

# The DAWN

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## HIGHLIGHTS OF DAWN

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### PART 1 OF 2 PARTS

# THE PROBLEM OF POLLUTION

**I**N THE LAST fifty years there has been considerable concern expressed about Earth's environment. Man has been 'fruitful' and 'multiplied', in fulfillment of God's command to fill the earth. (Gen. 1:28) The growing world population has called for greater needs to be satisfied, and industrial activity has increased tremendously. Since some of this activity has been accomplished without much regard for the environment, many actively concerned groups have been formed in countries throughout the world, pressing for legislation to clean the air and water. This concern for ecology in the United States has led to the Clean Air Act of 1970, and the Amended Clean Water Act of 1972, as well as the establishment of the National Environmental Protection Agency signed into law in 1970.

### THE NEED FOR POLLUTION CONTROL

A superfund was created through legislation to require industrial firms to clean up the worst of the

contaminated sites identified in the United States. The cost of cleaning up contamination is staggering. It was heartening to learn of a development started in 1980 being pursued by a group of scientists at the Environmental Chemistry Lab of the Department of Agriculture. This development involves the idea of using living plants to strip pollutants directly from the soil. The progress made by these researchers was reported in an article published recently in the Chemical and Engineering News Journal, from which we quote:

“After a fire leveled part of a forest on a mountain near Palmerton, PA, the area remains bare. Plants cannot grow because of high levels of zinc in the soil, remnants of pollution from a zinc smelter operation in the valley. Covered with contaminated soil, the area is littered with dead wood and shows little sign of animal life. Restoring it so that once again trees can grow, animals can roam, and humans can enjoy its beauty would take a lot of money using current methods.

“Hundreds of contaminated sites like that near Palmerton exist in the U.S. Current technologies to remediate such sites include hauling the contaminated soil to a landfill and replacing it with clean soil, chemical immobilization of metals, and leaching metals with acid washes. According to industry sources, cleanups in the U.S. by these methods are estimated to cost tens of billions of dollars. Because of the steep costs, polluted sites usually are cleaned only enough to eliminate the risk of contaminating groundwater or of exposing children to pollutants on surface soil. Such treatments do not guarantee that remediated sites can support wildlife or farming.

“Plants that gobble up metals offer an alternative that may prove better. They could be grown on contaminated sites, harvested mechanically like hay, and dried. The biomass could be burned to produce ash with a high content of metal that could be recovered. The economic value of the metal and the heat produced during ashing—which could be used to generate electricity or to retrieve the metals—could be enough to pay for the cost of the cleanup.”

The article tells of a remarkable shrub called Alpine Pennycress which has been planted in test plots in Palmerton, PA to remove zinc and cadmium pollutants from the soil. These plants are called hyperaccumulators because of their unusual ability to accumulate ten to one hundred times the concentration of a metal tolerated by ordinary crops. Alpine Pennycress can draw zinc out of the contaminated soil to 25,000 mg. per kilogram of dried plant without injury to the plant.

The researchers in the U.S. Department of Agriculture and the University of Sheffield, England, have identified many hyperaccumulators. There are 300 plant species that hyperaccumulate nickel. Others take up copper, cobalt, selenium, or manganese. Some feast on radioactive materials. All of this research is so exciting that what is envisioned is not only remediation of pollution, but also the use of such plants to ‘farm’ metals as an alternative to mining.

## **GOD'S METHODS OF POLLUTION CONTROL**

What escapes most people is that God, the great Supreme Creator of the universe, has designed plant life to perform such functions as remediation of pollution and potential farming of metals. For

many centuries God has been quietly cleaning up the environment by unseen forces—many of these being microorganisms in the soil and water, which we know as bacteria. These are so small that there can be 100 million in one gram of fertile soil. These minute organisms perform a large variety of remarkable tasks such as production of enzymes, photosynthesis, and conversion of free nitrogen and sulfur into amino acids as food for plants.

When raw sewage is dumped into a river for disposal, the water becomes polluted. Bacteria are present which can cause illness to animal life. As the river flows toward the sea it absorbs oxygen from the air essential to sustaining marine life. This oxygen also promotes the growth of bacteria which feed on the harmful bacteria and other wastes present in the sewage, and gradually the water is purified. Additionally, these bacteria when present in the soil absorb harmful components from the air, such as carbon monoxide, and convert these into useful plant foods. Mankind has utilized these bacteria created by God to do a cleaning work and have designed sewage treating plants that convert raw sewage into useful fertilizer and clean water.

## **POLLUTION BY BLOOD AND MURDER**

Man has faced many kinds of pollution. In the Bible the earliest type of pollution encountered was that of blood and murder. God said to Israel: "Defile not therefore the land which ye shall inhabit, wherein I dwell." (Num. 35:34) God was instructing Moses not to defile the Promised Land with blood or murder.

Most of the pollution mentioned in the Old Testament is the pollution of offering sacrifices to

idols. Many times such sacrifices were those of children born to be slain in religious rites, as mentioned in Psalm 106:38: They "shed innocent blood, even the blood of their sons and of their daughters, whom they sacrificed unto the idols of Canaan: and the land was polluted with blood." These acts were an abomination to God and he will not tolerate such defilements in his kingdom. Nor will he tolerate the crime and bloodshed of present society, because he has promised: "They shall not hurt nor destroy in all my holy mountain." (Isa. 11:9) We can be assured that neither will pollution of the environment be tolerated, because such is caused by selfishness and greed. All waste materials can be treated, but such procedures are often circumvented because of the cost for doing so.

## **SICKNESS OF THE WORLD**

We are living in a sick world. It is a sickness unto death which began more than six thousand years ago, and today has reached crisis proportions. The chief diseases which have brought about this crisis are sin and selfishness. Sin is a flouting of the laws of God, and selfishness is an inordinate seeking of one's own best interests regardless of what the consequences to others might be. Some of the symptoms of these fatal diseases are pride, hatred, and a lust for power which brooks no interference, even at the cost of murder.

Perhaps one of the most vivid descriptions of this fatal sickness of human society is the one given to us by the Apostle Paul when he wrote, "In the last days perilous times shall come. For men shall be lovers of their own selves, covetous, boasters, proud, blasphemers, disobedient to parents, un-

thankful, unholy, trucebreakers, false accusers, incontinent, fierce, despisers of those that are good, traitors, heady, highminded, lovers of pleasures more than lovers of God.”—II Tim. 3:1-4

At this time when the earth, the sea, the rivers, the lakes, and the atmosphere are all being polluted by man's inability to use properly the resources which God has provided for him, we have this worst of all defilements, which is the pollution of the human mind and heart by sin and selfishness. These pollutants have always been abroad throughout the earth, plaguing mankind and the various societies he has tried to create; but now in these 'last days' the situation has become acute, for, as we have seen, this disease of sin and selfishness has now reached crisis proportions.

In this 'time of the end', when the prophetic increase of knowledge should be providing not only an affluent life, but a peaceful, happy, and healthy one for the people of all nations, in many respects the very opposite is true. Of what value is it to humanity that men can reach the moon, when countless millions throughout the earth are starving, without homes, and in constant fear of being destroyed by poisons which selfish man is spewing into the air, water, and land in his gross misuse of the natural resources of the earth which the LORD has so bountifully provided.

Of what real satisfaction can it be to know that technology has contrived instruments which can fly to Mars, when that same technology stockpiles deadly weapons of war with terrifying potentials of destruction in sufficient quantities to destroy the human species a hundred times over? These paradoxes arising out of human selfishness certainly

raise the question as to what the great Creator is doing about this dilemma which has been thrust upon an unsuspecting world.

### **DILEMMA FORETOLD**

The present chaos and distress which have come unexpectedly upon the world are not a surprise to the LORD, for there are many prophecies in his Word in which he had forecast such a condition. One of them, presented in symbolic language, is found in Isaiah 24:1-5, *RSV*, which we quote:

“Behold, the LORD will lay waste the earth and make it desolate, and he will twist its surface and scatter its inhabitants. And it shall be, as with the people, so with the priest; as with the slave, so with his master; as with the maid, so with her mistress; as with the buyer, so with the seller; as with the lender, so with the borrower; as with the creditor, so with the debtor. The earth shall be utterly laid waste and utterly despoiled; for the LORD has spoken this word. The earth mourns and withers, the world languishes and withers; the heavens languish together with the earth. The earth lies polluted under its inhabitants; for they have transgressed the laws, violated the statutes, broken the everlasting covenant.”

Many times the words ‘earth’ and ‘world’, when used in the prophecies of the Bible, denote a social structure which may exist on the planet at any given time—one of the important parts of which is the people. However, the literal earth is also often referred to in the prophecies, and sometimes there is an intermingling of the symbolic and literal in the same prophecy. An example of this is Psalm 46:6,10, *RSV*. Verse 6 reads, “The nations rage, the

kingdoms totter; He utters his voice, the earth melts." In this verse the earth 'melts', but in verse 10 the earth still exists, and God's name is exalted in it. We quote: "Be still, and know that I am God. I am exalted among the nations, I am exalted in the earth!"

In this prophecy of the time in which we are now living it is the symbolic earth that melts, whereas the literal earth remains, and by Divine decree to the raging nations, peace is brought to the people, and God's name becomes exalted among the people. So in the prophecy quoted above from Isaiah 24 we find the symbolic earth 'twisted', we find a leveling of all segments of human society, and finally we find a polluting of the earth—and certainly this latter is being fulfilled literally today.

### **GOD'S REMEDY**

As pointed out in Psalm 46:10, in the LORD's due time he will say to the raging nations of earth, "Be still, and know that I am God." This suggests Divine intervention in the affairs of men at a juncture when, if left to their own devices, the sin-sick and selfish people of the earth would utterly fail in their efforts to solve the problems which they have brought upon themselves. Thus, in our approach to the subject, we should keep in mind that the great Creator is still interested in his human creatures, and will deliver them. Man will not be permitted to destroy himself, either by nuclear weaponry or by pollutants. Jesus did say, "Except those days should be shortened, there should no flesh be saved." However, he added: "But for the elect's sake those days shall be shortened."—Matt. 24:22 ■

*(To be continued)*

## INTERNATIONAL BIBLE STUDY LESSONS

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### LESSON FOR AUGUST 3

# GROW IN FAITHFULNESS

**KEY VERSE:** *“Let us leave the elementary teachings about Christ and go on to maturity, not laying again the foundation of repentance from acts that lead to death, and of faith in God.”—Hebrews 6:1, New International Version*

**SELECTED SCRIPTURE:** *Hebrews 5:11 to 6:10*

**T**HE LIFE OF a consecrated Christian is one of personal activity and growth. Examples of this are given in other scriptures, such as Romans 12:2: “Be ye transformed by the renewing of your mind”; I Corinthians 9:24: “run [to win the prize]”; Galatians 5:22,23: We are to develop “the fruit of the Spirit,” and to “grow up into him [Christ].” (Eph. 4:15) To remain idle or to fail to grow is a dangerous condition for the Christian.

The Apostle Paul taught this important principle in his letter to the Hebrews. The letter was written to

those who had already obtained a basic understanding of the plan of God. His admonition to grow in faithfulness by going beyond the basics, “the first principles of the oracles of God” (Heb. 5:12), to the solid food needed by the mature Christian, is as relevant today as it was to the Early Church.

The new Christian, being “unskilful in the word of righteousness” (vs. 13), is not able to apply the proper scriptures to situations arising in his Christian walk. Paul refers to six basic doctrines as the milk of God’s Word, important

for laying the foundation of our faith. (Heb. 6:1,2) After the words of our Key Verse, Paul states these basic doctrines as “repentance from dead works, and of faith toward God, of the doctrine of baptisms, and of laying on of hands, and of resurrection of the dead, and of eternal judgment.” (Heb. 6:1,2) These elementary teachings are the foundation for the solid food that the mature Christian needs. “Anyone who lives on milk, being still an infant, is not acquainted with the teachings about righteousness.” —Heb. 5:13, *NIV*

When Paul speaks of leaving the elementary principles behind and going on to maturity, he is speaking of using God’s Word with more understanding, and being able to apply the Word of God to properly distinguish good from evil. “Solid food is for the mature, who by constant use have trained themselves to distinguish good from evil.” (vs. 14, *NIV*) The use of solid food goes beyond the distinguishing of good from evil. It includes the determination to choose

the good and to reject the evil, whatever the cost.

Going on to ‘maturity’ or ‘perfection’ means going on to ‘completeness’, (Greek, *telelotes*), which is being used by Paul to indicate the type of life God intends for us to live. It is being “conformed to the image of his Son.” (Rom. 8:29) This growth is toward an understanding of the deep things of God—which does not mean complex types and shadows, or scriptures difficult to understand. Rather, it is referring to an understanding of the underlying principles of God’s Word. This type of growth includes ever increasing faithfulness to the end by being “followers of them who through faith and patience inherit the promises.”—Heb. 6:12

Paul concludes this exhortation to growth by showing that the end result of the watering of truth can either be fruitful and be a blessing to God, or can produce thorns and thistles, worthless growth. Let us be diligent in growing in faithfulness. ■

## ENDURING HARD TIMES

**KEY VERSE:** “*Let us hold fast the profession of our faith without wavering; (for he is faithful that promised.)*”—*Hebrews 10:23*

**SELECTED SCRIPTURE:** *Hebrews 10:19-25,32-39*

**O**UR KEY VERSE is an admonition by the Apostle Paul to the Hebrews to hold fast to the new and living way established by the sacrifice of Jesus Christ and preached to the Early Church by the apostles. Jesus had told his disciples to expect trials and persecution similar to his, even unto death. (John 15:18 to 16:3) Now Paul encouraged them to remain faithful to God, because God would remain faithful to them. Paul answers the question many Christians have asked during this Gospel Age, “What enables us to maintain our faith in this evil world, and through hard times?”

Paul’s first answer to this question is that we must develop a confidence in God. He said, “Having,

therefore, Brethren, confidence respecting the entrance of the Holies, by the blood of Jesus . . .” (Heb. 10:19, *Wilson’s Emphatic Diaglott*) This is because Christ is now the great high priest who introduces us to God and tells us we should “draw near [to God] with a true heart in full assurance of faith.”—Heb. 10:22

It is the new mind, the New Creature in Christ, that is true and sincere in its approach to God. The full assurance of faith, then, is the firm conviction of the will which results from the sprinkling of our hearts with the blood of Christ—that is, the merit of his sacrifice. We can cling to this hope because it is the promise of God, guaranteed by the faithfulness of God to his prom-

ises. Therefore we can maintain our faith through hard times with confidence based upon the new way to God opened up for us by the death and resurrection of Jesus Christ and guaranteed by Divine forgiveness.

The second answer Paul gives to maintaining our faith through hard times revolves around Christian fellowship. Christian enthusiasm for fellowship often begins at a fever pitch, and then it can, in some instances, cool off; so effort is required to build up the enthusiasm again. Christian believers are to "provoke [stimulate] one another unto love and to good works." (Heb. 10:24) The thought here is of encouraging one another, which cannot be done apart from fellowship. The assembling of ourselves together should not be for display of bitterness or sharp criticism. Christian fellowship should serve to strengthen by exhortation and instruction. In this way it serves to comfort the brethren.

A third answer Paul provides is to recall the mem-

ory of past events as a guide and strength for difficult future events. The Christian Hebrews had endured many persecutions in the past, having been made a laughing stock, humiliated through insults and abuse, having been jailed and persecuted physically, losing property and jobs, and, in some cases, even being put to death. (Heb. 10:33,34) Through all of these hard times the Hebrew Christians had survived, and recalling God's grace to them in the past would help them maintain their faith in the present. He again exhorted these brethren to bear up under difficult experiences, urging them to "Cast not away therefore your [their] confidence" (vs. 35), when a little more patient endurance would secure for them their reward.

Likewise, we too need to remember our promised share in Christ's resurrection as the ultimate end of our suffering and trial, and to be encouraged with this thought during difficult times—especially as we see the Millennial Day approaching. —vs. 36 ■

## REMEMBER THE PAST

**KEY VERSE:** "Now faith is the substance of things hoped for, the evidence of things not seen."—Hebrews 11:1

**SELECTED SCRIPTURE:** Hebrews 11:1,2,6-10,13-16, 39,40

**T**HE ELEVENTH CHAPTER of Hebrews has well been called 'the faith chapter' because it is a recollection of deeds of Old Testament heroes who "obtained a good report through faith." (Heb. 11:39) While suffering all forms of persecution, from ridicule to cruel death, they proved their faithfulness to God. The Apostle Paul stresses the importance of remembering these heroic figures to help us strengthen our faith. As he states, "All these things happened unto them for ensamples, and they are written for our admonition."—I Cor. 10:11

The Greek word *hupostasis*, translated 'substance' in Hebrews 11:1, has the meaning of 'sub-

stratum', 'what stands under', or 'foundation'. Faith is the 'basis' for things hoped for; it is not wishful thinking, nor is it credulity. Faith depends upon reason and facts, being structured in such a way that leads to firm belief in things unseen or as yet not occurring. Such was the faith of the believers of the Old Testament era. They reasoned on the facts given to them, and had firm belief that the promises of God were sure. Their vision of the future had this firm foundation which prompted their works of faith described by the Apostle Paul in Hebrews 11.

The definition of faith included 'the evidence', or what proves the existence

of things not seen. It is the means of testing truth to prove it so. It is a conviction of something being true that will survive any testing. Thus, Abraham was willing to leave his homeland to seek "a city" whose builder and architect is God. (Heb. 11:10) Though he never found that city in his lifetime, Abraham was convinced that through his seed such 'a city'—God's kingdom—would be established to bless all the families of the earth.

Another man of faith was Moses. When he became of age he "refused to be called the son of Pharaoh's daughter; choosing rather to suffer affliction with the people of God. . . . Esteeming the reproach of Christ greater riches than the treasures in Egypt: for he had respect unto the recompense of the reward." (Heb. 11:24-26) Moses had great faith in the promise God had made to Abraham through which the anointed—'Messiah', 'Christ'—would come. He was far more interested in preserving his share of reward through the Abrahamic promise than to enjoy Egypt's trea-

sure. Thus, by faith Moses led Israel from their captivity in Egypt through the Red Sea on dry ground. Whereas the Egyptians had a change of mind, pursued the Israelites, and drowned in the sea.—vss. 27-29

Faith deals with hope in the unseen, looking to the future. As Abraham followed God's leading to a new land and became a stranger in the land promised to him, so we, too, are pilgrims in a strange land. We live among the nations of earth, but only as aliens. We are in the flesh, but do not live according to the flesh; we live on earth, but our citizenship is in heaven.—Eph. 2:19

The 'faith heroes' of Hebrews 11 were commended by God as examples for us to imitate. They include well-known names of the past whose suffering was a price paid for their faithfulness. Incredibly, God has promised the faithful of this Gospel Age something even better! (Heb. 11:39,40) By remembering these past heroes of faith we should strengthen our faith every day of our Christian journey. ■

## RENEW YOUR COMMITMENT

**KEY VERSE:** *“Seeing we also are compassed about with so great a cloud of witnesses, let us lay aside every weight, and the sin which doth so easily beset us, and let us run with patience the race that is set before us.”—Hebrews 12:1*

**SELECTED SCRIPTURE:** *Hebrews 12:1-11*

**A**FTER RECOUNTING THE faithful testing of Old Testament faith heroes in the eleventh chapter of Hebrews, Paul exhorts us in the 12th chapter to renew our commitment to follow in Jesus' footsteps. The picture presented is that of an arena with the loyal heroes of faith of chapter 11 as onlookers as we of the Gospel Age run the race for the prize of the high calling. This is not to imply that these onlookers are alive. The Scriptures clearly say, “These all died in faith.” (Heb. 11:13) Their example and accomplishments in faith live on, and are encouraging to us as we run this race.

Jesus, our forerunner, has finished the race and is set down “on the right hand of the throne of God.” (Heb. 12:2) As our coach and trainer for this race, we are to look “unto Jesus the author and finisher of our faith.” (Heb. 12:2) We are to “consider him that endured such contradiction of sinners against himself, lest ye be wearied and faint in your minds.” (Heb. 12:3) By noting how Jesus conducted himself as he underwent opposition from the world, we receive valuable information on how to conduct ourselves in similar situations, as we strive against sin. He was “holv. harmless undefiled

separate from sinners” (Heb. 7:26), but we are not. We are burdened with the imperfections of our flesh, which can be discouraging. We are encouraged in renewing our commitment to “lay aside every weight [hindrance], and the sin which doth so easily beset us” (Heb. 12:1) so that we can run the race unhindered. Striving against sin is a difficult task. For the Christian, it is part of the learning process.

The apostle then uses another illustration to impress upon our minds the need for difficult experiences in order to achieve our goal. It is that of the disciplining of a son by his father. He says, “My son, despise not thou the chastening of the LORD, nor faint when thou art rebuked of him.”—Heb. 12:5

The difficult experiences permitted by the LORD are not intended to discourage us, but, rather, are to be viewed as necessary corrections to our character. “For whom the LORD loveth he chasteneth, and scourgeth every son whom he receiveth.” (vs. 6) If God did

not love us as his sons, he would not be interested in correcting us.

The apostle uses the illustration of an earthly parent who may have chastened us for his “own pleasure,” whereas God’s chastenings are so that we might be “partakers of his holiness.” (Heb. 12:9,10) It is for our good that we recognize our fleshly failings and make corrections. Included in our renewed commitment is this recognition of our fleshly failings and a determination to overcome them.

Both of these illustrations—that of the racecourse, and of parental chastening—are intended to help us to continually renew our commitment to God to the very end. We are to “run with patience the race that is set before us” (Heb. 12:1), and to endure discipline which is “of grief; yet afterwards it returns the peaceful fruit of righteousness to those who have been trained by it.”—Heb. 12:11, *Wilson’s Emphatic Diaglott*

By so doing we will gain the prize of the high calling in Christ Jesus. ■

## LIVE RESPONSIBLY

**KEY VERSE:** "Do not forget to do good and to share with others, for with such sacrifices God is pleased."  
—Hebrews 13:16, *New International Version*

**SELECTED SCRIPTURE:** *Hebrews 13:1-16*

**I**N THIS LESSON, the Key Verse emphasizes our responsibility of sharing with others the gifts of God. The *King James Version* of this verse has the word 'communicate', but the Greek word, *koinonia*, is more appropriately translated 'sharing'. Just as God demonstrated his love for us by giving his Son to be our Redeemer (John 3:16), our sacrifice is to be laid down not only to "seek for glory and honor and immortality" (Rom. 2:7), but to allow us to share in the privilege of blessing all the families of the earth in God's promised kingdom.—Gen 12:3

Our motivation is given in Hebrews 13:1, *New International Version*: "Keep on loving each other as brothers." The Greek word

translated 'love' in this text is *Philadelphia*, which means 'brotherly love'. It means being hospitable to our brethren even though we may not know them. (vs. 2) It means putting ourselves at risk if our brethren suffer for the faith. "We ought to lay down our lives for the brethren." (I John 3:16) This love demonstrates our love for God through the support of the body of Christ, for if one suffers, we all suffer.—I Cor. 12:26

We keep this brotherly love vibrant by remembering those who were raised up by God to establish and keep order in the church. We are enjoined to pay attention to the legacy which they have left us. (Heb. 13:7) We are to consider their way of life their

teachings, and their example of faithfulness to God's Word. We are to imitate them and their defense of the Truth, their faithfulness unto death. The truth never changes, nor does our Master, as Paul states in Hebrews 13:8: "Jesus Christ the same yesterday, and to day, and for ever." Therefore he warns us not to "be carried away by all kinds of strange teachings."—Heb. 13:9, *NIV*

To further impress the importance of this brotherly love, Paul turns our attention to the typical Atonement Day sacrifices, and shows how the church is also pictured with Jesus in "the bodies of those beasts" (vs. 11) which were burned outside the camp. Jesus, the antitypical bullock, "suffered outside the city gate" (vs. 12, *NIV*), suffering as an outcast from the social and religious systems of the time. The Apostle said, "Jesus . . . who for the joy that was set before him endured the cross, despising the shame. . . . Consider him that endured such contradiction of sinners against himself." (Heb. 12:2,3) Now

"let us go forth therefore unto him without the camp [outside the camp, where the refuse of the sacrificial animals was burned], bearing his reproach."—Heb. 13:13

As Paul wrote in another place concerning Christ, "The reproaches of them that reproached thee fell on me." (Rom. 15:3) As Jesus said, "If the world hate you, ye know that it hated me before it hated you. If ye were of the world, the world would love his own: but because ye are not of the world, but I have chosen you out of the world, therefore the world hateth you." (John 15:18, 19) We, as the antitypical LORD's goat, are admonished to "fill up that which is behind of the afflictions of Christ."—Col. 1:24

When we consider the privilege of sharing these reproaches as members of his body, it is proper and reasonable that we should fulfill Hebrews 13:16. We are to live responsibly, do good, and share what we have—especially with our brethren, those with whom we hope to live and reign a thousand years. ■

## THE VICTORY OF FAITH

*"This is the victory that overcometh  
the world, even our faith."*

*1 John 5:4*

THE SCRIPTURES LAY a great deal of stress upon the subject of faith. Hebrews 11:6 states, "Without faith it is impossible to please him [God]." The Apostle Peter tells us that by adding certain qualities of character to our faith we shall have an abundant entrance into the everlasting kingdom of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ; and that we shall never fall. Our Master says, "According to your faith be it unto you." (Matt. 9:29) Here we have inspired authorities who stress faith in no uncertain terms.

Why do the Scriptures emphasize faith so strongly? Because it is the soil in which all other graces of the Spirit take root and grow. How could one develop meekness, which means submission to the Divine will, without a strong faith? Again, how could patience, cheerful endurance, be cultivated without a strong mental conviction that this also is one of the qualities that the LORD is looking for in

us? Realizing, then, that faith is so very important, let us consider what constitutes faith.

## **FAITH AS A GRACE OF THE SPIRIT**

In treating this subject we are not doing so from the standpoint of the doctrines or the tenets of the Scriptures, but, rather, from the standpoint of one of the graces of the Spirit. In Hebrews 11:1 we read: "Faith is the substance of things hoped for, the evidence of things not seen." Only from the standpoint of spiritual vision is this statement understandable. In II Corinthians 4:18, the same apostle says: "The things which are seen are temporal; but the things which are not seen are eternal." This indicates that the things we see with our natural eyes are temporal, while the things we do not see with our natural eyes, but with the eyes of faith, are the eternal things. Linking this up with the Apostle Peter's statement that we are begotten to an inheritance incorruptible, undefiled, and that fadeth not away, we can see that the unseen things are the real, tangible, enduring things.—I Pet. 1:4

It has been said, "Faith is the operation, the exercise of our minds in respect to God and his promises." This is a wonderful statement. Ordinarily, unless we are careful, when confronted by any trial we do almost everything else but exercise our minds, especially in respect to God and the promises he has given us.

The world has certain apt ways of expressing things. It speaks of 'flying off the handle', or of 'blowing our tops', or 'going all to pieces'. All of these expressions indicate a loss of control. With the Christian this would mean a failure to properly exercise the mind in respect to the promises God

has made to us. We should take time to stop and think, taking into account the familiar promise that all things work together for good to the called ones, according to his purpose. (Rom. 8:28) If we would do this, then whatever experience we might be having would take on an entirely different aspect.

We have still another definition of faith: "Faith is a heart reliance, based upon a mental conviction, not positively proven to our senses, but received upon supposedly good authority." None of us can say positively that we know there is a God from the standpoint of having seen him with our natural eyes, or having heard him speak audibly, or having shaken his hand; but we have a mental conviction that he *IS*, because of what he has done, is now doing, and yet purposes to do for the human family.

This latter definition indicates that faith is composed of two parts: 1. an intellectual assurance, and 2. a heart reliance. The foundation of our faith is an intellectual grasp of the fundamental principles of Divine truth—the existence of an intelligent, personal God, the Creator and Sustainer of all things, and the fact that he has a purpose and a plan of redemption through Jesus Christ our Lord.

To have this foundation is not all there is to having faith. In order to have the faith without which it is impossible to please God, we must have the superstructure, which is a heart reliance in the promises of God, who is the Author of our being, and who, as a Father, invites the implicit confidence of his children.

To believe that God exists cannot in itself be particularly pleasing to him, because even devils believe this much, and tremble. Therefore the faith struc-

ture which we as Christians are to build might be compared to a dwelling, with its foundation and superstructure. The foundation is not the house; neither is a house without a foundation very satisfactory. It requires the two to constitute a proper house. So it is with faith.

Let us suppose that we are about to build ourselves a house. We would consult an architect. He would draw up plans and specifications to meet our requirements. Then we would enter into a contract with a builder. In this contract let us suppose that we agreed to furnish all the material. The contractor goes to work and in due course reports that our house is ready for inspection. Our architect looks it over and he finds that the foundation is according to the plans, and that material specified was used. But if, when he comes to the superstructure, he finds that the dimensions of the rooms are not according to the plan, and the material called for was not used, it is obvious he would not approve the building.

## **OUR CONTRACT**

We who have made a consecration to the LORD are contract builders, and have made a solemn covenant with the LORD to build him a house, a dwelling place. The apostle says, "Whom he did foreknow, he also did predestinate to be conformed to the image of his Son." (Rom. 8:29) In Christ we have the plan—the specifications, or the copy, after which we are to build. The LORD has provided the material. In fact, he has provided everything.

We found ourselves under condemnation, sentenced to death, and by his grace we were enabled to see our condition. He pointed us to the only way of escape—Christ Jesus—and, as we accepted him

and consecrated our lives to do God's will, we passed figuratively from death unto life. We were called of God with a heavenly calling. Responding, we were begotten of the Holy Spirit, and were given exceeding great and precious promises. We were given God's Word with which to build the character likeness of his dear Son. He has given us everything—as we sometimes sing: "What more can he say than to you he hath said? You who unto Jesus for refuge have fled."

He could not do more unless he actually forced us into a condition of obedience. That he will never do because he wants us to appreciate these favors and privileges to such an extent that we will strive to attain them regardless of the cost.

The question then is, How are we building? Are we using what he has provided? Some are browsing around here, there, and everywhere, for something else, and as a rule they find what they look for. According to Paul's statement, we can build with different kinds of material. He says, "Other foundation can no man lay than that is laid, which is Jesus Christ. Now if any man build upon this foundation gold, silver, precious stones, wood, hay, stubble; every man's work shall be made manifest: for the day shall declare it, because it shall be revealed by fire; and the fire shall try every man's work of what sort it is. If any man's work abide which he hath built thereupon, he shall receive a reward. If any man's work shall be burned, he shall suffer loss: but he himself shall be saved; yet so as by fire."—I Cor. 3:11-15

This scripture shows us that we can build with material that will endure the trial, the fire, or with material that will not. Again we inquire, How are

we building? Are we building a character structure that will endure the trials of faith? This is very important to all of us who have consecrated. It is a question that each one of us must answer individually. Will the Great Architect of the universe pass favorably or unfavorably upon our superstructure?

In Romans 10:17, we have the statement that faith comes by hearing, and hearing by the Word of God. This implies that a certain kind of faith is the result of knowledge. That evidently is true so far as a faith which is a natural quality is concerned, but it is not strictly true of the faith which is a fruit of the Spirit. One may ask, What is the difference? The former is a natural inherent quality, while the latter is an acquired quality, a grace that is being put on, a fruit that is being developed.

Does all Biblical knowledge result in a living, active faith? By no means. If it did, it would prove that those who have the largest amount of knowledge would also have the greatest degree of faith. This does not necessarily follow. At least we have not seen it work out that way among the LORD's people. Many have had a great deal of knowledge, and a wonderful ability to tell what they knew, and yet they have not continued in the narrow way. Why is this so? Evidently they did not have the other essential element of faith—a heart reliance upon God, which enables us to keep the terms of our consecration. Knowledge alone is not the faith which is the victory that overcometh the world. From the standpoint of the Apostle Peter, however, the true knowledge of God is an outgrowth of faith.—II Pet. 1:5

The faith which leads to God is a quality which many natural-minded people possess. But there are

others who just cannot believe, because they do not have the faculty to believe that which they cannot see. And the Scriptures verify this, as it is stated, "All men have not [Greek, *the*] faith." (II Thess. 3:2) But the faith which enables one to endure all sorts of trials, persecutions, afflictions, losses and reverses, aches and pains—cheerfully, gladly, rejoicingly—is a faith that is not a natural quality, but one that has been painstakingly developed.

This is shown by Peter's statement where he says, "Add to your faith virtue; and to virtue knowledge." (II Pet. 1:5) If all faith were the result of knowledge, the apostle could have said, 'Add to your knowledge virtue, and to virtue faith'; but we notice he did not put it that way. He said, 'Add to your faith virtue, knowledge, temperance, patience, godliness, brotherly kindness, love'.

Ephesians 3:14,17-19 reads, "For this cause I bow my knees [in prayer] unto the Father of our Lord Jesus . . . that Christ may dwell in your hearts by faith; that ye, being rooted and grounded in love, may be able to comprehend with all saints what is the breadth, and length, and depth, and height; and to know the love of Christ, which passeth knowledge."

What kind of knowledge is it that is surpassed by the love of Christ? It is evidently what we speak of as 'head knowledge'. There is a great difference between knowing something, and appreciating it. So it may be with truth. We know it is valuable, but do we realize how really valuable and precious it is? Do we realize that the great God who owns everything could not give us in our present condition anything of greater value than what he has given us—an understanding of his character, his plan and purposes?

Besides this, he has invited us to share his glory, to become heirs of his and joint-heirs with his only begotten and well beloved Son. The apostle adds, "that ye might be filled with all the fulness of God. Now unto him that is able to do exceeding abundantly above all that we ask or think, according to the power that worketh in us, unto him be glory in the church by Christ Jesus throughout all ages."—Eph. 3:19-21

What is this power that works in us, if it is not the power of faith operating through the Holy Spirit? It is through the exercise of the natural faith in Jesus and our full consecration to do God's will that we passed from death unto life. What a transforming power this is! And if we carry this thought on it means that, though taken from the lower strata of society, we have the prospect, through the exercise of faith, to be elevated to the highest plane in the universe! The only faith that can accomplish this is *the* faith, without which it is impossible to please God.

Should we not believe God? Has he ever deceived any of us? Has he ever asked anything unreasonable of us? Let us suppose that we have a child who has reached the years of discretion and with whom we always dealt fairly—always gladly and willingly kept our promises, never asked anything unreasonable. We make a certain proposition, and the child shows by his conduct a lack of trust and confidence. Would we be very pleased? No! We would say, Why should not that child believe me; I never deceived him, never expected anything but what is reasonable. On the other hand, can we think that God can be pleased when, in confronting a certain trial or experience, we show by our conduct that we do not

trust him? This evidently is what the apostle meant when he said, "Without faith"—trust, confidence, heart reliance—"it is impossible to please God." LORD, increase our faith!

## REWARDS OF FAITH

Thus far we have been considering what constitutes faith. Now let us consider the rewards of faith. First, the present reward, and then the future reward. In Romans 5:1 we read, "Being justified by faith, we have peace with God." Is this worth anything when all the world lies in the wicked one, being at enmity with God? And in this same connection, the apostle tells us, "By whom [the Lord Jesus Christ] also we have access by faith into this grace wherein we stand, and rejoice in the hope of the glory of God."—vs. 2

That we, by nature fallen creatures, should be given an opportunity to strive to attain to God's eternal glory, is beyond the power of the human mind to fully grasp! If it were not stated over and over again, we would be unable to believe it. The apostles could not tell us what this glory is, not having experienced it themselves. The Apostle John contented himself by saying, "It doth not yet appear what we shall be: but we know that, when he shall appear, we shall be like him; for we shall see him as he is."—I John 3:2

Then we are told that we can have the peace of God. What greater blessing could anyone have than a peace of heart and mind in this present time of distress, when men's hearts are failing them for fear and for looking after those things that are coming on the earth? In proportion as we are able to realize that all things work together for good to

those who love the LORD, it is our privilege to enjoy peace.

It is our privilege to realize that God loves us: "The Father himself loveth you." (John 16:27) He has our interests at heart. He wishes us to learn these lessons of faith, trust, and confidence in him, and thus have his peace ruling in our hearts. When all about us are in doubt and perplexity as to the outcome of the present distressful conditions, it is our privilege to view matters from God's standpoint. Though we see the social, religious, financial, and political institutions tottering to their fall, we know that it is only a part of the work of "the day of his preparation." (Nah. 2:3) "When . . . these things begin to come to pass, then look up, and lift up your heads; for your redemption [deliverance] draweth nigh."—Luke 21:28

How wonderful it is to think that God would take us into his confidence and reveal to us his plans and purposes, making known unto us things that were hidden from ages and generations, which are now "made manifest to his saints."—Col. 1:26

## **TRIALS ALSO A BLESSING**

Sometimes we are inclined to wonder why it is that since we have given our hearts to the LORD, we should have so many very trying experiences. Gradually we learn that these tests are to qualify us for the work to which he has called us, according to his purpose; and that these trials are great blessings in disguise. Peter says, "The trial of your faith, being much more precious than of gold that perisheth, though it be tried with fire, might be found unto praise and honor and glory at the appearing of Jesus Christ."—I Pet. 1:7

Think what efforts men have put forth in acquiring gold. Those who went into the 1849 gold rush sacrificed every convenience and comfort. They trekked across the continent in the hope of securing some of this precious metal. Surely they must have considered it very valuable. The apostle tells us that the trial of our faith is much more precious than gold that perishes.

Suppose we had all the gold in the world, and we should die tonight. What good would that gold do us? It would have perished so far as we were concerned. It would not do us a particle of good. But if we exercise *the* faith without which it is impossible to please God, we would just enter into life in a condition where we could really glorify God, as we would like to do now if it were not for these broken bodies, warped and badly twisted minds, and stammering tongues. So we see that Peter knew what he was speaking about when he said that the trial of our faith is much more precious than gold.

And what about the future reward of faith? Peter explains that there "are given unto us exceeding great and precious promises: that by these ye might be partakers of the Divine nature," the nature of God. (II Pet. 1:4) Again, "Behold, what manner of love the Father hath bestowed upon us, that we should be called the sons of God: therefore the world knoweth us not, because it knew him not. Beloved, now are we the sons of God, and it doth not yet appear what we shall be: but we know that, when he shall appear, we shall be like him," who was highly exalted, far above angels, principalities and powers. Yes, we shall be like him and see him as he is, who is the "express image of his [the Father's] person." "Every man that hath this hope

in him purifieth himself, even as he is pure.”—  
I John 3:1-3; Heb. 1:3

Here again, it is well to note that there is a difference between knowing about this hope and really having it in us, and appreciating it. Do all who know about this hope purify themselves? Evidently not; for if they did, there would not need to be a warning. The standard is high, and those who do not meet this standard still have a place in God's kingdom. They are known as “a great multitude” who are victors, though coming up through “great tribulation,” and who have “washed their robes, and made them white in the blood of the Lamb.”—  
Rev. 7:9-17

We realize full well that we cannot be actually pure, as God is pure, but we can be pure in thought, in intention; and the LORD takes the will for the deed. It is possible to be of such heart and mind that if we had a perfect body we would do perfectly, and this attitude is graciously accepted by the LORD.

How appropriate are the following comments on faith: “It is your faith that is on trial now. In the calmer days, when the sun of favor shone brightly upon you, you were quietly laying the foundation of a knowledge of the truth, and rearing the superstructure of Christian character. Now you are in the furnace to be proved; summon therefore all your courage; fortify your patience; nerve yourself to endurance; hold fast to your hope, call to mind the promises, they are still yours; and cast not away your confidence, which hath great recompense of reward. In quietness and confidence shall be your strength. Rest in the LORD, and wait patiently for him, and faith hath gained her victory.” ■

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The listing of Dawn publications, five-cent booklets and ten-cent booklets, usually printed on pages 32 and 33 of *The Dawn* magazine will be omitted every other month including this month.

Listing of the "*Frank and Ernest*" worldwide broadcasts and of "*The Bible Answers*" TV programs, generally given on pages 33-39, likewise will be omitted every other month including this month.

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# THE GREATEST THING IN THE UNIVERSE

*“God so loved the world, that he gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have everlasting life. For God sent not his Son into the world to condemn the world; but that the world through him might be saved.”*

*John 3:16,17*

*“Covet earnestly the best gifts: and yet show I unto you a more excellent way.”*

*I Corinthians 12:31*

**A**LL WHO CLAIM to be followers of our Lord and Savior, Jesus Christ, members in particular of his body, should be deeply grateful to the “Father of lights, with whom is no variableness, neither shadow of turning,” for his “every good gift and every perfect gift” (James 1:17), and particularly for the gift of his beloved Son. Because of this gift, and based on the merit of his redemptive sacrifice, consecrated believers can have hope in the promises of God pertaining to their own future inheri-

tance, and for the recovery of humanity from the thralldom of sin and death.

Christianity is the only religion on earth which abounds in the glorious promises of the great God of the universe for those who here devote their lives to do his will as their Master did before them. No other religion, regardless how well-intentioned or idealistic in its appeal to those who have embraced it, can even remotely approach Christianity with its message of hope for the sin-cursed and dying race. And certainly other religions do not offer a day of deliverance for the human race from all its enemies, even death itself! (Luke 4:18; I Cor. 15:25,26) The Christian religion alone outlines for us the pathway to glory, and also affords a preview of the history of the nations so that we might be able to determine where we are on the stream of time, and what the future holds for humanity.

Our theme texts indicate that the greatest thing in the universe is the love that is of God, for it was God's love that provided the only means of escape from the bondage of sin and death. This provision is in his only directly created Son. (John 1:3; I Cor. 8:6; Eph. 3:9; Col. 1:16) "Covet earnestly the best gifts," wrote Paul, "and yet show I unto you a more excellent way." (I Cor. 12:31) Then the apostle explains just what he means by a "more excellent way." It is the way of love. (I Cor. 13) He outlines its characteristics so that we can determine for ourselves whether this greatest thing in the universe is being manifested by us; whether we have cultivated it to the extent of our ability and thus reflect the Divine likeness, even as did Jesus, to whose image we are to be conformed.—Rom. 8:29

If it were not for God's love for the rebellious and sin-cursed human family, there would be no Divine plan of the ages for their recovery and blessing. True, the other qualities of wisdom, justice, and power of his righteous and benevolent character must be employed to this same end. But it was his love for us, the church of Christ, and for all mankind, that provided the "unspeakable gift" of his only begotten Son, our Lord and Savior, as the "Way, the Truth, and the Life." And this provision was made "while we were yet sinners," without our first having shown a disposition and desire for reconciliation, for at-one-ment with him.—II Cor. 9:15; John 14:6; Rom. 5:8

If our Heavenly Father were merely exercised by his justice alone, our lives would be forfeited, and we truly would be without hope in this world. His power we could not doubt, but knowing him to be a God of love supreme, what could we think of his wisdom in permitting us thus to have these innate desires for the right and the truth, and to exercise ourselves benevolently and sacrificially, only to be blotted out of existence? Our desire to know righteousness and truth would avail us nothing, and our personalities, our egos, our entities would be without meaning, could we not see and realize the fruition of our hopes and desires. What benefit would we personally derive if the only result of our living was to leave "footprints on the sands of time."

One could ask the question: "For what am I grateful today and can give thanks?" The response could be such as being thankful for the truth of the Divine plan, or the privilege of service, or the fellowship with those of like precious faith, or even health and strength. But the best answer would be.

**“I am thankful for the love of God.” Surely that is a comprehensive, conclusive, and all-embracing answer.**

Recently our attention was called to the fact that error can have no sanctifying effect on the called of God. Only the truth of God’s Word can have this effect. Hence, throughout the Gospel Age there were those who had God’s Word of truth with no admixture of error. Whether others of a darker past had the same opportunity for knowing the scope of the Divine plan that we enjoy today is unimportant; but there is one factor in that connection which is very likely to be overlooked. That is, that very few in the Early Church, and even until more recent times, could read and write; thus they were totally dependent upon those who did enjoy this advantage. That was a very fundamental reason why it was vitally important for them to assemble to gain knowledge and understanding.—Heb. 10:25

But lest some should suppose that because compulsory education is in effect nowadays, and most people can read and write, and therefore can find out things for themselves, it is now less important to assemble with others of like precious faith, the apostle adds to his exhortation to assemble, “and so much the more, as ye see the day approaching.” Do we see the day approaching? A person must be singularly blind spiritually not to be able to recognize these times of transition. And why is it so important that we assemble now? Because with these more or less chaotic times and all the various and sundry influences there are abroad, we need the help and encouragement which our coming together affords. Thus our confidence in the out-working of his purposes in us may be strengthened

and fortified against the besetments of this "evil day."—Eph. 6:13

Satan does not like to see God's people strengthened and fortified and united in their "most holy faith." (Jude 20) He would like to see them scattered and distraught, as many have been in recent times; and many are his agents, often unwittingly, to accomplish this end.

It might be reasoned, What has this to do with the greatest thing in the universe, the love that is of God? It has this to do with it: that in every period of the church's experience, God, in his infinite mercy and wisdom, has arranged for the enlightenment and protection of his people if they will but heed the instructions he has provided through our Lord and his apostles. The LORD has given enlightenment and spiritual blessing to his people in these days when everything is being put to the test of survival in the light of this Day of Jehovah.

### **SPECIAL GIFTS**

In harmony with our text in I Corinthians 12:31, the prophecy of Psalm 68:18, and the statement of James 1:17, the Early Church was given certain miraculous gifts, the purpose of which was to establish their own faith in God's promises for them, and to convince the unbeliever—the latter being explicitly stated in I Corinthians 14:22. But while these gifts were essential and desirable for their day and time, the apostle points out that there was something vastly more important and desirable than even the best of those gifts; namely, the acquiring and manifestation of the Divine quality of love, not only by thinking upon it, but being controlled by it, manifesting it on any and every occasion. These

gifts were to vanish away and to fail, but this kind of love would never fail. (I Cor. 13:8) Because the translators of the *King James Bible* could find no other word suitable, they translated the Greek word *agape* in this instance, "charity."

As we have come to know, the love herein disclosed is not the ordinary love of human nature as at present constituted, with more or less of the earthly element of self-interest attached to it. No, not even the love of a mother for her child, self-sacrificing as that might be, could compare with it. The Prophet Isaiah raised the question of a mother forgetting her offspring, and wrote, "Yea, they may forget, yet will I not forget thee" (Isa. 49:15), referring to his people Israel and Zion. He did not forget them, but they forgot him. They cast aside obedience to his Law which promised life and blessings.

Although unable to keep the Law inviolate because of their weaknesses and imperfection, and by keeping it to gain the promised reward of life, as only the perfect man Christ Jesus was able to do, their endeavor to keep it brought them blessing and favor, while their rejection of it brought the penalties it prescribed, until, as it plainly showed, they would be dispersed among the nations. Had a sufficient number of them endeavored to keep the Law, and to have seen Jesus as its living fulfillment, then the Gentiles would never have had the blessed opportunity of running for the "prize of the high calling of God in Christ Jesus."—Phil. 3:14

The love which is of God, disclosed by the Apostle Paul in I Corinthians 13, transcends all other loves, for it is the very nature and being of God. As the Apostle John puts it, "God *IS* love [Greek, *agape*]."

(I John 4:8,16) As we are controlled by it, we, too, indicate our Godlikeness. That we could ever reach its fullness and perfection while still in these imperfect vehicles of expression—these frail, perishable bodies—is unthinkable; but we have it ever before us as the criterion, the standard toward which we are ever to strive. For if we do not thus strive to attain it, how can we expect to be in fellowship and association with our Heavenly Father and his now Divine Son, to share with him in “the dispensation of the fulness of times”?—Eph. 1:10

The apostle suggests that we might have every proper gift, even all knowledge and mountain-removing faith, and a totally self-sacrificing disposition, and yet fail to achieve this goal of Godlikeness in thought, word, and deed. If we can succeed in attaining some measure of this Divine attribute of love, then we need not fear failure, but can have the full assurance of faith that God will supply our every essential requirement both now and forever.

In our desire thus to qualify for a place in the Divine kingdom of our Lord, we might be inclined to place the emphasis on study. Study is very essential, to be sure, but to what end is that study? Is it that we might be the most brilliant people of earth, or to be able to overwhelm by argument the opponents of truth and right? No, surely not! The Apostle Paul makes it plain when he writes to Timothy: “Study to show thyself approved unto God, a workman that needeth not to be ashamed, rightly dividing the Word of truth.” (II Tim. 2:15) If approved of God, why need we be concerned about the trivialities of this fleeting human existence?

## **SELF-SACRIFICE NOT SUFFICIENT**

We might think to place the emphasis on self-sacrifice. Ah, yes, that is good indeed. But the Apostle Paul warns us on that score, for he says we might give our bodies to be burned, and we might give everything we possess in order to feed the poor and thus show our generosity, our benevolence, as God is benevolent, and still we may be found lacking. (I Cor. 13:3) Why does not such sacrifice alone qualify us for the Divine favor and blessing, and a place in the kingdom to come? Because, to recognize in connection with our self-sacrifice and our desire to use our means to a good purpose, it is the motive which prompts us that counts with the LORD. Is the motive a desire to make a good showing before our friends and relatives, or the world—in other words, to make a name for ourselves? Or, is the primary object the reflecting of the Divine likeness and love, appreciating the fact that when he gave his only begotten Son to die for us we were yet sinners, having made no effort at reformation, nor possessing any desire to seek and learn the “Way, the Truth, and the Life,” which reside in the Master and his words of “Spirit” and “life.”—John 14:6; 6:63

Then, too, this kind of love involves demonstration under trial and test, under suffering and adversity. We might be ever so willing to do good with our means and it might not cost us any more than the material loss involved. Even this, of course, if done with the proper motive as unto him, would be richly blessed in due time by our benevolent God and Heavenly Father, especially if done for the benefit of those in the Divine employ. But when this sacrifice entails not only material loss, but additionally, persecution, suffering, ignominy, and re-

proach because we are his and for his name's sake and righteousness' sake, then we can be happy indeed, as our Lord indicated in the last of the Beatitudes in his sermon on the mount.—Matt. 5:11,12

There is still another great objective we need to bear in mind in considering the development of this Divine attribute of love, and that has to do with a little four-letter word—S E L F. Surely, if we have reached the mark of perfect love, self should not enter into our consideration; but strive as we may, it will impose itself at times. Think how much is involved in this little word! All the besetments of our fallen humanity, the influence of the world and the wiles of the Adversary are focused on us. If we resist our natural impulses and bring all our thoughts into subjection to the new will in Christ, we are fortified and prepared for any contingency. Then, whatever pressure might be brought to bear upon us from without to overthrow our faith and our confidence in the outworking of God's providences in our behalf, Satan will meet the same rebuff that he met when he tried to tempt our Lord after his forty-day fast at the beginning of his ministry.—II Cor. 10:5

If this Divine attribute of love [*agape*], the pinnacle of character development (II Pet. 1:7), motivates us in everything we think, say, or do—which is not impossible if we are set and determined to have it so—then whatever material loss we might suffer, or however intense the physical or mental pain we might be called upon to endure, will be seen to be a means to an enduring end: to refine, polish, and prepare us for “the glory that excelleth,” the “glory

and honor and immortality, eternal life" beyond this veil of tears.—II Cor. 3:10; Rom. 2:7

### A "TREE OF LIFE"

We may not always be successful in maintaining this degree of perfect love that has no fear. At times we may become discouraged with ourselves, at the progress we have made along this line, with our environment, and with almost everything in general. (II Tim. 1:7) We may lose heart because the Divine purpose for this old earth and its inhabitants may appear to lag; the prophetic forecast for these days may appear to lack the complete fulfillment expected, and we may feel, as the wise man stated it, that "hope deferred maketh the heart sick." (Prov. 13:12) Although we often hear this expression of Solomon, it is seldom in relation to the remainder of the passage, which reads, "But when the desire cometh, it is a tree of life." This would tend to show that our desires have a very important bearing on our attitude toward life and its interests, and that God intends to fulfill all those legitimate desires of his people in harmony with his purpose for them.

If, while endeavoring to maintain our position at this mark of perfect love, thoughts contrary to our spiritual interests and desires obtrude themselves, then we may know that our patient endurance is being tested. We may recall with particular profit the statement of our Lord in his wonderful prophecy applying to the end of both the Jewish Age and the Gospel Age: "Because iniquity [unrighteousness, wickedness, lawlessness, vice] shall abound, the love [*agape*] of many shall wax cold. But he that shall endure unto the end, the same shall be saved."

(Matt. 24:12,13) Saved—Ah, yes—not only from the condemnation of sin and death, but to the highest form of life eternal—the Divine, with its glory, honor, and immortality.

Again the Apostle Paul, after showing wherein Israel of old failed, and warning us not to follow their example of wrongdoing, writes: “Wherefore let him that thinketh he standeth take heed lest he fall.” (I Cor. 10:12) And then, to reassure us, adds, “There hath no temptation taken you but such as is common to man: but God is faithful, who will not suffer you to be tempted above that ye are able; but will with the temptation also make a way to escape, that ye may be able to bear it.”—vs. 13

In II Corinthians 6:3-10, we have the indications of an approved ministry in the following: “Giving No Offence in any thing, that the ministration may not be not blamed; but in everything establishing ourselves as God’s Servants, by much patient endurance in Affliction, in Necessities, in Distresses; in Stripes, in Prisons, in Tumults; in Labors, in Watchings, in Fastings; by Purity, by Knowledge, by Forbearance; by Kindness, by a holy Spirit, by Love undissembled, by the Word of Truth, by the Power of God; through those arms of Righteousness, on the right hand and Left; through Glory and Disgrace; through Bad fame and Good Fame; as Deceivers, and yet true; as being ignorant, yet being duly appreciated; as dying, yet behold! we live; as chastised, yet not put to death; as grieving, but always rejoicing; as poor, but enriching many; as having Nothing, yet possessing All things.”—*Wilson’s Emphatic Diaglott*.

In the last expression, ‘possessing all things’, we are reminded of our Lord’s words in Luke 12:15:

“Take heed, and beware of covetousness: for a man’s life consisteth not in the abundance of the things which he possesseth.” Perfect love is not concerned with the possession of the ‘abundance of things’ of this earth, but with possessing the fruitage of the Holy Spirit. (Gal. 5:22) We note, too, that the sixth verse indicates that it is possible to be mistaken in this *agape* love, that it may be simulated and not the real thing.—II Cor. 6:6

A similar statement is made with regard to *philia* or brotherly love, in I Peter 1:22, which reads: “Having purified your lives by the obedience of the truth [showing how the washing of the water by the Word (Eph. 5:26) is affected in obedience thereto] to unfeigned Brotherly love, love each other from the Heart, intensely.” (*Wilson’s Emphatic Diaglott*) Let us not hastily assume that this Divine attribute of love can be attained without continued and unremitting application and endeavor. Some may reach the mark of perfect love more quickly than others. Stephen, the first Christian martyr of record, reached it very early in his Christian life, and so can we if we make it the ruling factor of our lives.

The progressive manner in which the mark is reached is shown by the illustration of the Apostle Paul in I Corinthians 9:24-27, and Hebrews 12:1, of a racecourse divided into four quarters. After entering the race (no ‘outsider’ can run in it) by consecration to the Divine will, being baptized into Christ’s death, and being raised to newness of life, the first impulse or reaction is to reciprocate the love of God in making possible this way of life through Jesus’ sacrifice. It is a sort of duty love. We love God because he first loved us.

But we do not stop there. We go on to the halfway mark by loving the things that God loves. We love righteousness because it is now the principle of our new lives in Christ, and because it is the disposition of our Heavenly Father. It was because our Lord loved righteousness and hated iniquity that he was so highly exalted to the right hand of the throne of God, there to make intercession for us, his church.—Heb. 1:9; 7:25; 12:2

Upon reaching this second quarter, or halfway mark in the race for the prize of our high calling of God in Christ Jesus, we realize that our love must be shown toward our brethren and associates in the body of Christ, that we must love them even more than the Golden Rule demands, and that we must be willing to lay down our lives for them even as our Lord set us the example in laying down his life for us and all men. The Apostle John states that such a love indicates that we have passed from death to life. (I John 3:14,16) It also will lead us to cover their unintentional weaknesses and failings with the mantle of love and compassion. This is shown by the correct rendering of I Corinthians 13:7, which reads: Charity [love] “beareth all things, . . . hopeth all things, endureth all things.” The word ‘beareth’ in this text should have been rendered “covereth.” It would be repetitious to have it read, as it does in the *King James Version*, “Beareth all things . . . endureth all things.” Moreover, according to *Strong’s Concordance*, the primary meaning of the Greek word, *stego*, is “to roof over,” or “to cover.”

Passing on from this third quarter mark of ‘love [agapao] of the brotherhood’, the mark of Divinity is reached when we are able to love [agapao] our enemies. (I Pet. 2:17; Matt. 5:44) This love for our

enemies is not in the same way nor to the same extent that we are to love the brethren, but it is with the desire to do them good should the occasion arise. "If thine enemy hunger, feed him; if he thirst, give him drink: for in so doing thou shalt heap coals of fire on his head. Be not overcome of evil, but overcome evil with good."—Rom. 12:20,21

Many who are now the enemies of the New Creation, the enemies of righteousness and truth through mental blindness and obstinacy, will have that blindness removed when once the work of regeneration begins, and they are raised from the dead, enlightened to a realization of what has been done for them in the sacrifices of our Lord and his church, and afforded the opportunity to attain human perfection in a worldwide paradise. All this will come to pass because God so loved a world of sinners lost, that he gave his only begotten Son to suffer and to die for them, that the way might be opened up both of "life and immortality" through the good news of the incoming kingdom.—Matt. 19:28; II Tim. 1:10

Let us then encourage and help each other in the Divine service, and in the cultivation of this greatest thing in the universe, the Divine attribute of "love Divine, all love excelling" (Hymn #165, *Hymns of Dawn*), making it possible for us now to be raised up together, and made to sit together in the heavenlies in Christ Jesus: that in the ages to come he might show the exceeding riches of his grace in his kindness toward us through Christ Jesus. And let us ascribe "blessing, and honor, and glory, and power, . . . unto him that sitteth upon the throne, and unto the Lamb for ever and ever."—Eph. 2:6,7; Rev. 5:13 ■

## **CHRISTIAN LIFE AND DOCTRINE**

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### **PART II—THE CREATION SERIES**

**NOTE:** To receive the full benefit of the lesson, the reader is advised to look up the cited scriptures in his Bible before examining the explanatory material of the article.

# **GOD'S PLAN IN THE BOOK OF GENESIS**

## *GENESIS, CHAPTER THREE*

### **VERSE 1**

There has been a great deal of speculation concerning the identity of the "serpent" mentioned for the first time in the opening verse of this chapter. The term is a translation of the Hebrew word *nachash*, meaning to hiss, mutter, or whisper, as do enchanters. The explanation that the "serpent" was more subtle than any beast of the field is not altogether true of serpents as we know them today. The Hebrew word here translated beast could as well be rendered living creature, and some contend that the "serpent" was in reality the fallen Lucifer, and is so referred to in Revelation 20:2.

There is perhaps something to be said in favor of this view, for it would mean that Eve was con-

fronted with the enticing influence of a glorious, though fallen, spirit being rather than the repelling presence of a snake, hence the difficulty she experienced in resisting his suggestions. But regardless of the medium by which the temptation was presented to mother Eve, the Scriptures are explicit on the point that Satan was, indeed, the real tempter—and this is the important consideration.

Satan's method of attack in the case of Eve was the same as it has been throughout the ages; namely, an attempt to cast doubt upon the Word of God. "Hath God said, Ye shall not eat of every tree of the garden?" Satan was acquainted with the Word of God then, even as he displayed familiarity with it 4,000 years later, when tempting Jesus. While Satan is doubtless agreeable to the immorality and crime that have resulted from the fall of man, his principal activity is that of attacking the confidence of God's people in the veracity of his Word.

### **VERSES 2,3**

In answering the "serpent," Eve revealed that she had a thorough knowledge of God's requirements. This information was obviously communicated to her by Adam, as she was created after the command was given to him. The clause, "neither shall ye touch it," was added by Eve, and may be expressive of her desire to comply with God's directions, even to the finest detail—that she would not so much as go near the tree which had been forbidden.

### **VERSE 4**

Having succeeded in engaging Eve in conversation, in having her state the law of God and the

penalty for violating it, that "old serpent" was quick to follow up with a flat denial that God meant what he said when he declared that the penalty for disobeying his instructions would be death when he said, 'Thou shalt surely die'. But in denying this, Satan insisted, 'Ye shall not surely die'. Stemming from this denial of the Word of God have come all the false doctrines that have deceived the dying world throughout all the ages.

Satan's lie, 'Ye shall not surely die', finds expression today in the unscriptural theory that there is no death. All philosophies tending to show that death is not a reality have their origin in this lie of Satan's. Among these are the claims of inherent immortality; the immortality of the soul; the trans-migrations of souls; reincarnation, and others.

#### **VERSE 5**

In this text we have an example of Satan's method of deceiving by the admixture of truth and error. It was true that partaking of the forbidden fruit would result in the human race obtaining a knowledge of good and evil, but it was not true that human beings would become gods. We cannot be sure what Satan meant by his use of the term 'gods' or mighty ones, but this is probably the origin of the idea that at death human beings enter a higher existence, similar to the angels. It was essential that Satan introduce some such view as this into the minds of the people in order to divert their attention from the reality of death.

#### **VERSES 6,7**

From the reading of this passage it is apparent that Satan had presented a most desirable picture of the advantages that would accrue from disobey-

ing God's law. Eve was assured that the tree was "good for food," "pleasant to the eyes," and "to be desired to make one wise." With all these reasons for breaking God's command, plus the doubt as to whether death would actually follow as a result, Eve succumbed to the temptation, and Adam joined her in the transgression.

Eve was deceived, but the Apostle Paul informs us that Adam was not. (I Tim. 2:14) It was to Adam that the Creator gave his law directly, and his communion with his God had evidently resulted in giving him confidence in his Word. He knew that death would result from his disobedience, but he chose to go along with his wife in a course which he knew would lead to certain disaster. He may have recalled his loneliness prior to her creation and felt that life would not be worthwhile without her.

The sudden realization that they were naked is in keeping with the symbolism which is used throughout the Scriptures indicating that those who are guilty before God are represented as being in need of a covering. This symbolism finds its most important application in connection with the 'robe' of Christ's righteousness which covers the imperfections of all who come to God through him.

### **VERSES 8-10**

"They heard the voice of the LORD God walking in the garden." While Adam and Eve had transgressed God's law, they were still close to the perfection they possessed before sinning, and apparently God created them in such a manner that they could communicate with him more directly than is possible for imperfect human beings. It is not necessary to suppose, of course, that the Creator him-

self spoke personally and audibly to them; but whatever method he used, it must have been with a directness and definiteness that there could be no mistaking the meaning of the message.

They were afraid. Fear is one of the inevitable results of sin. This principle has been borne out in the experiences of the entire human race. Because the race has continued in sin, all mankind continues to be blighted with fear.

A knowledge of both good and evil was to result from partaking of the forbidden tree. They began to acquire their knowledge of evil almost immediately; but their full knowledge of both good and evil will not be attained until the close of the Millennial Age. The entire human race will then possess that knowledge through experience, and thus equipped, will be able to decide whether or not they will obey God and live, or disobey him and die.

### **VERSES 11-13**

One of the traits of fallen human nature is that of blaming others for our own wrongdoing. This tendency manifested itself very early in human experience, and we find Adam blaming Eve—and implying that the Creator himself was somewhat to blame, for he had given Eve to him—and Eve blaming the “old serpent.” When one does wrong, the most satisfactory thing to do is to accept the blame, and as far as possible, make amends.

### **VERSES 14,15**

In this condemnation of the “serpent” is clear evidence that more than a snake was involved in the temptation of our first parents. The “seed” of the serpent referred to here is the seed of Satan, made up of all who come under his influence and

lend themselves to the furthering of his sinful purposes. The "enmity" placed between the seed of the serpent and the seed of the woman has been manifested throughout the ages in the persecution of those upon whom God has manifested his favor.

The assertion that the seed of the serpent would bruise the "heel" of the seed of the woman suggests opposition, but not of a sort that would prove fatal. The bruising of the serpent's head by the seed of the woman indicates the destruction of that great enemy of God and men represented by the serpent; namely, Satan, the Devil. The seed of the woman is the Christ, made up of Jesus, the Head, and the church his body; and one of the New Testament promises is that Satan shall be bruised under the feet of the church. (Rom. 16:20) We are also told that all the wicked will the LORD destroy.—Ps. 145:20

#### **VERSE 16**

In this text we have important evidences of the inspiration of the Bible. From a physical standpoint there is no reason why human mothers should suffer in giving birth to their children more than do the lower animals, but they do. No scientific reason has ever been advanced for this, and no explanation given, except this one which we find in the Book of Genesis. It is part of the curse which resulted from Eve's transgression of God's law.

#### **VERSES 17-19**

The punishment upon Adam—and upon the entire human race of which he was the representative head—was twofold. He was to die—dust thou art, and unto dust shalt thou return—and the earth was cursed, making it difficult to obtain the neces-

sary food. There seems to be special significance in the expression, "cursed is the ground for thy sake." In the Creator's wisdom, the earth was left in an unfinished state, making it necessary for fallen man to subsist by hard toil. This was for the benefit of man since it has prevented the human race from sinking even deeper into debauchery and sin.

#### **VERSE 20**

The meaning of names plays an important part in the revelation of God's plan. Mary, for example, was told that she should call her son Jesus, meaning "savior," because he would save his people from their sins. The name, Eve is from a Hebrew word meaning "life-giver." While the life principle originates with the father it could not develop into maturity without the aid of the mother, hence the importance of this fact is emphasized by the name that was given to the original mother of the human race.

#### **VERSE 21**

In God's provision of clothing for our first parents which required the sacrifice of life, there is a pointing forward to the provision of Christ's righteousness to cover the imperfections of those who return to God's favor through him. While God did not reveal his plan of salvation with much detail in his dealing with Adam and Eve, he did not leave them altogether without hope. His statement concerning the seed of the woman is very significant in the light of subsequent promises, and in the coats provided for the sinful pair there is a picture of a future provision of Divine love.

## VERSES 22-24

God said, "Behold, the man is become as one of us, to know good and evil." Adam and Eve did not become 'gods' in any other sense than in their knowledge of good and evil, and now they were to experience both. They had experienced a great deal of 'good' before they transgressed the Divine law, and life was not to be entirely void of blessings even now.

The LORD said that man had become as "one of us." The 'us' in this statement is evidently a reference to himself and the *Logos*, who cooperated with him in the great Creative work. (John 1:1-3) God's knowledge of good and evil was intuitive, and the *Logos* had received it by information from his Heavenly Father. But now man was in the way to obtain it by experience. Although a deep sense of guilt came over our first parents because of their sin, and they immediately suffered from the loss of sweet communion with their Creator, the knowledge of the terrible consequences of their disobedience was to be a growing one.

In carrying out the death sentence, God expelled Adam and Eve from their paradise home. Cherubim and a flaming sword were placed at the east of the garden to prevent our first parents from returning. It is quite possible that this is symbolic language. Prof. Strong defines the Hebrew word here translated cherubim as an 'imaginary figure'. It is reasonable to conclude that both the cherubim and the flaming sword are symbolic of Divine providences which made it impossible for fallen man to continue enjoying the blessings of the garden which God had planted for him. Possibly a great disaster of nature made the garden uninhabitable.

Being expelled from their paradise home, this first human pair began to die—began to realize from actual experience that Satan had lied when he said, 'Ye shall not surely die'.

## **CHAPTER FOUR**

### **VERSES 1,2**

This passage indicates that Adam and Eve did not exercise their powers of procreation until after they were expelled from Eden, which proves that this was not the "forbidden fruit." God had commanded them to multiply and fill the earth, but, in his providence, this commission did not begin to be carried out until after they sinned.

Now they were under condemnation to death. They had lost a measure of their original perfection, and of necessity their children would inherit their imperfections. Thus it was that original sin resulted in the entire human race losing life. Paul expresses the thought clearly, saying, "As by one man sin entered into the world, and death by sin; so death passed upon all men, for that all have sinned."—Rom. 5:12

### **VERSES 3-8**

Little detail is furnished concerning the domestic life of the earth's first family. Cain and Abel had by now grown to young manhood. One became a tiller of the soil and the other a keeper of sheep. Doubtless much occurred during their childhood and maturing years which would have been well worth recording, but for the LORD's purpose he selected just this one incident.

True, it was a tragic incident, ending in the murder of Abel, but it is not recorded in the sacred

Word simply as a murder story, nor even because it was the first murder—and the first death. It is used, rather, because in it is an illustration of a fundamental feature of God's plan of salvation.

We doubt if all the details even of this experience of these two young men are given. What is written simply tells us that God had respect unto the sacrifice brought to him by Abel, and that he did not so view Cain's offering. The account gives us no special reason for this seeming partiality. In verse seven the LORD says to Cain, "If thou doest well, shalt thou not be accepted? and if thou doest not well, sin lieth at the door."

This, however, seems to refer to what Cain's attitude might be subsequent to the acceptance of Abel's sacrifice, meaning that if he took this experience in the proper spirit, the LORD would compensate him in some way later.

The Apostle Paul, writing under the inspiration of the Holy Spirit, throws important light on this narrative, saying that "by faith Abel offered unto God a more excellent sacrifice than Cain." (Heb. 11:4) This would indicate that Abel brought his offering to the LORD as a work of faith, knowing that it was the kind of sacrifice that would be acceptable to him.

Previously God had said that the 'seed' of the woman would bruise the 'serpent's' head. This implied a deliverance from the result of the tragedy which occurred in Eden. Sin entered into the world, and for the human race to be delivered from its result there would have to be a remission of sin. The apostle informs us that without the shedding of blood there can be no remission of sin.—Heb. 9:22

Thus, having made this promise of future deliverance, God began to illustrate the manner in which it would be fulfilled, indicating that it would be upon the basis of a sacrifice involving the shedding of blood. As the plan of God for human redemption and deliverance unfolds through the Word, we learn that Jesus is the "Lamb" that is "slain," and that it is his blood that atones for the sin of Adam and the entire human race.—Rev. 5:12

### **VERSES 9,10**

Selfishness, manifesting itself in the form of jealousy, had taken a firm hold upon Cain, and his attitude was well expressed in his question, "Am I my brother's keeper?" Selfishness ultimately leads to a viewpoint of this sort, whereas love prompts in the opposite direction. Those in whose hearts the love of God reigns, feel a genuine concern for the well-being of others, particularly those who are near—and should be dear—to them according to the flesh.

Adam was a son of God (Luke 3:38), and from this standpoint the entire human race is God's family, although, since the fall, alienated from him. But God loves this family, and has made a plan through Jesus for the recovery of all who will accept the provision of his love. If we appreciate what God has done for us and for the world, and are endeavoring to be like him, we too will take a self-sacrificing interest in all whom he loves. Unlike Cain's attitude of selfishness, we will gladly assume whatever responsibility we can toward others, and will seek to do them good.

The Hebrew word translated "blood" in verse ten is plural, and should be rendered "bloods." This may denote that God considered the murder of Abel

as a figure of the experiences which would come to all those throughout the ages who, through their works, would manifest their faith in him and in his Word. From this standpoint all the righteous blood that was shed would be like the righteous blood of Abel. See Matthew 23:35

#### **VERSES 11-15**

Cain's punishment was severe. The word "punishment," in verse thirteen, however, should be translated iniquity, or sin. The Septuagint, Vulgate, and other versions render this passage, "Is my iniquity too great to be forgiven?" This translation harmonizes well with the LORD's reply, which assured Cain that although he would be a marked man, he could expect a certain amount of protection. While this was no indication that God had forgiven him, it was a partial answer to his question, and one from which he could obtain a certain degree of comfort.

#### **VERSES 16-17**

Cain's going out from the presence of the LORD means that no longer did the LORD deal with him, and that from thenceforth he no longer looked to the LORD for favors. He dwelt in the land of Nod, which is mentioned as being east of Eden. The exact geographical setting of Nod cannot be determined today.

The mention of Cain's wife has raised that age-old question, Where did Cain get his wife? Up to this point in the narrative, no mention is made of members of the race other than Cain and Abel. However, this does not mean that there were no other children. In chapter 5, verse four, we learn that Adam begat sons and daughters throughout

his long lifetime, and it is reasonable to conclude that daughters had been born and had become mature by the time Cain was ready for marriage. As the race had not deteriorated physically by then, as it has since, intermarrying would not result disastrously to their offspring, as is liable to be the case today.

#### **VERSES 18-24**

Enoch, the son of Cain, should not be confused with Enoch, "the seventh from Adam," and a descendant of Seth. The genealogy of Cain's descendants indicates quite clearly the nature of their social life. Cain founded the first city; Lamech instituted polygamy; Jabal instituted the nomadic life; Jubal invented musical instruments; and Tubalcain was the first blacksmith.

#### **VERSES 25,26**

The name "Seth" means appointed, or placed. Eve gave the name to this particular boy because she believed that God had given him to her to take the place of Abel. Evidently she had great respect for the promise of a coming 'seed', and noting, in God's providences, that his favor had been upon Abel, she felt there must be someone especially appointed by the LORD to take his place if that original promise was to be fulfilled.

We cannot be too certain of the meaning of the expression, "Then began men to call upon the name of the LORD." It does not mean that worship of God first began in the days of Enos, for as we have seen, years before this both Cain and Abel worshiped Jehovah, and brought offerings to him. The marginal translation states, "to call themselves by the name of the LORD."

There are a number of Hebrew scholars who take the view that this text is giving us the origin of the worship of false gods, and of taking the name of the true God in vain. It seems reasonable that since these chapters tell us of the fall of man into sin, they should complete the story by informing us that man's worship also became corrupted.

*(To be continued)* ■

## **WEEKLY PRAYER MEETING TEXTS**

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**AUGUST 7**—"If a man contend in the games, he is not crowned unless he strive lawfully."—II Timothy 2:5, Wilson's Emphatic Diaglott (Z' 02-265 Hymn 13)

**AUGUST 14**—"It is enough for the disciple that he be as his Master, and the servant as his Lord. If they have called the Master of the house Beelzebub, how much more shall they call them of his household?"—Matthew 10:25 (Z. '03-13 Hymn 261)

**AUGUST 21**—"Seek ye first the kingdom of God and his righteousness."—Matthew 6:33 (Z. '02-350 Hymn 4)

**AUGUST 28**—"Preach the Word; be instant in season, out of season."—II Timothy 4:2 (Z. '03-189 Hymn 116)

## **OBITUARIES**

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*The following brethren have recently finished their Christian course. We wish to express our sincere sympathy to the families and friends in the loss of these dear ones. We appreciate information concerning any brethren to be included in this list.*

Sister Mildred Klusak Lightfoot, FL—April 27. Age, 95.  
Sister Beverly Gershon, Pittsburgh PA—May 13. Age, 61.  
Brother Stanley Zolnierski, Detroit, MI—May 31. Age, 80.  
Sister Mildred White, Kelowna, BC, Can.—June 13. Age, 81.  
Brother John Olchow, Winnipeg, MB, Can.—June 15.

## ENCOURAGING LETTERS

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### READ BOOKLET TWICE

Dear Bible Students: Your wonderful pamphlet, "*Hope*" came today. I immediately opened it. And when I saw the contents I quickly started to read the booklet. I cannot help but say that God somehow saw to it that I should receive this booklet—it is just what I needed. My beloved husband died two months ago tomorrow, April 6th. I have cried so much. He had Alzheimers, but died from a heart attack. I read your booklet twice already, because I was convinced that I would never see George again. We both went to church for years, and both sang in the choir, but somehow I still feared I would never see him again. But your pamphlet made me believe what the Word of God promises us: "In Christ shall all be made alive." Thank you so much for sending me this wonderful and help-

ful booklet. Sincerely.—*NJ*

### YOUNG LADY WITH QUESTIONS

Dear People of the Bible: My name is Bertrina and I'm 14 years old, and in the 8th grade. On Sunday, April 13, I watched your program and I really enjoyed it. Because I recently received Jesus Christ as my Savior I have many questions to be answered. I would like to receive "*Hope for a Fear-filled World*," and any other booklets that could help me. If that's not too much, I would appreciate it. Thanks! and God Bless!—*IL*

### CHRISTIAN GROWTH THROUGH BROADCAST

Hello Gentlemen in Christian Service: Thank you for your Christian radio ministry on Radio Station WLQV. The broadcast I listened to concerning deliverance from sin and hope of salvation pointed out the

importance of fellowship, and the meaning of the word 'church'. A church is not a building or place of worship. It is the collective members in fellowship helping each other by sharing prayer, study, and discussion. The "*Frank & Ernest*" program also offered a hope for salvation to those outside the church. Please send a copy of the booklet entitled, "*The Church.*" Hopefully, the booklet will help the listeners of the program to understand God's Word, know him, and learn humility. Thank you for the deep knowledge of the Scriptures that we experience as a result of your broadcast. Sincerely.—MI

#### THANKS!

Sirs: I would like to have a free copy of the booklet, "*How God Answers Prayer.*" Your materials are *really* increasing my faith! Thanks!—MS

#### GLAD SHE FOUND US AGAIN

Dear "Frank & Ernest," I am so glad to find you on WABI, Ohio. I was unable to find you for a while. Long ago you were coming to us in Alabama, through a Birmingham station. Thank God for your work. I am an old retired nurse. May I please have the booklet? Please respond and know we will meet some day in His presence. Thanking you in advance for the booklet, and I deeply appreciate your efforts to reach the lost world that changes day after day. It boggles my mind to see the changes in this world in my 83 years of life. I pray for the lostness and collision-course it seems the nations of this world are in. I am nearing my transition—keep me in your prayers that I am faithful until He comes for me. Sincerely.—AL

## SPEAKERS' APPOINTMENTS

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

### M. Balko

|         |              |                 |    |
|---------|--------------|-----------------|----|
| Poland  | August 12-22 | Portland, OR    | 10 |
| Ukraine | 23-31        | Seattle, WA     | 11 |
|         |              | Vancouver, B.C. | 12 |

### K. Fernets

|         |              |                   |       |
|---------|--------------|-------------------|-------|
| Poland  | August 12-22 | Vernon, B.C.      | 13    |
| Ukraine | 23-31        | Witaskiwin, Alta. | 16,17 |
|         |              | Havre, MT         | 18    |
|         |              | Florence, MT      | 19    |

### E.F. Lankford

|                |          |                    |    |
|----------------|----------|--------------------|----|
| Upper Lake, CA | August 8 | Boise, ID          | 20 |
|                |          | Salt Lake City, UT | 21 |

*The speakers listed below, in cooperation with the Dawn, are invited by individual classes or their services have been arranged by their home class:*

### E. Blicharz

St. Petersburg, FL August 10

### C. Chandler

Wetaskiwin, Alta. August 16,17

### P. Cooper

Wetaskiwin, Alta. August 16,17

### R. Gorecki

New London, CT August 17

### S. Jones

Witaskiwin, Alta. August 16,17

### N. Kasperowicz

Middletown, NY August 10

### L. Young

Louisville, AL August 31

## CONVENTIONS

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*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 Ave., East Rutherford, NJ 07073.*

**ALBERTA BIBLE STUDENTS CONVENTION, Canada, August 16,17—**  
Ethier Lodge, Wetaskiwin, Alta. Contact: Janice New-

meier, Box 428, Fox Creek, Alta., Canada T0H 1P0  
Phone: (403) 622-3809

**JACKSON, MI, LABOR DAY CONVENTION,**