from the rod or the lash, joints aching because their feet were in stocks, Paul and Silas “prayed, and sang praises unto God” from the innermost recesses of the damp and dark prison of Philippi. (vs. 25) The two disciples of Christ did not merely sing and pray quietly to encourage themselves in their extremity. It is clear that they were praying and singing with such volume that all other prisoners could hear them—“and the prisoners heard them.” (vs. 25) They had courage in abundance fostered by their unshakable faith. Theirs was a mission for God. They had been commissioned to preach at a strategic location from which the Gospel would spread westward toward Rome. Paul and Silas, not allowed to openly speak the Gospel message, sang it to the others in prison; and the prisoners heard it. The disciples of Christ alive in the present day would likewise certainly sing the Gospel story if they were not permitted to preach it. “I will sing the wondrous story of the Christ who died for me. How He left His home in Glory for the cross at Calvary.”—No. 343, *Hymns of Dawn*

LIBERATION OF ALL

Satan, having had Paul and Silas beaten and thrown into prison with execution a distinct possibility come morning, had done his best to end their mission. He failed. All in the prison were set at liberty. “Suddenly there was a great earthquake, so that

the foundations of the prison were shaken: and immediately all the doors were opened, and everyone's bands were loosed." (Acts 16:26) Supposing all the prisoners had fled, the jailer was as good as dead under Roman law and he knew it. "The keeper of the prison awaking out of his sleep, and seeing the prison doors open, he drew out his sword, and would have killed himself, supposing that the prisoners had been fled." (vs. 27) Death by his own hand was preferable to the numerous gruesome ways that the Romans could have put the jailer to death for his perceived failure. As the jailer drew his sword to end his life, Paul "cried with a loud voice, saying, Do thyself no harm: for we are all here." (vs. 28) Astonished, the jailer "called for a light, and sprang in, and came trembling, and fell down before Paul and Silas, And brought them out, and said, Sirs, what must I do to be saved?"—vss. 29,30

REJOICING AND BELIEVING

Responding, Paul said, "Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ, and thou shalt be saved, and thy house." (vs. 31) Luke adds, "They spake unto him the word of the Lord, and to all that were in his house." (vs. 32) The message Paul and Silas related to the jailer could not have differed substantially from that which Paul delivered to the Colossians in his epistle, "I am made a minister, according to the dispensation of God which is given to me for you, to fulfil the word of God; Even the mystery which hath been hid from ages and from generations, but now is made manifest to his saints: To whom God would make known what is the riches of the glory of this mystery among the Gentiles; which is Christ in you,

the hope of glory: Whom we preach, warning every man, and teaching every man in all wisdom; that we may present every man perfect in Christ Jesus.” (Col. 1:25-28) Hearing the word of the Lord, the grateful and now converted jailer “took them the same hour of the night, and washed their stripes; and was baptized, he and all his, straightway. And when he had brought them into his house, he set meat before them, and rejoiced, believing in God with all his house.”—Acts 16:33,34

CHASTENED MAGISTRATES

Morning revealed a chastened local authority. “When day came, the chief magistrates sent their policemen, saying, ‘Release those men.’ And the jailer reported these words to Paul, saying, ‘The chief magistrates have sent to release you. Therefore come out now and go in peace.’ But Paul said to them, ‘They have beaten us in public without trial, men who are Romans, and have thrown us into prison; and now are they sending us away secretly? No indeed! But let them come themselves and bring us out.’ The policemen reported these words to the chief magistrates. They were afraid when they heard that they were Romans, and they came and appealed to them, and when they had brought them out, they kept begging them to leave the city. They went out of the prison and entered the house of Lydia, and when they saw the brethren, they encouraged them and departed.”—Acts 16:35-40, *New American Standard Bible*

A STRATEGIC ADVANTAGE

Their previous day’s rash and illegal conduct of beating Paul and Silas, and incarcerating them

without trial, placed the Philippian magistrates in serious jeopardy of the very strict Roman law. No doubt apprised of that, they sent an underling to the jailer the following morning to quietly secure their release. It was then Paul chose to reveal that he and Silas were, in fact, Roman citizens. Were they to reveal that fact directly to the higher Roman authorities, all involved in their cruel and illegal treatment would have been severely dealt with by Rome. Paul and Silas kept their Roman citizenship hidden until the best possible strategic moment. They had been willing to endure the earlier brutality of the Philippian citizenry and officials to gain the advantage over the magistrates to ensure the safety and protection of their beloved Philippian brethren after their departure. Though Paul, Silas, Luke and Timothy were introducing what appeared to be a new religion, the local magistrates' fear of the severe legal consequences for their official blunder ensured there would be no official reprisals against the Philippian church after the missionaries' departure. Going to the house of Lydia, a sister in Christ at Philippi, the four no doubt assured all brethren gathered there of that fact, after which the men departed.

CHURCH'S MISSIONARY JOURNEY

The circumstance of Paul, Silas, Luke and Timothy at Philippi was very much an analogy of the church's experiences throughout the Gospel Age. Like the missionaries at Philippi, the church has been on a missionary journey during the entire Gospel Age. Paul and his brethren were pursued by hypocrites who offered assistance for gain; likewise, the

church has been beset by those who feign interest in the Truth for gain, the most notable being Emperor Constantine of Rome seeking political advantage over the alliances of his pagan rivals. His offer to enhance the authority and prestige of the early church by declaring it the state religion was accepted by the majority at the time. The result was the ecclesiasticism of Christianity.

Paul and Silas were bloodied in the marketplace at the hands of the magistrates of Philippi without a hearing. The church, in kind, has been unjustly drawn into the congregational marketplace where doctrines and creeds are bought and sold for money, and condemned without being heard. Paul and Silas were publicly beaten there. Likewise, the church has felt the sharp lash of public castigation zealously laid on by the ecclesiastical magistrates of Christianity.

CHURCH'S UNJUST INCARCERATION

Superstitious ignorance has been the enthusiastic jailer of the church. Religious superstition has forced the church into the inner prison of obscurity even as gross darkness covers the people. As were Paul and Silas by their stocks, the church has also been fettered by the doctrinal fantasies and religious traditions of others. These severely limit the church's access to those held in the deep blackness of religious deception. However, the church does what is possible to do in its extremity. As did Paul and Silas, the church continues to raise its voice in prayer and songs of praise, singing loudly the song of Moses and the Lamb for the benefit of others, not knowing to what hearing ear its voice may be carried in the dark.

CITIZENSHIP REVEALED

The subsequent release of Paul and Silas well represents the glorification of the church at the end of the Harvest. The church, at the end of this present Gospel Age, will be loosed from the gloomy recesses of its prison of obscurity and will ascend to the brilliant light of prominence and power with the Sun of Righteousness. The chastened magistrates of professing Christianity will then know that those they beat unjustly on earth were, in truth, citizens of heaven. ■

WEEKLY PRAYER MEETING TEXTS

SEPTEMBER 7—“If any man be in Christ, he is a new creature: old things are passed away; behold, all things are become new.”—II Corinthians 5:17 (Z. ’03-333 Hymn 191)

SEPTEMBER 14—“Having your conversation honest among the Gentiles: that, whereas they speak against you as evildoers, they may by your good works, which they shall behold, glorify God in the day of visitation. For this is thankworthy, if a man for conscience toward God endure grief, suffering wrongfully.”—I Peter 2:12, 19 (Z. ’03-365 Hymn 13)

SEPTEMBER 21—“Yea, though I walk through the valley of the shadow of death, I will fear no evil.”—Psalm 23:4 (Z. ’03-413 Hymn 12)

SEPTEMBER 28—“Your adversary the devil, as a roaring lion, walketh about, seeking whom he may devour: whom resist steadfast in the faith.”—I Peter 5:8,9 (Z. ’04-11; ’00-32 Hymn 200)

Restoring the Soul

“He restoreth my soul: he leadeth me in the paths of righteousness for his name’s sake.”

—**Psalm 23: 3** In this scripture, the true meaning of David’s poetic words, ‘He restoreth my soul,’ is that “He saves my spiritual life.” The soul is a living being and in the case of the New Creature in Christ, it is the new, spiritual life—the New Creature—that is preserved by our Lord Jesus, the true Shepherd. Paul explains, “If any man be in Christ, he is a new creature: old things are passed away; behold, all things are become new.”—II Cor. 5:17

As followers of the Good Shepherd, we are all members of the fallen and dying race, and it is through faith in the atoning blood of Christ Jesus that we receive justification to life. Upon this basis, we may be acceptable sacrifices to God. The apostle wrote, “I beseech you therefore, brethren, by the mercies of God, that ye present your bodies a living sacrifice, holy, acceptable unto God, which is your reasonable service.”—Rom. 12:1

THE SHEPHERD'S VOICE

We may rejoice in this provision which was made available for us through our Lord; for without it we could not be led as sheep. Restoration of the soul, which David speaks of in our featured text, is a provision of Divine grace by which we are blessed after becoming followers of the Good Shepherd. As New Creatures in Christ Jesus, we have various enemies—the world, the flesh, and the Devil—which are ever on the alert to do us harm and to separate us from our Shepherd. By listening carefully for the Shepherd's voice, and following him closely at all times, we are protected from these enemies, and, if we fall into their clutches, he rescues us and restores our consecrated life.

As a shepherd boy in the rugged country of Judea, David was well acquainted with the dangers that threatened the sheep which were under his care. He knew that the sheep's enemies were lurking around, ready to rush in to destroy and devour the sheep. He knew that at times some of the sheep were overwhelmed by these enemies, and, but for his watchfulness and skill as a shepherd, they would be devoured. It was with feeling that he could write of God's providential and tender care, He restoreth my soul.

Dangerous enemies of the sheep in David's experience were the wild animals which roamed the country. David encountered these in his experience as a shepherd, and on one occasion killed a lion which had attempted to make away with a sheep. (I Sam. 17:34-36) In addition to reflecting on the background of his experience, David spoke prophetically of the manner in which the Good Shepherd

cares for his sheep during this present Gospel Age. In a warning to us, the Apostle Peter also wrote, “Be sober, be vigilant; because your adversary the devil, as a roaring lion, walketh about, seeking whom he may devour.”—I Pet. 5:8

ENEMIES OF THE SHEEP

Our adversary Satan, the Devil, is indeed a formidable foe and one with whom we would be utterly unable to cope without the help of our Shepherd. Peter encourages us to look to the Shepherd, saying, “Casting all your care upon him; for he careth for you.” (I Pet. 5:7) How heart-cheering is the assurance, ‘he careth for you.’ We would surely be devoured by the Adversary were it not for the Good Shepherd’s care, and we can surely trust him to do for us all that we cannot do for ourselves.

We should all follow the leadings of our Shepherd. The apostle says, ‘Be sober, be vigilant.’ Failure to be sober and vigilant will leave us exposed to danger, a ready prey for the roaring lion going about to devour the Lord’s sheep. In the Scriptures, spiritual soberness is contrasted with spiritual drunkenness and intoxication. As New Creatures, there are various ways in which we can become intoxicated, and thus expose ourselves needlessly to the attacks of the Adversary.

We may become intoxicated with false doctrines concerning the plan of God and its proper place in our lives. Intoxication of this kind means that we no longer properly recognize the Shepherd’s voice. We hear other voices which lead us in strange paths and away from the flock which is protected by the Shepherd. In this separation, we are exposed to

danger, and the more so because with this condition goes a measure of pride. We may imagine that we have something better than some of the other sheep. We may look at the flock and think of them as being in bondage. We might congratulate ourselves that we are free to roam where we want and to follow any voices which may appeal to us. In this state of spiritual drunkenness we may not sense the danger to which we are exposed, until suddenly we realize that we have been overtaken by the Adversary. If our hearts are right, our Shepherd will restore our spiritual lives when we cry to him for help, but we should not think that Divine mercy gives us freedom to wander in dangerous paths.

ALERTNESS

If we are not on the alert, we may become intoxicated with pleasure, with the spirit of the world, or with the cares of this life. Self-complacency is also a form of intoxication—a false sense of security. We may presume ourselves on God's grace without doing our best to hearken to the Shepherd's voice and faithfully follow his leadings. Let us then endeavor to be sober, exercising the spirit of a sound mind by listening carefully to the Shepherd's voice, which is the voice of Truth.

Peter also says that we should be vigilant. This means that we are to be watchful and on the alert that we may recognize the Adversary's attacks and be ready to resist him, steadfast in the faith. A sheep is a defenseless animal and at first it may not seem in keeping with this illustration that the apostle says we should resist our great Adversary who goes about as a roaring lion to devour us. As

we have seen, while sheep are helpless when once in the clutches of a lion, they can help protect themselves by keeping close to the shepherd and following closely the sound of his voice. It may be this that the apostle evidently had in mind when he said, "Whom resist steadfast in the faith."—I Pet. 5:9

If we are following faithfully the voice of Truth, we will find ourselves associated with the rest of God's flock. This in itself is a protection. If we are on the alert, vigilant in giving heed to the Good Shepherd's voice of Truth, we will not be led into the ways of danger by other voices. Thus we may resist the Adversary by refusing to give heed to the various ways by which he would lead us from the Good Shepherd's care.

GIVING EARNEST HEED

Paul expresses the thought of being vigilant when he writes, "We ought to give the more earnest heed to the things which we have heard, lest at any time we should let them slip." (Heb. 2:1) In his letter to the Hebrews, Paul stresses this thought of giving 'earnest heed' to the Truth. He says that we should "hold fast the profession of our faith without wavering." He exhorts us not to forsake "the assembling of ourselves together" for mutual helpfulness; and, immediately following this admonition, he cites the possibility of sinning willfully and of the dire consequences. (Heb. 10:22-27) The lesson is obvious. If we become careless with the Truth, neglecting even our privileges of fellowship with the brethren, tragedy may result.

All of the Lord's true followers are sheep and he is their Shepherd. These sheep, in turn, have a

responsibility toward the Shepherd and one another. Some are used by the Chief Shepherd as under shepherds, and to the extent of our ability and opportunity we should all be on the alert to help our brethren whenever the occasion may arise. The Apostle Peter writes, “Feed the flock of God which is among you, taking the oversight thereof, not by constraint, but willingly; not for filthy lucre, but of a ready mind; Neither as being lords over God’s heritage, but being ensamples to the flock.”—I Pet. 5:2,3

This admonition of special responsibility was addressed to the elders and those who serve the Lord’s people. However, we are all to have a watchful interest in one another’s spiritual welfare and to be ensamples to the flock. This should not be left merely to those who are elected to serve the ecclesia, but all should cooperate with the Chief Shepherd in helping to protect the flock against the attacks of the Adversary.

This mutual interest of the Lord’s sheep toward one another is brought to our attention by Paul. “Brethren, if any man be overtaken in a fault, ye which are spiritual, restore such an one in the spirit of meekness; considering thyself, lest thou also be tempted. Bear ye one another’s burdens, and so fulfil the law of Christ.”—Gal. 6:1,2

RESTORING SPIRITUAL LIFE

It is the Chief Shepherd that restores our spiritual life when we have allowed ourselves to fall by the wayside. We should remember also that our Shepherd may look to us to help in the restoration of a healthy spiritual life to the fainting ones among his sheep. “We then that are strong ought to bear the

infirmities of the weak, and not to please ourselves. Let every one of us please his neighbour for his good to edification.”—Rom. 15:1,2

James wrote, “He which converteth the sinner from the error of his way shall save a soul from death, and shall hide a multitude of sins.” (James 5:20) Here the sinner is one who has erred from the Truth and the apostle shows the blessed privilege we have of assisting that brother or sister in the Truth. If, by the Lord’s grace, we may be of some help, we do so in cooperation with our Shepherd. We may assist the soul of the erring one, bringing him back safely into the fold.

Psalm 37:23 reads, “The steps of a good man are ordered of the LORD: and he delighteth in his way.” Here is a reference to one who hearkens to the voice of the Good Shepherd and endeavors to follow his leadings. It is thus that his steps are ordered of the Lord, and it is walking in these steps that makes him a better Christian. It is not his own righteousness that makes him good, for “There is none righteous, no, not one.” (Rom. 3:10) But he is reckoned acceptable by God because his heart is right, and because his unwilling imperfections are not imputed to him. God delights in all who are good from this standpoint, and through the Good Shepherd exercises his protective care over them.

OBTAINING MERCY IN TIME OF NEED

This care is manifested particularly in times of greatest need. Writing further of those whom the Lord looks upon as good because they are directed by his Word, David says, “Though he fall, he shall not be utterly cast down: for the LORD upholdeth

him with his hand.” (Ps. 37:24) The fact that one may ‘fall’ does not mean that he is abandoned by the Lord, for if his heart is right, and he cries unto the Good Shepherd for help, his soul will be restored. How blessed is this assurance! It is a similar thought to that expressed by the apostle when he urges us to come boldly to the “throne of grace,” there to obtain mercy and help in time of need.—Heb. 4:16

When we are in need of soul restoration, we are indeed privileged to cry out to the Good Shepherd for help. If we are to be heard, it is essential that we recognize our failures and penitently seek restoration to the fold of Divine care. “Create in me a clean heart, O God; and renew a right spirit within me.” (Ps. 51:10) It was essential that we have a ‘right spirit’ in order to enter the narrow way. However, through the deception of the Adversary, the allurements of the world, or by the pleasures or cares of the flesh, our spirits may not continue to be right.

THE SPIRIT OF PURITY

A right spirit is one of purity toward God, of zeal for him, for his people, for his Truth and the service of the Truth. It is the spirit of joy, peace, and love in our dealings with our brethren and with the world. It is a spirit of alertness for the doing of God’s will, a spirit that seeks for opportunities to sacrifice time and strength in the service of God.

It is possible for the right spirit which we possess to change. One of the faults Jesus found with some of his people was the fact that they had lost their first love. (Rev. 2:4) Here is a lesson which all of us may well take to heart. It is easy to lose that right spirit with which we started out in

the narrow way. A root of bitterness, a bit of discouragement, a measure of selfish ambition or of false pride, can creep over us and almost before we are aware of what is taking place the proper spirit of consecration to God, and devotion to him, may be suppressed. If we recognize what has occurred, or is threatening, we should seek the throne of grace. David expresses the proper attitude, saying to his God, "Cast me not away from thy presence; and take not thy holy spirit from me."—Ps. 51:11

That right spirit which we had when we first became sheep in the Lord's pasture was one which was in tune with God's own Spirit, his Holy Spirit. In consecration, we gave ourselves to the Lord and he blessed us with an infilling of his Holy Spirit. We were thus at one with him and we felt his presence near to us. It would be tragic to lose his Holy Spirit, so when we pray for him not to remove it from us, we should cooperate with him by emptying our hearts of all self-will that his Spirit may dwell therein.

OUR FIRST LOVE FOR THE LORD

"Restore unto me the joy of thy salvation," David continues. (Ps. 51:12) If perchance some earth-born cloud has hidden us from the view of our Shepherd we should be quick to cry out to him for the restoration of his favor. If we do, we can be assured that he will restore our spiritual life, and with that restoration will come that first love for the Lord which was ours when we possessed that right spirit. All of the Lord's people who may have had in any measure the joy taken away that was theirs

when they first found the Truth should take these essential steps to have their souls restored and their joy revived.

When one has lost a measure of that right spirit which he once possessed, he is to some extent spiritually sick. He may not realize his danger, nor be inclined to take the necessary steps in order to be restored; but the watchful eye of the Good Shepherd is always on the alert to see the needs of his sheep, particularly those who may be in danger. He knows that the sick ones, and those caught by the enemy, are not able to come to him for help, so he goes to them. He seeks them out and bestows his special care upon those who need him most.

It is well to remember in this connection that the Good Shepherd carries on his work through under shepherds. He looks to all of us for cooperation and expects that we will be glad at any time, and under any circumstances, to lay down our lives for the sheep. Thus the Good Shepherd's care is an example of the interest we should have in our brethren, particularly those who may stand in need of soul restoration.

IMPORTANCE OF PRAYER

There may not be much we can do for these, but we can pray. Perhaps their greatest need is that someone pray for them. If we have opportunity we can remind them, either personally, or by means of the printed message, of the joys of the Truth. By precept and example, we can admonish them to return to their first love, assuring them that their original joy will return when the right spirit which they once possessed is renewed. Thus to be interested in

the Lord's sheep is a token that we have the Lord's Spirit.

Paul wrote, "We then that are strong ought to bear the infirmities of the weak, and not to please ourselves." (Rom. 15:1) In some ways, it might be more pleasing to associate only with the strong ones among the Lord's sheep, but if we have the right spirit, the Spirit of the Good Shepherd, we will gladly help bear the infirmities of the weak. We must not expect the weak ones to come to us because they may be too weak to do so. Instead, we are to go to them, no matter how great a sacrifice may be entailed in so doing. The parable of the lost sheep illustrates the principle involved in our opportunity to help the needy ones among the Lord's sheep. In this parable, the Good Shepherd is said to leave the ninety and nine which were safely in the fold, and to go out into the wilds to seek the sheep which was lost, that it might be restored to the fold.—Matt. 18:12,13

It is evident from this that it would be wrong to suppose that we are to center our attention principally upon the sheep which are already safely in the fold of the Good Shepherd. These are not to be neglected, but we should be especially on the alert and willing to make sacrifices for the weak ones among the sheep. Those who have temporarily fallen by the wayside may have their fainting souls restored and their joy in the Lord renewed.

SELF-EXAMINATION

God's abounding grace, and his enduring mercy, are highlighted in our featured text, 'He restoreth my soul.' This text emphasizes human limitations

and weaknesses by assuring us of the Divine provision for them. The full value of the lesson is lost if it fails to impress us with the opportunity which is ours of exercising mercy toward the weaker ones, and of doing all in our power to help renew a right spirit within them. If, upon self-examination, we find that we lack this proper attitude toward the Lord's sheep, then we may consider whether we have not ourselves lost our first love. It is well in this connection that all of us remember the admonition, "Let him that thinketh he standeth take heed lest he fall."—I Cor. 10:12

To be assured that soul restoration is available for erring ones among the Lord's sheep enhances our appreciation of God's love and mercy. It does not justify us in becoming lax in our own efforts to follow the Good Shepherd faithfully. The more we know of God's love, the greater the incentive to be faithful to him. Despite our best efforts, we will daily come short of the perfect standard he has set for us. In this sense, therefore, we are daily in need of soul restoration. Daily we need to seek Divine forgiveness, and recognize our need for the Good Shepherd's care in our spiritual lives. All the Lord's consecrated followers may say of him that he is our Good Shepherd, that he is ready to restore and preserve their spiritual lives. For this we are most grateful. ■

"God raised us up with Christ . . . that in the coming ages he might show the incomparable riches of his grace, expressed in his kindness to us in Christ Jesus."—Ephesians 2:6,7, New International Version

The Christian's Firm Foundation

CHRISTIANS HAVE OFTEN been laughed at as credulous because, by God's arrangement, they must now walk by faith, not by sight. "Eye hath not seen, nor ear heard, neither have entered into the heart of man, the things which God hath prepared for them that love him." (I Cor. 2:9) Yet, nearly all thinking people have certain notions as to the future—nearly all expecting a future life. Some speculate that the dying one really becomes more alive, and merely seems to die. Others speculate along evolutionary lines, and tell us that their hope for the future is not for themselves, but for their posterity who may reach such a state of development as will permit them to live forever.

All these speculators must admit that they have nothing more for their belief than mere conjecture—no revelation from God, no proof. The Christian's position is a much better and more reasonable one. He trusts not to his own speculations, not to the speculations of others, realizing that these are of little value. He accepts the Bible

as the Word of God. He is there informed that God has provided for the recovery of the entire race from the sentence of death, and that eventually all the willing and obedient may attain everlasting life through the merit of Christ's sacrifice on Calvary.—Rom. 14:9

The Bible does not set before the mind of the Christian the absurdity that the dead are more alive than before they died. The Bible declares that the dead are dead, or figuratively asleep, and would have no further knowledge or interest in anything under the sun except through the Divine arrangement—the resurrection of the dead. “Since by man [Adam] came death, by man [Jesus] came also the resurrection of the dead,” Paul says. The Bible tells us when this resurrection will take place—namely, at the Second Presence of Jesus, when he shall establish his glorious Millennial kingdom, promised through the writings of Moses and all the prophets, and through Christ and the apostles.—I Cor. 15:21-23

Does not the Christian have a firm foundation? He not only has God's Word for his faith, but he has a reasonable faith, confirmed by everything known on the subject. We know that we all die, and that “the dead know not any thing.” (Eccles. 9:5) We know that they could suffer neither joy nor sorrow while asleep in death. The only hope for any is through a resurrection. This is what the Bible teaches. The believer has strong consolation, strong confirmation, strong reasons for believing God's message, and for disregarding not only his own imaginations, but the untrustworthy imaginations of others.

SPEAKERS' APPOINTMENTS

The speakers listed below are routed through the Pilgrim Department of The Dawn. Their visits are furnished free upon request. Write to: The Dawn Pilgrim Department, East Rutherford, NJ 07073. A visit will be arranged whenever possible.

M. Balko

New York, NY September 2,3
Clay City, IN 22-24

K. Fernetz

Mukachevo, Ukraine
September 27-30

J. Panucci

Pascara, Italy September 8-10
Naples, Italy 11,12
Agrigento, Italy 14
Montallegro, Italy 15

K. Ajise

Seattle, WA September 2-4

S. Jones

Clay City, IN September 22-24

W. Austin

New York, NY September 2,3
Dallas, TX 24
Albuquerque, NM 28

E. Kuenzli

New York, NY September 2,3

M. J. Balko

Seattle, WA September 2-4

A. Lankford

Clay City, IN September 22-24

M. Blicharz

Seattle, WA September 2-4

R. Luke

Seattle, WA September 2-4

D. Bruce

Seattle, WA September 2-4

L. McClellan

New York, NY September 2,3

B. Clark

Clay City, IN September 22-24

J. Mottie

Clay City, IN September 22-24

B. Eckholt

New York, NY September 2,3

A. Ostryk

Seattle, WA September 2-4

A. Fernetz

Seattle, WA September 2-4

T. Ruggirello

Seattle, WA September 2-4

R. Goodman

Atlanta, GA September 3

R. Sconyers

St. Petersburg, FL September 3

M. Grudzien

Seattle, WA September 2-4

C. Willis

Clay City, IN September 22-24

L. Young

Louisville, AL September 3

CONVENTIONS

These conventions are listed by request of classes who sponsor them. So your convention can be placed in these columns in time, make your request in writing three months before the date of the convention to Dawn Magazine, 199 Railroad Avenue, East Rutherford, NJ 07073.

JACKSON LABOR DAY CONVENTION, September 2,3—FaHaLo Camp and Conference Center, 3000 Mt. Hope Road, Grass Lake, MI 49240. Contact R. Lumley, 2531 Ashton Road, Jackson, MI 49203. Phone: (517) 782-7252

NEW YORK LABOR DAY CONVENTION, September 2,3—Wellesley Inn, Two Bridges Road & Exit 52, Route 80, Fairfield, NJ 07006. Contact D. Szybinski, 250 West 102 Street, 1A, New York, NY 10025. Phone: (212) 998-2095

SEATTLE LABOR DAY CONVENTION, September 2,3,4—Seabeck Christian Conference Center, 15395 Seabeck Hwy NW, Seabeck, WA 98380. Phone: (360) 830-5010. Contact L. Flinn. Phone: (253) 939-9838

HUNTSVILLE CONVENTION, September 8,9,10—Holiday Inn Select, 401 Williams Avenue, AL 35801. Phone: (256) 533-1400. Contact P. Mosley, 1006 Mill Race Circle, Guntersville, AL 35976. Phone: (256) 582-3640

CLAY CITY CONVENTION, September 22,23,24—Canyon Inn, McCormick's Creek State Park, Clay City, IN. Contact Sondra Clark, 7861 Clearwater Parkway, Indianapolis, IN 46240. Phone: (317) 578-2634

DETROIT MONTH-END CONVENTION, September 24—Northwest YWCA, Grand River at Beech Daly, Redford, MI. Contact F. Nemesh. Phone: (248) 649-6588

LOS ANGELES QUARTERLY CONVENTION, September 24—406 Irving Drive, Burbank, CA. Contact R. Bieniak. Phone: (949) 457-0894

NEW ENGLAND CONVENTION, October 13,14,15—

(New Location) Quality Inn, 51 Hartford Turnpike (Route 83/30), Vernon, CT. Contact A. M. Suraci, 171 Johnson Road, Hamden, CT 06518. Phone: (203) 248-3793

GRAND RAPIDS CONVENTION, October 14,15—

Kenowa Hills Middle School, 3950 Hendershot Avenue, Grand Rapids, MI 49544. Contact J. Houlmont. Phone: (231) 972-4259

PITTSBURGH AREA CONVENTION, October 14,15—

Sewickley Grange Hall, Route 136, West Newton, PA. Contact G. Balko, Jr., 1300 High Street, West Newton, PA 15089. Phone: (724) 872-6418

SAN LUIS OBISPO CONVENTION, October 21,22—

Masonic Temple, 859 Marsh Street, San Luis Obispo, CA. Contact E. Allard. Phone: (805) 773-2962

DETROIT/METRO DETROIT JOINT GATHERING, October 22—

Pleasant Ridge Community Center, 4 Ridge Road, Pleasant Ridge, MI. Contact F. Nemesh. Phone: (248) 649-6588

ORLANDO CONVENTION, October 28,29—

Garden Club of Sanford, 200 Fairmont Drive (corner of Hwy. 17-92), Sanford, FL. Contact H. Jeuck, 587 Queens Mirror Circle, Casselberry FL 32707. Phone: (407) 699-8303

SAN DIEGO CONVENTION, November 17-19—

Aliant International University, 10455 Pomerado Road, San Diego, CA 92131. Phone: (866) 825-5426. Contact D. Rice. Phone: (619) 589-1534

ROCKLAND CONVENTION, February 25—

Comfort Inn & Suites, 425 East Route 59, Nanuet, NY. Contact D. Shallieu, 1041 Johnston Drive, Watchung, NJ 07069. Phone: (908) 756-4954

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To us the Scriptures clearly teach:

THAT THE CHURCH IS “THE TEMPLE” OF THE LIVING GOD —peculiarly “his workmanship;” that its construction has been in progress throughout the Gospel Age—ever since Christ became the world’s Redeemer and the chief “corner stone” of this temple, through which, when finished, God’s blessings shall come “to all people,” and they find access to him.—I Cor. 3:16,17; Eph. 2:20-22; Gen. 28:14; Gal. 3:29

THAT MEANTIME THE CHISELING, SHAPING, AND POLISHING of the consecrated believers in Christ’s atonement for sin progresses, and when the last of these “living stones,” “elect and precious,” shall have been made ready, the great Master Workman will bring all together in the first resurrection; and the temple shall be filled with his glory, and be the meeting place between God and men throughout the Millennium.—Rev. 15:5-8

THAT THE BASIS OF HOPE FOR THE CHURCH AND THE WORLD lies in the fact that Jesus Christ, by the grace of God “tasted death for every man,” “a ransom for all,” and will be “the true Light, which lighteth every man that cometh into the world,” “in due time.”—Heb. 2:9; John 1:9; I Tim. 2:5,6

THAT THE HOPE OF THE CHURCH is that she may be like her Lord, “see him as he is,” be a “partaker of the divine nature,” and share his glory as his joint-heir.—I John 3:2; John 17:24; Rom. 8:17; II Pet. 1:4

THAT THE PRESENT MISSION OF THE CHURCH is the perfecting of the saints for the future work of service; to develop in herself every grace; to be God’s witness to the world; and to prepare to be the kings and priests in the next age.—Eph. 4:12; Matt. 24:14; Rev. 1:6, 20:6

THAT THE HOPE FOR THE WORLD lies in the blessings of knowledge and opportunity to be brought to all by Christ’s millennial kingdom—the restitution of all that was lost in Adam, to all the willing and obedient, at the hands of their Redeemer and his glorified church—when all the willfully wicked will be destroyed.—Acts 3:19-23; Isa. 35