

# The DAWN

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# Waiting for the Kingdom

*“Wherefore God also hath highly exalted him, and given him a name which is above every name: That at the name of Jesus every knee should bow, of things in heaven, and things in earth, ... And that every tongue should confess that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of God the Father.”*  
—*Philippians 2:9-11*

have rejoiced in these promises.

Some, however, have not been willing to await God’s time for the establishment of his kingdom, but have undertaken abortive efforts of their own to set it up. Yet, the failure of these human efforts will in

**THROUGHOUT THE SACRED** Scriptures, the subject of the kingdom of God is a very prominent one. In Jesus’ model prayer it is represented as the agency which will be employed for the reestablishment of the divine will upon the earth. (Matt. 6:10) Throughout man’s long experience with sin and death, God has made many promises concerning the blessings of the kingdom which he proposes to establish upon the earth. Many of those whose hearts have been in harmony with God and with righteousness

no sense discourage those who have faith in the promises of God that in his own time and way all of the glorious promises which he has made in respect to the future blessing of mankind will be fulfilled.

God's laws, which are just, holy and good, must be upheld in order for his blessings to be available for his creatures. It was because of disobedience to divine law that the penalty of death came upon the human race. Satan used his influence in connection with the disobedience of our first parents. He succeeded in tempting them to transgress God's law, and has used his advantage with rare ability and great persistence in dragging mankind into every imaginable kind of physical, mental and moral sickness. The depth of man's calamities, however, are not of such a sort that infinite wisdom, goodness and power cannot provide the means by which God can receive him again into his favor, one more blessed and precious because of his former experience with sin.

A plan of operation was instituted by God to "seek and to save that which was lost," and to deliver the groaning creation from the "bondage of corruption," sin and death. (Luke 19:10; Rom. 8:19-22) As illustrated in the parable of the lost sheep, a loving shepherd, the only begotten Son of God, was sent to recover the lost sheep. He left the ninety and nine in their accustomed pastures, representing the many orders of angelic creation which remained in harmony with God. (Eph. 3:10; Col. 1:16) Laying aside his heavenly glory, he humbled himself, and became a man—Christ Jesus.—Luke 15:4-7; Phil. 2:7

What wonderful patience was manifested by Jesus, the good shepherd, in seeking and saving fallen man! He was not discouraged by the risk and privation

associated with his work of bringing salvation to mankind—the lost sheep. He steadfastly resisted the temptations of the adversary and endured the contradiction of sinners. When he saw the multitudes, he was moved with compassion, for they were like sheep having no shepherd. He came to minister, and went about preaching the glad tidings, healing the sick, and even raising the dead.—Matt. 4:3-11; 9:18-25,35,36; 20:28

While often faint and weary, Jesus did not give up the mission for which he came to earth. He was faithful even unto death, and as Paul states, we now look to “Jesus the author and finisher of our faith; who for the joy that was set before him endured the cross, despising the shame, ... For consider him that endured such contradiction of sinners against himself.”—Heb. 12:2,3

Jesus endured it all, for, in the language of the parable, he went after that which was lost, and when he found it, he “layeth it on his shoulders, rejoicing.” (Luke 15:5) None of the ransomed can fully know the depth of the waters crossed, nor how dark was the night through which the Lord passed, ere he found the lost sheep. What beauty we see in this picture! The shepherd did not chide the wandering sheep, nor seek to drive it back with increased fears, but took it in his arms and bore it back to its proper home and blessings. Man was guilty, and Jesus came to help him in his weakness. He did not come as a wrathful avenger, but as a sympathizing friend.

## **THE GOOD SHEPHERD'S COMPASSION**

Jesus' compassion for the multitudes brought criticisms from the lofty, the self-righteous, and the hard-hearted, yet he continued to be sympathetic

and kind. Through Jesus we are able to understand some of the depths of divine compassion, and of why it is true as stated in the parable, that there is joy in heaven over one sinner that repents.—Luke 15:7

Of the Almighty himself, the prophet wrote, “Who is a God like unto thee, that pardoneth iniquity, and passeth by the transgression of the remnant of his heritage? he retaineth not his anger for ever, because he delighteth in mercy. He will turn again, he will have compassion upon us; he will subdue our iniquities; and thou wilt cast all their sins into the depths of the sea.”—Mic. 7:18,19

How wonderfully merciful and sympathetic the Creator has been, and what depth of love is manifested in sending his Son to recover the sinful and lost race! While God’s justice could not clear the guilty, yet his loving sympathy for the condemned race has caused him to suffer long in order that salvation might be the grand result. (II Pet. 3:15) Sin is more awful to God than to us. Our senses are dulled, and we suffer for only a few years, but he has been long-suffering with sin and its effects among mankind for thousands of years. However, God’s plan to shower blessings through all eternity upon his human creation will, in the end, be of far greater joy to him than the comparatively short time of witnessing man’s struggle with sin and its effects. Indeed, it is this very experience with sin which God knows will be of eternal value to his human creation.

Consider the heights of divine fortitude, the infinite strength, the firmness of mind that has enabled God to endure that which his wisdom and foreknowledge have dictated in this great lesson of the permission of evil. Consider how he has permitted

his name to be reviled, reproached and misrepresented to the utmost limit, and his glory as the incorruptible God changed to the image of man, birds, beasts and creeping things. (Rom. 1:23) Consider him as he beheld the course of his beloved Son from Bethlehem to Calvary, suffering for sins, “the just for the unjust.”—I Pet. 3:18

If God has recorded for our admonition his manifestations of long-suffering toward sin and its terrible results, he has likewise detailed in no uncertain terms the showers of blessings he will dispense when his kingdom is established, under the rulership of Christ. Paul writes that if God “spared not his own Son, but delivered him up for us all, how shall he not with him also freely give us all things?” (Rom. 8:32) Time would fail to recount all of the abundant testimonies given us in the Scriptures concerning God’s purpose to bless mankind. These are positive, glorious and thrilling earthly promises of blessings yet in store for the repentant and restored race. In them we are told of the triumphant joy and pleasure the great author of redemption will have in the dispensing of these blessings in his kingdom. Note a few of these reassuring promises:

“I create new heavens and a new earth.”—Isa. 65:17; II Pet. 3:13

“I create Jerusalem a rejoicing, and her people a joy.”—Isa. 65:18

“Before they call, I will answer.”—Isa. 65:24

“They shall not hurt nor destroy in all my holy mountain.”—Isa. 65:25

“Many nations shall come, and say, ... let us go up to the mountain of the LORD.”—Mic. 4:2

“All nations shall flow unto it.”—Isa. 2:2

“All flesh [shall] come to worship before me.”—Isa. 66:23; Rev. 15:4

“I will make the place of my feet glorious.” “The earth is my footstool.”—Isa. 60:13; 66:1

“Behold, I make all things new. ... These words are true and faithful.”—Rev. 21:5

Billions have perished in death, whether on battlefields, by disease, calamities, plagues, murder, poverty, or by other means. All these in due time will be awakened under “new heavens” and in a “new earth,” where the knowledge of the Lord will be worldwide. (Isa. 11:9; Hab. 2:14) When it dawns upon their minds as to why they have been called forth from the tomb and have been given the privileges associated with that new kingdom rule, and that these wonderful blessings of God have been purchased for them through the redemptive sacrifice of Christ, we cannot be surprised that they will lift up their heads and say, “Other lords beside thee have had dominion over us: but by thee only will we make mention of thy name.” Mankind will become so enthralled and captivated with their new surroundings that “the former [things] shall not be remembered, nor come into mind.”—Isa. 26:13; 65:17

## **KINGDOM ESTABLISHED BY DIVINE POWER**

All true Christians should be on the alert, watching for evidences that God’s kingdom is near. However, they should always keep in mind the great fundamental truth of the Bible which makes it clear that divine power, and not human effort, is to establish that kingdom.

We should ever remember that the church in the flesh is a suffering and sacrificing church, not a

reigning one. It is the privilege of the Christian to bear witness to whatever God may be accomplishing, and to tell of the glorious kingdom which he will establish. In this present time of trouble when the nations of earth are being shaken in preparation for the kingdom, it is also the Christian's privilege to bear witness to this fact, and to the "silver lining" just beyond the current storm clouds. Aside from this, the work of the espoused "bride" of Christ now is to make "herself ready," and to await the consummation of her hope by being "faithful unto death," that she might receive the "crown of life," and exaltation to "glory and honour and immortality." —Rev. 19:7; 2:10; Rom. 2:7

### **MISAPPLICATION OF PROMISES**

Long before Jesus' earthly ministry, God made this promise to his Son: "I will give thee the nations for thine inheritance, and the uttermost parts of the earth for thy possession." (Ps. 2:8, *Revised Version*) Without doubt the Master knew that this and other similar promises applied to him. Nevertheless, he did not make the mistake of misapplying them and expecting that they were to be fulfilled during the time he dwelt upon the earth.

Moreover, when Jesus did ask of his Father things pertaining to his followers, his petition was a very restricted one. Instead of asking for all the nations as an inheritance, he said, "I pray not for the world, but for them which thou hast given me." (John 17:9) Jesus recognized that the time had not then come for him to ask his Father for the rulership of the whole earth. He knew, furthermore, that the due time for this request would not

come until his own sacrificial work, as well as the sacrificial work of his “body” members, his “bride,” was completed.

The Apostle Paul tells us that “flesh and blood cannot inherit the kingdom of God.” In this same passage, he also makes it clear that those who do become associates with Jesus in his Messianic kingdom must undergo a change of nature. “This mortal must put on immortality,” he says. (I Cor. 15:50,53) To overlook these clear statements of the Bible can lead to all sorts of confusing and erroneous conclusions. Christians should be on the alert that they not be drawn into what might appear attractive looking, but actually “pseudo” kingdom arrangements which are not authorized by the Scriptures.

On this point, a faithful Christian once said: “Temptations continually assail the Lord’s people—suggestions to do some wonderful works in his name and to prove to themselves and to others that they are heaven’s favorites. The lesson for us to learn is, that the work which the Father has given us to do is not a work of convincing the world, but rather that we should quietly, yet as effectively as reason and propriety will permit, let our light shine and to simply manifest a desire to occupy the reasonable position of servants, ministers of the Truth.”

## **THE DIVINE COMMISSION**

Jesus prophesied that before the end of this present time of great trouble, and hence before his Messianic kingdom on earth, the “gospel of the kingdom shall be preached in all the world for a witness unto all nations.” (Matt. 24:14) This has been the divine

commission given to Christ's footstep followers throughout the present Gospel Age, and it is no less now the Christian's commission. Indeed, it is a most appropriate time to proclaim more zealously than ever the glad tidings of great joy concerning the blessings coming to mankind just beyond this time of trouble. Thus, to give a message of hope and comfort in the midst of a dark and distressed world is a wonderful privilege.

The fact that some in the past have mistakenly supposed that the kingdom of God was established in their day should not lead us to take the position that even now its establishment is in the remote, far-off future. We should not be blind to the fact that in our very day the kingdoms of the world are being shaken to the core, and will soon be supplanted by a "kingdom which cannot be moved," by which the "desire of all nations shall come."—Heb. 12:26-28; Hag. 2:6,7

We can rejoice to be living in this most wondrous time of earth's history. We can lift up our heads with confidence as we note the stately steppings of our God, and realize that the work of shaking which has been foretold is even now taking place in the earth. Although the period required to displace the old order has already stretched out over many years, it is only a short period as God reckons time. Compared to his "everlasting kingdom," earth's present time of trouble will be short indeed.—Ps. 145:10-13

Meanwhile, let those of us who are privileged to be living in this period, when the old order is passing away in order to make place for the new, rejoice more than ever before in the opportunity that is ours of proclaiming the glad tidings of the kingdom

and of thus being witnesses for God and for his glorious arrangements. We are not to do this, however, in a condemnatory spirit. Let us, rather, realize that if some, even a majority, fail to appreciate the message of the kingdom now, the Lord will cause them to understand in that future glorious new day when all the blind eyes will be opened and all the deaf ears will be unstopped.—Isa. 35:5

The divine commission given in God's Word to the followers of Christ of giving witness to the "gospel of the kingdom" should be deemed a grand privilege. It is our joy to believe in the kingdom, to wait for the kingdom, to pray for the kingdom, and to bear witness to the kingdom. However, it is God's work to establish his kingdom. He will accomplish this, not through any earthly arrangements, but through Christ Jesus our Lord, now the "express image" of the Father's person, and who is at "the right hand of the Majesty on high." (Heb. 1:3) Let us each rejoice at the blessed prospect which lays before mankind! ■

## WEEKLY PRAYER MEETING TEXTS

**NOVEMBER 5**—"Having an high priest over the house of God, let us draw near with a true heart in full assurance of faith."—Hebrews 10:21,22 (Z, '00-170 Hymn 321)

**NOVEMBER 12**—"Be not faithless, but believing."—John 20:27 (Z. '04-89 Hymn 263)

**NOVEMBER 19**—"Let us watch and be sober."—I Thessalonians 5:6 (Z. '02-239 Hymn 272)

**NOVEMBER 26**—"And the LORD said unto Moses, What is that in thine hand?"—Exodus 4:2 (Z. '94-143, '01-348 Hymn 191)

# Love That Serves

**Key Verse:** *“I have given you an example, that you should do as I have done to you.”*  
—*John 13:15, New King James Version*

**Selected Scripture:**  
*John 13:1-15,34,35*

**JESUS EXHORTS US IN** today’s Key Verse to imitate his example of service. This lesson came at the most crucial moment of his earthly ministry. Our Lord was preparing for the Feast of the Passover. He and his disciples had gathered together in the upper room. “Then He said to them, With fervent desire I have desired to eat this Passover with you before I suffer.” (Luke 22:15, *NKJV*) This was to be their last Passover together. One of his own would betray him that very night, and he would be crucified. The disciples would be deprived of his day-to-day leadership, and the Holy Spirit would now be their guide and comforter. (John 14:16,26) This was indeed a significant moment, not only in the history of the church, but also for the entire human family. The atonement between God and man was now to be laid down, eventually bringing all mankind back from the grave with the opportunity to come into harmony with their Creator.

Knowing that this would likely be the last opportunity to give an all-important lesson to his disciples, Jesus “rose from supper and laid aside His garments, took a towel and girded Himself. After that, He poured water into a basin and began to wash the disciples’ feet, and to wipe them with the towel with which He was girded.” (John 13:1-5, *NKJV*) The Master was teaching them by his own example that service, even as menial as washing

others' feet, was essential to discipleship.

When Jesus came to Peter, "Peter said to Him, Lord, are You washing my feet?" Jesus answered, "What I am doing you do not understand now, but you will know after this." Puzzled, Peter responded, "You shall never wash my feet!" Jesus answered again, "If I do not wash you, you have no part with Me." Jesus did not deride Peter, but with love and tenderness he calmly stated the facts of the case to him. The Master's loving reply facilitated Peter's immediate and hearty response, to wash "also my hands and my head." (vss. 6-9, *NKJV*) Had Jesus harshly criticized him, the result would likely not have been as blessed. We pray that all of us, as God's people, may exercise that same sweetly reasonable spirit of Jesus to all who may challenge us.

Jesus had earlier told his disciples, "You know that those who are considered rulers over the Gentiles lord it over them, and their great ones exercise authority over them. Yet it shall not be so among you; but whoever desires to become great among you shall be your servant. And whoever of you desires to be first shall be slave of all. For even the Son of Man did not come to be served, but to serve, and to give His life a ransom for many." (Mark 10:42-45, *NKJV*) The epitome of leadership in the Church is not manifested by domineering but through service. Many of the difficulties in the Early Church arose from those who erred along this line.

Each of us has something to offer our brethren in Christ, and we must look for opportunities to serve them for their edification, encouragement, comfort and consolation. The Holy Spirit has been given to us for that purpose. "As each one has received a gift, minister it to one another, as good stewards of the manifold grace of God. ... Let him do it as with the ability which God supplies, that in all things God may be glorified through Jesus Christ." (I Pet. 4:10,11, *NKJV*) Desiring to please God and bless the brotherhood, may we possess love that serves. ■

# Abiding in Jesus' Love

**Key Verse:** *"If you keep My commandments, you will abide in My love, just as I have kept My Father's commandments and abide in His love."*  
—*John 15:10, New King James Version*

**Selected Scripture:**  
*John 15:4-17*

can find true happiness and fulfillment.

Apostle John spoke powerfully to this, "This is the love of God, that we keep His commandments. And His commandments are not burdensome." (I John 5:3, *NKJV*) Here the apostle makes two deeply resonant observations. First, if we say we love God, we must demonstrate it by keeping his commandments—that is, by living a life consistent with his will. Second, God's commandments are not burdensome; rather, they are liberating.

Along these lines the psalmist was moved to speak thus: "The law of the LORD is perfect, converting the soul; The testimony of the LORD is sure, making wise the simple; The statutes of the LORD are right, rejoicing the heart; The commandment of the LORD is pure, enlightening the eyes; The fear of the LORD is clean, enduring forever; The judgments of the LORD are true and righteous altogether.

**IN OUR KEY VERSE, JESUS** declares that his love toward us is contingent upon our obedience to his commandments, just as he had kept all those he received from his Father. As creatures stained with sin, we often feel disposed to react rebelliously against God's commandments, and selfishness may cause us to resent our responsibility to obey his laws. Such attitudes, however, are folly. It is only through obedience to the divine will that we

More to be desired are they than gold, Yea, than much fine gold; Sweeter also than honey and the honeycomb. Moreover by them Your servant is warned, And in keeping them there is great reward.”—Ps. 19:7-11, *NKJV*

There is “great reward” in keeping the laws of God. We acknowledge a future reward in his eternal kingdom. There are also blessings at the present time through obedience to God. Our soul is converted to his divine will; we are made wise; we rejoice in the glorious promises of Scripture; our eyes are enlightened. These are priceless treasures now. By obeying God’s commands we are transformed day by day. “Do not conform to the pattern of this world, but be transformed by the renewing of your mind. Then you will be able to test and approve what God’s will is—his good, pleasing and perfect will.” (Rom. 12:2, *New International Version*) As God’s will is put to the proof in us, as Paul states, we find that it is good, pleasing, and simply put, perfect.

Jesus likened the process of our spiritual growth to bearing fruit. “Abide in Me, and I in you. As the branch cannot bear fruit of itself, unless it abides in the vine, neither can you, unless you abide in Me. I am the vine, you are the branches. He who abides in Me, and I in him, bears much fruit; for without Me you can do nothing. If anyone does not abide in Me, he is cast out as a branch and is withered; and they gather them and throw them into the fire, and they are burned. If you abide in Me, and My words abide in you, you will ask what you desire, and it shall be done for you. By this My Father is glorified, that you bear much fruit; so you will be My disciples.” (John 15:4-8, *NKJV*) We cannot bear fruit on our own, no matter how our human pride might claim that we can, but only through the strength we receive by abiding in Jesus. By bearing the fruit of the spirit in abundance, we glorify our Heavenly Father, and are blessed each day in proportion as we live our faith. May each moment find us rejoicing abundantly as we abide in Jesus’ love. ■

# Love One Another

**Key Verse:** *“This is the message that you heard from the beginning, that we should love one another.”*

—*I John 3:11, New King James Version*

**Selected Scripture:**  
*I John 3:11-24*

you love one another; as I have loved you, that you also love one another. By this all will know that you are My disciples, if you have love for one another.”—John 13:33-35, *NKJV*

This is the most potent of Jesus’ commands to his followers. Our love for the brethren is not optional, and it must be demonstrated by actions. Peter adds to the emphatic nature of our Lord’s command, “Since you have purified your souls in obeying the truth through the Spirit in sincere love of the brethren, love one another fervently with a pure heart.” (I Pet. 1:22, *NKJV*) Our love for one another must not be lukewarm, nor begrudgingly given. It must be fervent, and come from a pure heart.

Apostle Paul offers a clue as to how “all will know” we are Jesus’ disciples if we love one another. He states in his epistle to Titus: “At one time we too were foolish, disobedient, deceived and enslaved by all kinds of passions and pleasures. We lived in malice and envy, being hated

**IN OUR KEY VERSE APOSTLE** John takes the reader back to the “beginning,” when Jesus instructed his disciples on the principles of Christianity. “Little children, I shall be with you a little while longer. You will seek Me; and as I said to the Jews, Where I am going, you cannot come, so now I say to you. A new commandment I give to you, that

and hating one another. But when the kindness and love of God our Savior appeared, he saved us, not because of righteous things we had done, but because of his mercy. He saved us through the washing of rebirth and renewal by the Holy Spirit, ... poured out on us generously through Jesus Christ our Savior.” (Titus 3:3-6, *New International Version*) Before coming into Christ, a worldly spirit ruled in our hearts. We often exhibited envy and malice. When hated by others, we returned hatred to them. Now, the beauty of the Gospel reigns within our hearts, and we exercise the privilege and power of showing divine love to all—friends and enemies.

These words from Jesus’ sermon on the mount still ring with profound truth: “You have heard that it was said, you shall love your neighbor and hate your enemy. But I say to you, love your enemies, bless those who curse you, do good to those who hate you, and pray for those who spitefully use you and persecute you, that you may be sons of your Father in heaven; for He makes His sun rise on the evil and on the good, and sends rain on the just and on the unjust. For if you love those who love you, what reward have you? Do not even the tax collectors do the same? And if you greet your brethren only, what do you do more than others? Do not even the tax collectors do so? Therefore you shall be perfect, just as your Father in heaven is perfect.”—Matt. 5:43-48, *NKJV*

What wondrous improvements would be wrought in the world if all mankind could now love their enemies, bless those who curse them, and pray for those who persecute them. Though this is not now the case, we anticipate the days soon coming when, as the Scripture says, “They shall not hurt nor destroy” in all God’s holy kingdom, for the earth shall be “full of the knowledge of the LORD.” (Isa. 11:9) What better way to prepare for this time than to love our Christian brethren in sincerity, and let it overflow to all whose lives we touch each day. ■

# Love Does Not Hold Back

**Key Verse:** *“Now the multitude of those who believed were of one heart and one soul; neither did anyone say that any of the things he possessed was his own, but they had all things in common.”*

—Acts 4:32, New King James Version

**Selected Scripture:**  
Acts 4:32-5:11

Their sin was not so much holding back some of their money, but rather that they lied about giving it all. “Peter said, Ananias, why has Satan filled your heart to lie to the Holy Spirit and keep back part of the price of the land for yourself? While it remained, was it not your own? And after it was sold, was it not in your own control? Why have you conceived this thing in your heart? You have not lied to men but to God.” (vss. 3,4, NKJV) The sale of the land was fully under Ananias and Sapphira’s control. However, they misrepresented what they had done,

## **OUR KEY VERSE TELLS US**

much concerning the altruistic nature of the early Christians. The excitement they shared in the fact of Jesus’ resurrection was amplified by the miraculous signs and powers granted by the outpouring of the Holy Spirit. Thousands were being added to the church. In the midst of all the good will among the brethren, however, a very sour note fell. Ananias and his wife Sapphira sold a piece of land belonging to them. They gave of the proceeds to the church, but the gift was tainted.—Acts 5:1,2

perhaps trying to buy influence in the church. By lying to the apostles, they had actually lied to God, and their punishment, which was death, provides us a sobering lesson. Influence among the brotherhood is gained only by humility, honesty and selfless service.

The Early Church's experience with communal living did not continue. Some may see in their arrangement justification for a sort of Christian communism. Paul argued against this notion. He put responsibility on each believer to "lead a quiet life, to mind your own business, and to work with your own hands, as we commanded you, that you may walk properly toward those who are outside, and that you may lack nothing." (I Thess. 4:11,12, *NKJV*) Paul practiced what he preached: "You yourselves know how you ought to follow us, for we were not disorderly among you; nor did we eat anyone's bread free of charge, but worked with labor and toil night and day, that we might not be a burden to any of you, not because we do not have authority, but to make ourselves an example of how you should follow us. For even when we were with you, we commanded you this: If anyone will not work, neither shall he eat."—II Thess. 3:7-10, *NKJV*

Being self-sufficient in providing for our households teaches us the virtues of responsibility and accountability. Paul could have relied on other brethren to support him, but he knew it was best to provide for himself and his companions with his own hands. Note his insightful words to the Corinthians, "Truly the signs of an apostle were accomplished among you with all perseverance, in signs and wonders and mighty deeds. For what is it in which you were inferior to other churches, except that I myself was not burdensome to you? Forgive me this wrong! Now for the third time I am ready to come to you. And I will not be burdensome to you; for I do not seek yours, but you." (II Cor. 12:12-14, *NKJV*) Regardless of our temporal station in life, our zeal and love for the Lord must not hold back. Let us willingly give our little all for his cause. ■

# Impartial Love

**Key Verses:** *“If you really fulfill the royal law according to the Scripture, you shall love your neighbor as yourself, you do well; but if you show partiality, you commit sin, and are convicted by the law as transgressors.”*

—James 2:8,9, *New King James Version*

**Selected Scripture:**  
*James 2:1-13*

God, bringing every thought into captivity to the obedience of Christ. ... Do you look at things according to the outward appearance? If anyone is convinced in himself that he is Christ's, let him again consider this in himself, that just as he is Christ's, even so we are Christ's.” (II Cor. 10:3-7, *NKJV*) By God's grace, we are to pull down all strongholds of personal prejudice, realizing that they are selfish and false. We also must cast off all inherited bigotry, often expressed as self-entitlement and arrogance.

One of the most beloved Bible statements in this regard

## **THE KEY VERSES OF OUR**

lesson extol the virtue of impartiality in expressing Godly love. As Christians, we fight against prejudice and partiality. Some are obvious such as nationalistic pride, social status, and racial stereotypes. We must dig deeper, however, and work together with God's spirit to fight our internal war against all partiality. “For though we walk in the flesh, we do not war according to the flesh. For the weapons of our warfare are not carnal but mighty in God for pulling down strongholds, casting down arguments and every high thing that exalts itself against the knowledge of

is found in these words, “The LORD does not see as man sees; for man looks at the outward appearance, but the LORD looks at the heart.” (I Sam. 16:7, *NKJV*) The Apostle James’ words also are powerful and searching. They speak plainly without further need of explanation.

“My brethren, do not hold the faith of our Lord Jesus Christ, the Lord of glory, with partiality. For if there should come into your assembly a man with gold rings, in fine apparel, and there should also come in a poor man in filthy clothes, and you pay attention to the one wearing the fine clothes and say to him, ‘You sit here in a good place,’ and say to the poor man, ‘You stand there,’ or, ‘Sit here at my footstool,’ have you not shown partiality among yourselves, and become judges with evil thoughts? Listen, my beloved brethren: Has God not chosen the poor of this world to be rich in faith and heirs of the kingdom which He promised to those who love Him? But you have dishonored the poor man. Do not the rich oppress you and drag you into the courts? Do they not blaspheme that noble name by which you are called? If you really fulfill the royal law according to the Scripture, ‘You shall love your neighbor as yourself,’ you do well; but if you show partiality, you commit sin, and are convicted by the law as transgressors. For whoever shall keep the whole law, and yet stumble in one point, he is guilty of all. ... So speak and so do as those who will be judged by the law of liberty. For judgment is without mercy to the one who has shown no mercy. Mercy triumphs over judgment.”—James 2:1-13, *NKJV*

God is impartial. He appointed judges in Israel and said to them, “Take heed to what you are doing, for you do not judge for man but for the LORD, who is with you in the judgment. Now therefore, let the fear of the LORD be upon you; take care and do it, for there is no iniquity with the LORD our God, no partiality, nor taking of bribes.” (II Chron. 19:6,7, *NKJV*) May we always hold our judgments in integrity with no partiality in the expression of our love. ■

# Faith in Things Unseen

***“Faith is a basis of things hoped for, a conviction of things unseen.”*** **IN THE BOOK OF HEBREWS,** chapter eleven, the Apostle Paul begins by defining faith, as stated in our opening verse. He then goes on to describe a list of individuals from Old Testament times who received promises from God and then demonstrated faith in those promises by their actions. Consequently, they all “obtained a good report through faith.” (Heb. 11:39) Their faith enabled them to pass through the experiences and tests which God permitted to come upon them. In particular, Paul points out from the life of Abraham more lessons of faith than from any other individual cited in this chapter, covering much of his life.—vss. 8-19

When God first called Abram, whose name he later changed to Abraham, he promised him and his progeny “a land that I will shew thee. ... Unto thy seed will I give this land.” (Gen. 12:1,7) Abraham had never seen this land. Nevertheless, he accepted the invitation and left his native country “not knowing whither he went.” (Heb. 11:8) God also promised him that he would have a “seed,” or child. However,

his wife Sarah “was barren.” (Gen. 11:30) Abraham did not know how this portion of the promise would be fulfilled, although he believed that God was both willing and able to fulfill his promises.

## **OUR EXPERIENCES SIMILAR**

Many experiences which Jesus’ followers have during the present age require a faith similar to Abraham’s. God permits us to undergo various experiences so that we may develop a strong and immovable faith. As our faith develops and takes hold upon God’s promises, we are led to value most highly spiritual things, those which cannot be seen by the natural eye, nor understood by human intellect.—I Cor. 2:5-14

Another portion of the promise given to Abraham included the wonderful plan of our Heavenly Father for all mankind, which states, “In thee shall all families of the earth be blessed.” (Gen. 12:2,3) Many years later, the psalmist David asked God, “What is man, that thou art mindful of him?” (Ps. 8:4) Abraham may have similarly wondered: Who am I, that God should speak to me and make known his purpose to bless all the families of the earth? This, however, was exactly what God did, and Abraham had the necessary faith to believe what the Creator had told him. He demonstrated his faith by believing the “things unseen” which God had promised.

Faith is not blind belief, in the sense of having no basis upon which to rest. On the contrary, faith is founded upon a knowledge of God’s divine purposes and promises, as given in the Bible. Paul explains that all divinely inspired Scripture is “profitable for teaching, for conviction, for correction, for that discipline which is in righteousness; so that the man of

God may be complete, thoroughly fitted for every good work.” (II Tim. 3:16,17, *Diaglott*) Elsewhere, the apostle says that “faith cometh by hearing, and hearing by the word of God.” (Rom. 10:17) Faith has been concisely described as “believing and completely trusting what God says.” Thus, in the case of Abraham, all he needed to know was what God had promised, and his faith rested upon this.

### **GOD FULFILLS ALL HIS PROMISES**

Those seeking after God increasingly realize that he has kept and will continue to fulfill all his promises. Through the words of Isaiah, he states: “As the rain and the snow come down from heaven, and do not return to it without watering the earth and making it bud and flourish, so that it yields seed for the sower and bread for the eater, so is my word that goes out from my mouth: It will not return to me empty, but will accomplish what I desire and achieve the purpose for which I sent it.” (Isa. 55:10,11, *New International Version*) How glad we are to learn that God will soon restore all mankind to life upon the earth and give everyone an opportunity to live everlastingly upon a perfect earth. (Isa. 26:19; 35:1-10; Luke 2:10; Acts 3:20,21) God is never late in fulfilling his promises. As Peter wrote, “The Lord is not slow in keeping his promise, as some understand slowness. He is patient with you, not wanting anyone to perish, but everyone to come to repentance.” —II Pet. 3:9, *NIV*

During the present Gospel Age, a special opportunity has been afforded to become a partaker of the “heavenly calling.” (Heb. 3:1; Phil. 3:14) At first, some may have wondered: Why would God choose

me for such favor and honor as to be privileged to hear, through the Scriptures, his voice? However, in time we learn that God's grace is bestowed upon us, "not according to our works, but according to his own purpose and grace, which was given us in Christ Jesus." (II Tim. 1:9) It is wonderful indeed to answer this invitation from the Heavenly Father, but it is also costly. God said to Abraham, "Get thee out of thy country, and from thy kindred, and from thy father's house." (Gen. 12:1) This meant the forsaking of much that Abraham held dear, but he obeyed.

Similarly, we hear, through the prophetic Word, God inviting us to "forget also thine own people, and thy father's house." (Ps. 45:10) While this invitation does not have the same literal meaning as did God's call to Abraham, it is no less exacting in terms of sacrifice. We are not asked, necessarily, to move away a great distance as in the case of Abraham, but we are invited to put God first in all our hopes, plans and goals. Jesus stated that those who love father, mother, husband, wife, or other earthly family more than they love him, cannot be his "disciple." —Matt. 10:37; Luke 14:26

This does not mean that we are to ignore the needs of our family. Paul states emphatically, "If any provide not for his own, and specially for those of his own house, he hath denied the faith." (I Tim. 5:8) Indeed, in the case of Abraham, when called to leave his native land, he took with him his family—Sarah his wife, Terah his father, and his young nephew Lot, whose father Haran had previously died. (Gen. 11:31) As followers of Jesus, the call to forget "thine own people and thy father's house" means that we have an opportunity to forego a future earthly resurrection,

and the blessings of God's kingdom on earth, soon to come. (Matt. 6:10) Rather, we instead embark now upon a lifelong journey of character development in order to receive, if faithful unto death, a heavenly resurrection—the “first” resurrection.—Col. 1:5; Rev. 2:10; 20:6

### **GOD'S PROMISES—OUR FOUNDATION OF FAITH**

If we have responded to the heavenly calling by making a full and unreserved consecration to God, we then begin to gradually develop faith in God's “exceeding great and precious promises.” (II Pet. 1:4) We come to understand that, from an eternal standpoint, “no good thing will he withhold from them that walk uprightly” in the narrow way. (Ps. 84:11; Matt. 7:14) In time, we develop the conviction that “all things work together for good to them that love God, to them who are the called according to his purpose,” and we appreciate more deeply “what manner of love the Father hath bestowed upon us, that we should be called the sons of God.” (Rom. 8:28; I John 3:1) These and many other precious promises of God are the “basis” of our faith, and which give us “conviction” in “things unseen,” as described in our opening text.

Like Abraham, we answer the call not knowing the exact manner in which all our experiences will come about, and the way in which they will be supervised by God to develop our characters. We do know, from the Scriptures, that God is asking us to devote our all to him, including time, talents, means, reputation and influence. (Matt. 16:24; Luke 6:22,23; Phil. 3:7,8; I Pet. 4:2) Abraham's faith grew stronger with the passage of time. When God first spoke to

him, his faith was sufficient to obey God's call to leave his native land. Later, however, as his faith was tested, he did not always fully obey as he might have done. (Gen. 20:1-18) In this also is a lesson for us, as we too may not always follow the Lord's instructions as fully as we should.

### **“UNSEEN” VERSUS “SEEN” THINGS**

When we dedicate ourselves in consecration to God, we tell him that it is our intention to leave “those things which are behind.” (Phil. 3:13) However, due to fleshly weakness, we may often lay hold upon the heavenly promises with one hand, while with the other hand we still cling to earthly things. We hear the admonition, “Set your affection on things above, not on things on the earth,” and we try to do so. Yet, at times, our affections may come tumbling down to earth and entangle themselves around the temporary joys and advantages which we promised God we would give up, in order to make progress toward heavenly glory.—Col. 3:1,2

Our minds and hearts will not bend heavenward all at once. It requires training and struggle over our consecrated lifetime to carry this out as we would like. It is here that faith becomes so essential. As the apostle explains, “This is the victory [Greek, *nike*: the means of success] that overcometh the world, even our faith.” (I John 5:4) If our faith in the “unseen” heavenly promises of God is weak, then they are sure to be proportionately less important to us. At the same time, the “seen” things, the temporary blessings and pleasures of this world, we will deem of greater value. However, if our faith is strong, the “unseen” things of God will become real and vital, and the

“seen” things of the present life will fade to a position of relative unimportance.—II Cor. 4:17,18

As Abraham was put to the test, each experience enabled his faith to grow stronger. God has also promised to permit a variety of circumstances to come into our lives, in order to strengthen our faith and give us opportunities to develop a firmer hold upon his promises.—Heb. 12:5-11

### **FAITH DEVELOPED OVER TIME**

One of God’s methods of developing the faith of his people is in connection with the element of time. In the sight of God, “a thousand years ... are but as yesterday.” (Ps. 90:4) By contrast, we often measure time relative to our lifespan. Consequently, ten years may seem to us like a long time. If God permits us to wait that long for the fulfillment of one or more of his promises, our faith is put to a severe test, yet we should not become discouraged nor lose faith.

Such was the case with Abraham. When he was seventy-five years old, in addition to promising land, God pledged to him that he and his wife Sarah would have a son, a “seed.” (Gen. 12:1-4) However, after eleven years had passed and no son was born to Sarah, Abraham’s faith was tested. Consequently, he followed Sarah’s suggestion that he father a child by her handmaid, Hagar. As a result, a son, Ishmael, was born to Abraham by Hagar.—Gen. 16:1-16

Thirteen years after Ishmael was born, God spoke to Abraham, telling him again that he and his wife Sarah would have a son, and his name would be called Isaac. When Abraham heard this, he fell on his face and laughed. (Gen. 17:15-17) Then he replied to God, “O that Ishmael [Hagar’s son] might live

before thee!” (vs. 18) Here was a momentary lack of faith. Abraham was suggesting that Ishmael could just as well be the seed of promise. If God would accept this arrangement, then there would be no more difficulty about the promised seed.

Abraham’s laughter seemed to indicate he doubted that Sarah would ever bear a son. When God first made the promise that they would have a child, Sarah was sixty-five years old and barren. At that time, evidently, Abraham’s faith was strong enough to believe that God would overcome Sarah’s barrenness. However, twenty-four years had now passed by, and this had not occurred. Sarah was not only still barren, but with Abraham now ninety-nine years old and Sarah eighty-nine years old, both were well past the normal age for conceiving a child. (Gen. 17:1) Why, they perhaps thought, should God keep talking about what was highly unlikely?

Abraham did not know how God would fulfill his promise, and at first his faith was not strong enough to believe what he could not “see.” Had Abraham understood, in detail, the way God would fulfill his promises, he would have been walking by sight, and not by faith. All he really needed to know was that God had made a promise, and this should have been a sufficient foundation for his faith. In the end it was, because after God reassured Abraham that he and Sarah would have a son, he “staggered not at the promise of God through unbelief; but was strong in faith, ... And being fully persuaded that, what he had promised, he was able also to perform.”—Gen. 18:1-14; 21:1-7; Rom. 4:16-21

God also tests our faith oftentimes by permitting us to wait for the fulfillment of his promises. This

principle of God's dealings with his people is indicated by the message which he gave to the Prophet Habakkuk: "The vision is yet for an appointed time, ... though it tarry, wait for it; because it will surely come." (Hab. 2:2,3) Indeed, the Lord's people in this end of the Gospel Age have had their faith severely tested by the seemingly long wait for the fruition of their hopes. The signs Jesus spoke of concerning present world conditions, including the "distress of nations, with perplexity; ... Men's hearts failing them for fear," should be a great stimulus to our faith, for as he further explained, "When these things begin to come to pass, then look up, and lift up your heads; for your redemption [deliverance] draweth nigh."—Luke 21:25-28

### **SEVERE TESTS OF FAITH**

At ninety years of age, Sarah gave birth to Isaac, the promised seed. God had kept his long-stated promise! Years later, however, when Isaac grew to be a young man, Abraham's faith was further tested in a most difficult manner. God asked him to offer Isaac in sacrifice. This was truly a severe test upon Abraham, but through many years of experience his faith had grown strong, and he had learned to trust all of God's promises. He knew that it was nothing short of the power of God which enabled him and Sarah to have a son. Abraham had now heard the voice of God again, and to the human mind, the message seemed contrary to all that had been previously promised. God had performed a miracle in order that Isaac might be born, so why should he now be slain?—Gen. 22:1-18

However, Abraham raised no such question, but fully obeyed, because of his faith in the wisdom, love

and power of God. His faith had become so strong that he believed God could raise Isaac from the dead, in order to fulfill his promises in connection with the seed. (Heb. 11:17-19) This was “full assurance of faith!” (Heb. 10:22) It is comparatively easy to have faith in God and in his promises when the circumstances of life are favorable, such as having a comfortable home, a loving family, a secure job and good health. Besides these temporal blessings, we enjoy privileges of fellowship with the brethren and service of the Truth. Thus we exclaim: Surely the Lord is good!

We may have a strong faith under such favorable circumstances, but how strong is our faith when God’s providences permit troubles, illness, difficulties or various injustices to come upon us? God spoke to Abraham in terms of sacrifice, and he speaks to us in the same manner. Is our faith, like Abraham’s, strong enough to obey even though we may not know the reason for the experiences which God is permitting us to have? It was a great joy to Abraham when Isaac was born and for him to experience the obvious, miraculous power of God in this matter. Now, however, it was different. This dear son whom he loved, this miracle son, was now to be slain as a sacrificial offering. This is what the voice of God said, and in full faith, Abraham obeyed.

How does our faith compare with that of Abraham? Jesus said, “Peace I leave with you.” (John 14:27) We accept that with rejoicing, and the peace and joy of the Lord is received as a blessed portion. However, how do we react when we hear those other words, “I beseech you therefore, brethren, ... that ye present your bodies a living sacrifice, holy, acceptable unto God, which is your reasonable      *(Continued on page 36)*

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(Continued from page 31) service?” (Rom. 12:1) Do we recognize this heavenly call to sacrifice as also being the voice of God; and recognizing it, are we continuing to obey it?

## **GOD PROVIDES**

The place designated by God where Isaac was to be offered in sacrifice was a three-day journey from Abraham’s home. On the third day, he instructed the two young men who had accompanied them to remain and that he and Isaac would continue on. “Abraham took the wood of the burnt offering, and laid it upon Isaac his son; and he took the fire in his hand, and a knife; and they went both of them together.”—Gen. 22:1-7

With simple but profound faith, Abraham replied, “My son, God will provide himself a lamb.” (vs. 8) Abraham did not know just what God would do, but he had faith to believe that God would make some provision to spare Isaac from death. We know this because when Abraham told the two young men to stay behind, he also said to them, “I and the lad will go yonder and worship, and come again to you.”—vs. 5

When Abraham raised the knife to slay Isaac, an angel of the Lord intervened to prevent the killing. Turning around, Abraham saw a ram—a male lamb caught in a thicket by its horns—which God had miraculously provided for an offering in Isaac’s stead. (vss. 9-13) Abraham did not know why this test of faith had been put upon him, but now we understand. We see in this experience a picture of the willing sacrifice of Jesus, the true “lamb of God” which God provided to take away the sin of the whole

world. (John 1:29; I Pet. 1:18,19) Additionally, the Scriptures inform us that Isaac is a picture of the Christ class—Jesus the head, and those faithful to the heavenly calling as members of his body.—Gal. 3:16,27-29; 4:28

There is something very insightful in the statement the angel of the Lord made to Abraham following this experience. He said, “Now I know that thou fearest [reverence] God, seeing thou hast not withheld thy son, thine only son from me.” (Gen. 22:12) This indicates that God had reserved judgment concerning Abraham until he fully demonstrated his faith. It is the same with us. When we finally reach the end of our life, if we have been successful in demonstrating our faith by our actions, we will hear, “Well done, thou good and faithful servant: ... enter thou into the joy of thy Lord.”—Matt. 25:21

Abraham “died in faith,” not having received the fulfillment of all the promises God had made to him. Sarah had borne a son, but that seed had not yet blessed all the families of the earth. God had promised him the land of Canaan, but, while Abraham sojourned in it for a while, he never owned nor truly possessed it. (Acts 7:5) The complete fulfillment of God’s promises to him will not be until the resurrection. Thus it is with us. Faith will not have gained its victory until we have been “faithful unto death,” and receive the “crown of life.” (Rev. 2:10) Let us, therefore, remember these words of the Apostle Paul: “Our light and momentary troubles are achieving for us an eternal glory that far outweighs them all. So we fix our eyes not on what is seen, but on what is unseen. For what is seen is temporary, but what is unseen is eternal.”—II Cor. 4:17,18, *NIV* ■

# Samuel—Judge and Prophet

*“Samuel judged Israel all the days of his life. And he went from year to year in circuit to Bethel, and Gilgal, and Mizpeh, and judged Israel in all those places.”*

—*I Samuel 7:15,16*

**SAMUEL WAS ONE OF** those who served Israel as a judge, as had Gideon, Jephthah and others. Samuel, however, was more than a judge in Israel. The record states that he was “established to be a prophet of the LORD.” (I Sam. 3:20) In the New Testament, the Apostle Peter places him as the second of the Old Testament prophets, Moses being the first. (Acts 3:22,24) Samuel was a faithful, God-reverencing servant of Israel, and was the last of their judges, for it was during his time that the nation began to be ruled by kings.

The circumstances leading up to Samuel’s birth, as well as his experiences as a child, had an important bearing on his life as a servant of God. His father’s name was Elkanah, and his mother’s name, Hannah. Although married for some years, Hannah was childless. This greatly distressed her, and when she went with Elkanah to worship and offer sacrifice at Shiloh year by year, “she wept, and did not eat.”

Her husband loved her dearly and said, “Why weepest thou? and why eatest thou not? and why is thy heart grieved? am not I better to thee than ten sons?”—I Sam. 1:3-8

Hannah could not be comforted. She went to the house of the Lord and there poured out her heart to the God of Israel. While Eli the priest was seated close by, Hannah “prayed unto the LORD, and wept sore. And she vowed a vow, and said, O LORD of hosts, if thou wilt indeed look on the affliction of thine handmaid, and remember me, and not forget thine handmaid, but wilt give unto thine handmaid a man child, then I will give him unto the LORD all the days of his life, and there shall no razor come upon his head.”—vss. 9-11

At that time Eli was Israel’s high priest. He noticed from his vantage point the tenseness of Hannah while she was so earnestly praying, and he supposed she was intoxicated. He said to her, “How long wilt thou be drunken? put away thy wine from thee.” Hannah denied this charge and explained, “Out of the abundance of my complaint and grief have I spoken hitherto.” Eli then answered and said to Hannah, “Go in peace: and the God of Israel grant thee thy petition that thou hast asked of him.” (vss. 13-17) The God of Israel did grant her petition. When her son was born she named him Samuel, which means “heard of God.” Explaining the name she had given him, Hannah said, “Because I have asked him of the LORD.”—vs. 20

Hannah was true to the promise she made to the Lord. As soon as her child was weaned she took him to Shiloh, to the house of God, and said, “As long as he lives he is dedicated to the LORD.” (vs. 28, *New*

*American Standard Bible*) The boy Samuel became a servant to Eli, the priest. Eli evidently loved the Lord and desired to serve him faithfully as priest, but his two sons, Hophni and Phinehas, who would be the underpriests, were wicked. The record states, "The sons of Eli were sons of Belial [Hebrew: worthless]; they knew not the LORD." (I Sam. 2:12) Eli knew of his sons' evil deeds in connection with their service, but aside from severely scolding them, he seemingly did nothing further to rectify the situation.

The Lord then addressed the situation. First, he gave a message to Eli by an angel, referred to as "a man of God." It was a declaration of condemnation against the house of Eli, in which it was stated that the two wicked sons would die, "in one day." (vss. 27-36) The youth Samuel was ministering before Eli at this time. His first official assignment from the Lord was to confirm to Eli the message of condemnation and judgment which had been given by the angel. We read that the "word from the LORD was rare in those days, visions were infrequent." (I Sam. 3:1, *NASB*) This means that there was no prophet in the land at that time who could speak authoritatively for God. While the Lord had miraculously directed various of his servants such as Joshua, Gideon and others, none since Moses had been constituted a prophet. Now, however, the young man Samuel was about to be initiated as a prophet, and his first message would be far from a pleasant one.

Young Samuel began his service to God as a prophet in a very unique manner. From early childhood he had served Eli in the house of the Lord.

The account states, “It came to pass at that time, when Eli was laid down in his place, and his eyes began to wax dim, that he could not see; And ere the lamp of God went out in the temple of the LORD, where the ark of God was, and Samuel was laid down to sleep; That the LORD called Samuel: and he answered, Here am I.”—I Sam 3:2-4

Samuel did not know that this was the Lord calling him. He supposed that Eli had spoken to him, needing some assistance. He was surprised to learn that Eli had not called. He went back to bed, only to hear his name spoken a second time, and again he reported to Eli. He had the same experience a third time, and Eli then perceived that it must be the Lord who was speaking to the boy. He told Samuel that if he heard his name called again, to answer, “Speak, LORD, for thy servant heareth.”—vss. 5-9

The Lord did speak to Samuel again, and he responded as Eli had instructed. Then the Lord gave this new prophet in Israel his first message to deliver. It was: “In that day I will perform against Eli all things which I have spoken concerning his house: when I begin, I will also make an end. For I have told him that I will judge his house for ever for the iniquity which he knoweth; because his sons made themselves vile, and he restrained them not.”—vss. 10-13

This was a difficult message for Samuel to deliver to Eli, to whom he was loyal. However, the next morning Eli, suspecting that the young man had received a message for him from the Lord, insisted that he tell it all, which Samuel faithfully did. It was a blow to Eli, but he took it well, and said, “It is the LORD: let him do what seemeth him good.”—vss. 16-18

In due course the judgment fell upon the house of Eli, just as Samuel had prophesied in his confirmation of the angel's message which previously had been given directly to Eli. Thus was this young servant of God confirmed as a prophet. The record is that "Samuel grew, and the LORD was with him, and did let none of his words fall to the ground. And all Israel from Dan even to Beersheba knew that Samuel was established to be a prophet of the LORD."—I Sam. 3:19,20

### **SAMUEL DELIVERS ISRAEL**

As a judge, Samuel wrought a great deliverance for Israel from the hands of the Philistines. However, this did not occur until these enemies of the nation had been permitted to destroy the sons of Eli and thus carry out the divine judgment against them.—I Sam. 4:1-11

True to the method employed by all whom the Lord raised up as judges to deliver Israel, Samuel's first step was to call the nation back to the true worship of God. The record states, "Samuel spake unto all the house of Israel, saying, If ye do return unto the LORD with all your hearts, then put away the strange gods and Ashtaroth from among you, and prepare your hearts unto the LORD, and serve him only: and he will deliver you out of the hands of the Philistines." The people heeded this exhortation, and then Samuel instructed them, "Gather all Israel to Mizpeh, and I will pray for you unto the LORD."—I Sam. 7:3-5

This was a great test of Samuel's faith. While the people were gathered at Mizpeh, they were surrounded by the Philistines. Samuel, however, offered sacrifice

to the Lord and continued to pray. Meanwhile, “the Philistines drew near to battle against Israel: but the LORD thundered with a great thunder on that day upon the Philistines, and discomfited them; and they were smitten before Israel.”—vs. 10

“Then Samuel took a stone, and set it between Mizpeh and Shen, and called the name of it Ebenezer, saying, Hitherto hath the LORD helped us.” The Philistines were subdued, not only in that one encounter, but, as the record states, “They came no more into the coast of Israel: and the hand of the LORD was against the Philistines all the days of Samuel”—that is, all the days during which he served as judge.—vss. 12,13

### **THE PEOPLE ASK FOR A KING**

Samuel’s judgeship was terminated before his death by the demand of the Israelites that they have a king to rule over them. Samuel had appointed his sons to succeed him as judges, but they were wicked. “His sons walked not in his ways, but turned aside after lucre, and took bribes, and perverted judgment.” (I Sam. 8:1-3) The elders of Israel saw this as an opportunity to present their request. They gathered together and came to Samuel, saying, “Behold, thou art old, and thy sons walk not in thy ways: now make us a king to judge us like all the nations.” Samuel was greatly displeased with this request, perhaps feeling that his many years as judge of Israel was now being rejected. He also knew that only God himself should properly be considered Israel’s sovereign king.—vss. 4-6

Samuel took the matter to the Lord in prayer, and the instructions he received were: “Hearken

unto the voice of the people in all that they say unto thee: for they have not rejected thee, but they have rejected me, that I should not reign over them. According to all the works which they have done since the day that I brought them up out of Egypt even unto this day, wherewith they have forsaken me, and served other gods, so do they also unto thee.”—I Sam. 8:7,8

The Lord explained in comforting Samuel that the people had for centuries been treating him just as they were now treating Samuel. What a sad testimony was thus given by God concerning his covenant people. He told Samuel to consent to their ill-conceived desire, but also to “protest solemnly unto them, and shew them the manner of the king that shall reign over them.” (vs. 9) Samuel did this, and in verses 10-18 we have the prophet’s eloquent account of the burdens that would be heaped upon the people and the difficulties they would encounter under the rulership of kings.

“Nevertheless the people refused to obey the voice of Samuel; and they said, Nay; but we will have a king over us.” (vs. 19) How much this is like the attitude of all whose hearts are not in tune with the Lord, and whose ears are dulled to the warnings which he so lovingly gives to those who are turning in the wrong direction. In effect, the people said to God’s prophet: We hear all you say, but we do not believe you are right; and in any case, we want a king.

## **SAUL, ISRAEL’S FIRST KING**

While in reality the nation had rejected both Samuel and the Lord, the people did not go so far in their rebellion as to select and anoint their own

king. Superficially, at least, they looked to God and to Samuel to cooperate in their demand. In I Samuel chapters 9, 10 and 11 are recorded the circumstances leading up to the choosing and anointing of Saul as the first king of Israel. At the climax of these events, the record states, “All the people went to Gilgal; and there they made Saul king before the LORD; ... and there Saul and all the men of Israel rejoiced greatly.”—I Sam. 11:15

It was shortly after these events that we discover the real stature of Samuel as a servant and prophet of the Lord. He had yielded obediently to God’s instructions to anoint a king over Israel. He also knew that their demand for a king was a rejection of the Lord and of himself. Samuel then presented himself to the people. He asked them to bear witness if he had at any time, through his whole lifetime of service to the nation, ever defrauded or oppressed them in any way.

The people answered, “Thou hast not defrauded us, nor oppressed us, neither hast thou taken ought of any man’s hand.” Then Samuel continued, “The LORD is witness against you, and his anointed is witness this day, that ye have not found ought in my hand. And they answered, He is witness.” Then briefly, yet eloquently, Samuel reminded the people of the wonderful way God had cared for the nation from the time of their great deliverance from Egypt.—I Sam. 12:4-11

In this oration, Samuel stressed particularly the marvelous manner in which the Lord had delivered the people every time they cried to him for help and gave up their worship of false gods. On every such occasion the Lord provided one who, working as his instrument, delivered them from the hand of their

enemies. He brought the lesson up to date by reminding them that he himself had been used to deliver them from the oppressive hand of the Philistines.

Then, referring to a current situation in which the nation was in sore need of help, Samuel said, "When ye saw that Nahash the king of the children of Ammon came against you, ye said unto me, Nay; but a king shall reign over us: when the LORD your God was your king. Now therefore behold the king whom ye have chosen, and whom ye have desired! and, behold, the LORD hath set a king over you. If ye will fear the LORD, and serve him, and obey his voice, and not rebel against the commandment of the LORD, then shall both ye and also the king that reigneth over you continue following the LORD your God."—I Sam. 12:12-14

Samuel also warned, however, that if the people and their king did not continue faithful, "then shall the hand of the LORD be against you, as it was against your fathers." (vs. 15) With the object of impressing upon the people the fact of their great sin in asking for a king to rule over them, Samuel called upon God, who "sent thunder and rain that day: and all the people greatly feared the LORD and Samuel. And all the people said unto Samuel, Pray for thy servants unto the LORD thy God, that we die not: for we have added unto all our sins this evil, to ask us a king."—vss. 16-19

Having received this confession of sin from the people, Samuel told them that, despite their previous sins, if they turned back to the Lord, he would be with them. "The LORD will not forsake his people for his great name's sake: because it hath pleased the LORD to make you his people. Moreover as for

me, God forbid that I should sin against the LORD in ceasing to pray for you: but I will teach you the good and the right way: Only fear the LORD, and serve him in truth with all your heart: for consider how great things he hath done for you.”—I Sam. 12:20-24

### **SAMUEL’S UNPLEASANT TASK**

From the time Saul became king in Israel, Samuel’s chief role was that of prophet. God’s ancient and holy prophets served not only as seers to forecast future events, but also to relay messages to the nation of Israel through its kings and religious leaders. It was in this role that Samuel gave Saul instructions from the Lord: “Go and smite Amalek, and utterly destroy all that they have, and spare them not; but slay both man and woman, infant and suckling, ox and sheep, camel and ass.”—I Sam. 15:3

It is only from the standpoint of God’s plan to restore all the dead to life and give them an opportunity to accept Christ, obey the laws of the Messianic kingdom, and live forever, that we can understand such instructions as coming from a God of love. Knowing this, we can appreciate that it was an act of divine mercy to destroy the women and children together with the men, rather than to leave them behind to mourn and to suffer privation and lifelong loss. What a glorious time it will be when they all will be raised from death and reunited, with the further opportunity of gaining eternal life upon the earth!

Saul did not fully comply with God’s instructions, allowing the Israelites to spare the lives of some of the Amalekites’ cattle. His excuse for disobedience was that the people had kept some of the best of

the cattle to offer in sacrifice, whereupon Samuel explained that “to obey is better than sacrifice, and to hearken than the fat of rams.” Then Samuel informed Saul that the Lord had rejected him from being king.—I Sam. 15:7-23

## **SELECTION OF SAUL’S SUCCESSOR**

Following this unhappy experience, Samuel was used by the Lord to seek out and to anoint a successor to Saul to be king of Israel. He was instructed to go to the house of Jesse, in Bethlehem, for God had chosen one of Jesse’s sons to be the new king. Samuel learned another valuable lesson in this experience. Jesse had a number of sons, sturdy and kingly in appearance, but none of these was the Lord’s choice. David, the youngest of them, who was tending his father’s sheep, was the one God indicated as his choice. He explained to Samuel, “The LORD seeth not as man seeth; for man looketh on the outward appearance, but the LORD looketh on the heart.”—I Sam. 16:7

In conformity with the Lord’s wishes, Samuel anointed young David to be king of Israel. This, apparently, was Samuel’s last official act of divine service. From boyhood to old age he had served the cause of the Lord and of righteousness faithfully, and he is named by Paul as one of the ancient heroes of faith, one of those who endured much in order that “they might obtain a better resurrection.”—Heb. 11:32,35

I Samuel 19:18-24 reveals that David, when persecuted, fled to Samuel and together they “went and dwelt in Naioth.” This record indicates that the presence of Samuel, the aged prophet of the

Lord, served as a protection for young David, although nothing is said of any message which Samuel may have communicated under these circumstances. Finally, the record states: "Samuel died; and all the Israelites were gathered together, and lamented him, and buried him in his house at Ramah."—I Sam. 25:1

In all that the Bible reveals of the experiences of Samuel, no flaw of character is manifested. He was loyal to God, even though called upon to render unpleasant tasks, as in confirming the judgments of the Lord against the house of Eli, and informing Saul that he had been rejected by the Lord. In these things his life of faith and faithfulness should be a great example to us, as in "this present evil world" we seek to know and to do our Heavenly Father's will.—Heb. 11:37-39; 12:1; Gal. 1:4 ■

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*To God be the glory, great things He hath done,  
So loved He the world that He gave us His Son,  
Who yielded His life an atonement for sin,  
And opened the life-gate that all may go in.*

*Praise the Lord, praise the Lord,  
Let the earth hear His voice!  
Praise the Lord, praise the Lord,  
Let the people rejoice!*

*O come to the Father through Jesus his Son,  
And give Him the glory, great things He hath done.*

—*Hymns of Dawn*

# Abounding with Thanksgiving

*“As ye have  
therefore received  
Christ Jesus the  
Lord, so walk ye in  
him: Rooted and  
built up in him,  
and stablished in  
the faith, as ye  
have been taught,  
abounding  
therein with  
thanksgiving.”  
—Colossians 2:6,7*

**THOSE WHO HAVE** entered into the blessed relationship described in our opening text should be, as the Apostle Paul states, “abounding therein with thanksgiving.” The Greek word here translated “abounding” literally means to “be in excess.” In other words, to be abounding Christians implies zeal, labor, sacrifice, and application of righteous principles

in excess of the normal way of life. This abounding, the apostle further indicates, includes our thankfulness to the Heavenly Father for having been brought into the body of Christ and made members of the family of sons.

In I Corinthians 15:58, Paul says, “Be ye stedfast, unmoveable, always abounding in the work of the Lord, forasmuch as ye know that your labour is not in vain in the Lord.” Here, he associates steadfastness

with abounding in the work of the Lord. One who is not steadfast, and not unmoveable, cannot abound in the Lord's work. Such a one is described by the Apostle James as "double minded," and "unstable in all his ways."—James 1:8

### **"SO WALK YE IN HIM"**

Paul, in our text, admonishes us to walk in Christ in keeping with the manner in which we have received him. We "received" Christ Jesus by first recognizing our own sinful and undone condition; that we were members of a sin-cursed and dying race not meriting any favors from God. Then we understood that the sacrificial work of Jesus provided redemption for us, and that through the merit of his sacrifice we could be acceptable to God. We saw in this provision a marvelous manifestation of divine love, and by it we were constrained to present ourselves in full devotion to do God's will. This step of consecration is described by the Apostle Peter as "the answer of a good conscience toward God."—I Pet. 3:21

This meant the giving up of our own wills, and the acceptance of the will of God as expressed through Christ. Thus, figuratively speaking, we were "beheaded," and accepted Christ as our Head. (Rev. 20:4) This was the condition upon which we were eligible to become members of the "body" of Christ, to be "in him," and thereafter to "walk" in him. Even then, it was only because the merit of Christ was imputed for our justification that we could be accepted into this arrangement. Paul explains, "There is therefore now no condemnation to them that are in Christ Jesus, ... who walk not after the

flesh, but after the Spirit”—the Holy Spirit by which we are anointed.—Rom. 8:1,4

Briefly, then, we “received” Christ because we accepted his will as our rule of life, and because the merit of his atoning blood made us acceptable. Thus, when the apostle exhorts us to continue walking in him as we received him, it simply means that we are continually and humbly to recognize our own unworthiness, as we did in the beginning. It means also to put down our own will and desires, as in our consecration we agreed to do, and endeavor to become more and more responsive to the leadings and the influence of the Holy Spirit, through which the will of God is revealed to us.

This formula for faithfulness to the Lord is very simple. Yet, it is most exacting because it is the difference between saying “Lord, Lord,” and actually maintaining a surrendered will regardless of what the cost may be. It is the difference between knowing the scriptural “philosophy” of the Christian life, and “living” the Christian life. We have accepted the philosophy, and now the test is to “walk ye in him.”

Our text further says that in order to carry out daily the terms of our consecration, and to continue doing so faithfully to the very end of our earthly walk, it will be necessary to be “rooted and built up in him.” Here Paul changes the figure of speech from “walking” in Christ to being “rooted” in him. It might well be that the apostle had the following words of the psalmist in mind when combining the thought of walking with being rooted: “Blessed is the man that walketh not in the counsel of the ungodly, ... But his delight is in the law of the

LORD; ... And he shall be like a tree planted by the rivers of water.”—Ps. 1:1-3

A tree, to be firmly established, must have its roots grow deep into the soil. In addition, for the tree to flourish and bear fruit, its roots must also come in contact with sufficient water or moisture to meet its needs. Thus the psalmist explains that the man who loves the law of the Lord, or has fully surrendered his own will in favor of the Lord’s will, and is continuing to walk in this way of consecration, is “like a tree planted by the rivers of water.”

Applying the illustration to ourselves, it means that we need our “roots” of understanding and faith deeply embedded in the great foundations of the Truth, as they are centered in Christ. Merely a passing, surface knowledge of these will not enable us to stand resolute against the many “winds” of false doctrine which are assailing the Lord’s people in this “evil day.” (Eph. 4:14; 6:13) Indeed, as Paul states in our text, we must be “stablished in the faith.” It will not be sufficient that we believe the Truth, in any of its many facets, simply because someone else has told us to do so. Our own “roots” must strike down deeply into the precious promises of God which reveal his plan, and absorb their refreshing nourishment, in order for our faith to be firmly established.

If we are properly “rooted” we will be enabled to withstand all the unfavorable elements with which we are daily surrounded as Christians. In order to grow and bear fruit a tree needs both the sunshine and the rain, as well as varying degrees of temperature. Even storms are an aid in strengthening its trunk and branches. Similarly, as Christians we

need the sunshine and gentle rain of God's favor, as manifested in many of the precious blessings of Christian experience. We also need the trials, persecutions, hardships and disappointments. The stormy winds that blow are also required if we are to be properly rooted and grounded in the Truth. All of these experiences serve to establish us the more that we might thus be "abounding therein with thanksgiving."

### **"BUILT UP IN HIM"**

In addition to being rooted in Christ and in the precious truths of which he is the embodiment, Paul says we are to be "built up" in him. In another of his epistles, the apostle writes that by "speaking the truth in love" we "grow up into him [Christ] in all things." (Eph. 4:15) While the thoughts of being "built up" and to "grow up" are slightly different, the "all things" applies to both. If we are walking in Christ as we have received him, and if we are properly rooted in him through a personally applied understanding of the Truth, our endeavor will be to have our lives conformed to his teachings and example in "all things."

By nature, all the Lord's people differ more or less in temperament from one another. We may find it comparatively easy to be "built up" into Jesus' example along certain lines. However, there are also circumstances that may arise in which we pay insufficient attention to those directives of the Word that are contrary to the downward tendencies of our own human desires. To the extent that we fall victim to this, we cannot truly be "abounding" Christians.

To be built up into Christ also means to “love one another” as he loved us—that is, to have a sacrificing love which leads us to “lay down our lives for the brethren.” (John 13:34,35; I John 3:16) This has to be more than merely a thought. It must be translated into action, not half-heartedly, but in an abounding manner. The measure of an abounding love for the brethren will not be our convenience, but the extent of their need and the opportunity we have to sacrifice our time and energy on their behalf. The example of Jesus’ sacrificing love will be our guide as to the strength and the means we will devote to the service of our brethren, whether it be ministering to the needs of one or more of them individually, or in a general service on behalf of all the consecrated.

Jesus was “the light of the world,” and he said that we also were to be “the light of the world.” (John 8:12; Matt. 5:14-16) We know how faithful Jesus was in bearing witness to the Truth. It mattered not to him how much it cost of his time or strength, or even of reputation. He was always ready and glad to speak those things which the Father had given him to say. His was an abounding service, far in excess of the demands of justice. It was a service which daily absorbed his vitality to the very limit of human endurance. This is another of the “all things” in which we are to be built up into him who is our Head and our perfect example.

Throughout this present Gospel Age, only a “little flock” is found worthy to live and reign with Christ in the heavenly phase of his kingdom. (Luke 12:32) One reason is that so few who accept Christ seem to be able to progress beyond the point of merely

being beneficiaries of divine grace. They are glad that they are “saved,” and the ethical teachings of the Bible may affect a moral reformation in their lives. The Christian life, however, is much more than this. We receive all the riches of divine grace through Christ in order that we may lay down our lives as his ambassadors.

Are we abounding in this God-given “vocation” of bearing witness to the Truth, as was Jesus? (Eph. 4:1) Are our efforts in this direction in excess of our convenience, and at the cost of time and strength which could otherwise increase the ease and the pleasures of the flesh? Self-sacrificing zeal as light-bearers is one of the evidences of being built up into Christ, one of the “all things” in which his image is reflected in our lives.

### **“IT IS WRITTEN”**

Another prominent characteristic in Jesus’ life of faithfulness was his unswerving loyalty to the Father’s Word. “It is written,” was his reply to temptation. (Matt. 4:3-10) To those who followed him, he said, “I have not spoken of myself; but the Father which sent me, he gave me a commandment, what I should say, and what I should speak.” (John 12:49) Later, he said to his Heavenly Father, “I have finished the work which thou gavest me to do.” (John 17:4) In saying the things and doing the work given him by the Father, Jesus explicitly followed his instructions. There was no deviation, no compromising, and no holding back.

It is this that we agreed to do in our consecration. It is the Word of God, which now includes the teachings of Jesus and the apostles, that reveals the

Heavenly Father's will, and we have agreed to do his will. We know this to be true, but how deep do our "roots" go down into these precious truths? Are we "doers" of the Word, or merely "hearers?"—James 1:22

Paul admonished, "Study to shew thyself approved unto God." (II Tim. 2:15) It is not merely the reading and studying of the Word which brings divine approval. Our study should be for the purpose of discovering God's will in all the various details of our lives. Bible study, therefore, whether individually or together with others, is a challenge to the depth of our consecration. To read Jesus' instructions, for example, to "turn the other cheek" when smitten by an enemy, provides us with a very high standard of what God "approves," when compared to what might be the natural inclinations of our flesh.

We could easily become so inspired with the beauties of the Truth, and so filled with the desire to tell the whole world about it, that we would neglect our responsibilities toward those who are properly dependent upon us. This, too, would be contrary to what God approves. Paul wrote that one who provides not for his own is worse than an unbeliever. (I Tim. 5:8) Thus, in our study to show ourselves approved, we need to find the proper balance between the directive to let our light shine and meeting our temporal responsibilities.

## **GO TO HIM ALONE**

Because we are all still weak, according to the flesh, we may at one time or another encounter misunderstandings with others of like precious faith. We use the word "misunderstandings" because

we doubt that any truly consecrated Christian would purposely and willfully do injury to another. Nevertheless, there are times when certain circumstances may result in a conflict of some kind with another brother or sister in Christ. Situations of this kind call for the exercise of sympathetic understanding and brotherly love, and the following of Jesus' explicit instructions concerning such matters.

The Master said, "If thy brother shall trespass against thee, go and tell him his fault between thee and him alone: if he shall hear thee, thou hast gained thy brother." (Matt. 18:15) We note that Jesus did not say: If he hear thee, thou hast justified thyself and punished thy brother. The sole purpose of such an encounter should be to fully restore to fellowship the one who we believe may have erred against us. Clearly, such an outcome is much more likely if we go to him alone, in the spirit of love.

By doing this, it would be found in most instances that what seemed to be a trespass against us appeared so only because certain words or acts had been misunderstood, and there was no intent to cause injury. Even if one had willfully trespassed in some measure, the Christlike, loving attitude we should exemplify in going to him alone, rather than involving others, would probably go far in gaining his understanding and rectifying the matter. Indeed, this would be the real purpose in going to the brother, rather than seeking recompense for injury we might have received.

## **PRESENT STRESS AND STRAIN**

The stresses and strains of the experiences which the world is passing through at the present time have resulted in a mixture of restlessness, irritability,

anger and fear on the part of nearly all mankind. The Lord's own people are not free from these influences. We may, at times, in looking at the conditions in the world around us, or even at our own experiences, have varying conceptions of what we hear, see, or experience, from others among the brotherhood. We must take great care, however, that we do not allow these things to impact our relationship with Christ's fellow body members in any negative way.

This is especially so since Satan is ever alert to stir up strife among the consecrated people of God, and is ready and anxious to pit our opinions one against the other. Let us all, then, practice the art of being good listeners, and careful observers. As Paul states, let us not say or do "anything whereby thy brother stumbleth, or is offended, or is made weak." (Rom. 14:21) This application of the law of love is part of the fulfillment of our consecration and is one of the aspects of the will of God enjoined on us by his Word.

Due to our own imperfections and fleshly weaknesses, we may at times find ourselves in the midst of vexing situations, not knowing which way to turn, or what to do. These are experiences which indeed try our souls, and the temptation may come to us to make some rash move which might well add to the difficulty rather than lessen it. It is well to remember that life is filled with challenges which oftentimes we cannot solve by our own reasoning, nor by our own strength.

However, the Lord knows all about these trying situations. When Moses and the Israelites stood before the Red Sea with the Egyptian army close behind them and ready to destroy them, the situation looked

hopeless. They could do nothing about it, and Moses was helpless by his own power. The Lord knew, though, and provided the solution.

As we walk in Christ Jesus and are being built up in him, we will encounter Red Sea experiences. There will be perplexities which we will be unable to get around, over or through based on our own efforts. There will be times when the only thing we can do is what the Israelites were told to do: “Stand still, and see the salvation of the LORD.” (Exod. 14:13) Jeremiah learned this also, and wrote: “It is good that a man should both hope and quietly wait for the salvation of the LORD.”—Lam. 3:26

### **ABOUNDING WITH THANKSGIVING**

The 26th of this month is set aside as a national day of thanksgiving. This is good, but every day should be one of thanksgiving to the Christian who is abounding in all those things involved in carrying out the terms of their consecration. If we are walking in the Master’s footsteps, and are rooted and built up in him, and established in the faith, we will find cause for thankfulness in every experience of life. We will thank God for the sunshine and the rain, and we will thank him for the sorrow and the pain.

There seems to be a special significance in Paul’s expression, “abounding therein with thanksgiving.” Certainly this implies that our thanksgiving will abound, and if it does, it will follow that our abounding will be manifested in every aspect of the Christian life. Will we, for example, be likely to hold resentment in our hearts toward those who vex us, if we thank God for the experiences which reach us through them?

Will we not abound in our patient waiting on the Lord if we thank him for the situations which he permits to test our loyalty and the depth of our consecration?

If we are thankful to the Lord for every opportunity we have to lay down our lives in the service of the Truth, will we be likely to allow those opportunities to pass unused?

If we thank God for his Word, and for the wonderful promises and instructions it contains, will we be lax in our studies “to show ourselves approved” unto him?

If we daily thank God for his love and mercy through Christ, in recognition of our great need of his atoning blood, will it not keep us forcefully reminded of our own imperfections? Will it not also make us more sympathetic toward our brethren whom we know are also acceptable to God only through the merit of the Redeemer?

Indeed, for a Christian to be faithful, he must also be thankful. Those who abound in their thanksgiving will likewise abound in “all things,” and they are the ones who are promised an abundant entrance into “the everlasting kingdom of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ.”—II Pet. 1:3-11 ■

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## MOVING?



If you are moving, please let us know six weeks before you move so that we can change the address on your Dawn subscription.

# SPEAKERS' APPOINTMENTS

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

## **T. B. Alexander**

Online Broadcast of Convention  
Milwaukee, WI November 8

## **T. N. Alexander**

Online Broadcast of Convention  
San Diego, CA  
November 21,22

## **T. Krupa**

Online Broadcast of Convention  
San Diego, CA  
November 21,22

## **H. Montague**

Online Broadcast of Convention  
New Haven, CT November 1

## **D. Rice**

Online Broadcast of Convention  
New Haven, CT November 1

## **T. Ruggirello**

Online Broadcast of Convention  
San Diego, CA  
November 21,22

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*“Is anything too hard for the Lord?” Gen. 18:14*

*The spirit of God is powerful in whatever way it is applied. As an illustration of its power, the Apostle points us to our Lord Jesus and His literal death, and how God’s holy spirit raised Jesus from the dead in His resurrection. The thought is that this power of God thus exercised on behalf of the Lord Jesus, and which He promises so to exercise in the close of this age on behalf of all the faithful members of the body of Christ, indicates a power of God by which, if we avail ourselves of it, the new nature will find strength to conquer, to keep the flesh under, and, more than this, to make it active, energetic in the service of righteousness.*

*—Exceeding Great and Precious Promises*

## 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 Olive Grigalunus, Portland, OR—September 21. Age, 98

Sister Mary Linderman, Hartford, CT—September 23. Age, 96

Sister Audrey Johnston, Brighton, England—September 28. Age, 97

Sister Sophie Zielinski, Agawam, MA—September 28. Age, 97

Sister Zosia Wacior, Betania, Miechow, Poland—October 8. Age, 86

Brother Adolf Debski, Betania, Miechow, Poland—October 9. Age, 92

Sister Jean Tobey, St. Petersburg, FL—October 9. Age, 102

Sister Gienia Czerniak, Betania, Miechow, Poland—October 15. Age, 92

Brother Edward Segedyn, Betania, Miechow, Poland—October 15. Age, 84

Sister Helena Nowakowska, Betania, Miechow, Poland—October 19. Age, 85

*“Behold, I tell you a mystery; we will not all sleep, but we will all be changed, in a moment, in the twinkling of an eye, at the last trumpet; for the trumpet will sound, and the dead will be raised imperishable, and we will be changed. For this perishable must put on the imperishable, and this mortal must put on immortality. ... Thanks be to God, who gives us the victory through our Lord Jesus Christ.”*

—I Cor. 15:51-53,57,  
*New American Standard Bible*

# 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.*

**IMPORTANT NOTICE: Numerous conventions in coming months will not be held in-person due to the COVID-19 pandemic. Some of these, however, will have an online broadcast alternative. Listed below are the details which the Dawn has been made aware of concerning upcoming conventions. Please contact the brethren shown in the listings to find out the status of a convention, and also how you can attend an online broadcast if one is planned.**

**NEW HAVEN CONVENTION, November 1—WILL BE BROADCAST ONLINE ONLY**—Contact A. Suraci. Phone: (203) 248-3793 or Email: annasuraci@comcast.net

**MILWAUKEE CONVENTION, November 8—WILL BE BROADCAST ONLINE ONLY**—Contact D. Farchione. Email: debfarchione@aol.com

**SAN DIEGO CONVENTION, November 21,22—WILL BE BROADCAST ONLINE ONLY**—Contact R. Brand. Email: blatbrand@aol.com

**NEW ALBANY-LOUISVILLE CONVENTION, November 27,28—WILL BE BROADCAST ONLINE ONLY**—Contact M. Moody. Email: jmmem1874@bellsouth.net

**CHICAGO NEW YEAR CONVENTION, January 2,3—WILL BE BROADCAST ONLINE ONLY**—Contact D. Whittaker. Phone: (630) 293-4810 or Email: donnawh@live.com

**HARTFORD CONVENTION, February 7—WILL BE BROADCAST ONLINE ONLY**—Contact J. Slivinsky. Phone: (860) 289-0116 or Email: djslivinsky@sbcglobal.net