

The Dawn

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Highlights of Dawn

The Earth Devoured

THE WORLD is now well on its way into another year. The horn-blowing, bell-ringing, and joyous festivities with which 1989 was ushered in are now forgotten, and throughout the globe people are more aware than ever that they are faced with the same, similar, or still more serious problems than those which so gravely perplexed them during 1988.

Many trouble spots continue to exist in the world at the close of this year—any one of which could erupt into full-fledged war at a moment's notice. The Middle East continues to be daily in the spotlight of world attention, with its delicately balanced and precarious state of semi-peace barely being maintained in the Gulf of Aqaba. The easing of tensions between Iraq and Iran, and Russia withdrawing its armies from Afghanistan and easing off its military aid to Iran are viewed as hopeful signs, but all of the basic problems still exist.

The skirmishes which continue in Israel and on its borders are a continual threat to life and peace which could escalate at any time to implicate larger, more powerful, far-away countries. Terrorist activities, with kidnappings, hijackings and bombings have caused heartache, pain and suffering, and, yes, death. South Africa is another hotbed of unrest and rebellion due to the inhumanity of man to man, his lack of conscience and denial of basic human needs. Situations continue to flare up in South and Central America which are unsettling to the citizens of those areas, taking the lives of young soldiers in ambushings and guerrilla warfare between antagonistic political parties, and involving the United States and Russia as they take sides, for and against, the hostile parties.

Ireland, although fairly calm at the moment, has not solved its problems between north and south which have existed there for so many decades. And the Philippines, despite their new improved regime, are still in a state of flux, and more trouble could erupt in those islands in a dramatic manner at any time.

Economic problems continue to haunt the globe. Glasnost and Perestroika are new words we are becoming accustomed to, describing the change in attitude toward social economics with which the Soviet Socialist Republic must experiment. Their old ideologies have been proven a failure, and new methods are being tried, or, as the present men in control of government now realize, they will vanish from the global economic scene. The entire world financial status is another very precarious situation, and competition between countries is fierce and extremely complicated.

The explosion of inventions is inconceivable to the average human being! A computer which was 'state of the art' one year is obsolete the next! Labor-saving machinery once thought to be a threat to the working man, is now run by computerized, electronic robots! These scientific achievements, soon to be a real boon to mankind in the Millennial Age because of their ability to provide needed commodities such as food, clothing, shelter, communication, and transportation quickly, are making problems at the present time to the average working man. It is necessary to learn new, more complicated skills in order to reduce unemployment and to keep a healthy economy. Instead of a society of services and manufacturing, we have become a society of electronic, electrical and mechanical technologists, embracing also other science-oriented fields. This requires change and improvement in educational institutions and goals, which are sadly falling behind the needs.

AIDS, cancer, drug abuse, pollution and poverty, continue to haunt mankind, raising question marks with no answers. And so, as we approach the last decade of the twentieth century, with

its enlightenment along all lines of human endeavor, we realize more and more clearly that enlightenment is not by any means the solution to our multiplying problems. In fact it seems in a large measure to complicate them.

The acute problems of the world are due, basically, to human selfishness. The enlightenment of the people in this time of the end has led them to clamor for their rights, and the selfish interests of all groups blind them to a consideration of the rights of others. Thus there is trouble, serious trouble. Even in the labor world, equitable solutions could be found if those concerned were governed by an unselfish interest in the welfare of all mankind.

The Scriptures reveal that God takes the responsibility of bringing about this foretold increase of knowledge. We are told that his lightnings would enlighten the world, and that when the people saw, they would tremble. (Ps. 97:4) The prophecies reveal that this trembling of the people would ultimately result in the destruction of man's social order. God foretold this, saying that he would devour the whole earth with the fire of his jealousy, or zeal.—Zeph. 3:8

It would seem that this fire is already kindled. Jesus said, in a prophecy of destruction upon the Jewish polity of his day, "I am come to send fire on the earth; and what will I, if it be already kindled?" (Luke 12:49) What Jesus meant was that the conditions and situations which would lead to the great time of trouble upon Israel in A.D. 70-73 were already manifesting themselves. This is an interesting statement, for it reveals that the fire of the prophecies is not literal, but symbolic of a conflagration of human passions which destroys man's world or earth of today.

And what a vivid illustration Jesus suggests! Applying it today, we can think of all the various trouble spots of the earth as so many places where the devouring fire of Jehovah's zeal is already beginning to burn. Indeed, worldly writers refer to them as brush fires, which is what they are; but, eventually these will become joined in a worldwide blaze which will destroy man's self-

ish, social order, and make way for the establishment of the kingdom of Christ.

In Zephaniah 3:8, where we read that the LORD will devour the whole earth with the fire of his jealousy, the Hebrew word translated jealousy is the same one which is translated zeal in Isaiah 9, where, forecasting the birth of Jesus, and the establishment of his kingdom, we are informed that "the zeal of the LORD of Hosts will perform this." The zeal of the LORD of Hosts in the setting up of Jesus as the new world ruler is manifested in many ways.

This zeal of the LORD for the establishment of righteousness in the earth is reflected in the outworking of every aspect of his plan for the reconciliation and salvation of the human race now estranged from him through wicked works. Nothing has been permitted to interfere with the divine plan. When the enemies of Jesus, the new king of earth, put him to death, God raised him from the dead and exalted him to his own right hand of power.

1989 Memorial Supper Date

THE proper time for the annual observance of the Memorial Supper will be after 6:00 p.m., on Tuesday, April 18th.

We have a complete Memorial Service available for isolated brethren, or for any who care to have it, on both audio and video cassette. The audio cassette service can be purchased for \$3.00, or is available on loan from The Dawn, 199 Railroad Avenue, East Rutherford, NJ 07073.

The video cassette service can be purchased for \$6.00, and is also available on loan. Send your request to:

*Dawn Video Cassette Service
P.O. Box 4355
North Hollywood, CA 91607.*

The divine plan for the Gospel Age has been the selection of a little flock from among mankind to share the rulership of the kingdom with Jesus. (Luke 12:32) This work has gone grandly on and, at the end of the age, these joint-heirs are, like Jesus, raised from the dead to live and reign with him. The zeal of Jehovah of Hosts is seen in the carrying out of these great features of his plan.

Before the kingdom of Christ can function for the promised blessing of all the families of the earth, the selfish and sinful rulership of man must be set aside; and here again the zeal of the LORD for the accomplishment of his purposes is manifested. He declares that his determination is to gather the nations and to assemble the kingdoms, that he might pour upon them his indignation, even all his fierce anger, and as a result of this the whole symbolic earth will be destroyed. The psalmist wrote concerning this that the "heathen raged, the kingdoms were moved: He uttered His voice, the earth melted."—Ps. 46:6

God does not destroy man's social order through lack of love for the people, but rather because he does love them, and is preparing for their ultimate and eternal blessing. This is reflected in the further prophecy of the psalmist: "Come, behold the works of the LORD, what desolations he hath made in the earth. He maketh wars to cease unto the end of the earth; he breaketh the bow, and cutteth the spear in sunder; he burneth the chariot in the fire." (Ps. 46:8,9) Note that the desolations made in the earth by the LORD is simply the fact that he makes an end of war, and the munitions of war!

This has been one of the heartfelt desires of the people of all ages, but because of human selfishness it has been impossible of accomplishment. And even today, as we have noted, for the nations to disarm and be satisfied to settle their differences in ways other than by war, would create serious problems. But the Creator knows how to solve these problems, and indeed will

solve them, to his own glory and to the eternal blessing of his human creatures.

Jehovah tells us that after he has devoured the symbolic earth with the fire of his zeal, he will turn to the people a pure language, or message, that they might all call upon him and serve him with one consent. (Zeph. 3:9) Yes, while the symbolic earth will be destroyed, the literal earth will remain as man's home, and the people will be enlightened to know the true God, for then a true knowledge of him will fill the earth as the waters cover the sea.—Isa. 11:9

This knowledge will be in both the minds and hearts of the people, inducing them willingly to seek their Heavenly Father's will and ways and be guided thereby. It is described by the Prophet Jeremiah as the law of God being written in the inward parts of the people. (Jer. 31:31-34) This means that divine love will replace selfishness as a motivating power in human behavior. This in itself will solve the problems created by human selfishness.

We have noted how the use of robots in factories has increased production and quality of workmanship in many factories, but has also taken away many less-skilled jobs, and made it necessary for people to have more education. The designing and production of the robots has opened up some highly-skilled positions requiring knowledge of electronics, electrical engineering, and mechanical engineering. Think of the hundreds of millions of people who are in need of a sufficient supply of food, clothing, housing, and transportation! There is still only a minority of the earth's population which enjoys the high standard of living with which the people of America are blessed. There is a great need waiting to be filled in most countries, and with the law of love operating under the guidance of messianic kingdom agencies, these needs will be supplied.

Labor-saving machinery has appeared as a result of the foretold increase of knowledge. (Dan. 12:1) The LORD knew that

at the beginning it would create problems for the nations, and help to bring about the downfall of Satan's empire. But the LORD also knew that eventually this increased potential of production would be needed to provide food, clothing, and homes for the billions who, throughout the kingdom age, would be restored from the sleep of death. "Her merchandise and her hire [economic enterprise] shall be holiness to the LORD: it shall not be treasured nor laid up [by the rich]; for her merchandise shall be for them that dwell before the LORD [all mankind in the Millennial Age], to eat sufficiently, and for durable clothing." —Isa. 23:18

Just from the standpoint of divinely directed human abilities, think of the work that awaits the human race! First, there will be the raising of the standard of living for the people of the third world countries. The LORD will not be satisfied with the pitiful conditions under which they are barely surviving today. God will not allow any to go hungry; now many thousands are starving to death. All will share equally in the bounties of the earth!

And then, as noted, will be the need to feed, clothe, and house those who are being raised from the dead. What a happy project that will be! True, all will be giving a hand in it, and we can imagine that there will not be more work for anyone than can and will be thoroughly enjoyed. With love as the motive, and righteousness the guiding principle of life, all otherwise idle time will be profitably spent to enrich the minds and hearts of mankind, increasing their appreciation of the LORD, and their desire to serve and please him.

We cannot expect that this glorious kingdom program will become operative during 1989! But we do now see that the fire which will devour the old and selfish social order of man is already kindled—yes, kindled in many places. In Jehovah's due time they will be joined in the final phase of the greatest "time of trouble" the world has ever seen—the "Armageddon" of the Scriptures. (Dan. 12:1; Matt. 24:21; Rev. 16:16; 19:11-15) But,

unlike the world, we do not fear as we look ahead to these things coming upon the earth.

We do not fear because we know the outcome, an outcome that will be glorious, not only for the Master's followers, who can expect soon to be delivered from this present evil world to live and reign with him, but glorious also for all mankind; for after the fire has devoured the earth, the "desire of all nations shall come." (Hag. 2:7) Instead of fear, we look up and rejoice, and seize every opportunity that comes to us to make known the glad tidings of the kingdom, and thereby to comfort those who mourn.

May our Heavenly Father help us to continue rejoicing, and to remain faithful as his ambassadors, while we wait his due time for the establishment of his kingdom!



Weekly Prayer Meeting Texts

March 2—"Whatsoever things are true, whatsoever things are honest, . . . think on these things."—Philippians 4:8 (Z. '03-9 Hymn 210)

March 9—"God is not unrighteous to forget your work and labor of love, which ye have showed toward his name, in that you have ministered to the saints, and do minister."—Hebrews 6:10 (Z. '03-59 Hymn 210)

March 16—"We know that we have passed from death unto life because we love the brethren, . . . and we ought to lay down our lives for the brethren."—I John 3:14,16 (Z. '99-88 Hymn 117)

March 23—"Ye endured a great fight of afflictions, partly whilst you were made a gazingstock, both by reproaches and afflictions, and partly whilst ye became the companions of them that were so used."—Hebrews 10:32,33 (Z. '03-40 Hymn 260)

March 30—"Seeing then that all these things shall be dissolved, what manner of persons ought you to be in all holy conversation and godliness."—II Peter 3:11 (Z. '96-33 Hymn 305)

International Bible Study Lessons

LESSON FOR MARCH 5

An Appeal for Acceptance

KEY VERSE: "Perhaps he therefore departed for a season, that thou shouldest receive him forever . . . a brother beloved."—*Philemon 15, 16*

SELECTED SCRIPTURE: *Philemon 4-20*

ONE of the servants, or slaves, owned by Philemon was Onesimus. Whether or not Paul had become acquainted with him during any of his visits to Philemon's home, we cannot be sure. What we know with certainty is that Onesimus, for reasons not revealed in the Scriptures, elected to run away from his Master. He fled to Rome, thinking that in a large city like Rome he would be less likely to be found.

Arriving in Rome, Onesimus sought out Paul, who was in prison. The fact that he went to Paul would seem to indicate that he was acquainted with the apostle, and knew that he was held in a Roman prison. As we know, Paul used every possible opportunity to present the Gospel, and did not overlook the privilege of witnessing to Onesimus, who accepted the message, and consecrated himself to God and the service of the heavenly Master, even Jesus Christ our Lord.

Onesimus also became a very

valuable servant to Paul, not as a slave, but as a voluntary helper. However, under the circumstances, Paul realized that he could not properly continue to use the services of Onesimus inasmuch as he actually belonged to Philemon. The fact that Onesimus had accepted Christ did not cancel his obligation to his earthly master from whom he had run away. This being true, Paul arranged for Onesimus to return to Philemon to seek forgiveness, and to accept whatever, if any, penalties might be imposed upon him.

In this unusual situation there is brought into focus for us the opportunity for Philemon to exercise the virtue of forgiveness. Jesus' teachings on this point actually left Philemon no choice as to what he should do, for in his Sermon on the Mount Jesus said, "If ye forgive men their trespasses, your Heavenly Father will also forgive you: but if ye forgive men not their trespasses, neither will your Father forgive

your trespasses." (Matt. 6:14,15) The proper application of this principle of divine love and mercy was considered so important by Jesus that he incorporated it in the prayer which he taught to his disciples.—Matt. 6:9-13

According to the standards of the time, the trespass of Onesimus against his master, Philemon, was a very real and serious one. It was not that he had been misunderstood by Philemon. Nor did Paul, in his letter to Philemon, try to discount the seriousness of the trespass. All Paul asked was that Philemon exercise forgiveness and mercy toward Onesimus, especially that now he was a brother in Christ.

Today, a similar situation could not develop. However, it is still true that brethren in Christ are trespassed against, both by those in the world and, at times, unwittingly, no doubt, by their brethren in Christ. And whatever the nature of these trespasses, if we truly desire to be like our Father in heaven, we will extend mercy and forgiveness toward those who do us wrong, especially if they manifest a spirit of repentance and seek our forgiveness, as did Onesimus.

And even when we are not directly asked to extend forgiveness, the spirit of mercy and of kindness should be in our hearts toward all

who transgress God's law. God loved us while we were yet sinners, and provided a Redeemer, his own beloved Son, to make possible our reconciliation. And while we were yet sinners, Christ died for us. This is the manner in which divine love operates, and if we would be like our Heavenly Father, and like his beloved Son, we, too, will need to maintain this desire to make peace with those who trespass against us.

Paul is gently reminding Philemon that there had been an opportunity to serve him while in prison, and that he would be glad to accept the services of Onesimus in the place of Philemon. However, as Paul explained, since Onesimus really still belonged to Philemon he could not assume to continue accepting his services without the consent of his master.

In his letter Paul eases the situation as much as possible by reminding Philemon that it might well have been permitted for a good purpose, "for perhaps he therefore departed for a season, that thou shouldest receive him forever; not now as a servant [or slave], but above a servant, a brother beloved, specially to me, but how much more unto thee, both in the flesh, and in the Lord? If thou count me therefore a partner, receive him as myself."—vss. 15-17

Citizens of a New Kingdom

KEY VERSE: *God "hath delivered us from the power of darkness, and hath translated us into the kingdom of his dear Son: in whom we have redemption through his blood, even the forgiveness of sins."*—Colossians 1:13,14

SELECTED SCRIPTURE: Colossians 1:1-14

IF WE are to understand the scriptural testimony concerning the kingdom of God it is essential to keep in mind that in this kingdom there are both rulers and subjects. The work of God in the earth up until the present time has been the selection and preparation of those who are to share in the rulership of that kingdom. Jesus is the king or ruler supreme—the one who came in fulfillment of the Old Testament prophecies concerning a Messiah who was to establish a worldwide government, through the agencies of which all the families of the earth are yet to be blessed as the subjects of the kingdom.

Those who are invited to joint-heirship with Christ, and who are inspired with the hope of living and reigning with him, must prove their worthiness of this high honor and great responsibility by laying down their earthly lives in service, even as Jesus laid down his life. This work of sacrifice is properly called king-

dom work because it is in preparation for the glorious future work of the kingdom of Christ.

In our text the reference is to those seeking a position of rulership in the kingdom as joint-heirs with Jesus Christ. All dedicated followers of the Master are to view this as the first, or all-important consideration of their consecrated lives.

It is wholly upon the basis of faith that we seek to be associated with Jesus in the ruling phase of his kingdom. We must have faith to believe that God is a rewarder of those who "diligently seek him." (Heb. 11:6) Our faith is in God whom we cannot see, and in his promises of rewards which are as yet invisible, except to the eye of faith.

If our faith is strong we will be able to consider as of secondary importance the material things of life, and take a firm hold of the promises of God while we forge ahead in the way of sacrifice which

leads to the goal we seek. We cannot successfully seek the kingdom while clinging to the things of the earth, under the power of darkness—ignorant of God and his purposes.

James wrote, "A double-minded man is unstable in all his ways." (James 1:8) This instability manifests itself in various ways. There is indecision in taking steps of obedience, especially when sacrifice is involved. There is a disposition to temporize with the world and the flesh, and the Devil. There may be a desire to make progress along spiritual lines, yet material allurements may be permitted to lead away from the true course of obedience by which spiritual gains are made.

The remedy for this is singleness of purpose, or wholeheartedness in seeking the kingdom. James also wrote, "Purify your hearts, ye double-minded." (James 4:8) He indicates that in this way we draw near to the LORD, and that he in turn will draw near to us; and with the LORD nearby to help, real progress toward the kingdom can be made.

The instructions of the LORD, his will, are as a light to our souls. Jesus said that "the light of the body is the eye." To this he added, "If therefore thine eye be single, thy whole body shall be full of light. But if thine eye be evil, thy whole body shall be full

of darkness. If therefore the light that is in thee be darkness, how great is that darkness!—Matt. 6:22,23

Here the eye is used as a symbol of vision—our spiritual vision. If we become double-minded, our spiritual vision will not remain clear, or single. We will have double vision in the sense of seeing and doing things other than those outlined by the will of God. We will see too much value in material things, and begin to set our affection upon them. If this condition is permitted to develop it means that we are leaving the narrow way of light and sacrifice and entering again into the way of darkness.

Let us continue, then, to seek the kingdom, not only first, but also with a "whole heart," and in faith, and with patience, giving all diligence to make our "calling and election sure." (Ps. 119:2; II Pet. 1:10) Through the precious words of truth we know that we have been "called" and "chosen." Now it remains for us to be faithful—faithful even unto death—in following the Lamb in that exacting course of sacrifice which he exemplified so faithfully for us.—Rev. 17:14

Let us be encouraged by the assurance of Jesus, who said, "Fear not, little flock; for it is your Father's good pleasure to give you the kingdom."—Luke 12:32

LESSON FOR MARCH 19

Remedy for False Teaching

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

SELECTED SCRIPTURE: Colossians 2:6-19

THE Gospel of Christ is received by faith, but not instantaneously. It is revealed gradually as faith is able to receive and act upon it.

The apostles are good illustrations of this 'faith to faith' revelation and receiving of the Gospel. Even before they heard of Jesus they knew something of the messianic promises and had faith in them. When they came into contact with Jesus and his wonderful ministry they believed that he was the Messiah, and left all to follow him. Thus upon the basis of their faith God was dealing with them.

In his prayer, Jesus said to his Father concerning his apostles, "Thine they were, and thou gavest them me; and they have kept thy Word." (John 17:6) These men were completely dedicated to God. They had faith in his Word, and were obedient to it. Prior to Pentecost they did not clearly understand the divine plan, but they believed and obeyed that which they did under-

stand. Because of this God looked upon them as his people. "Thine they were," said Jesus. Like Abraham, they were God's friends. How richly their faith was rewarded!

It was Abraham's faith in the promises that constituted the basis for his friendship with God. This was true of the apostles—it is still true today.

During the Gospel Age God reveals his plans and purposes through his written Word. The objective of this revelation, even as in the past, is to invite cooperation in the out-working of the divine plan. During the Gospel Age this cooperation can be only through association with Jesus, and under his headship. But Jesus said, "No man can come to me, except the Father which hath sent me draw him." (John 6:44) This shows that there is a certain selection on God's part. He is not at the present time drawing the whole world, but only those whom he chooses.

God chooses those whom he knows are able to exercise faith in him and in his promises. In addition to their ability to exercise faith, these are also humble of heart and willing to learn. The first evidence of God's drawing power in their lives may well be in an experience or series of experiences which cause them to realize the futility and worthlessness of the material values so highly esteemed by the world in general. Just as no one can come to Jesus unless drawn by the Father, Jesus explained that only through him could anyone have access to the Father. (John 14:6) This means that the truth by which God draws points the way to Jesus, and to the redeeming merit of his shed blood.

During this Gospel Age the only object of thus being drawn to God through Christ is to become disciples of Christ—which means to follow in his footsteps of self-sacrifice. It means to deny self and to take up one's cross and follow Jesus into death. It means to be "planted together in the likeness of his death." (Rom. 6:3-5) The footstep followers of Jesus walk in a path that is difficult to tread. It is a "narrow way." To walk in this way means sacrifice, suffering, and death. In Revelation 20:4 it is described as being "beheaded for the witness of Jesus, and for the Word of God." And even

though the word beheaded is thus used symbolically, it denotes suffering, and the loss of life.

This is the age of sacrifice, the "better sacrifices" mentioned by Paul in Hebrews 9:23. Now his followers are invited to suffer and die with Jesus. Their bodies also are presented in sacrifice.—Rom. 12:1

It is possible for these to offer an acceptable sacrifice to God only because they are made free from Adamic condemnation through the merit of the blood of Christ. Paul speaks of their bodies being offered a "living sacrifice." This can be only because, through the merit of Christ's blood, they are no longer under death condemnation, but through faith have been made alive in Christ. Think of what this means to us! It means that we are co-sacrificers with Jesus, and, in a manner acceptable to God are laying down our lives both for the brethren and in the interests of the whole world of mankind.

This is what is meant by the words of our text. Jesus' walk in life was solely in the interest of truth and righteousness, and the salvation of mankind. As footstep followers of the Master, we have the unspeakable privilege of being taught by him through the Word of truth those principles which guided his life, and which are to guide us also.

Risen with Christ

KEY VERSE: "If ye then be risen with Christ, seek those things which are above, where Christ sitteth on the right hand of God."—Col. 3:1

SELECTED SCRIPTURE: Luke 24:1-7; Col. 1:15-20; 3:1-4

OUR TEXT is one of the inspiring lessons of the resurrection to all who are endeavoring, by God's grace, to be like Jesus. Christ IS risen indeed, but are we risen with Christ? This language does not mean that we have already participated in the "first resurrection," but is expressive of our hope of sharing in his glory—a hope which inspires us to set our affections on things above, "where Christ sitteth at the right hand of God."

We are walking in "newness of life," that is, from the moment of our consecration, we begin to live a new life; for we are new creatures in Christ Jesus, to whom old things have passed away, and all things have become new. (Rom. 6:4) All of our interests are to be centered above, with the things of our natural life receiving only the necessary minimum of attention. Our treasure is in heaven, and if

this is truly so, our hearts, our affections, will be there also. This means the mortifying of our flesh, being crucified with Christ. (Col. 3:5; Rom. 6:6) There is no other way in which we can be risen with Christ, for as Paul explains, it is only if we are dead with Christ that we may hope to live with him.—(Rom. 6:8

We have covenanted to be dead with Christ, and our sacrifice is holy and acceptable unto God, but we are not wholly dead as yet. (Rom. 12:1) Nevertheless, it is essential that we do all in our power to bring our old nature into subjection and make it a servant of the new mind. Only if we do this can it be said that by faith we are now risen with Christ.

In his letter to the Ephesians, Paul speaks of the "mighty power" of the Heavenly Father which was used to raise Jesus from the dead, and to exalt him to his own right

hand in the heavenlies. (Eph. 1:19) The mighty power of God had been employed along many lines previous to this. Under the direction of his infinite wisdom the entire universe had been brought into existence by his mighty power.

Never before, however, had there been such a manifestation of divine power as was required to raise Jesus from the dead, give him the divine nature, and exalt him to his own right hand. This was the first time that any of God's creatures had been raised to such a height of glory. No wonder the apostle, in writing about it, speaks of the *mighty* power of God which was then used.

But it has a far more important lesson for us than merely that we should be awe-inspired by the thought of such mighty power. Paul, in this connection, prayed that the eyes of our understanding be enlightened in order that we might understand and appreciate the superlative height of glory to which we are called, and to realize that the attainment of such a high position in the divine plan is entirely possible because of the fact that the "mighty power" of God which was used to raise Jesus from the dead is employed "to usward who believe."

The Apostle Paul wanted us to realize that the same power which defeated the purpose of Jesus' enemies in putting him to death will see us through to victory with him.

The resurrection of Jesus, then, is most significant to us, for it is a reminder that greater is he who is for us than all they who are against us—a wonderful assurance of victory, indeed! When we consider this text, how much it should renew our courage to press on in the upward way which leads to glory, honor, and immortality! How it should stimulate us to set our affections on things above, "where Christ sitteth on the right hand of God."

As we remember the resurrection of Jesus, our faith is increased, our hope grows brighter, and the glory of the terrestrial loses its attraction as we set our affections where Christ sitteth at the right hand of God. Inspired by this, we will seek first, and all the time, the kingdom of God and his righteousness; we will redeem the time; we will frequently ask ourselves, "What manner of persons ought we to be," seeing that we are risen with Christ and seeking those things which are above."—II Pet. 3:11

Christian Life and Doctrine

Psalm 23 Series, Part 3

Thirsting After God

"He leadeth me beside the still waters."—Psalm 23:2

WATER is used in the Scriptures as a symbol of refreshing truth concerning God and his plan for us as Christians, as well as for all mankind. The "green pastures" of the Shepherd Psalm nourish and sustain, while the "still waters" refresh. Both are symbols of the truth, and both emphasize the vital necessity of knowing the truth in order to be spiritually healthy and vigorous as new creatures in Christ Jesus. The truth of the divine plan serves both as food and drink for the Christian, each representing the benefits of the truth in its own appropriate manner. The 'still waters' of the psalm seem to portray more particularly the thought that by means of the truth we are refreshed by knowing and feeling an intimate and personal relationship with God, which produces a peace and tranquillity of soul implied in the revised text, "waters of quietness."

In another psalm David wrote, "As the hart panteth after the water brooks, so panteth my soul after thee, O God. My soul thirsteth for God, for the living God: when shall I come and appear before God?" (Ps. 42:1,2) And again: "O God, thou art my God; early will I seek thee: my soul thirsteth for thee, my flesh longeth for thee in a dry and thirsty land where no water is." (Ps. 63:1) In these two beautifully phrased longings of the soul, David indicates his 'thirst' after God, and in the Shepherd Psalm he exults in the fact that the Chief Shepherd does lead him beside the still waters of truth and that he is thereby refreshed by the knowledge of God.



Water was not plentiful in that near-desert country where David tended his father's sheep. Therefore it was necessary for the shepherd to know where water could be found, and to lead the sheep in these places of refreshment, else they would perish. It was, as the psalmist expressed it, "A dry and thirsty land"—or as the margin states, a "weary land without water." This was true of much of the literal land of Israel, and it is symbolically true of conditions throughout the world and in worldly churches—Babylon. God's sheep, his true people, find no refreshing truth anywhere in the world. They must be led by the Good Shepherd to the fountains of 'still waters'.

But first, like David, they must realize their need. They must discover the dryness of the 'land', and become truly thirsty for the living waters. Jesus said, "Blessed are they which . . . thirst after righteousness: for they shall be filled." (Matt. 5:6) Once we realize the arid conditions of the world surrounding us, we will listen carefully for the voice of the Shepherd in order that we might be led to the refreshing waters.

There are millions of people throughout the globe who, in one degree or another, long to know God and to serve him. This is natural, for man was created in the image of God and endowed with a desire to worship his Creator. Through the centuries, this attitude of worship has largely been effaced in the majority of people, and in others, grossly distorted. To many the experience of knowing and serving God is merely an emotional feeling. With these the matter of understanding the doctrines of the divine plan as set forth in the Scriptures is of little importance. Whether they believe that the wages of sin is death or eternal torture seems to be of no special concern, so long as emotionally they imagine that they feel near to God.

But this is not what the psalmist had in mind when he wrote concerning his thirsting after God. To him, drinking of the still waters to which the shepherd led him was more than an emotional ecstasy. After crying out, "My soul thirsteth for thee . . . in

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a dry and thirsty land," David continued, "to see thy power and thy glory, so as I have seen thee in the sanctuary. Because thy loving-kindness is better than life, my lips shall praise thee."—Ps. 63:2,3

Here we have the sum of the matter—to see God's power and glory as it is represented in the sanctuary; that is, in the Most Holy of the Tabernacle. How may one know of God's power and glory and be refreshed by that knowledge? It was David again who wrote, "The heavens declare the glory of God; and the firmament showeth his handiwork. Day unto day uttereth speech and night unto night showeth knowledge." (Ps. 19:1,2) Truly we can see in the heavens a marvelous demonstration of the power and glory of God. But the heavens do not explain the relationship of the Creator to his people. The plan of God cannot be read from the stars.

David knew this, and while he delighted in this heavenly display of God's glory, he rejoiced still more in the thought that "the law of the LORD is perfect, converting the soul: the testimony of the LORD is sure, making wise the simple. The statutes of the LORD are right, rejoicing the heart: the commandment of the LORD is pure, enlightening the eyes. The fear of the LORD is clean, enduring forever: the judgments of the LORD are true and righteous altogether." (Ps. 19:7-9) The "law," the "testimony," the "statutes," the "commandment," and the "judgments" of the LORD are his expressed will for his people—his plan for them and through

them for the blessing of all mankind. It is these that delighted David's soul even more than the display of God's glory which nightly was spread out before him in the heavens.

The psalmist realized that his study of the heavens would not provide an intimate knowledge of God. He knew also that there were great truths of the divine plan which the Creator at that time had not revealed to his servants. He rejoiced in the statutes and the commandments of the LORD as given through Moses. He was refreshed by the testimony of the LORD as recorded by the prophets which went before him, but he knew there was a depth of meaning to that testimony which he had not been able to reach. The apostle tells us that the prophets did not understand the things which they wrote, for they were written for our admonition and enlightenment upon whom "the ends of the ages" have come.—I Pet. 1:12; I Cor. 10:11, **Diaglott**; Rom. 15:4

It was not until the beginning of the Gospel Age that the plans and purposes of God began to open up in a manner to reveal the fullness of his glory, and power. Jesus brought "life and immortality to light through the Gospel," the apostle tells us; and Paul speaks of the "mystery" which had been hidden from ages and from generations, but is now made known to the saints. (II Tim. 1:12; Col. 1:26,27) God's glory was revealed through Jesus, the living Word of truth, and the mighty power of God was displayed as never before in the resurrection of Jesus from the dead.—Eph. 1:17-20

The testimony of the LORD, spoken by the mouth of all the holy prophets, held out the hope of a coming Messiah, but not until the beginning of the Gospel Age did the people of God learn that the Christ was not one member but many. (Acts 3:21; I Cor. 12:12) David knew and wrote that when God created man he crowned him with "glory and honor," but this, as Paul informs us, was merely the terrestrial, or earthly glory. (Ps. 8:3-9; I Cor. 15:40) David did not know that the Christ, both Head and body, was to partake of the "glory of God," the celestial glory. Not

knowing this precious truth pertaining to the "high calling of God in Christ Jesus," David did not comprehend the power and glory of God as it is our privilege to do. (Phil. 3:14) He rejoiced in, and was refreshed by the 'still waters' of truth to the extent that the plan of God was due to be understood at that time; but those still waters were not nearly so refreshing as they are today.

The opening of the Gospel Age marked a great advance in the unfolding of the divine plan for the refreshment of God's people, but the LORD promised that the end of the age would witness a still further revealing of the mysteries of God in order that his people in this time of great need might be refreshed by an understanding of the wisdom, justice, love, and power of God, such as had never before been vouchsafed to his people. It was to be a time when the "wise" would understand; when "brethren" would not be in darkness; when "meat in due season" would be served to them; yes, a time when the words of the prophet would be fulfilled, "Blessed is he that waiteth, and cometh to the thousand three hundred and five and thirty days."—I Thess. 5:1-4; Luke 12:42; Dan. 12:10-12

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How soul-satisfying indeed is the knowledge of God that has come to us through "present truth." (II Pet. 1:12) The nominal church world today is more arid of the refreshing waters of truth than ever before; but the Good Shepherd has led us beside the 'still waters' of truth which reveal God's glory in a manner and to a degree that truly satisfies. Now the whole plan of God as it centers in Christ Jesus can be understood. And how wonderfully it reveals God's glory! The glory of God is made up of the sum total of his attributes of wisdom, justice, love, and power, and never before have these attributes of God been so clearly understood as they are today through the aid of present truth.

The creative work of God shows forth his power. So do the resurrection of Jesus and the church, and the promised resurrection of all mankind. The sentence of death upon Adam, and the race in Adam, shows forth God's justice; as does also the ransom feature of his plan. God's love is revealed in the gift of his Son to be man's Redeemer, and in all the gracious provisions he has made for both the church and the world. God's wisdom is displayed in every marvelous detail of his plan for the redemption and restoration of fallen man—in the permission of evil; in the arrangement whereby one man could redeem the entire race; in the foretold increase of knowledge at the end of this age by which the old world is destroyed in preparation for the new; and in the exact timing of every feature of his plan.

In all of these truths is displayed the glory of God. It was David's longing to understand these things that constituted the great thirst of his soul. David wanted to know God thus as he believed him to be revealed in the sanctuary—the Most Holy of the Tabernacle. In the typical Most Holy there is a wonderful illustration of the four cardinal attributes of God's glory. The mercy seat which covered the ark of the testimony is where the blood of the typical sacrifices of the bullock and the goat was sprinkled. The sprinkling of the blood pictured the satisfaction of justice. The mercy seat therefore represented justice.

Overshadowing the mercy seat were the two cherubim with outstretched wings looking toward the mercy seat as though waiting until the blood was sprinkled before flying to take the glad tidings of justice satisfied to the people. These beautifully depict love and power as they operate for the blessing of the people when the work of atonement is complete and Christ appears in the presence of God, first for the church, and later for the world.

There was a miraculous light which constantly appeared over the mercy seat, and between the cherubim. Light symbolizes understanding or knowledge, and may, together with the ark and its contents, represent the fourth attribute of God's character—his wisdom. Thus in the typical sanctuary is revealed the glory of God, the glory of his character of wisdom, justice, love, and power.

All of the glorious attributes of God's character are revealed to us through present truth. And how satisfying are these still waters of refreshing knowledge of God. Yes, they satisfy our longings as nothing else could do. Through the truth and the application of the truth in our lives, we know God. We see his glory and rejoice in it. Knowing him gives us confidence and strength, for we are assured that he is willing, and abundantly able, to do for us more than we can reasonably think or ask; and that no good thing will he withhold from us as long as we walk uprightly, following the voice of the Good Shepherd.—Ps. 84:11

And there is a special significance, we think, in the assurance that the symbolic waters of knowledge of which we are privileged to drink are 'still'—not a fast-running stream which dashes headlong over rocks in uncertain spurts and whirls, as does the ordinary mountain stream. In such streams, especially as they reach the lowlands, there are still places to be found, deep pools or ponds, where the water scarcely seems to move. It is to these that the trained shepherd leads the sheep, because here they can drink and be satisfied.

The truth is just like these pools of still waters. If we can imagine a sheep trying to drink from a brook at a place where it is dashing over rocks in a whirl of foam, we can get the picture of the LORD's people vainly trying to refresh their souls with the uncertain and ever-changing theories of men. And yet, at times, false shepherds lead God's sheep to just such places to drink. They expect the sheep to drink and be refreshed by 'truth', or 'new light' which changes so rapidly that they are bewildered and confused. In such cases the sheep are restricted in their drinking to the foam of human speculation. It may appear bright and exciting, but it fails to satisfy.

In contrast, the Good Shepherd leads the sheep to the still waters where they can drink, and where their thirsting souls are quenched. The real truth is 'still', it is settled. It was the truth yesterday; it is the truth today, and it will be the truth tomorrow, and forever. We drink of this deep, refreshing fountain of knowledge over and over again. Having followed the Good Shepherd to this refreshing pool, we remain with him at the pool that we may continue to be refreshed.

But the still waters of present truth are not stagnant. The illustration gives us the proper thought, for the still waters of the stream are still merely in contrast with the rushing torrent which tumbles down over the mountain side. These still waters are deep, and they are continually renewed and kept fresh. So is the Word of God. It is new every morning and fresh every night. Just so, there is progress in the truth—a wholesome, refreshing progress—but it is the same pool from which we drink; and the water from that pool ever remains the pure doctrines of the divine plan.

Jesus is the Good Shepherd who leads the sheep of this Gospel Age to the still waters of truth which reveal the true knowledge of God. Jesus said. "If any man thirst, let him come unto me, and drink. He that believeth on me, as the scripture hath said, out of his belly shall flow rivers of living water." (John 7:37,38) Jesus knew that in his day, even as in the time of David,

there were those who were thirsting after righteousness, after truth, after life, and after God who is the fountain of all these. As the Good Shepherd, he invited all such to come to him, assuring them that only in this way could their thirst be assuaged and their souls satisfied.

Jesus said that those who believed would not only be given water to drink, but that out of their bellies would flow rivers of life-giving water. This would be the blessing of those who 'believe', Jesus said. Thus in turning from metaphor to plain speech, we see that drinking of the still waters to which the Good Shepherd leads us is a matter of believing on him, and, of course believing the whole plan of God of which he is the center and foundation. And how understandable this is! Surely it would do no good to be led beside the still waters if we did not drink of those waters. By the same token, it is of little value to know about Jesus and about the divine plan of the ages unless we believe and act upon our belief by conforming our lives thereto.

And in this connection Jesus takes the thought a step further by saying of those who do 'drink', or believe, that out of their bellies shall flow living waters. John states that this further explanation of the matter had reference to the effect of the Holy Spirit in the lives of Jesus' disciples. The Holy Spirit had not been given at that time, John reminds us, but later it did come upon the waiting disciples at Pentecost, and has blessed all true believers since.—John 7:38,39

It is well to ponder these words of the Master carefully, and note what he actually says. He emphasizes not only the refreshment of those who come to him to drink, but shows that in addition they in turn become fountains of living water. It is not through carelessness of expression that he says these living waters of truth were to flow *out* of the bellies of believers, instead of *into* their bellies. It is true, there must first be the inward flow; but one who is truly refreshed himself by this life-giving water

will automatically become a fountain of truth for the blessing of others.

And, as John explains, this is the real evidence of a Spirit-filled life. Some have erroneously imagined that they can live nearer to God, know him better, and be more spiritual when living measurably by themselves. True spirituality is not found in a monastery, nor in isolation of any kind. The truly spiritual will not be thinking first of themselves, but of others. They will realize that the refreshing waters of truth will be most stimulating to them when flowing out from their lives to refresh the lives of others. We have a good illustration of this in the Pentecostal experience of those early disciples. When the Spirit of God was poured out upon them, they at once began to bear witness to the truth. It rejoiced their hearts and loosened their tongues, and, as Jesus foretold would be the case, living waters of truth began to flow out from their lives to refresh and bless others.

The people of God have been the channels of this living water of truth throughout the entire age. Jehovah, the Chief Shepherd, is the original fountain of truth. Jesus, the Good Shepherd, was the one through whom the Chief Shepherd spoke at the beginning of the age. Then he became the prime fountain of truth and life. (Heb. 1:2) He passed the water of truth on to his apostles, and they in turn to the Early Church, and through their writings to the entire church. And every true believer, to the extent of opportunity and ability, has been a fountain of living water, having first drunk deeply from the original fountain.

When Jesus explained that those who believed on him would become fountains of living water, he cited the Old Testament as the authority for his statement. He was evidently alluding to Isaiah 12:3, which reads, "Therefore with joy shall ye draw water out of the wells of salvation." This is a promise made to fleshly Israel. The context indicates that its fulfillment would take place following the return of God's favor to them; that is, during the time of Christ's kingdom. The promise does not state that

they would become wells of salvation, but that they would obtain water from such wells.

Inasmuch as Jesus referred to this promise and said that those who believed on him would become fountains of living water, it is evident that in the divine arrangement they are to *be* the 'wells of salvation' from which natural Israel and all the world will obtain life during the age to come. This agrees with Romans 11:26 which declares, "So all Israel shall be saved: as it is written, There shall come out of Zion the Deliverer, and shall turn away ungodliness from Jacob." In this arrangement also we see the glory of God reflected. Considering the great sin of Israel, and that he cast them off because of their unbelief, it is truly a wonderful manifestation of God's love. Paul understood it this way, and wrote, "O the depth of the riches both of the wisdom and knowledge of God! How unsearchable are his judgments, and his ways past finding out."—Rom. 11:33

Yes, the still waters of truth are indeed deep. We will never be able to drink from the full depth of this unlimited fountain of wisdom and knowledge. We drink as deeply as we can now, and are refreshed. Yes, our souls rejoice because our thirst is quenched, and we pour out these living waters of truth that others may be blessed even as our hearts have been made glad. But because of human limitations, our understanding and appreciation of the truth are far short of what we desire. For the same reason, our efforts to pass on a knowledge of the truth to others are puny and generally speaking, ineffective.

But if we continue faithful, it will not always be thus. We will, as David suggests, bless God as best we can while we live. We will now lift up our hands in his praise; but by and by, when we enter into his actual presence, we will know him, and will be able to serve him perfectly. What rejoicing that will be! Then, too, we will be actual 'wells of salvation' from which Israel and all the world will draw their supplies of living water. Yes, through Christ and the church, the whole world will learn to

know God; and those who respond to this knowledge in grateful and obedient service, will be given everlasting life. Thus will the Good Shepherd also lead his 'other sheep', which are not of this Gospel Age fold, to the still waters of life and truth.

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The Davidic Covenant

"MY MERCY shall not depart away from him [David] as I took it from Saul, whom I put away before thee. And thine house and thy kingdom shall be established forever before thee: Thy throne shall be established forever."

—II Samuel 7:15,16

DESPITE David's fleshly imperfections, the LORD said concerning him, "I have found David the son of Jesse, a man after mine own heart, which shall fulfill all my will." (Acts 13:22) Among David's godlike qualities was his frequently displayed attribute of mercy.

Jesus said, "Blessed are the merciful: for they shall obtain mercy." (Matt. 5:7) This is doubtless one reason why God's

covenant with David was based upon mercy, and styled "the sure mercies of David." (Isa. 55:3) When Saul sinned, the kingdom was removed from him, but not so with David. The covenant established with him was a lasting one, and continued, not only through his own life, but throughout the reigns of his descendants, both the good and the wicked kings, until Zedekiah. A study of God's dealings with these kings reveals many instances in which mercy was shown, and the Davidic kingdom saved.

David was a type of Christ, and it is through him that the Davidic covenant is actually fulfilled. When Zedekiah, the last king in the typical house of David was overthrown, the Prophet Ezekiel said, "It shall be no more, until he come whose right it is." (Ezek. 21:25-27) Jesus is the one whose right it is. We read, "Of the increase of his government and peace there shall be no end, upon the throne of David, and upon his kingdom to order it, and to establish it with judgment and with justice from henceforth even forever. The zeal of the LORD of hosts will perform this." (Isa. 9:7) In the annunciation to Mary, the angel said concerning the Son who would be born to her, "He shall be great, and shall be called the Son of the Highest: and the LORD God shall give unto him the throne of his father David."—Luke 1:32

The mercy aspect of this feature of the divine plan is again emphasized in Isaiah 16:5, which reads, "In mercy shall the throne be established: and he [Christ] shall sit upon it in truth in the tabernacle of David, judging and seeking judgment, and hastening righteousness."

The Apostle Paul confirms this, saying: "It is written, After this I will return, and will build again the tabernacle of David, which is fallen down; and I will build again the ruins thereof, and I will set it up: that the residue of men might seek after the LORD, and all of the Gentiles, upon whom my name is called, saith the LORD, who doeth all these things. Known unto God are all his works from the beginning of the world."—Acts 15:15-18

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NOTICE: As of February 20th, **The Bible Answers** television programs are no longer being broadcast over Tempo Cable Network. The network has been sold, and the new owner is revamping their programming, eliminating virtually all religious airing. Presently we use Modern Motion Picture, which airs a number of **The Bible Answers** programs. However, these are unscheduled, and therefore we are unable to advise you where or when to find them.

We are in the process of negotiating a contract with another cable network. The contract will be signed, and the details worked out in time for us to publish in the April issue of *The Dawn* the schedule of times and places that **The Bible Answers** programs will be aired.

ADVERTISING BY SIGNS: Experimentation with a new witness approach has begun the end of February and will be tried for one year in the state of New Jersey. Large outdoor advertising signs offering the **Armageddon** booklet to the public without charge will be circulated throughout the metropolitan area on heavily trafficked highways leading to New York City. We ask your prayers that the LORD will bless this effort.

Christian Life and Doctrine

The Holy City

"I John saw the Holy City, New Jerusalem, coming down from God out of heaven, prepared as a bride adorned for her husband."—Revelation 21:2

JOHN'S vision of the Holy City completes a long chain of prophetic testimony concerning the kingdom of God, in which reestablished divine control over the affairs of men is symbolized by a 'city'. In Hebrews 11:10 the Apostle Paul tells us that Abraham looked for a city "whose builder and maker is God." Throughout the Book of Psalms, as well as elsewhere in the Old Testament, much is said about this city of God. As an inspiration to followers of Jesus, Paul wrote, "Ye are come unto Mount Zion, and unto the city of the living God, the heavenly Jerusalem."—Heb. 12:22

The Apostle John records in considerable detail what he saw in his vision of this promised city of God. In two of the recorded items we have irrefutable proof that it is a symbolic, not a literal city. One of these is its size. He explained that the "length and the breadth and the height of it are equal." (Rev. 21:16) The measurement, he said, is "twelve thousand furlongs."

Twelve thousand furlongs are said to equal fifteen hundred miles. Of course a city fifteen hundred miles square could be located on any one of several of the earth's continents, but when the apostle tells us that the height is equal to the length and breadth, we realize that he is not discussing a literal city. We have no doubt that the LORD does not want us to think that the New Jerusalem will be a literal city, which will tower fifteen hundred miles above the earth!

Then there is the angel's identification of this city as "the bride, the Lamb's wife." (Rev. 21:9,10) Obviously the bride of Christ is not a city of literal buildings, with a wall, etc. The bride

of Christ is a beautiful picture of the true church, those of whom the apostle wrote, saying, "I have espoused you to one husband, that I may present you as a chaste virgin to Christ."—II Cor. 11:2

The Holy City will not be the first 'city' to rule over the nations of the earth. Rather, the angel who gave John the vision had previously shown him another city, which also was said to be a woman—not a legitimate bride, however, but a harlot. (Rev. 17:1,2,4,5,18) This woman's name was Babylon, and the angel explained concerning her that she was "that great city, which reigneth over the kings of the earth."

By almost common consent of students of the Bible, this harlot woman, who also is identified as "that great city," was the apostate church. Her harlotry consisted of her illicit union with the kings of earth in the church-state counterfeit of Christ's kingdom—Christendom, whose reign spanned the centuries of the Dark Ages. The true church of Christ throughout the Gospel Age has been a 'chaste virgin', espoused to Christ, and waiting for the return of her Lord that she might be united with him in marriage, and reign with him in the genuine kingdom of promise.

The church which became apostate did not wait for her heavenly Bridegroom. Instead, she fell from her purity, as had been foretold, and joined hands with the kings of the earth. (II Thess. 2:3) Her union with civil governments constituted a counterfeit of Christ's kingdom, and it was this false system of iniquity which the prophecies described as Antichrist, or the Man of Sin. The angel showed John, in vision, this woman described as the great city, also revealing her overthrow and destruction. He described the fall of the city to be like that of a great millstone cast into the sea [the discontented and demanding masses of mankind], and which "shall be found no more at all." (Rev. 18:21) And this is exactly what we see happening before our very eyes! There is a constant and growing demand for the people to have input into what is taught by religion. There is an increasing effort by the common man to bring religion down to the level of every-

day life and make it relevant and fitting for the standards of today, rather than to be subject to the lofty and far-away dictates of a hierarchy. The millstone is cast into the sea!

It is following these events that the "marriage of the Lamb" is depicted, and the bride, the Lamb's wife, is then shown to constitute another city which yet will rule over the nations of the earth. (Rev. 19:7; 21:9, 24) It seems evident, therefore, that just as the great city is the false kingdom of God, so the Holy City which takes its place is the true kingdom of God; that is, it will be the medium through which genuine divine control over the affairs of men will operate.

One of the Old Testament prophecies of the Holy City, the New Jerusalem, is that of Isaiah 65:17-19. In this promise, the typical use of the idea of a city is combined with that of the 'heavens' and 'earth'. God promised to create "new heavens and a new earth," and then added, "but be ye glad and rejoice forever in that which I create: for, behold, I create Jerusalem a rejoicing, and her people a joy." It is obvious from these words that Jerusalem and the new heavens and new earth are symbols of one and the same thing, which the LORD here promised to create.

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It cannot be emphasized too strongly that they are merely illustrative. We know of the many symbols which are used to depict the church while still on earth and in the flesh: wheat, sheep, branches, stones, virgins, servants, ambassadors, etc. It seems strange, therefore, that the many pictures used by God to illustrate the glory of the church when united with Christ and reigning with him, should be misunderstood by anyone to be literal, as though there is to literally be a city, or to literally be a new heaven or a new earth.

When we realize that these terms were used by God merely to convey certain concepts to our minds relative to the great glory of the Christ, and the manner in which the kingdom of God will function in the earth, then we can understand why they are often combined to give us a more comprehensive understanding of all that is implied. No single illustration can possibly convey the complete truth concerning God's program for blessing all the families of the earth.

The ancient city of Jerusalem was the governmental center of Judea. It was from Mt. Zion in Jerusalem that God ruled his people through the king whose palace was positioned atop that mountain. To the Israelites this particular city conveyed the same idea as today is associated with Washington, London, or Moscow. When we speak of these cities in connection with world affairs we do not have reference so much to the geographic locations as we do to the authority which emanates from these official centers of government. The lesson of the city symbolism, then, is clear. But this picture alone does not reveal the whole truth concerning God's kingdom. In Isaiah's prophecy, cited above, as well as in the vision shown to John and recorded in Revelation 21, it is combined with the typical use of the idea of a new heaven and a new earth. (vs. 21) The relationship of the literal heavens to the literal earth as it affects life upon this planet, serves to illustrate important points concerning the operation of Christ's kingdom among men.

All life upon the earth is subject to the influence of the heavens. Without our sun, earth would be devoid of all life. The movements of the heavenly bodies control earth's seasons, climatic conditions, tides, etc. In the symbology of the Bible, God uses this relationship to illustrate the fact that the divine kingdom will consist of two phases—the heavenly and the earthly; the spiritual and the human. Our Lord Jesus and his church, which he chooses during this Gospel Age, will constitute the spiritual phase; while the Ancient Worthies chosen during the preceding ages—the Patriarchial and Jewish Ages—the last one of whom was John the Baptist, will be the nucleus of the new earth. (Matt. 11:11; Luke 16:16; Heb. 11:39,40) This nucleus will enlarge as mankind lines up with the laws of the new kingdom, until it embraces the entire human race—all the families of the earth.

In the first chapter of Ephesians, Paul tells about the exaltation of Jesus to a position high above "all principality, and power." (vs. 19-23) **Wilson's Emphatic Diaglott** uses the words "every Authority, and Government." The Apostle also reveals that the hope of the church is to be exalted with Christ; and that by virtue of this divine arrangement for the church we are even now seated with Christ in the "heavenlies." (Eph. 1:3 and 2:6) As you will note in Ephesians 2:6, the word 'places' is in italics, indicating that it was added by the translators to clarify the sense of the verse. However the word is not found in the Greek text. In Ephesians 6:12 the expression "high places" is a translation of the same Greek word translated "heavenly" in Ephesians 1:3. The Apostle Paul shows that the wicked spiritual rulers of this world who occupy these high places are in opposition to those who are being prepared to be the spiritual rulers with Christ of the world to come.

Psalms 45:16, Matthew 8:11, and Luke 13:28,29, explain the position to be occupied by the Ancient Worthies in God's kingdom. These, as we have seen, will be the new earth—that is to say, the channel through which the laws emanating from the

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spiritual Christ will reach and govern the people. So we can see why it requires the combined symbolisms of the *new heavens and new earth*, and the *Holy City* to convey to our minds a more complete idea of the Messianic kingdom arrangement.

There are, of course, many details connected with these very meaningful prototypes. The Bible speaks of the sun, the moon, and the stars which make up the heavens, and which pass away, as well as the new heavens. The Bible also speaks of mountains, trees, the sea, etc., as they relate to the earth symbol-

ism. In the prototype of the Holy City, we have its streets of gold, its wall, its gate bedecked with precious jewels. (Rev. 21:10, 17-21) The gates are named after the twelve tribes of Israel, and the names of the twelve apostles of the Lamb are in the twelve foundations of the wall. All these details have very definite meanings which relate to God's plan of redemption and salvation for a sin-cursed and dying world. The purpose of this article, however, does not call for an examination of their meanings. We are chiefly concerned now with the fact that the *Holy City* is the channel of blessing for the world of mankind.

John explains that there is no temple in this city; the Almighty God, and the Lamb, are the temple. (Rev. 21:22) This indicates that the church is not the Holy City independent of Jesus, her Bridegroom, but only because she is united with him. It shows that Jesus, as the representative of God is the very center of the city, the real channel through whom God will fulfill his promises to bless all the families of the earth.

The ancient Temple in Israel was the meeting place between God and the people. So this new temple arrangement of the Holy City will be the meeting place between God and all of mankind who conform themselves to the laws of the new kingdom. Revelation 21:24 reads, "The nations of them which are saved shall walk in the light of it; and the kings of the earth do bring their glory and honor into it." Let it be remembered that the church of this age becomes the bride of the Lamb, and is part of this city into which the nations come. This shows that there are many who will be saved and blessed who are not of the church, not part of the city. They enter *into* the city and receive the blessings it provides, but they are *not* the city.

In Revelation 21:24—"The nations of them which are saved shall walk in the light of it"—the expression, 'of them which are saved', is not found in the oldest manuscripts. The original text reads, "The nations shall walk in the light" of the city. However the added words, 'of them which are saved', do

not change the meaning materially. Only those who will obey the laws of the kingdom and who will conform their lives to the things "written in the books" can be truly said to *walk* in the *light* of that city. The "unbelieving, the idolators", etc., obviously are those who will walk contrary to the light of that city—contrary to the instructions which will emanate from the divine Christ through the "princes in all the earth."—Rev. 21:8; Ps. 45:16

Only those who, by obedience to the divine law, will prove worthy to have their names written in the Lamb's Book of Life, will have the privilege of entering into this city. There is not to be universal salvation, but there is to be a universal opportunity for salvation. The light of that Holy City will be so clear that the way into it will be made plain to all—so plain that a "wayfaring man . . . shall not err therein." (Isa. 35:8) Only the willfully wicked will be barred from the city.

In conjunction with his vision of the new heavens and earth, and the Holy City—the New Jerusalem, John heard a great voice out of heaven saying, "The tabernacle of God is with men, and he will dwell with them, and they shall be his people, and God himself shall be with them, and be their God." (Rev. 21:3) Here we have another beautiful prototype—that of the ancient Tabernacle. To Israel, the Tabernacle was an emblem of God's presence with their nation, and in John's vision it was announced to him that the coming down from God of the Holy City and the creating of new heavens and a new earth, meant that God's blessing will be with and upon men. It will not be merely with one nation, but with all men—that is, all people—in fulfillment of his promise to bless all the nations of the earth.

When our first parents transgressed God's law, he withdrew his favor from them. They were sentenced to death, and death has reigned in the earth ever since. "In his [Jehovah's] favor is life," the Prophet David declared. (Ps. 30:5) Hence, when through the establishment of the long-promised Messianic kingdom, divine favor is again manifested toward the human race, the

final result will be what John described, saying, "God shall wipe away all tears from their eyes; and *there shall be no more death*, neither sorrow, nor crying, neither shall there be any more pain: for the former things are passed away."—Rev. 21:4

The Apostle Paul, describing the reign of Christ, tells us that he must reign until all enemies are destroyed, the last enemy to be destroyed being death. (I Cor. 15:26) It is because the reign of Christ will destroy death that there shall be no more death. So again we are assured that the Holy City is an apt symbol, and yet merely a symbol, of that kingdom. In Isaiah 25:6-8, we have another prophecy of the destruction of death. Here it is declared that God will "swallow up death in victory." This prophecy also reveals that the work of destroying death is the work of the kingdom—the kingdom being typified, in this instance, by a mountain in which the LORD makes a feast of fat things. Compare Daniel 2:34-36, 44,45.

In the 22nd chapter of Revelation we have still another picture of God's kingdom arrangement for the blessing of all the families of the earth. It is that of the "river of life" which flows "out of the throne of God and of the Lamb." Chapters 20, 21, and 22 of Revelation are all descriptive of the work and blessings of the Millennial Age. In these closing chapters of the Bible our Lord brings to focus many lines of prophetic testimony concerning the kingdom which have been previously introduced in other parts of the Sacred Word. These are not descriptive of different things, but are different descriptions of the same things—namely, the blessings of enlightenment, peace, and life which God has promised for all mankind through the redemptive work of Christ Jesus, and the operation of his kingdom.

The combined symbolism of the throne of God and of the Lamb portrays most beautifully and effectively the precious fact that only through the governmental authority of the kingdom—pictured by the throne—and because of the shed blood of the Lamb, can life be made available for the nations. And in the

study of this meaningful picture we should remember that the church is with Jesus on the throne. This is his promise: "To him that overcometh will I grant to sit with me in my throne, even as I also overcame, and am set down with my Father in his throne."—Rev. 3:21; Phil. 3:14

This being true, the river of life does not flow for the benefit of the church. This is further clarified by Revelation 22:17 where the church, as the bride of Christ is represented as inviting mankind to come, "and take of the water of life freely." So far-reaching and all-inclusive is this invitation that those who accept it are privileged to extend it to others, so that all who are thirsting may come, and "whosoever will" may partake of the refreshing waters of this river.—vs. 1

To make even more definite the assurance of life for the nations pictured by this river, we are told that on either side of it are the trees of life, bearing twelve manner of fruits, and yielding their fruit every month; and then the information that "the leaves of the tree [Greek, 'wood' or 'trees', plural] were for the healing of the nations." (vs. 2) Notice that the leaves of the trees are not for the healing of the church, but for the healing of the nations. Could we ask for a clearer definition of God's promise of life for others as well as the church of this Gospel Age!

The portrayal of life-giving blessings flowing out to the nations as presented to us in this closing chapter of the Bible is the climax of a golden thread of prophecy and promises, which began in Genesis and run throughout the entire Word of God. Man, because of sin, was driven out of his home in the Garden of Eden, with its rivers and trees of beauty and life. Cherubim with flaming swords prevented his return to the tree of life.—Gen. 3:24

But God promised that the seed, or progeny, of the woman would bruise the serpent's head. (Gen. 3:15) Later this seed is mentioned in the oath-bound covenant with Abraham to bless all the families of the earth. (Gen. 22:18) In the New Testament this promised seed is explained to be the Christ, Head and body. (Gal.

3:8, 16, 27-29) In Hebrews 2:14 the foretold fatal wounding of the serpent's head is revealed to be the destruction or rendering powerless of Satan by Christ. Revelation 20:1,2, shows Satan bound, and the 10th verse declares his complete destruction!

Both chapter 20 and chapter 21 of Revelation reveal, from various standpoints, the blessings of the kingdom in which the seed of promise is the channel of blessing. And finally, in the 22nd chapter, the all-comprehensiveness of the promised blessings coming to the people is portrayed in a manner to assure us that, at last—because of the shed blood of the Lamb, and the exercise of kingdom authority—the flaming swords are to be taken down, the trees of life made available to the nations, and the invitation extended: “Come, . . . take the water of life freely.”

Too much importance cannot be attached to the fact that the church, the bride of Christ, the holy city—those who live and reign with him—are shown in all three of these closing chapters of Revelation as separate from the people and nations who *receive* blessings *through them* as the seed of promise. Thank God this does not mean the closing of the door of opportunity for the nations to receive life during the Millennial Age. Keep in mind that prominently included in the prophecies of Revelation are promises for the world of mankind in general, which assure us of the blessings which later will come to them—to whosoever will.

Verse 12 beautifully describes the work of the millennium. In it Jesus is quoted as saying, “Behold, I come quickly; and my reward is with me, to give every man according as his work *shall be*.” And what will be that reward for the works which they then shall do? Verse 14 answers, “Blessed are they that do his commandments, that they may have right to the tree of life, and may enter in through the gates into the city.”

TILL we all come in the unity of the faith, and of the knowledge of the Son of God, unto a perfect man, unto the measure of the stature of the fullness of Christ.—*Ephesians 4:13*

Christian Life and Doctrine

Taken from a Talk by Brother W.N. Woodworth
Bowling Green KY in 1972

Our Infallible Guidebook

BECAUSE we call ourselves Bible students, it is appropriate that we consider the subject of our infallible guidebook—the Bible. All the truly good things we possess, all the fundamental truths we treasure, and which in their sum total we describe as the Divine plan of the ages, are found in the Bible. It is a light unto our feet, and a lamp unto our pathway. (Ps. 119:105) The entrance of God's Word gives light! (vs. 130) And indeed, it has considerable to say about itself.

Our theme text is from the Bible. It is II Timothy 3:16,17. "All Scripture is given by inspiration of God, and is profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness: that the man of God may be perfect, thoroughly furnished unto all good works." Where else could we get a theme text like this one, except from the Bible! Notice how many details pertaining to our service to God and our relationship to him are given in this wonderful text. And those not mentioned are covered by the expression that we are thoroughly furnished by God's Word to *all* good works. This is the purpose which the inspired Word of God, the infallible guidebook, accomplishes for all who earnestly search its pages.

When we speak of the inspiration of the Scriptures, we are referring to our confident belief that the words recorded by the Old Testament writers were brought to their minds by the power of God's Holy Spirit. Those holy men of old seldom understood clearly what they were prophesying concerning; except, of course, as it reflected the strictly local circumstances in Israel and

surrounding nations of their day. But regarding long-range prophecies, although they sought diligently to know, it was not revealed to them "what time, or manner of time, the Spirit of Christ which was in them did signify."—I Pet. 1:11

And as we consider the inspiration of the New Testament, we recall that Jesus received prophetic information from the Holy Spirit when the heavens were opened to him at the time of his Baptism at Jordan. This enabled him to understand the meaning of what the Old Testament writers had put down in the Book, and these things he then taught his disciples. Knowing their limited capacity to understand spiritual things before receiving the Holy Spirit at Pentecost, he did not delve too deeply into explanations. He said, "I have many things to say unto you, but ye cannot bear them now. Howbeit, when the Spirit of Truth has come it will guide you into all truth, . . . and show you things to come."—John 16:12,13

This promise of the Master was fulfilled at Pentecost when the Spirit of God came upon the waiting disciples gathered in the upper room. It sat upon the eleven particularly, like tongues of fire, in an inspirational manner—similar to the way it had come upon Jesus when the heavens were opened to him and a dove lighted upon him. "There appeared unto them cloven tongues like as of fire, and it sat upon each of them. And they were all filled with the Holy Spirit."—Acts 2:2,3

Later the Apostle Paul, who replaced unfaithful Judas, was inspired by the Spirit to experience various visions and revelations given to him by Jesus Christ, and his words were then added to our infallible guidebook. And finally, Jesus himself gave the church his prophetic revelations through the Apostle John, thus completing the New Testament. There is no indication that this work of inspired writing—this work which incorporates the idea of infallibility—would go beyond the apostles. No, the prophetic utterance of God's Word guided by the Holy Spirit, were complete with their writings.

What do we find in this inspired guidebook? Briefly we have what we term the Divine plan of the ages. Its theme is the sending of Messiah by God—one who would deliver mankind from the curse of sin and death. In it is also revealed that this Messiah would be composed of more than just one individual. Although Christ alone is the Redeemer, Ransomer, and Savior of mankind, in connection with actually accomplishing the work of deliverance he has 144,000 associates, who are the members of his body. "As the body is one, and hath many members, and all the members of that one body, being many, are one body: so also is Christ." (I Cor. 12:13; I Cor. 11:3) Christ is the Head of the body.

This work of deliverance is described in many beautiful ways. It is the work of resurrection; it is the work of restitution; it is the work of release from the captivity of death; it is the returning of the ransomed of the LORD. These are all Biblical expressions and are part and parcel of the fundamental doctrines of the Bible. There is the heavenly hope for the church, those who will live and reign with Christ. There is the hope of restoration to the earth for those who will, in the Millennial Age, qualify for the wonderful position of becoming the perfect kings of earth, when

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they are delivered and have learned to obey the laws of the kingdom. All of these great truths and the associated doctrines that go with them—including the true penalty of death—all these, and of course, particularly the ransom sacrifice of Jesus Christ as the center of this beautiful galaxy of doctrines—these we call the Divine plan of the ages!

Satan, from the very beginning, has always been on the alert for opportunities to set aside the authenticity of the Word of God. He caused Mother Eve to question the accuracy of what God imparted to Adam concerning obedience, and the penalty for sin. Much later in history, when the Word of God had been written down and collected into the Pentateuch so that it could be handed down unchanged from one generation to another, Satan adopted more subtil methods. It was not long after the Law was given to Moses that there gradually was developed a set of sayings which the Israelites called Great Truths. The Bible was not set aside, nor was its inspiration questioned, but the religious leaders decided that more was needed. Finally these sayings were incorporated into a book called the Talmud, which had as its purpose the explanation of the hard sayings of the Bible.

This method of distracting worshipers away from the true Word of God worked well for Satan. The subtle deception was used again after the apostles fell asleep when the infallibility of the Bible was not questioned, but the writings of those who interpreted the meaning of the Bible began to be accepted as equally infallible. The Adversary has found this method so successful that it continues right on down to our day. Some find their infallible interpreters of the Bible in Brooklyn, N.Y.; and others in Salt Lake City, Utah; still others look for infallibility from additional sources.

And so it would have gone with us except for the grace of God. In his own due time and way, the LORD raised up a wise and faithful servant to supply the special need which the church would have at this end of the age. One of the exhibitions of his

wisdom and of his faithfulness was that he warned Christians not to accept the words of men, including his own, as having any authority except if they can be proved by the Holy Word of God.

It is not that we do not need each other's help to understand the Word of God more and more clearly. The assistance and stimulation of the minds and hearts of all God's people is very necessary as they study the Bible together. In fact, the LORD made special and important provisions for his people, as we are told by the Apostle Paul in Ephesians 4:11,12: "He gave some, apostles; and some, prophets; and some, evangelists; and some, pastors and teachers; for the perfecting of the saints, for the work of the ministry, for the edifying of the body of Christ." We realize that the apostles and prophets were the only ones who taught through inspiration; since their death, other faithful servants help to guide us. But although *led by the Holy Spirit*, their words are not given to us *through the inspiration of the Holy Spirit*.

How thankful we are that even today we have these servants of God among us. As we have said, we were given a faithful and wise servant as our pastor. And another evidence of his faithfulness and wisdom is that he warned us against the method of deception used by the Adversary to diminish the authority of the Word of God. We remember how time and time again our pastor warned against accepting the words of men over and above the words of the Bible. He urged us to prove all things, even his own teachings and writings, by the Word of God. "Prove all things. Hold fast to that which is good."—I Thess. 5:21

Even some who accept the pastor provided by the LORD as a faithful servant may fall into the entrapment of the Adversary by making the acceptance of his every written word mandatory. However, on the contrary, here are some questions which show clearly the pastor's attitude toward the supreme authority of the Scriptures: "Have you read thoroughly and carefully the six volumes of **Studies in the Scriptures**, and have you derived much enlightenment and benefit therefrom? Do you believe you

have a substantial and permanent *knowledge of the Bible* which will render you more efficient as a servant of the LORD through the remainder of your life?"

No doubt we could all say, "Amen, Hallelujah," in answer to the questions. Great truths that mean so much to us are clearly presented in the six volumes. They have been, and always will be, and we rejoice in them. We can truly say, "Yes, we have derived much enlightenment from the volumes of **Studies in the Scriptures**. We certainly have received a substantial knowledge of *the Bible* in order to render us more efficient as servants of the LORD throughout the remainder of our lives!" But to claim that his writings are on a par with the Bible is to dishonor our pastor, who was a great man of God. He was an index finger to point us to the Word of God!

Our infallible guidebook is the Bible. And no matter how beautiful or inspiring words and philosophies may be, they are no more than fantasies if they are not supported by Scriptures. For example, we quote these poetic words of our pastor: "Close your eyes for a moment to the scenes of misery and woe, degradation and sorrow that yet prevail on account of sin, and picture before your mental vision the glory of a perfect earth. Not a stain of sin mars the harmony and peace of a perfect society; not a bitter thought, not an unkind look or word; love welling up in every heart meets a kindred response in every other heart, and benevolence marks every act. Think of all the pictures of comparative health and beauty of human form and feature that you have ever seen, and know that perfect humanity will be of still surpassing loveliness. Not an ache nor a pain, nor any evidence of decay. Such will human society be when thus they realize the resurrection work complete."

How beautiful! No one could be blamed for wanting to use this quotation rather than their own clumsy words. But as inspiring and significant as this passage is, it would be meaningless but for the fact that at the end of this concise essay on the kingdom,

Revelation 21:4 is cited as authority for the thoughts: "There shall be no more death, neither sorrow or sighing. Neither shall there be any more pain, for the former things are passed away." Unless our understanding of the fundamental truths is based on the plain teachings of the Bible, they are nothing but unsubstantiated thoughts! The only time we benefit from studying man's works is when we insist that what we accept as rock-bottom truth is substantiated by our infallible guidebook.

What do we mean by fundamental truths? Generally speaking, fundamental truths are well substantiated in the Word of God. Other, less fundamental doctrines may be more difficult to prove directly by the Bible, and we must reason upon several scriptures to come to proper conclusions. Many times our pastor warned us, even though we may not recognize it as a warning, by introducing a thought with the words, 'seemingly this is a reasonable conclusion'. When our understanding of a particular aspect of truth has no bearing on how we conduct our lives we immediately know that it is not a fundamental truth. On the other hand, for instance, the doctrine that we are living in the harvest time of the Gospel Age has a distinct bearing on how we live our consecrated lives. The harvest is the end of the age, and Jesus is the chief reaper. Therefore we wish to cooperate in the work he is doing as the chief reaper; we want to be among those who are involved in doing the reaping work.

As we rejoice in the great fundamental truths which have been revealed to us, let us go on to find continually more proofs of what we believe in the Bible. Let us search out those new gems of truth we sing about:

"Blessed Bible, precious Word!
Boon most sacred from the Lord;
Glory to his name be given
For this choicest gift from Heaven.

'Tis a ray of purest light,
Beaming through the depths of night;
Brighter than ten thousand gems
Of the costliest diadems.

'Tis a fountain pouring forth
Streams of life to gladden earth;
Whence eternal blessings flow,
Antidote for human woe.

'Tis a mine, aye deeper too,
Than can mortal ever go;
Search we may for many years,
Still some new rich gem appears."

Truly, this has been our experience throughout the years of our lives as we live up to our Christian privileges more fully. And as our understanding of the Bible continues to grow, as we learn more and more to sketch in the background of ideas—which do not affect the picture of our fundamental doctrines at all, other than to make them more beautiful and more clear—we will appreciate God's plan in its entirety. Let us rejoice indeed that the LORD has called us out of darkness into his marvelous light! The fundamentals of the truth cannot be changed, but they do shine with increasing luster as we study and use them in presenting the Gospel of the kingdom.

One thing we should keep in mind is that Satan would like to have us give up these fundamentals! He would like to have us become so engrossed and entangled in non-fundamentals that we would be liable to consider the basic doctrines "milk of the Word." To cause the people of God to lose sight of the glorious Divine plan of the ages, and therefore cease to proclaim it, is the ultimate object of the Adversary's deceptions. His goal is to keep the truth hidden under a basket—a basket of philosophy, or whatever else hides the truth—it is all the same to Satan. And

although *Satan does not want* the glorious doctrines of the Divine plan to be proclaimed, *WE want to* actively send forth the message!

“Tell the whole world these blessed tidings!

Speak of the time of rest that nears;

Tell the oppressed of every nation,

Jubilee lasts a thousand years!”

Let us continue to rejoice in the great hope of the kingdom, and to present it as faithfully as we can, that we may be among those of whom John said, “I saw the souls of them that were beheaded for the witness of Jesus and for the Word of God, . . . and they lived and reigned with Christ a thousand years!”—Rev. 20:4

LISTEN TO THE DAWN MAGAZINE

LISTEN TO THE DAWN MAGAZINE

- driving to work
- relaxing at home
- entertaining family or friends
- working in the kitchen or shop
- wherever you have a cassette player

FOR years, “The Dawn” magazine has been recorded monthly on tape for the blind. Recently we have been able to upgrade the quality of these recordings with a very fine reading voice. We are so pleased with the result that we wish to offer copies of these readings to all who might find a use for them.

Requests should be sent to the DAWN RECORDED LECTURE SERVICE, 199 Railroad Avenue, East Rutherford, NJ 07073. Cassettes may be purchased for \$2.00 each. If you would like to subscribe to this service on an annual basis, the cost is \$20.00 for twelve months.

The Cup of Blessing



HOW sacred the memories which gather around the anniversary of our Lord's death! They call to mind the Father's love as exhibited in the entire plan of salvation, the center of which is the gift of his Son, our Redeemer, who gave himself a ransom—a corresponding price—for all. Then faith brings us still nearer to him who "suffered, the just for the unjust"; and with grateful, overflowing hearts, and with tear-dimmed eyes, we whisper, "My Savior! My Redeemer! My Lord and Master!" Ah yes!

"Sweet the moments, rich in blessing,
Which before the cross I spend,
Life and joy and peace possessing
From my best and truest Friend."

Let us never forget that unless we partake of his cup, unless we are immersed into death with him, we can have no share in his kingdom of glory, we can never sit with him in his throne. Let us, then, count all the things of this earth as loss and dross that we may attain this pearl of great price. As the experiences of suffering come to us, let us not be afraid or think it "strange concerning the fiery trial that shall try [us], as though some strange thing happened unto [us]," "for even hereunto were [we] called," to suffer with our beloved Master now, and by and by be glorified together with him in the kingdom eternal.

Encouraging Letters

Blessed Information

Dawn Publications: Gentlemen: I found your ad in my Griens' Almanac on "Archeology Proves the Bible." I will greatly appreciate this information. It certainly will help me to understand the Scriptures as I read. By having this booklet and its truths, it will also help me to explain and prove clearly to the children I work with at church and the ones I keep here in my home. (I am a babysitter.) Please accept my thanks to you and the laborers who worked so hard to bring this blessed information to the public. God bless each one of you always, is my sincere prayer. Sincerely.—*MS*

Needs Help

Dear people: I received a copy of your very touching copy of "Hope" and I can't tell you how it touched and moved me since my wife passed away a few days ago. I am having a tough time accepting it since we were together 51 years.

Thanks for the help. Please send me a copy of "God and Reason," as I need all the help I can get. Thanks so much.—*FL*

Thanks from England

Gentlemen: I would like to take this opportunity to thank you for sending me the monograph, "How God Answers Prayer." I find it really informative and revealing. I have also heard from your U.K. counterpart. I wish you further progress and the LORD's continued inspiration in your valuable work. Yours sincerely.—*England*

What a Wonderful Sound!

Dear Sir: If it is at all possible I would like a copy of your Dawn magazine. The first time we heard your programme was by accident really, my wife and I, when turning the dial on the radio and we came across your programme. What a wonderful sound in a believer's ear! to hear about Jesus Christ, our wonderful Saviour. There

should be more stations broadcasting the Gospel. We do not have many over here in England. Hoping you can oblige us. In Christian friendship.—*England*

Comfort through "Hope"

Dear Friends: When my wife passed away a year ago I received a booklet titled "Hope" in the mail. It has been a comfort to me and several others that I passed it on to who lost loved ones. The booklet is wearing out, and I would like to purchase a dozen or more if possible. I would also like a copy of "God and Reason." Thank you.—*WI*

New Horizon

Dawn Publishers: I have enjoyed reading and studying "Archeology Proves the Bible." It has opened up a new horizon for me, and I would like to thank you for sending it to me. Please send "The Book of Books."—*DE*

Portrays My Beliefs

Gentlemen: I recently received your booklet "Day of Judgment." I became aware of your

association via WPAZ, Pottstown, Pa., in their program feature of 'Frank and Ernest'. The booklet I received is one of the most enlightening views of the scriptures that I have ever read. Not only does it portray my beliefs but it upholds my faith in what God has in store for all. Therefore, I would greatly appreciate a listing of other publications, local Bible study groups that utilize your publications, or any texts that you may deem important.—*PA*

Answer to Prayer

Sirs: Thank you for the 'Bible Answers' T.V. program. You were an answer to prayer. The program brought light on some scriptures in a new way. The ten free lessons for home study are welcome here.

First Choice in Reading

Dear Dawn Bible Students: I received my order today and what a joy. The Dawn magazine was my first choice in reading, and much to my surprise I found audio and video tapes available. I thank God that he guided me to you.

Please send me your catalogs of materials to help in Bible study, including a listing of children's study books.—*IN*

Surely Appreciates

Dear "Bible Answers": I surely do appreciate the "Archeology Proves the Bible" booklet. Please send me the booklets "Born of the Spirit," "How God Answers Prayer," "God and Reason," and I would appreciate a free copy of "Hope." Please send a copy of "Archeology Proves the Bible" to my friend.—*AR*

Remote Reader

Dear Brethren: Thank you for the recent Dawn publication I received on Armageddon. I enjoyed reading it immensely. I am in a remote location and to further enrich my knowledge of God's word and to keep in touch, I would like to subscribe to the Dawn magazine. For Bible study aides, I would like "The Divine Plan of the Ages," "The Creator's Grand Design," "The Book of Books," and "God's Promises Come True."—*NJ*

Clears Up Questions

Dear "Frank and Ernest": I started listening to your program about a month ago and really enjoy it. It makes things understandable and clears up a lot of questions. Please send me the booklets 'Our Lord's Return', 'God and Reason', 'Judgment Day', and 'Plan of God'.—*NM*

Shares with Others

Gentlemen: Sometime ago a booklet titled "God and Reason" was sent to me. I have read and reread this booklet and have loaned it to others to read. Please send me a subscription to the Dawn magazine. I look forward to reading other of your booklets.—*CT*

So Kind and Comforting

Sirs: I have read your "Hope" booklet over several times and will continue to do so as it gives me consolation and hope. It is gratifying to find that people all over are so kind and comforting to the bereaved. Please send me "God and Reason." Thank you.—*CA*

Lucky Corpsman

Dear Dawn Publications: Hello, my name is Terry F. Sawhill. I am a First Class Hospital Corpsman in the world's finest nuclear Navy, ours! I am presently serving aboard the mighty carrier Kitty Hawk deployed to the Indian Ocean. I was lucky enough to get hold of the March '87 issue of the **Readers' Digest**. In it you advertise a booklet called "Archeology Proves the Bible." I would like to request that you send me this booklet, as offered. In addition, I would like to know what religious organization or denomination you are affiliated with, if any. Your time and efforts are appreciated. Sincerely.—CA

Sadly Misses Dawn Issue

Dear Sirs: My subscription expired in May, and I sent my check in to renew it, but I am still lacking the June one. Please look into this matter for me. I happily look forward to this truthful guide to the LORD'S Word each month, and would sadly miss even one is-

sue. You people do such a fine job in clearly and reasonably explaining the Scriptures. Thank you for your time and consideration. God bless you all.—H

A Learning Christian

Dear "Frank and Ernest": I am very interested in your radio discussions and hope to learn much on such important subjects. Can you send me a copy of "Spiritualism" as a start. Yours sincerely.—*England*

London Listener

Dear "Frank and Ernest": I greet you both in the precious name of our Saviour, Jesus Christ! I want to thank you both for your very informative programmes. In an age when one is so easily confused your discussions and talks are a true blessing. I have already been baptized and blessed with the Holy Spirit, thank God! I need to learn so much. Please send me whatever literature you can. I write in particular about the booklet, "When a Man Dies," which will hopefully help me to understand more

about the time ahead when someone close to me dies. Please pray for me and my family. My mother and father and I are beginning to experience the gentle, loving peace that Jesus brings into our home, and into our lives. Yours in Christ.—*England*

Requests "Creation"

Dear "Frank and Ernest": I am writing to say that I was listening the other evening to your programme on Radio Caroline and enjoyed the questions and answers on evolution. Please send me a copy, as announced, of the booklet entitled "Creation," and God bless you all, Amen. Yours truly in Christ.—*England*

Same Listener Writes Again!

"Frank and Ernest": Dear Sirs: I have just listened to your programme again over Radio Caroline. It was, as always, an inspiration and blessing. Please send a copy of your advertised booklet, "What Can a Man Believe?" May God richly bless you and your co-partners in the work of the LORD. Yours faithfully.—*England*

Greatly Interested

Dear Sir: I listened with great interest to your broadcast this evening, and I would love to take you up on your offer of the free booklet entitled, "Born of the Spirit." Thank you very much. God bless.—*England*



Obituaries

Sister Kittie Wellwood, Dublin, Eire—March 17, 1988. Age, 92.

Sister Julia Siwak, Prince Albert, Sask.—January 2. Age, 84.

Sister Dora J. Snow, East Lansing, MI—January 5. Age, 99.

Sister Anna Garbacz, Detroit, MI—January 7. Age, 86

Sister Louise Allen, Los Angeles, CA—January 12. Age, 90.

Sister Plomer Austin, Tehachapi, CA—January 14. Age, 92.

Speakers' Appointments

Ministering the Glorious Gospel of Christ

These speakers are routed through the Pilgrim Department of the Dawn, or by classes associated with the Pilgrim Service. Their visits are furnished free upon request. Write to: Dawn Bible Students Association, East Rutherford, NJ 07073. A visit will be arranged whenever possible.

M. Balko, Sr.
 Orlando, FL March 4-6
 Louisville, AL 12
 Atlanta, GA 13
 Cincinnati, OH 14
 Greenfield, OH 15
 Columbus, OH 16

E. Herrscher
 Buenos Aires, Argentina March 17-20

N. Kasperowicz
 Middletown, NY March 19

S. Krystek
 San Luis Obispo, CA March 12

J. Panucci & A. Olcese
 Quito, Ecuador 8
 Brazatogui, Buenos Aires, Argentina 10-20
 Montevideo, Uruguay 21-23

L. Post
 Brazil March 6-16
 Buenos Aires, Argentina 17-20

J. Tate
 Allentown, PA March 12



Conventions

These conventions are listed at the request of the Classes which sponsor them.

ALL-FLORIDA CONVENTION, March 4-6—Plaza Inn, 603 Lee Road, Orlando. Contact for information and reservations, which must be received by February 15th, 320 Raven Rock Lane, Longwood 32750

Phone: (407) 260-8083

NEW ORLEANS—PASS CHRISTIAN CONVENTION, March 11, 12—Holiday Inn, Highway 90, 1600 E. Beach Blvd., Gulfport, MS. Contact: Mrs.

W.C. Buel, 214 Magnolia Dr., Pass Christian, 39571 (601) 452-4351

SOUTH AMERICAN CONVENTION, Buenos Aires, Argentina, March 17-19. For information, contact Mr. Jos. Panucci, 61 Ledyard Avenue, Groton, CT 06340 Phone: (203) 445-7040

CINCINNATI, OH, March 19—At the Harp's Home, 2609 Merrittview Lane, 45231

GARY AREA CONVENTION, March 25, 26—Hobart YMCA,

601 West 40th Place, Hobart, IN.
Contact: John Ulicni, 6703 Tyler
St., Merrillville, IN 46410.

Phone: (219) 769-5647

**FRESNO, CA PRE-MEMO-
RIAL, March 31-April 3**—
ECCO Center, Oakhurst, CA,
Phone: (209) 683-8162. Contact:
Shirley Evans, 7360 N. Pacific Ave-
nue, Fresno 93711, **before**
March 15 for information and res-
ervations.

DETROIT PRE-MEMORIAL,
April 7-9—Macomb Community
College, 14500 12 Mile Road,
Warren, MI. Contact: Mr. Frank
Nemesh, 2183 Babcock, Troy, MI
48084

Phone: (313) 649-6588

**GREATER NEW LONDON
PRE-MEMORIAL, April 9**—
Groton Municipal Bldg., 295 Merid-
ian St., Groton, CT 06340. Contact:
Mark Grillo, 70 Pautipaug Hill
Road, Sprague 06330

Phone: (203) 822-6085

**ALBUQUERQUE, NM, April
14-16**—Doubletree Hotel, 201
Marquette Ave. N.W. Contact Mrs.
Roberta Buss for information and
reservations: P.O. Box 9172, Zip
87119

Phone: (505) 877-2866

NEBRASKA CONVENTION,
April 21-23—Best Western
Omaha Inn, i-80 and L Street,
Omaha. Contact Jan Gilbert, 904
Donegal Circle, Papillion 68046

**MARSHFIELD, WI, April
22,23**—University of Wisconsin
Experimental Station, Marshfield.
Write to Star Carpenter, P.O. Box

864, Zip 54449, for information.

BOISE, ID, April 28-30—Plaza
Suite Hotel, 409 S. Cole Road.
Contact: Mrs. Allan Allers, 2438
Bruins Circle, 83704

Phone: (208) 375-6873

NEW YORK, NY, April 30—
Rutherford Womens Club, Corner
of Montross and Fairview Avenues,
Rutherford, NJ. Contact Secretary,
Leo Post, 24 Lexington Rd., New
City, NY 10956

Phone: (914) 634-5876

PITTSBURGH, PA, April 30—
Parkway Center, Bldg 7, 9th fl. For
information and accommodations
contact: Charles Martig, 730 Dun-
ster Ave, 15226

Phone: (412) 563-6110

HARTFORD, CT, May 7—Sage
Park Jr. High School, Sage Park
Rd, Windsor, CT. Write: Mrs.
Daniel Slivinsky, 42 Andrew Dr.,
East Hartford, 06108.

AGAWAM, MA, May 21—
Ramada Inn, 161 Bridge St. at I-91,
East Windsor (Warehouse Point)
CT 06016 Contact Mrs. Leslie
Hindle, 39 Park Hill, Broad Brook,
CT 06016

Phone: (203) 623-6591

**SAN FRANCISCO REGIONAL
CONVENTION, May 26-29**—
Asilomar, Pacific Grove, CA. Con-
tact Registrar **before April 26** for
reservations: Carol Blong, 713 Syc-
amore Ave., San Bruno, CA 94066
Phone: (415) 588-3982

**BIBLE STUDENTS GENERAL
CONVENTION, CHATTA-
NOOGA, TN**—July 22-27. Bulle-
tins will appear in future Dawns.