

# The DAWN

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# The Vision of Truth Will Not Tarry

*“The vision is yet  
for an appointed  
time, but at the end  
it shall speak, and  
not lie: though it  
tarry, wait for it;  
because it will  
surely come, it will  
not tarry.”*

—*Habakkuk 2:3*

**HABAKKUK SERVED ISRAEL'S** two-tribe kingdom of Judah as a prophet shortly before it was taken into captivity to Babylon. The nation was in a state of chaos at the time, and the book which bears Habakkuk's name presents his message to a considerable extent in the form of

a dialogue, in which we find the prophet asking questions and receiving answers from the Lord.

Habakkuk's first inquiry of the Lord pertains to the situation in Judah by which he was surrounded. We quote: "O LORD, how long shall I cry, and thou wilt not hear! even cry out unto thee of violence, and thou wilt not save! Why dost thou shew me iniquity, and cause me to behold grievance? for spoiling and violence are before me: and there

are that raise up strife and contention. Therefore the law is slacked, and judgment doth never go forth: for the wicked doth compass about the righteous; therefore wrong judgment proceedeth.”  
—Hab. 1:2-4

Here we sense the bitter anguish of Habakkuk, brought about to a large extent by the fact that it seemed as though the Lord was doing nothing about the evil that was rampant in the nation. As we reflect upon this we can sense in it the feeling of God’s righteous people throughout all the ages, even to the present moment, as they likewise have endeavored to understand why God has permitted so much evil and injustice to continue in the earth. The subject of why God permits evil has had a prominent place in the minds and hearts of all who would like to see conditions in the earth better than they have been.

God replied to Habakkuk on this point. “Behold ye among the heathen, and regard, and wonder marvellously: for I will work a work in your days, which ye will not believe, though it be told you. For, lo, I raise up the Chaldeans [Babylonians], that bitter and hasty nation, which shall march through the breadth of the land, to possess the dwellingplaces that are not theirs. They are terrible and dreadful: their judgment and their dignity shall proceed of themselves. Their horses also are swifter than the leopards, and are more fierce than the evening wolves: and their horsemen shall spread themselves, and their horsemen shall come from far; they shall fly as the eagle that hasteth to eat. They shall come all for violence: their faces shall sup up as the east wind, and they shall gather the captivity as the

sand. And they shall scoff at the kings, and the princes shall be a scorn unto them: they shall deride every strong hold; for they shall heap dust, and take it.”—vss. 5-10; Isa. 13:19; 47:1

Here the Lord explains to Habakkuk that he is not overlooking the intolerably wicked situation in Judah, and that he does propose to do something about it. He explains that he will take action against this iniquity in Habakkuk’s own lifetime. This in itself could have provided some measure of comfort for the prophet, for he had asked the Lord, “How long shall I cry, and thou wilt not hear!” Though Habakkuk did receive assurance that action would be taken against the wickedness in Judah, he still did not understand just what the Lord was doing, or why.

### **HABAKKUK’S QUESTION**

Not grasping the full import of what the Lord had said concerning the Chaldeans, a “bitter and hasty nation,” visiting trouble upon Judah, Habakkuk asked, “Art thou not from everlasting, O LORD my God, mine Holy One? we shall not die. O LORD, thou hast ordained them for judgment; and, O mighty God, thou hast established them for correction. Thou art of purer eyes than to behold evil, and canst not look on iniquity: wherefore lookest thou upon them that deal treacherously, and holdest thy tongue when the wicked devoureth the man that is more righteous than he? And makest men as the fishes of the sea, as the creeping things, that have no ruler over them?”—Hab. 1:12-14

Habakkuk’s problem now was to understand why God would use a people more wicked even than the

people of Judah to punish them. In his inquiry concerning this he stresses the Lord's holiness. God, he said, was his "Holy One." Yet, the prophet wondered as to the method the Lord said he would use to put down the wicked situation that existed in Judah. After extending the details of his question throughout the remainder of the chapter, Habakkuk continues, "I will stand upon my watch, and set me upon the tower, and will watch to see what he will say unto me, and what I shall answer when I am reproved."—Hab. 2:1

Once Habakkuk properly concluded that he should "watch" for God's direction of these matters rather than question and complain about them, the answer to the prophet was readily given. He says, "The LORD answered me, and said, Write the vision, and make it plain upon tables, that he may run that readeth it. For the vision is yet for an appointed time, but at the end it shall speak, and not lie: though it tarry, wait for it; because it will surely come, it will not tarry. Behold, his soul which is lifted up is not upright in him: but the just shall live by his faith."—vss. 2-4

This was God's answer to Habakkuk as to why he would use the wicked Babylonians to punish Judah. Actually, so far as the immediate present was concerned, it was no answer at all. However, what the Lord really does in his reply is to lift the controversy out of its local setting and give it a world-wide application. In the answer it is also indicated that only the just, on the basis of faith, will be able to understand, appreciate, and live by this answer.

The "vision" referred to in the answer is that great vision of truth which began to unfold when

God said that the seed of the woman would bruise the serpent's head, and was amplified by his promise to Abraham: "In thee and in thy seed shall all the families of the earth be blessed." (Gen. 3:15; 22:18; 28:14) This was the great vision of truth that permeated the prophecies of the Old Testament. Included within this great plan of the ages to destroy all evil are all the individual and collective institutions—including Satan himself—through which mankind has suffered because of sin. Only when this vision is understood is the answer seen clearly as to why God permitted evil.

The Lord explained to Habakkuk that this vision was for an appointed time. The prophet could not expect to understand it then, "but at the end it shall speak, and not lie." Though it may seem to tarry, God explains, "wait for it"—the vision will surely come in due time, and will not tarry. If Habakkuk's faith was able to grasp this assurance, which doubtless it was, he received a great comfort from it because it would assure him that while he could not understand the meaning of all that God was doing at that time, there was an explanation which would be forthcoming when "at the end" the vision spoke.

The *King James Version* reads, speaking of the vision, "It will surely come, it will not tarry." The *Greek Septuagint* version renders it, "Though he may tarry, wait for him; for he will assuredly come and will not fail." The use of the pronoun "he" in the *Greek Septuagint* emphasizes that fundamental to this great vision of truth is the fact that there is a personality associated with it—the great Christ, the Messiah of promise.

## **NEW TESTAMENT CONFIRMATION**

The Apostle Paul, who so faithfully preached the gospel of Christ, understood the significance of the vision promised to Habakkuk from this standpoint. He wrote to the Hebrew Christians, “Ye have need of patience, that, after ye have done the will of God, ye might receive the promise. For yet a little while, and he that shall come will come, and will not tarry. Now the just shall live by faith.” (Heb. 10:36-38) This vision of truth was the sole focus of Paul’s mission as a minister of Christ.

How comforting it is to us today to realize, through the fulfillment of many Bible prophecies, we are living in the time when God’s great vision of truth is speaking even more clearly than in Paul’s day. Because of this those who are faithfully watching now understand why God permits evil. They know also that the end of the reign of sin and death is drawing very near, and in that also they rejoice. With the end of the reign of sin and death there will come a time of joy and happiness when there shall be no more death, sorrow, crying, nor even any pain. (Rev. 21:1-4) How glorious to be living in the time when the vision is speaking. While the time has not arrived as yet, we know that it is drawing near when, as the Prophet Habakkuk later recorded, “The earth shall be filled with the knowledge of the glory of the LORD, as the waters cover the sea.”—Hab. 2:14

## **HABAKKUK’S PRAYER**

Much in the second and third chapters of Habakkuk is denunciation against wickedness and wicked people. In verse 20 of chapter 2, however, God gives us assurance that he has not lost control over the

permission of evil. We read: “The LORD is in his holy temple: let all the earth keep silence before him.” How reassuring it is to realize that no matter how much evil flourishes throughout the earth, God has not lost control of the situation!

Habakkuk sensed that, despite all that the Lord had threatened and the review of wickedness which he presented, in due time God’s vision would speak. Then the great Messiah of promise, together with his associates, would establish peace and righteousness throughout the earth, which would then be filled with an accurate knowledge and understanding of the Lord and his plan.

However, Habakkuk, like many of God’s righteous people through the ages, was impatient. He knew that the Lord was capable of taking full control of the situation any time he wished, and could not see the need for waiting for some future day for this to happen. Thus we have his prayer, “O LORD, I have heard thy speech, and was afraid: O LORD, revive thy work in the midst of the years, in the midst of the years make known; in wrath remember mercy.” —Hab. 3:2

First in Habakkuk’s prayer was his acknowledgment of fear when God revealed to him the calamities that would soon come upon the nation. Perhaps he felt that he could not endure even the sight of what this would involve, so he prayed to the Lord, “Revive thy work in the midst of the years, in the midst of the years make known; in wrath remember mercy.” In other words, he seemed to be asking God not to wait for some distant future time in which to reveal himself through the vision that would then speak. The prophet’s expression may

have been a request for the Lord to take hold of the evil situation in the world right then, bring it to an end, and establish righteousness. Why delay such a glorious outcome? Habakkuk may have thought.

This, however, was not the Lord's will. He knew that there were yet millions of people to be brought into the world who would benefit from the experience of evil. He knew that he had the ability when the time came, through the kingdom of the Messiah, to restore those who had suffered and died in the interim, and that together all would receive of his blessing when his glory would fill the earth.

### **HABAKKUK SPEAKS AGAIN**

After learning of all the calamities which the Lord would visit upon the wicked, Habakkuk, said, "When I heard, my belly trembled; my lips quivered at the voice: rottenness entered into my bones, and I trembled in myself, that I might rest in the day of trouble: when he cometh up unto the people, he will invade them with his troops."—Hab. 3:16

Despite Habakkuk's distress and foreboding, he maintained his trust in God and expressed his assurance that no matter what happened, he would rejoice in the Lord. "Although the fig tree shall not blossom, neither shall fruit be in the vines; the labour of the olive shall fail, and the fields shall yield no meat; the flock shall be cut off from the fold, and there shall be no herd in the stalls: Yet I will rejoice in the LORD, I will joy in the God of my salvation."—vss. 17,18

How sublime is this expression of trust in the Lord! It is the more wonderful when we realize that previous to this Habakkuk had declared himself to

be afraid because of what he had heard God say. His “belly trembled,” his “lips quivered” at the voice of the Lord. “Rottenness” entered into his bones, and he “trembled.” He had expressed a desire to “rest in the day of trouble,” evidently referring to rest in the sleep of death.

While not much is known about Habakkuk’s personal life, he is thought to have been a farmer. In his expression of trust in the Lord he refers to essentially all the things with which a farmer would be concerned. His fig trees might fail; there might be no fruit on the vine; the labor of the olive might fail, and the fields would yield no meat; the flocks would be cut off from the fold; there would be no herd in the stalls. With all these things occurring in a farmer’s life there would seem to be not much left for which to live, but despite this Habakkuk said, “Yet I will rejoice in the LORD, I will joy in the God of my salvation.”

It is a joy to worship and serve God under favorable conditions, but the real test of our faith in him and devotion to him results from adversity. In Habakkuk we have a wonderful example of what should be our attitude when the Lord permits trials and tests to come upon us. If we rejoice in the abundance of good things which he supplies today, will we also rejoice in the God of our salvation tomorrow, when perhaps some of these good things are removed? We should be able to, especially since we are living in the time when the vision of truth is speaking, and the presence of the Son of man is enabling us to see the glory of God’s glorious plan—“the eternal purpose which he purposed in Christ Jesus our Lord.”—Eph. 3:11 ■

*Christian, the morn breaks sweetly o'er thee,  
And all the midnight shadows flee;  
Tinged are the distant skies with glory,  
A beacon light hangs out for thee.  
Arise! arise! the light breaks o'er thee,  
Bright from thy everlasting home;  
Soon shalt thou reach thy goal of glory,  
Soon shalt thou share thy Saviour's throne.*

*Lift up thy head; the day breaks o'er thee;  
Bright is the promised shining way!  
Light from heav'n is streaming for thee;  
Lo! 'tis the dawn of perfect day.  
Rejoice! rejoice! in hope of glory,  
Counting all else but vanity:  
Precious this truth; O seek and hold it,  
And send it forth that all may see.  
—Hymns of Dawn*

## **WEEKLY PRAYER MEETING TEXTS**

**SEPTEMBER 5**—“Jealousy is cruel as the grave: the coals thereof are coals of fire, which hath a most vehement flame.”—Canticles 8:6 (Z. '03-330 Hymn 130)

**SEPTEMBER 12**—“In your patience possess ye your souls.”—Luke 21:19 (Z. '03-361 Hymn 279)

**SEPTEMBER 19**—“Sanctify them through thy truth: thy word is truth.”—John 17:17 (Z. '03-377 Hymn 238)

**SEPTEMBER 26**—“Jesus Christ himself being the chief corner stone; in whom all the building fitly framed together groweth into an holy temple in the Lord: in whom ye also are builded together for an habitation of God through the Spirit.”—Ephesians 2:20-22 (Z. '03-443 Hymn 58)

# God Rescues Lot

**Key Verse:** “*When God destroyed the cities of the plain, he remembered Abraham, and he brought Lot out of the catastrophe that overthrew the cities where Lot had lived.*”  
—**Genesis 19:29**,  
*New International Version*

**Selected Scripture:**  
**Genesis 19:15-29**

whole plain of the Jordan” which was “well watered,” even though it meant living near the city of Sodom, where the people were “wicked and were sinning greatly against the LORD.”—Gen. 12:1-5; 13:1-13, *NIV*

Later, God informed Abraham, his name having been changed from Abram, that Sodom and its inhabitants would be destroyed because of their wickedness. (Gen. 18:17-32) Shortly thereafter, as Lot was sitting at the gate of Sodom, God sent two angels to him. They said to him, “We are going to destroy this place. The outcry to the LORD against its people is so great.” “With the coming of dawn, the angels urged Lot, saying, Hurry! Take your wife and your two daughters who are here, or you will be swept

## **WHEN ABRAM FOLLOWED**

God’s instructions to leave Haran and travel to the land of Canaan, his nephew Lot also went with him. They each had their own flocks and herds, however in Canaan “the land could not support them while they stayed together” and “quarreling arose between Abram’s herdsmen and the herdsmen of Lot.” To avoid difficulties, Abram decided they should part company, and although being the senior member of the family, he gave Lot first choice as to which land to settle in. Lot chose “the

away when the city is punished.”—Gen. 19:1,12-15, *NIV*

Lot hesitated to leave, so the angels “grasped his hand and the hands of his wife and of his two daughters and led them safely out of the city, for the LORD was merciful to them.” One of the angels said, “Don’t look back, and don’t stop anywhere in the plain! Flee to the mountains or you will be swept away!” However, Lot replied, “I can’t flee to the mountains; this disaster will overtake me, and I’ll die.” Lot asked to go to the nearby small town of Zoar, and his wish was granted. After he arrived in Zoar, God destroyed Sodom and Gomorrah, including all their inhabitants. “But Lot’s wife looked back, and she became a pillar of salt.”—vss. 16-26, *NIV*

In this lesson Abraham pictures those who maintain their faithfulness to God throughout the difficulties and trials of life. (Gal. 3:9) Sodom and Gomorrah represent the selfishness, evil, and corruption in this “present evil world,” which God will soon bring to an end. (II Pet. 3:7) Although all the inhabitants of Sodom and Gomorrah were destroyed, in the Messianic kingdom they will all be resurrected on earth and given an opportunity to learn righteousness, and if obedient, granted everlasting life.—Luke 10:12

Peter describes Lot as a “righteous man.” (II Pet. 2:7,8) However, Lot also compromised and made some serious mistakes in order to be materially prosperous. The Lord’s followers should be careful not to compromise and accept the popular attitudes and immoral standards which fallen mankind has adopted. Taking such a position on the side of righteousness may result in not being well thought of by many around us and might cost us earthly “prosperity.”

Although Lot hesitated to leave Sodom, God was merciful. Our Heavenly Father is also merciful with us when we make mistakes or fail to do his will acceptably. However, we have to confess our sins to him in prayer, seek his forgiveness, and strive to more closely reverence him by following his righteousness and his commandments in our life.—Ps. 103:9-18

# Hannah's Petition

**Key Verse:** “Go in peace, and may the God of Israel grant you what you have asked of him.”

—*I Samuel 1:17*,  
New International  
Version

**Selected Scripture:**  
*I Samuel 1:9-20*

**BEFORE THE TIME WHEN** Israel had kings, there was a man named Elkanah who had two wives, Peninnah and Hannah. Peninnah had children, while Hannah had none. Every year Elkanah took his family to Shiloh to worship and offer sacrifice to the Lord, giving a portion of the sacrifice to each member of his family. Elkanah gave a double portion to Hannah because of his great love for her. Peninnah, however, mocked Hannah because she had no children, and this cruelty went on year after year, causing Hannah to weep and not eat. Finally one year, Hannah silently prayed to God and vowed saying, “O LORD Almighty, if you will only look upon your servant’s misery and remember me, and not forget your servant but give her a son, then I will give him to the LORD for all the days of his life, and no razor will ever be used on his head.”—*I Sam. 1:1-11, NIV*

God heard Hannah’s prayer and the following year she had a son, and named him Samuel. (vss. 19,20) The vow she had made to God, not allowing a razor to come upon her son’s head, was the Nazarite vow. This was “a special vow, a vow of separation to the LORD.” As part of this vow, in addition to not cutting the hair, no wine was to be drunk, nor was anything from the grapevine eaten. One taking this vow was to have no contact with any

dead body, including immediate family members.—Num. 6:1-21, *NIV*

Throughout the entire time a person placed themselves under the Nazarite vow, that individual was “consecrated to the LORD.” (vs. 8) Very few Israelites took the Nazarite vow for their entire life. The Bible records just three people who did—Samson, Samuel and John the Baptist. (Judg. 13:5; I Sam. 1:11; Luke 1:15) Similarly, those consecrated to the Lord during the present Gospel Age are admonished, “be thou faithful unto death.”—Rev. 2:10

The name Hannah means “favor” or “grace.” The Lord’s followers are told, “By grace are ye saved through faith; and that not of yourselves: it is the gift of God. Not of works, lest any man should boast.” (Eph. 2:8,9) Hannah lived a life of prayer. She prayed when she was troubled. She also prayed when she was thankful, such as when she presented her child Samuel to Eli the high priest.—I Sam. 2:1-10

Paul’s exhortation is, “Do not be anxious about anything, but in everything, by prayer and petition, with thanksgiving, present your requests to God. And the peace of God, which transcends all understanding, will guard your hearts and your minds in Christ Jesus.” (Phil. 4:6,7 *NIV*) We are to fully place our hope and trust in God, have the spirit of rejoicing, and pray continually, asking in harmony with his promises. Thus we will have the peace of God, and be able to “give thanks in all circumstances,” whatever his providences may permit.—I Thess. 5:16-18, *NIV*

Hannah made a great sacrifice to God. She dedicated her son Samuel to live the Nazarite vow of complete dedication to the Lord, all the days of his life. Today, consecrated followers of Christ have also made a life-long vow of complete dedication to God, including separation from the “dead things” of this present evil world. These, instead, “put on Christ,” developing the fruits and graces of the Holy Spirit.—Gal. 3:27; Eph. 4:24; Col. 3:10-17 ■

# God Provides Manna

**Key Verse:** “*When the Israelites saw it, they said to each other, What is it?*

*For they did not know what it was.”*

—**Exodus 16:15**,  
*New International  
Version*

**Selected Scripture:**  
**Exodus 16:1-15**

**WHILE THE ISRAELITES** were in slavery in Egypt, they were oppressed with “forced labor,” and the Egyptians “made their lives bitter with hard labor in brick and mortar and with all kinds of work in the fields.” (Exod. 1:11-14, *NIV*) After God miraculously delivered Israel out of Egypt, they “set out from Elim and came to the Desert of Sin.” God

had a special purpose and object in his leading of natural Israel in the desert wilderness. It was to teach them lessons, if rightly received, which would prepare them to enter the promised land.—Exod. 16:1; Deut. 8:2, *NIV*

“The second month after they had come out of Egypt,” while in the desert, the Israelites grumbled, saying, “If only we had died by the LORD’s hand in Egypt! There we sat around pots of meat and ate all the food we wanted, but you have brought us out into this desert to starve this entire assembly to death.”—Exod. 16:1-3, *NIV*

While slaves in Egypt, the Israelites would surely not have been given time to sit around “pots of meat,” nor given “all the food” that they wanted. It appears they quickly became nostalgic for their past life, embellishing it with things which never existed. While it is important to recall and remember God’s promises and providences,

it can be dangerous to yearn for past earthly arrangements and long for the way things “used to be.” Neither should we have excessive admiration for former, but imperfect, people of the world whom we once knew.

Instead, let us be thankful for today, and for God’s daily goodness to us—“Forgetting what is behind and straining toward what is ahead.” (Phil. 3:13,14, *NIV*) Instead of being nostalgic, let us be confident that God, who has begun a good work in us, will carry it on to completion. (Phil. 1:5,6) Through the Prophet Isaiah, God instructs us to “forget the former things; do not dwell on the past.”—Isa. 43:18,19, *NIV*

Because they lacked faith in God, the Israelites murmured against Moses and Aaron. They forgot how his providences had preserved them from the plagues in Egypt and brought them safely through the Red Sea. They were unable to realize that the Lord would not let them starve to death in the wilderness. God told Moses that he “heard the grumbings of the Israelites” and would give them meat to eat in the evening and they would “be filled with bread” in the morning.—Exod. 16:11-12, *NIV*

The next morning, on the ground surrounding the Israelites’ camp, were “thin flakes like frost.” When the Israelites saw it, they asked, “What is it?” Moses answered, “It is the bread the LORD has given you to eat.” The Israelites called the bread manna. Each morning, everyone was to gather as much as they needed for that day. On the sixth day of the week they were to gather twice as much, because no manna would appear on the Sabbath day.—vss. 13-31, *NIV*

Just as the Israelites would have died in the wilderness if they had not gathered the manna each day, each follower of Christ is dependent upon the Word of God. Only by partaking of it regularly—daily—by reading and studying it, and personally applying it in our daily life, will we become strong in faith and continue the work of our sanctification.—Ps. 119:97-105; John 17:17 ■

# The Israelites Rebel

**Key Verse:** *“If the LORD is pleased with us, he will lead us into that land, a land flowing with milk and honey, and will give it to us.”*

—**Numbers 14:8,**  
*New International Version*

**Selected Scriptures:**  
**Numbers 13:25-33;**  
**14:1-10**

few or many. What kind of land do they live in? Is it good or bad? What kind of towns do they live in? Are they unwallled or fortified? How is the soil? Is it fertile or poor?” He also asked them to bring back some of the fruit of the land.—Num. 13:18-20, *NIV*

The spies went through the land for forty days. In the Bible, a period of forty days is often regarded as a period of testing from the Lord. (Gen. 7:12; I Sam. 17:16; Matt. 4:1,2) After returning from their exploration, all twelve spies reported that the land “does flow with milk and honey!” They also presented Moses with some of the ripe fruit they had gathered.—Num. 13:25-27, *NIV*

However, ten of the spies said, “The people who live there are powerful, and the cities are fortified and very

## **WHEN ISRAEL APPROACHED**

the land which God had promised to their forefathers, the people came to Moses and said, “Let us send men ahead to spy out the land for us and bring back a report.” Moses agreed and selected twelve men, “one man from each tribe” of Israel, to look over and explore the land.—Deut. 1:22,23, *NIV*

Moses instructed the twelve spies, “See what the land is like and whether the people who live there are strong or weak,

large.” This negative report created fear and murmuring amongst the Israelites. The ten spies exaggerated their report, saying, “We can’t attack those people; they are stronger than we are. ... The land we explored devours those living in it. All the people we saw there are of great size. ... We seemed like grasshoppers in our own eyes.”—Num. 13:28,31-33; 14:1-3, *NIV*

The ten spies even resorted to lying to make it appear that there were insurmountable difficulties to possess the land. One false statement was, “the cities are large, with walls up to the sky.” (Deut. 1:28, *NIV*) Another was, “We saw the Nephilim.” (Num. 13:33) They said this even though Genesis 7:21-23 makes it clear that “all flesh” and “every living substance,” including the Nephilim, were destroyed in the flood.

The report of the ten spies caused the people of Israel to rebel against God. Moses then said to all who believed the evil report, “You did not trust in the LORD your God, who went ahead of you on your journey, in fire by night and in a cloud by day, ... and to show you the way you should go.”—Deut. 1:26,32,33

Caleb and Joshua, the only spies who gave a good report, received wrath from the children of Israel, for having given positive testimony about the land. In a similar way, the prospective church class during the Gospel Age may, from time to time, receive wrath from some for having given a good and true report from the Scriptures concerning God’s plans and promises. They may even receive unmerited criticism, persecution or slander from their own brethren.—Luke 21:16,17; John 15:18-20; II Tim. 3:12; I Pet. 3:14-17

God could have miraculously given the Israelites all the courage needed in order to enter the land of promise, but he did not do so. Instead, God wanted Israel to develop faith and trust in him. The Heavenly Father deals in much the same way with us, and desires that we develop full faith and trust in him, under all circumstances.—Prov. 3:5,6; Isa. 26:4; I Tim. 4:10; Heb. 11:6 ■

# Moses Intercedes for the People

**Key Verse:** *“In accordance with your great love, forgive the sin of these people, just as you have pardoned them from the time they left Egypt until now.”*

—**Numbers 14:19**,  
*New International Version*

**Selected Scripture:**  
**Numbers 14:11-20**

**SUBSEQUENT TO THE NARRATIVE** in last week’s lesson, the whole assembly of Israel talked about stoning Joshua and Caleb. Then the glory of the Lord appeared to the people and God said to Moses, “How long will these people treat me with contempt? How long will they refuse to believe in me, in spite of all the miraculous signs I have performed among them? I will strike them down with a plague and destroy them, but I will make you into a nation greater and stronger than they.”—Num. 14:10-12, *NIV*

Moses interceded for the people, and said to the Lord, “If you put these people to death all at one time, the nations who have heard this report about you will say, The LORD was not able to bring these people into the land he promised them.” Then Moses summarized God’s character, saying, “The LORD is slow to anger, abounding in love and forgiving sin and rebellion. Yet he does not leave the guilty unpunished.” Moses then spoke the words found in our Key Verse.—vss. 15-19, *NIV*

God replied to Moses, “I have forgiven them.” He continued, however, saying, “Not one of the men who

saw my glory and the miraculous signs I performed in Egypt and in the desert but who disobeyed me and tested me ten times—not one of them will ever see the land I promised on oath to their forefathers.” “As surely as I live, declares the LORD, I will do to you [those who believed the ten spies] the very things I heard you say: In this desert your bodies will fall—every one of you twenty years old or more who was counted in the census and who has grumbled against me.”—vss. 20-23,28,29, *NIV*

God then said to Israel, “Your children will be shepherds here for forty years, suffering for your unfaithfulness, until the last of your bodies lies in the desert. For forty years—one year for each of the forty days you explored the land—you will suffer for your sins.” Then the ten spies who had given the evil report were “struck down and died of a plague.” (vss. 33,34,37, *NIV*) This clearly showed to all the Israelites God’s displeasure with the ten spies. The Scriptures tell us, “There is a way that seems right to a man, but in the end it leads to death.” (Prov. 14:12, *NIV*) How true that was for the ten spies and their slanderous report which had influenced the Israelites.

The Lord continued, saying, “Because my servant Caleb has a different spirit and follows me wholeheartedly, I will bring him into the land.” (Num. 14:24, *NIV*) Caleb, along with Joshua, fully followed the Lord by giving a good report. They did this by telling the Israelites, “The LORD is with us. Do not be afraid.” (vs. 9, *NIV*) While nearly all the other Israelites were fearful and doubting, Caleb and Joshua placed their trust in God, rather than in human strength.

As spiritual Israelites, God has also given us this same important promise that he is with us. “Never will I leave you; never will I forsake you. So we say with confidence, The Lord is my helper; I will not be afraid.” (Heb. 13:5,6, *NIV*) Let us continually keep before our minds God’s wonderful promises and fully trust in him.—Eph. 6:10; II Tim. 1:7; I Pet. 5:7 ■

# “The Dead Know Not Anything”

*“Christ also hath  
once suffered for  
sins, the just for  
the unjust, that he  
might bring us to  
God, being put to  
death: ... By which  
also he went and  
preached unto the  
spirits in prison.”*

—I Peter 3:18,19

## THE TRUTH OF GOD’S

Word cannot be properly understood and appreciated except by taking into account its entire testimony on a given subject. This is well illustrated by its several statements concerning the condition and whereabouts of Jesus during the interim between his death and his resurrection, in contrast to various theories and traditions which have been proposed by human wisdom.

In an Old Testament prophecy concerning Jesus, quoted by the Apostle Peter, and applied by him to the death and resurrection of the Master, Jesus is said to have been in “hell.” (Ps. 16:10; Acts 2:27-32) A surface reading of our opening text makes it appear that he went somewhere to preach to “spirits in prison,” which seems to corroborate the tradition that hell is a place. Did Jesus, in fact, go to this place called “hell” upon his death?

To answer this, we first must understand the scriptural definition of “hell.” The Bible hell, quite simply, is the condition of death. In the Old and New Testament, *sheol* and *hades* are the respective Hebrew and Greek words translated “hell,” and which describe a condition of complete unconsciousness—“the dead know not anything.” (Eccles. 9:5,10) As Jesus died a ransom, or substitute, for father Adam and his race, thus taking the sinner’s place, it therefore was necessary that he go into this condition of death, the Bible hell.—I Tim. 2:5,6; I Pet. 1:18,19

“He made his grave with the wicked,” declared the prophet concerning Jesus. (Isa. 53:9) It is in harmony with this basic fact of Biblical truth that we must seek an understanding of whatever else the sacred Word has to say concerning the whereabouts of Jesus between the time of his death on the cross and his resurrection from the dead the third day thereafter. This we must also do independently of the traditions of men.

In order to understand clearly how it was possible for Jesus to preach to “spirits in prison” at a time when other Scriptures show that he was unconscious in death, it is necessary first of all to determine who the “spirits” were to whom he preached. It is this information that Peter gives us in the words following our opening text, “Which sometime were disobedient, when once the longsuffering of God waited in the days of Noah.”—I Pet. 3:20

In his second epistle, Peter furnishes us with even more definite identification of the “spirits,” saying, “If God spared not the angels that sinned, but cast them down to hell, and delivered them into chains of darkness, to be reserved unto judgment; And

spared not the old world, but saved Noah the eighth person, a preacher of righteousness, bringing in the flood upon the world of the ungodly.”—II Pet. 2:4,5

From the foregoing quotation it will be seen that the “spirits” to whom Jesus preached were a certain group of angels who had been disobedient to God at the time of the flood. The Apostle Jude also mentions these same beings, similarly referring to them as angels, and describing their special sin as being that they “kept not their first estate.” Jude also explains, even as Peter does, that these angels are now imprisoned in “chains of darkness,” waiting for the “judgment of the great day.”—Jude 6

These “spirits in prison,” then, are not the “spirits” or “apparitions” of human beings who have died, but are spirit creatures of an angelic nature of existence. This is an important truth ever to keep in mind with regard to our subject.

We are well aware that on God’s earthly plane of creation, which is visible and understandable to us, there are various levels of existence, from the lowest form of single-cell life up to man, who in his perfection was the king of this material, earthly domain. The Scriptures show that this same variety in the divine creation extends to a higher realm, far beyond that which is visible to us, and that above man, the highest of God’s earthly creatures, there is a spirit world. In this spirit world, even as in the natural, there are various orders of beings, such as angels, principalities and powers.—Rom. 8:38

Concerning man, the psalmist declares, “Thou hast made him a little lower than the angels.” (Ps. 8:5) When Jesus came to earth to die as man’s

Redeemer, he was “made flesh,” and as a man he died. (John 1:14) However, when resurrected he was highly exalted, “Far above all principality, and power, and might, and dominion, and every name that is named, not only in this world, but also in that which is to come.” (Eph. 1:21) Thus do the Scriptures point out a clear line of demarcation between the earthly and the spirit planes of existence.

The Bible indicates that at the present time there are both holy and unholy angels, although when created all these spirit creatures were in harmony with God and served him in various capacities. Of those angels which remained in harmony with the Creator the apostle says that they are now “ministering spirits, sent forth to minister for them who shall be heirs of salvation.”—Heb. 1:14

A few verses earlier we read, “Of the angels he saith, Who maketh his angels spirits, and his ministers a flame of fire.” (vs. 7; Ps. 104:4) Concerning the angelic care provided to Christians, Jesus said, “Take heed that ye despise not one of these little ones; for I say unto you, That in heaven their angels do always behold the face of my Father which is in heaven.”—Matt. 18:10

## **EARTHLY AND HEAVENLY “ANGELS”**

The student of the Scriptures should not be confused by the fact that in the Bible the term “angel” is sometimes applied to human beings. The word actually denotes a servant, or messenger, and it is always necessary to determine from the context whether or not the passage in which it is used has reference to human messengers or to heavenly, spirit messengers.

On the other hand, many Scriptures clearly indicate that there are spirit creatures called angels. For example, the night that Jesus was born an angel announced his birth to the shepherds. That it was a spirit being who performed this service is evident from the words: "Suddenly there was with the angel a multitude of the heavenly host praising God, and saying, Glory to God in the highest, and on earth peace, good will toward men." (Luke 2:10-14) Likewise, it was a spirit being that announced to Mary that she was to be the mother of Jesus, and it was a spirit being that ministered to Jesus in the Garden of Gethsemane. Jesus referred to heavenly beings when he said that he could ask of his Father and more than twelve legions of angels would be provided to assist and protect him.—Luke 1:26-38; 22:43; Matt 26:53

As we have already seen, however, not all of these angelic creatures remained loyal to Jehovah, their Creator, some of them having been disobedient. These unfaithful ones, by common usage, have come to be designated "fallen angels." The Scriptures previously quoted show that as a punishment for their rebellion they are now held, or imprisoned, in "chains of darkness," awaiting judgment.

## **WHERE ARE THE "SPIRITS"?**

In a text already quoted the Apostle Peter gives us some very important information as to what constitutes the prison-house of these fallen angels. He says concerning the angels who sinned, that God "cast them down to hell."—II Pet. 2:4

The word "hell" in this verse is not a translation of the Greek word *hades*. The term here used by

the apostle is the Greek word *tartaroo*, and this is the only time it appears in the Bible. *Tartaroo* is derived from the word *tartarus*, a term used in Grecian mythology as the name for a dark abyss or prison. In the text under consideration the entire expression, “cast them down to hell,” is used to translate *tartaroo*. Thus, the word evidently refers both to an act and a place. The fall of the angels who sinned was from honor and dignity into dishonor and condemnation. The thought seems to be that God did not spare the angels who sinned, but degraded them to a position of dishonor and restricted their spiritual powers.

These angels in their original state of holiness were mighty and honorable, and evidently possessed great liberties. In their service of God and of his earthly creation they probably were frequent travelers between the earth and other parts of the Creator’s vast universe. Jude says that these angels “kept not their first estate.” This throws light on the words of Genesis 6:2, which reads, “The [angelic] sons of God saw the daughters of men that they were fair; and they took them wives of all which they chose.” In other words, the sin of these angels was, in part, at least, that of materializing as human beings and indulging in an illegitimate relationship with the daughters of men.

At different times during the historical period covered by the Bible, various ones of the holy messengers, or angels, were sent to earth to deliver messages to the prophets and others. On many of these occasions they were permitted to materialize and appear as human beings. An example of this is furnished in the visit of the three angels to

Abraham prior to the birth of Isaac. (Gen. 18) Such materializations were permissible when sanctioned by the Lord, and when the angels taking part in them did not exceed their privileges. However, the angels that sinned before the flood “kept not their first estate”—that is, they preferred to continue their association with mankind as human beings.

Having limited and degraded their own powers by an illicit relationship with the fallen human race, how fitting it was that their punishment should be that of being cast down, or abased, and at the same time restrained in “chains of darkness.” The thought contained in the use of the word “prison,” as found in our opening text, is that of the restraint of liberty. Thus, these “spirits” have indeed been in “prison,” restrained of much of the normal liberty that was theirs while in full fellowship and harmony with the Creator.

Although the physical “place” of incarceration of the fallen angels is of less importance than the status of their relationship with God, there is scriptural evidence to support the thought that their sphere of influence is limited to the earth, and more or less indirect contact with the human family. In the Gospel accounts of Jesus’ ministry, we find frequent mention of his casting out “devils” or “demons.” Later, the apostles were privileged to render a similar service for different ones. While higher critics try to prove that these cases dealt with by Jesus and the apostles were but examples of insanity or nervous disorders, there is altogether too definite a thought of personality attached to these “devils” to permit any such liberal interpretation.

## **KING SAUL AND THE WITCH OF ENDOR**

In the Old Testament also, we find evidence of the limited activities of these fallen angels or “spirits in prison.” There is, for example, the case of King Saul and the witch of Endor. All witchcraft was forbidden by the Mosaic Law, and punishable by death, yet these ancient spirit mediums persisted in their nefarious practices. (Lev. 19:31; 20:27) Just as spirit mediums today claim ability to communicate with the dead, so evidently the witch of Endor made similar professions. When King Saul, because of his disobedience, lost the favor of God and saw that he was in grave danger of being defeated by his enemies, he appealed to the witch to get in touch with Samuel to see if the dead prophet could do anything for him.

The account of this ancient séance is recorded in I Samuel 28:7-20. Many students of the Bible, in reading this story of Saul’s supposed communication with the dead Prophet Samuel, have concluded that it furnishes excellent scriptural proof that the dead are not really dead at all. The claim is made that those who appear to be dead are actually alive somewhere, and that they can be communicated with under certain conditions, especially by the aid of a spirit medium. All down through the ages, Satan has used this method of deceit in an effort to contradict the plain teachings of the Scriptures that the “wages of sin is death.”—Rom. 6:23

As we examine briefly some of the facts concerning Saul’s visit to the witch, it will be noted that according to Saul’s own words, he was no longer in favor with God. During the encounter he said, “God is departed from me, and answereth me no more, neither by prophets, nor by dreams.” (I Sam. 28:15)

While Samuel was alive he was a faithful servant and prophet, and was never willing to go contrary to God's wishes. Yet here we find Saul, who himself knew that God's favor had left him, asking the witch to obtain a message from this faithful prophet.

If we were to suppose that Samuel was alive, and not really dead, residing either in heaven or some other place, would he have been any less obedient to the Lord than he was while here on the earth? Further, are we supposed to believe that this witch, under condemnation by God's law, had the power to thwart the divine will, and not only produce Samuel, but inveigle a message from him to comfort this rebellious king? In both cases, the answer is most assuredly no! This account is given us in the Bible as a record of an important event in Saul's life demonstrating how far he had fallen from faithfulness to God's law, but with no thought of accrediting the witch's claim of having seen and talked with Samuel.

The methods used by the evil spirits through the medium at Endor were similar to those in use today. These fallen angels caused to pass before the witch's mental vision the familiar likeness of the aged prophet, wearing, as was his custom, a long mantle. When she described the mental picture presented by the evil spirits, Saul recognized it at once as a description of Samuel. However, Saul himself saw nothing. He "perceived" from the description that it was Samuel.—vs. 14

Easily convinced, as people under such circumstances usually are, Saul did not stop to question how it could be that Samuel was "seen" by the witch as an old man, if he was now a spirit being and far better off than before. Saul also did not think to

inquire why Samuel wore the same old mantle in the spirit world that he wore when he knew him as an earthly being, nor did he consider that the prophet's mantle had long before decayed in the grave. Saul had been forsaken by the Lord, and now was easily deceived by these lying "spirits," who impersonated the prophet and spoke to Saul in his name through their medium, the witch.

"Why hast thou disquieted me, to bring me up?" she represented the dead prophet as asking. (vs. 15) It was generally understood by the Israelites in the days of King Saul that the dead were actually asleep in *sheol*. Hence the question, "Why hast thou disquieted me?" would not sound strange. However, can we imagine for a moment that this condemned witch had the power to raise the prophet from the dead? Additionally, if Samuel was not really dead at all, but enjoying himself in the spirit world, does it not seem strange that he was declared by the witch to come "up" from earth instead of "down" from heaven?

By means of the power of the evil spirits, the dead Samuel is attributed as saying to Saul, "Tomorrow shalt thou and thy sons be with me: the LORD also shall deliver the host of Israel into the hand of the Philistines." (vs. 19) Imagine the faithful Samuel and the beloved Jonathan together in the spirit world with the wicked King Saul! Certainly, this does not fit with Christian theology. Ultimately, of course, but not the next day, all these were together in death, in *sheol*, the Bible hell. (I Sam. 31:1-6) Still in the death condition, they await the resurrection, when all will be called forth by the Son of Man. It did not require any supernatural

(Continued on page 36)

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*(Continued from page 31)* power on the witch's part to correctly forecast the approaching defeat and death of Saul. In fact, Saul already feared it, hence his appeal to the witch.

Actually, neither Saul nor the witch were in communication with Samuel at all, but with one or more of the "spirits in prison." Indeed, their chief activity since the time of the flood has been to deceive mankind, particularly with respect to the condition of the dead. The mention in the Scriptures of these necromancers, witches, and enchanters leads us to infer that through mediums the fallen angels were seeking fellowship with Israel. Apparently it is also the custom for these mediums to change their manner of manifestation from time to time. In the days of Jesus and the apostles, for example, the operation of these spirits had evidently changed from the witchcraft method to that of obsession and possession.

### **MODERN WORK OF THE "SPIRITS"**

Having been once given the power to materialize as men, yet abusing it, these fallen angels continue to exercise their powers through human agencies, either by the use of mediums or through direct control of the mind, as in obsession. It is evident, however, that the human will must consent to this foreign domination before these evil spirits can take possession. When they do take possession, apparently the will becomes so broken down that there is no longer any power of resistance. Hence the service of Jesus and the apostles in casting out demons and devils was much appreciated by those so possessed in their day.

While these fallen angelic beings may, from time to time, change their method of contacting and

deceiving the human race, their influence is always away from God and away from the truth of his Word. Much ado is made about talking with the dead, yet in all the attempts that have been made, what has been the total result? Indeed, many have been convinced that they have been in touch with their dead friends and relatives, but here it has ended. No worthwhile information has ever been procured through these encounters.

### **HOW CHRIST PREACHED TO THE SPIRITS IN PRISON**

Now that we have identified these “spirits” to whom Peter tells us Jesus preached, the question arises, How was this preaching accomplished? How could Jesus be in *sheol*, or *hades*, where there is no consciousness, yet at the same time be preaching to these fallen angels? The explanation of this apparent difficulty is simple when we examine the passage a little more closely. According to the *King James* translation, the apostle said that Jesus “went and preached to the spirits in prison.” Some Greek scholars, however, suggest that the phrase “went and preached” is used in the sense of accomplishing something, and not in the sense of going to any specific place or location. That view suggests Jesus did not go to a place, but preached by his example.

Dr. Benjamin Wilson, in his *Emphatic Diaglott* translation, renders this passage of Scripture, “He preached to the spirits in prison,” leaving out the two words, “went and,” as being redundant pertaining to a proper understanding of the text. In a footnote to this text he states that other authorities agree with him in this respect. Leaving out, then, these two

words, the full text would read, “For Christ also hath once suffered for sins, the just for the unjust, that he might bring us to God, being put to death in the flesh, ... By which also he preached unto the spirits in prison.” (I Pet. 3:18,19) Thus rendered, the meaning is that it was by his death and resurrection that Jesus “preached” an object lesson to these fallen angels by his faithfulness to the Heavenly Father and Creator, against whom these spirits had rebelled.

Lucifer was the first of these spirit beings to rebel against God, and he evidently exercised a great deal of influence over those who later joined the ranks of the rebels. In Matthew 25:41 the expression, “the devil and his angels,” indicates a close relationship existing between Satan and these other fallen spirit beings. It was the spirit of ambition and pride that led to Lucifer’s fall. (Isa. 14:12-14) Apparently the same spirit has pervaded the ranks of these fallen angels. By contrast, Jesus’ faithfulness, which led him to humble himself and become obedient unto death, would be a powerful sermon to those “spirits in prison.” Furthermore, the power of that sermon would be greatly increased when these spirits noted that Jesus, on account of his faithfulness, was raised from the dead and highly exalted to a place at the right hand of God, while they were degraded and abased because of their disloyalty.

Thus we find, laying aside the unscriptural traditions which have been handed down since Old Testament times, that the various Biblical passages bearing on the condition of the dead, when properly understood, are seen to be in harmony with the great fundamental truths that the “wages of sin is death,” and that the “dead know not anything.”—Rom. 6:23; Eccles. 9:5 ■

# The Hagar-Sarah Conflict

*“Wherefore then serveth the law? It was added because of transgressions, till the seed should come to whom the promise was made; and it was ordained by angels in the hand of a mediator.”*  
—Galatians 3:19

**IN CONSIDERING HAGAR,** it is virtually impossible not to think also about Sarah, due to the complex relationship they had with each other as is recorded in the Genesis narrative. The ongoing Mideast conflict also draws our attention to these two women because their respective sons, Ishmael and Isaac, were both

fathered by Abraham, who is revered by both Arabs and Jews to this day. The following New Testament passage indicates that these two mothers were allegorical of two covenants.

“It is written, that Abraham had two sons, the one by a bondmaid, the other by a freewoman. But he who was of the bondwoman was born after the flesh; but he of the freewoman was by promise. Which things are an allegory: for these are the two covenants; the one from the mount Sinai, which gendereth to bondage, which is Agar. For this Agar is mount Sinai in

Arabia, and answereth to Jerusalem which now is, and is in bondage with her children. But Jerusalem which is above is free, which is the mother of us all. For it is written, Rejoice, thou barren that bearest not; break forth and cry, thou that travailest not: for the desolate hath many more children than she which hath an husband. Now we, brethren, as Isaac was, are the children of promise. But as then he that was born after the flesh persecuted him that was born after the Spirit, even so it is now. Nevertheless, what saith the scripture? Cast out the bondwoman and her son: for the son of the bondwoman shall not be heir with the son of the freewoman. So then, brethren, we are not children of the bondwoman, but of the free.”—Gal. 4:22-31

### **TYPICAL ILLUSTRATIONS**

In the foregoing account, Abraham was an illustration of God. Sarah was a type of the Abrahamic Covenant, and Isaac was a type of the Christ, Head and Body. The bondwoman, Hagar, represented the Law Covenant, and her son, Ishmael, represented the Jewish nation that was under the Law Covenant. Abraham was promised a seed, but his wife Sarah was barren and past childbearing age, so she gave Hagar, her young handmaid, to him. Hagar became the mother of Ishmael “after the flesh,” that is to say, in the usual manner in which children are conceived. Many years later, however, Isaac was born to Sarah, the freewoman, who brought him forth in fulfillment of the divine promise as a result of special providences employed by God to facilitate her having a child so late in her life.—Gen. 18:11-14; 21:1,2

Just as Sarah was barren for a period of time, the Abrahamic promise to have a seed to bless all the families of the earth lay dormant. In the meantime, Hagar, representing the Law Covenant, brought forth Ishmael who pictured natural Israel. Although the natural seed came first, ultimately the Sarah Covenant will bring forth many more children than the Law Covenant. The antitypical Isaac class, Christ and his Bride, will be the mother and father of the entire race of mankind. The context of Paul's earlier reference from Galatians chapter four suggests that the one who "hath an husband" was Hagar. This is because she brought forth Ishmael according to the natural husband and wife arrangement, and this occurred before Isaac was born to Sarah. In reality, however, Hagar was a bondswoman, or servant, as opposed to Sarah, who was the true wife of Abraham. Finally, the casting out of the bondswoman and her son showed that after Israel's house was left desolate and the period of exclusive Jewish favor had ended, the promises associated with blessing all the families of the earth were given to the son of the free woman, the Christ, Head and Body.—Matt. 23:37-39; Gal. 3:16,28,29

## **TESTS OF FAITH AND OBEDIENCE**

From the Old Testament narrative, Abram, as he then was known, was informed that if he would leave his native land and go to settle in a land which he would be shown, God would make a covenant with him. Through this covenant promise Abram would become great, and through his seed all the families of the earth would be blessed. (Gen. 12:1-3) Abram then departed from his home. "By faith Abraham, when

he was called to go out into a place which he should after receive for an inheritance, obeyed; and he went out, not knowing whither he went.” (Heb. 11:8) We are told that Abram was 75 years old when he departed from Haran. The Scriptures also inform us that Sarai, prior to being called Sarah, was ten years younger than her husband, meaning that she was 65 years old when she left Haran with Abram.—Gen. 12:4;17:17

Most assuredly, we believe, Abraham and Sarah, despite their advancing ages, received the ultimate testimony that they pleased God based on their faith, regardless of matters surrounding their fleshly circumstances. Speaking of these Old Testament faith heroes, Paul says, “Of whom the world was not worthy: they wandered in deserts, and in mountains, and in dens and caves of the earth. And these all, having obtained a good report through faith, received not the promise: God having provided some better thing for us, that they without us should not be made perfect.”—Heb. 11:38-40

When there appeared to be a delay in the fulfillment of God’s promise regarding a seed, Abram suggested that perhaps his servant Eliezer could become his heir, but God gave him assurances that he would father a son. Later, we are introduced to Hagar, the Egyptian slave girl, an unmarried and childless woman. (Gen. 15:2-4; 16:1) Sarai apparently viewed this as the solution to her problem of being barren. She gave Hagar to her husband so that he could bring forth a seed. At this point God had not revealed to Abram that his heir would be born through Sarai. Thus, when the proposition was made to take Hagar, Abram must have assumed it was what the Lord would have him do to fulfill the promise of having a seed.

Sarai also saw no problem with this arrangement. Her words in Genesis 16:2, “It may be that I may obtain children” by Hagar, seem to imply that her maidservant would simply do her bidding and act as a surrogate mother. We see nothing in the account to imply that either Sarai or Abram thought anything could go wrong with such a plan. Of course, God permitted this to occur and used it as part of the allegory previously referred to in Galatians chapter 4. A very basic lesson for the Lord’s people today is to commit all things to God in prayer rather than to take matters into our own hands. (Prov. 3:5,6) Our Heavenly Father can overrule so that unwise courses of action on our part provide valuable lessons. How much better it is, though, to seek his will first, before acting on our own initiative, which sometimes reaps bitter fruitage. Returning to the account, Hagar conceives a child, despises her mistress and Sarai complains to Abram, who tells her that she is free to do with Hagar as she pleases. We are then told that Sarai dealt harshly with Hagar.—Gen. 16:3-6

### **CONSEQUENCES OF BARRENNESS**

Concerning Hagar despising her mistress, it would appear that she may have been flaunting her pregnancy by looking down upon Sarai and her inability to conceive. Going back to the Genesis account where it is recorded that the seed of the woman would bruise the serpent’s head, we believe God-fearing women had the hope that this promise would be fulfilled in themselves. We additionally recall two other examples of the agony experienced when women could not bear children. “When Rachel saw that she bare Jacob no children, Rachel envied her sister; and said unto Jacob,

Give me children, or else I die.” (Gen. 30:1) “Unto Hannah he [her husband Elkanah] gave a worthy portion; for he loved Hannah: but the LORD had shut up her womb. And she was in bitterness of soul, and prayed unto the LORD, and wept sore.”—I Sam. 1:5,10

What prompted Hagar’s indiscretion in displaying haughtiness towards her mistress? Did she think, perhaps, that she would replace Sarai as wealthy Abram’s favored wife? Did Sarai feel threatened that this could happen? “Under three things the earth is disquieted, and under four it cannot bear up. Under a servant when he reigns, a fool when he is filled with food, an unloved and repugnant woman when she is married, and a maidservant when she supplants her mistress.” (Prov. 30:21-23, *The Amplified Bible*) Whatever these two women thought, after Hagar conceived, things in their relationship were never going to be the same as they had been previously.

Evidently, once Hagar was with child, her status must have risen. This is first shown by the fact that Sarai was solicitous of her needs, probably insuring the most favorable conditions for this mother to be who was carrying what Sarai considered to be her own child. Secondly, Sarai had to receive Abram’s approval for meting out punishment towards Hagar for her actions. When we read that Sarai dealt with her harshly, it may not refer to any physical action, but probably a removal of whatever special privileges she may have enjoyed since her pregnancy commenced.

## **HAGAR’S FLIGHT AND RETURN**

After being humiliated by Sarai, Hagar ran away, determined to face her situation alone. She then encountered an angel of the Lord in the wilderness

on the road to Shur. Apparently, Hagar had decided to return to Egypt to fulfill her destiny, but after her meeting with the heavenly visitor her attitude changed. The angel said to Hagar, “Whence camest thou? and whither wilt thou go? And she said, I flee from the face of my mistress Sarai. And the angel of the LORD said unto her, Return to thy mistress, and submit thyself under her hands.”—Gen. 16:6-9

The angel then gave Hagar this further message from the Lord: “I will multiply thy seed exceedingly, that it shall not be numbered for multitude. And the angel of the LORD said unto her, Behold, thou art with child, and shalt bear a son, and shalt call his name Ishmael; because the LORD hath heard thy affliction. And he will be a wild man; his hand will be against every man, and every man’s hand against him; and he shall dwell in the presence of all his brethren. And she called the name of the LORD that spake unto her, Thou God seest me: for she said, Have I also here looked after him that seeth me?”—vss. 10-13

Several matters worthy of mention are shown in this episode. In verse 13 it is apparent that Hagar understood she had been speaking to an angelic being and as such she manifested a reverential spirit in acknowledging that fact. When questioned as to what she was doing in the desert, she gave a truthful answer that she was fleeing from her mistress. Hagar’s obedience in returning and submitting to Sarai demonstrated that she had reconsidered her previous arrogance. Her responsiveness to these divine instructions coincides with a New Testament admonition for the church as it may relate to secular service and employment. “Servants, be obedient to them that are your masters according to the flesh,

with fear and trembling, in singleness of your heart, as unto Christ; Not with eyeservice, as menpleasers; but as the servants of Christ, doing the will of God from the heart; With good will doing service, as to the Lord, and not to men: Knowing that whatsoever good thing any man doeth, the same shall he receive of the Lord.”—Eph. 6:5-8

The angel’s assurance that Hagar’s seed would be multiplied exceedingly was another factor in making her acquiesce in returning to Sarai. That promise, of course, took some time to be fulfilled, but it suggests a lesson in patience for us to internalize as the footstep followers of Christ. “Wait on the LORD: be of good courage, and he shall strengthen thine heart: wait, I say, on the LORD.”—Ps. 27:14

### **DOUBTING WHAT SEEMED UNLIKELY**

In contrasting Hagar’s seeming faith when approached by the angel of the Lord, we might look briefly at initial reactions by Abram and Sarai under similar circumstances, recalling again that they had the testimony of being pleasing to God. Sometime after Ishmael was born to Hagar, we read the following account. “God said unto Abraham, As for Sarai thy wife, thou shalt not call her name Sarai, but Sarah shall her name be. And I will bless her, and give thee a son also of her: yea, I will bless her, and she shall be a mother of nations; kings of people shall be of her. Then Abraham fell upon 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? And Abraham said unto God, O that Ishmael might live before thee!”—Gen.17:15-18

It seems apparent that Abraham never revealed to Sarah God's promise that she would have a child, thus suggesting some doubt in Abraham's mind that this truly would occur. Support for this assertion is supplied when Sarah overhears heavenly visitors telling Abraham that she would have a son. Here was her reaction: "Sarah laughed within herself, saying, After I am waxed old shall I have pleasure, my lord being old also?" We then recall how the angel inquired whether anything was too hard for the Lord to do, upon which Sarah denied laughing. (Gen. 18:10-15) Surely her initial reaction was one of unbelief, and as suggested previously, Abraham did not have the confidence to share this news earlier after first hearing it.

### **CONSEQUENCES OF MOCKING**

After the birth of Isaac, conditions were very different, and Sarah experienced the joy of motherhood. On the occasion of a great feast to celebrate her son Isaac's weaning, the record states that Ishmael mocked Isaac. Whatever the nature of that mocking was, it set off a red flag to Sarah, and her reaction was swift. "Wherefore she said unto Abraham, Cast out this bondwoman and her son: for the son of this bondwoman shall not be heir with my son, even with Isaac. And the thing was very grievous in Abraham's sight because of his son."—Gen. 21:8-11

There is no question that Abraham loved Ishmael deeply and was very pained by Sarah's request. God spoke to Abraham, however, assuring him of his providences on Ishmael's behalf. Abraham sent Hagar away with some bread and water for herself and her son, but without any escort into the wilderness of Beersheba. On the surface that seems like a

meager provision for Hagar and Ishmael whom he loved. We do not know the details, but one suggestion given referring to this matter is that Abraham had shepherds and other workers scattered in various nearby locations at strategic points, and that it was his intention that Hagar and Ishmael resettle in one of these areas. If that were so, Hagar apparently lost her way and wandered off course into the desert. Having run out of water, she feared that her young child would die, until by divine providence they came upon a well of water by which Ishmael was revived. The record states that God's care over Ishmael continued, "And he grew, and dwelt in the wilderness, and became an archer. And he dwelt in the wilderness of Paran: and his mother took him a wife out of the land of Egypt."—vss. 12-21

### **RIGHTS OF THE FIRSTBORN**

There are numerous details concerning the Law Covenant and the Sarah feature of the Abrahamic Covenant considered in the allegory of Galatians chapter 4. Much of the world's attention is focused today on the ongoing Middle East conflict between the descendants of Isaac and Ishmael. Interestingly enough, at the time of Abraham's death apparently relations between Isaac and Ishmael were probably good, and they had amiable contact with each other at the time of their father's burial. "His sons Isaac and Ishmael buried him in the cave of Machpelah, in the field of Ephron the son of Zohar the Hittite, which is before Mamre."—Gen. 25:8,9

The following passage of Scripture has been used sometimes in an attempt to justify Arab claims

that they have a right to Israel's land. "If a man have two wives, one beloved, and another hated, and they have born him children, both the beloved and the hated; and if the firstborn son be hers that was hated: Then it shall be, when he maketh his sons to inherit that which he hath, that he may not make the son of the beloved firstborn before the son of the hated, which is indeed the firstborn: But he shall acknowledge the son of the hated for the firstborn, by giving him a double portion of all that he hath: for he is the beginning of his strength; the right of the firstborn is his."—Deut. 21:15-17

The foregoing verses provide a general rule with regard to the standing of the firstborn even during the days of the patriarchs such as Abraham. God, however, retains the right to make exceptions as he deems fit. He did so in the case of Isaac and Ishmael, since they were divinely appointed pictures of the Gospel church and Israel. We thus see that the natural seed of Abraham, typified by Ishmael, was developed first. Then the spiritual seed, through whom all the families of the earth are to be blessed, pictured by Isaac, will come and "out of Zion shall go forth the law, and the word of the LORD from Jerusalem."—Gen.12:3; Acts 3:25; Isa. 2:3

## **REACTING TO THE MIDDLE EAST CONFLICT**

In considering present day circumstances in Israel, there is a division among the people there as to what should be done to relieve their situation. There are those who say that Israel should negotiate for secure borders which, it is hoped, would result in peaceful co-existence with their enemies. Others believe Israel must never accept such a compromise

because God gave them the land and it is theirs to protect and defend. Many Jews recall how they have been mistreated and almost eradicated as a people by the holocaust and declare, “never again.” Finally, there are some who are waiting for the Messiah to resolve all these concerns.

What should be the spiritual Israelites’ response to these issues? One of the best things to do is to point to the scriptural promises that demonstrate future conditions of peace and righteousness in the world which will come to Jews, Arabs and all peoples of the earth. The Bible clearly indicates there will be a restoration which will provide everlasting blessings for mankind and that speak of favorable conditions under the New Covenant. (Isa. 35:5-10; Jer. 31:31-34; Acts 15:16,17) We are to remember that the evil we presently see in the world is traceable to sin and that with Satan bound, the nations will learn righteousness. Above all, we should not find ourselves out of control because we see atrocities in one place or another, though it pains us to see evil wherever it is found.

Let our attitudes reflect the spirit of this sage counsel. “Dearly beloved, avenge not yourselves, but rather give place unto wrath: for it is written, Vengeance is mine; I will repay, saith the Lord.” (Rom. 12:19) Let us order our steps in such a way that we will be a part of the antitypical Isaac who, with our beloved Head, Christ Jesus, will straighten out all of earth’s affairs and right all the wrongs that have existed in the world since man’s fall in Eden. It will be then that the prophet’s words will reach their fulfilment. “When thy judgments are in the earth, the inhabitants of the world will learn righteousness.”—Isa. 26:9 ■

# Jesus' Example of Compassion

*“Jesus went forth,  
and saw a great  
multitude, and was  
moved with  
compassion toward  
them, and he  
healed their sick.”  
—Matthew 14:14*

## **LOVE IS THE VERY ESSENCE**

of the Heavenly Father's character, for “God is love.” (I John 4:8,16) It finds expression in various ways. It is manifested in the giving of one's time, strength, or substance that another might be fed, clothed, or instructed. It is shown in yielding one's own will to that of another, and in a hundred different sacrifices, large and small, that the lives of others might be made a little brighter, and their burdens and grief's less heavy.

Compassion seems to be a very special manifestation of love. It is a form of love that springs from the deepest recesses of the heart. To be compassionate means to be sympathetic and understanding. It means to be moved with pity for the unfortunate and the sorrowing. It means, literally, to suffer together with those who are suffering. It is possessed in abundant measure by our Heavenly Father, and it is shared in like measure by Christ Jesus our Lord.

This compassion which the Lord felt toward the sick and dying world, of which our opening text speaks, did not begin with his earthly ministry. It had older, deeper roots. It began long before, with the creation and ages-long preparation of the earth when it was without form and void, unprepared for habitation by human beings. The provision of light to combat the darkness; the establishment of the atmosphere through which would drift the beautiful clouds, gathering up moisture with which to water and refresh the earth; the separation of the seas from the dry land; the seeding of the earth's hills and valleys to bring forth grass and fruit-bearing trees; the making manifest in the heavens of the sun and the moon to divide the day from the night; the filling of the seas, the land and the skies with marvelous living creatures—all this mighty and loving provision had first to be accomplished by the Son of God, at the direction of his Heavenly Father. God's son, in his prehuman existence, is identified by John as the "Word" [Greek: *Logos*], who was with God throughout the creative process. "All things were made by him [the *Logos*]; and without him was not any thing made that was made."—John 1:1-3

Then came the day when man himself would be created, this new being for whose sole benefit and joy all this mighty preparation had been made. The *Logos* also had a part in that creation. We read in Genesis, "God said, Let us make man in our image, after our likeness: and let them have dominion over the fish of the sea, and over the fowl of the air, and over the cattle, and over all the earth, and over every creeping thing that creepeth upon the earth." God also planted a garden "eastward in Eden; and

there he put the man whom he had formed.”—  
Gen. 1:26; 2:8

What a joy it must have been to the Heavenly Father and his Son, the Logos, to create this new human being, formed out of the dust of the earth. He could think; he could freely make his own decisions; he could praise God; he could even multiply and eventually fill the earth with perfect offspring! What wonderful prospects were promised for his everlasting enjoyment of life on earth!

However, he who had shared in this loving work of creating man, to which so much careful attention had been devoted, was also to be a witness of his fall into sin, and man's condemnation to death. God's son beheld, no doubt with great sorrow, the terrible downward drift of humankind into sin and sickness, sorrow and suffering, disease and death.

## **FOREKNOWN OF GOD**

This eventuality was not unforeseen by the Heavenly Father, for he possesses foreknowledge beyond human comprehension. “I am God, and there is none like me, declaring the end from the beginning, and from ancient times the things that are not yet done, saying, My counsel shall stand, and I will do all my pleasure.” (Isa. 46:9,10) One wonders if the Logos also possessed this ability to foreknow events. Was he prepared for the terrible sentence which justly fell on the human being, in whose creation he had participated with such loving care?

The Apostle Peter writes, “Ye were not redeemed with corruptible things; ... But with the precious blood of Christ, as a lamb without blemish, and without spot: Who verily was foreordained before the

foundation of the world.” (I Pet. 1:18-20) John the Revelator refers to Jesus as “the Lamb slain from the foundation of the world.” (Rev. 13:8) Thus we see that the Heavenly Father foreknew that man would fall. He also knew that his only begotten Son, our Lord Jesus, would give his life that man might be redeemed from the sentence of death. Did Jesus in his prehuman existence as the Logos know this? If not, when did he learn of it? We cannot know, but at the proper time God revealed his plan for man’s redemption to his beloved Son.

Why did God’s Son accept this commission, and come to earth as man’s Redeemer? He had glory, honor and fellowship with the Father. For one thing, he did it simply because it was his Father’s desire for him to do so. “Lo, I come: in the volume of the book it is written of me, I delight to do thy will, O my God: yea, thy law is within my heart.” (Ps. 40:7,8) That it was the Father’s will would be reason enough. Even in that final extremity of anguish in the Garden of Gethsemane, before his crucifixion, Jesus said, “O my Father, if it be possible, let this cup pass from me: nevertheless not as I will, but as thou wilt.”—Matt. 26:39

However, there was another reason. For some four thousand years the Logos had observed the degraded state of that marvelous human being in whose creation he had been so closely associated. He had noted his fall from that glory, perfection and happiness enjoyed by father Adam in Eden. He had seen him entangled in the cords of sin, immersed in strife and wars, laid low by disease, suffering and death. The Son of God greatly desired to have a part in bringing about the recovery of fallen man

## **JESUS' COMPASSION FOR MANKIND**

Jesus tells us of his Father's great love for man, even in his fallen condition, saying, "God so loved the world, that he gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have everlasting life." (John 3:16) Jesus shared that same love for mankind, and in his compassion for the human race he gave up the glory and fellowship he had with the Father. "He took upon him the form of a servant, and was made in the likeness of men: And being found in fashion as a man, he humbled himself, and became obedient unto death, even the death of the cross." (Phil. 2:7,8) Paul also tells us that the Son of God was "made a little lower than the angels for the suffering of death, ... that he by the grace of God should taste death for every man."—Heb. 2:9

That love and compassion which moved our Lord to forsake his high position with the Heavenly Father characterized his entire ministry here on earth. Wherever he went he was exposed to the sorrows, sickness and suffering of the people, and his heart went out to them. Time and again we read that great multitudes followed him, and he healed them. (Matt. 4:24; Mark 3:10; Luke 9:11) When Jesus heard of the death of John the Baptist we are told that "he departed thence by ship into a desert place apart: and when the people had heard thereof, they followed him on foot out of the cities." He was "moved with compassion toward them," as stated in our opening text. He healed all those who were sick, and then fed the multitude of five thousand.—Matt. 14:13-21

Matthew also writes that "Jesus went about all the cities and villages, teaching in their synagogues,

and preaching the gospel of the kingdom, and healing every sickness and every disease among the people. But when he saw the multitudes, he was moved with compassion on them, because they fainted, and were scattered abroad, as sheep having no shepherd." (Matt. 9:35,36) On still another occasion we read that "Jesus called his disciples unto him, and said, I have compassion on the multitude, because they continue with me now three days, and have nothing to eat: and I will not send them away fasting, lest they faint in the way." Finding that the disciples had seven loaves and a few small fishes, he gave thanks, and then proceeded to feed some four thousand men, besides the women and children that were with them.—Matt. 15:32-38

Jesus did not restrict his compassionate attention to the multitudes. He was deeply touched with the infirmities of individuals, as in the case of the leper. "There came a leper to him, beseeching him, and kneeling down to him, and saying unto him, If thou wilt, thou canst make me clean. And Jesus, moved with compassion, put forth his hand, and touched him, and saith unto him, I will; be thou clean. And as soon as he had spoken, immediately the leprosy departed from him, and he was cleansed." —Mark 1:40-42

Then there was that moving incident in the city of Nain, recorded for us by Luke: "It came to pass the day after, that he went into a city called Nain: and many of his disciples went with him, and much people. Now when he came nigh to the gate of the city, behold, there was a dead man carried out, the only son of his mother, and she was a widow: and much people of the city was with her. And when the

Lord saw her, he had compassion on her, and said unto her, Weep not. And he came and touched the bier: and they that bare him stood still. And he said, Young man, I say unto thee, Arise. And he that was dead sat up, and began to speak. And he delivered him to his mother.” (Luke 7:11-15) As the woman thus received her son back from death, how the evidence of her joy must have lifted some of the burden of his ministry from the Master’s heart.

We recall, too, the death of Lazarus, and how his sorrowing sisters, Mary and Martha, sent for Jesus. The sisters, in their grief, went out to meet the Lord, and “when Mary was come where Jesus was, and saw him, she fell down at his feet, saying unto him, Lord, if thou hadst been here, my brother had not died. When Jesus therefore saw her weeping, and the Jews also weeping which came with her, he groaned in the spirit, and was troubled, And said, Where have ye laid him? They said unto him, Lord, come and see. Jesus wept. Then said the Jews, Behold how he loved him!” (John 11:32-36) Jesus then restored Lazarus to life.

Even in the Garden of Gethsemane, when being apprehended shortly before his crucifixion, Jesus again manifested his mercy and compassion, this time toward one of his enemies. In an impulsive move to protect his Master, “Peter having a sword drew it, and smote the high priest’s servant, and cut off his right ear. Then said Jesus unto Peter, Put up thy sword into the sheath: the cup which my Father hath given me, shall I not drink it?” (John 18:10,11) Jesus then touched the servant’s ear, and healed it. (Luke 22:51) There, in the very center of that tumult, was one who was calm. He never for an instant forgot

that he was the Son of God, and that he had come into the world to be man's Redeemer. With no thought for his own plight, and unmindful of the fact that his own death was imminent, Jesus mercifully healed the man's ear. How often must our Lord have longed for that time, still unknown to him, when not just one here and one there would be healed, made to see, or restored to life. Much more, he looked forward to when the whole dead and dying world of mankind would come under the healing, life-giving ministrations of the kingdom.

Not many ever thanked Jesus. On one occasion he healed ten lepers, and only one returned, giving him thanks and glorifying God. Jesus said, "Were there not ten cleansed? but where are the nine? There are not found that returned to give glory to God, save this stranger." (Luke 17:11-19) However, this almost universal ingratitude did not deter our Lord, for he knew that godly compassion is not bestowed only on those who can repay, or who may render thanks.

At the very end, we witness Jesus' love for his fellow countrymen, and we hear a despairing cry that seems to come from the depths of his soul. "O Jerusalem, Jerusalem, thou that killest the prophets, and stonest them which are sent unto thee, how often would I have gathered thy children together, even as a hen gathereth her chickens under her wings, and ye would not!" (Matt. 23:37) He had come "unto his own, and his own received him not," but this did not diminish his love and compassion for them. (John 1:11) No wonder we read that the "common people heard him gladly." Truly, we have a High Priest who was "touched with the feeling of our infirmities." He was moved with pity for all

humanity. He suffered with them, and finally he gave his life for them.—Mark 12:37; Heb. 4:15

### **RAISED FROM THE DEAD**

Then came Jesus' resurrection from the grave. As he was brought forth from the tomb by his Heavenly Father, to find himself freed from the bands of death, we can imagine that first marvelous, sweet moment of exhilaration that must have filled his being, realizing that his sacrifice was finished, and accepted of the Father. Perhaps his very first thoughts centered on that wonderful prophetic promise, "Thou wilt not leave my soul in hell; neither wilt thou suffer thy Holy One to see corruption. . . . in thy presence is fulness of joy; at thy right hand there are pleasures for evermore."—Ps. 16:10,11

During those sometimes lonely days of his ministry, how often he must have thought of that wonderful association he had previously enjoyed with the Creator. He must have longed to be with his Father, to complete his present work, and to fellowship once again with the one to whom he had been "daily his delight." (Prov. 8:30) Before he could ascend to the Father, however, he had yet another task to perform. He must go back to his disciples, those sheep without a shepherd, to manifest himself, to comfort them, and to assure them of his resurrection.

In his various appearances to the disciples, we find that same gentle love and compassion that had marked Jesus' entire earthly ministry. We recall his tender concern for the two discouraged disciples on the road to Emmaus, his kindly revelation of himself to Mary at the tomb, and his patience with

Thomas. (Luke 24:13-32; John 20:11-17,24-29) How these encounters must have touched his heart!

### **THE JOY SET BEFORE HIM**

The apostle tells us that it was for “the joy that was set before him” that Jesus “endured the cross, despising the shame.” (Heb. 12:2) What was that joy? It likely sprang from many sources. It surely included the anticipation of returning to his Father’s fellowship, the promise of immortality, and the knowledge that he had been obedient to his Father’s will. Perhaps his greatest joy, however, was the prospect of blessing all the families of the earth, all of those dying multitudes toward whom his heart went out in pity, and for whose sufferings he was so moved with compassion. The knowledge of that joyous prospect would sustain and direct him in the way of sacrifice. Indeed, true compassion for one’s fellow man can be a source of strength and power in the Christian way.

As a man, Jesus had no natural seed of his own. “Who shall declare his generation? for he was cut off out of the land of the living.” However, the prophet informs us that he will indeed have a seed. “He shall see his seed, he shall prolong his days, and the pleasure of the LORD shall prosper in his hand.” That pleasure of God which shall prosper in the hand of the glorified Jesus is the bringing of the world of mankind back into harmony with the Creator during the Messianic kingdom. To these our Lord Jesus will be an “everlasting Father.” The whole restored world of mankind will be his children. Those who are obedient to the righteous laws of that kingdom arrangement will no longer be a dead and dying

race, but a happy, healthy people, to enjoy everlasting life in a perfect paradise on earth.—Isa. 53:8-10; 9:6,7

All who are motivated by the same joyous hope of blessing all the families of the earth that moved our Lord to lay down his life in sacrifice; all who are constrained by that same compassion toward the world to walk in his sacrificial steps, will join their Lord Jesus in the presence of the Heavenly Father. As our Lord during his earthly ministry healed the sick, the lame, the blind, so it will be our joy in the kingdom to be associated with him in healing and restoring to perfect life here on earth, the whole world of mankind.—Rom. 8:16-18; Gal. 3:26-29; Rev. 3:21

With such a prospect, let us, then, seek to emulate the loving compassion of Jesus, especially in these troubling times, when mankind is in such great distress and turmoil. Let us each strive to be examples of care, tenderness, and sympathy in our daily life and in our dealings with the world around us. By so doing, we too can look forward to the realization of that which so inspired our Lord Jesus: “In thy presence is fulness of joy; at thy right hand there are pleasures for evermore.”—Ps. 16:11 ■

## **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 Kathryn Hunter, Steubenville, OH—July  
30. Age, 92

Brother John Moffat, Rockland, NY—August 11.  
Age, 56

# 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.*

## **O. B. Elbert**

Toronto, ON September 14,15

*The speakers listed below are invited by individual classes, or their services have been arranged by their home classes:*

## **N. Austin**

Seattle, WA  
August 31-September 2

## **D. Christiansen**

Huntsville, AL September 7,8

## **M. Costelli**

Seattle, WA  
August 31-September 2

## **O. B. Elbert**

New York, NY  
August 31-September 1

## **M. Ensley**

Seattle, WA  
August 31-September 2

## **A. Fernets**

Seattle, WA  
August 31-September 2

## **R. Goodman**

Seattle, WA  
August 31-September 2

## **L. Griehs**

Washington, DC  
September 14,15

## **K. Humphreys**

New York, NY  
August 31-September 1

## **E. Kuenzli**

Jacksonville, FL September 15

## **H. Montague**

Huntsville, AL September 7,8

## **R. Niemczyk**

Seattle, WA  
August 31-September 2

## **J. Trzeciak**

Chicago, IL September 29

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*In one Spirit were we all baptized into one body,  
whether Jews or Greeks, whether bond or free;  
and were all made to drink of one Spirit.”*

*—I Corinthians 12:13*

# 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.*

## **NEW YORK CONVENTION, August 31-September 1**

—Doubletree Hotel Mahwah, 180 Route 17 South, Mahwah, NJ. For reservations, phone: (201) 529-5880. Deadline for reserving rooms at subsidized rate is August 16. Other information, contact G. Passios. Phone: (201) 939-3196 or Email: gpassios11@verizon.net

## **SEATTLE CONVENTION, August 31-September 2**

—Seattle Scottish Rite Center, 1207 N 152nd Street, Shoreline, WA 98133. Contact L. Flinn. Phone: (206) 518-2678 or Email: laurie@flinn.us

## **TENNESSEE VALLEY CONVENTION, September 7,8**

—Comfort Inn, 4725 University Drive, Huntsville, AL. Contact T. Allen. Email: timallen6768@gmail.com

**OGUN CONVENTION, September 14**—Grace Estate, zone D, Ota, Nigeria. Contact J. Isife. Phone: +2348035-220141 or Email: johnisife@yahoo.com

## **WASHINGTON DC CONVENTION, September 14,15**

—Hilton Garden Inn BWI Airport, 1516 Aero Drive, Linthicum Heights, MD 21090. Phone: (410) 691-0500. Contact M. Earl. Email: washingtonbiblestudents@gmail.com

## **COLUMBUS HARVEST CONVENTION, September 21,22**

—Ledwinka Farm, 10004 E 550 N, Columbus, IN 47203. Contact E. Ledwinka. Email: ledwinka@hughes.net

## **NAMBOUR CONVENTION, September 27-29**

—Alexandra Park Conference Centre, 13 Mari Street, Alexandra Headland, QLD, Australia 4572. Contact D. Greenhalgh. Email: darryngreenhalgh@hotmail.com

## **COLORADO CONVENTION, October 4-6**

—Holiday Inn Express & Suites, 17140 West Colfax Avenue, Golden, CO 80401. Contact D. Moss. Email: deb.moss@comcast.net

**WEST NEWTON CONVENTION, October 5,6**—Sewickley Grange Hall, Route 136, West Newton, PA 15089. Contact L. Mlinek. Email: lmlinek@verizon.net

**AGAWAM CONVENTION, October 6**—Agawam Senior Center, 954 Main Street, Agawam, MA. Contact F. Sansom. Phone: (860) 861-6881 or Email: elshaddai144k@icloud.com

**GRAND RAPIDS CONVENTION, October 12,13**—Kenowa Hills Middle School, 3950 Hendershot Avenue NW, Grand Rapids, MI 49544. Contact T. Malinowski. Phone: (616) 304-7691 or Email: malinowski.tjm@gmail.com

**ORLANDO CONVENTION, October 26,27**—South Seminole Lodge, 122 Triplet Lake Drive, Casselberry, FL 32707. Contact C. Goodman. Phone: (407) 695-6815 or Email: clmgoodman@gmail.com

**SAN LUIS OBISPO CONVENTION, October 26,27**—Masonic Hall, 859 Marsh Street, San Luis Obispo, CA. Contact M. Allard. Phone: (805) 773-2962 or Email: medlallard@juno.com

**MILWAUKEE CONVENTION, November 2,3**—Lake Lodge, 1235 East Howard Avenue, Milwaukee, WI 53207. Contact D. Farchione. Phone: (414) 324-9667 or Email: debfarchione@aol.com

**NEW HAVEN CONVENTION, November 3**—Italian-American Club, 85 Chase Lane, West Haven, CT. Contact A. Suraci. Phone: (203) 248-3793/(203) 430-5770 or Email: annasuraci@comcast.net

**CALI, COLOMBIA CONVENTION, November 16,17**—Hotel Las Americas, Calle 21 Norte #3N-34. Cali, Colombia. The room rate is \$40.00 per night. The deadline for this rate is October 15. Contact C. Anania. Phone: (973) 262-0467 or Email: njbiblestudents@gmail.com

**SOUTHWEST CONVENTION, November 29-December 2**—Ontario Gateway Hotel, Ontario, CA. Hotel reservations, phone: (909) 975-5000. Mention Bible Students Convention for special rate available until November 3. Other information, contact D. Rawson. Phone: (408) 644-7668 or Email: rawsondr@yahoo.com