

a herald of Christ's presence

THE DAWN

"YE WERE CALLED
UNTO THE
FELLOWSHIP OF
HIS SON JESUS
CHRIST OUR LORD."

--I Corinthians 1:9

August 1963

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From Chaos to the Kingdom

IF EVER there was a time in the history of the world which demanded calm and unbiased reasoning on the part of all, it is now. But mere reasoning, no matter how intelligent, cannot bring hope to anyone unless there can be found some proper foundation upon which reason may be based. That sure foundation is faith in the inspired Word of God as the source of divinely furnished information concerning the Creator's view of the world's situation, and what he intends to do about it.

Today the world seems hopelessly adrift on the stormy seas of raging human passions. Jesus foretold the coming of just such a time as this, in which there would be "distress of nations, with perplexity; . . . men's hearts failing them for fear," as they look forward to the things coming on the earth. (Luke 21:25, 26) Is there a way out? We believe that there is, but it is not a way devised by man. It is God's way, and one which will be implemented by sufficient divine power to assure success.

We hold that through biblical truth alone will we find the nature of the only real solution to the present world-wide perplexity and distress. However, on this point we are faced with the necessity of distinguishing between the pure teachings of the Bible and the confusing theories of traditional theology, which too often masquerade in the name of Christianity. To whatever extent vain superstition is replaced with dependable biblical truth and reason, one's faith becomes a far more comforting reality, and the Bible takes on a new and saner meaning.

And how much need there is today that our faith be based upon a firm foundation of reason and the Bible, for we surely are confronted with many confusing theories and speculations. Evolutionists insist that we have made steady strides forward

since the first "crude" beginning of civilization on this planet. Many today boastfully point to the marvelous achievements of this modern "brain age," yet our so-called civilized world is faced with the undeniable fact that its vaunted civilization now stands on the brink of destruction. With all our learning we are not able to maintain the standards of the supposed culture which we pretend to have achieved.

No longer is it possible to prevent a knowledge of these startling facts from edging in upon the public mind. Serious statesmen are frankly pointing out the necessity of something drastic being done if civilization is to be saved. Prominent religious leaders in all schools of ecclesiasticism are earnestly announcing that unless the people now quickly turn to God the whole world will be plunged into the greatest and most deadly cataclysm of all human history.

However, the vast majority of religionists, particularly in the Protestant world, are avowed modernists and evolutionists who have little or no faith in the divine inspiration of the Bible. Many of these are not even sure that there is a personal God, a great Creator over all. They depend upon their guesses in the field of evolution to find a solution to the world's problems—and how futile are such speculations!

A noted scientist and evolutionist, Dr. Ernst Mayr, professor, author, and director of the Museum of Comparative Zoology at Harvard University, has recently expressed some interesting views. As reported in the public press, Dr. Mayr believes that the human species ceased its evolutionary climb 30,000 years ago, and that there has been no increase in human brain capacity during the last 100,000 years. He agrees with Sir Julian Huxley that most likely "man's genetic nature has degenerated and is still doing so." On this point, aside from the time element they suggest, these two scientists are in harmony with the Bible. However, they fail to recognize that the degeneration of man is due to original sin. We quote **The Courier-Journal**, of Louisville, Kentucky:

"How did all these things happen to us? Mayr takes us back to man's ancestors 22,000,000 years ago, learning to walk upright, freeing their forelimbs to make and use tools, but most astonishing of all—their three-to-four-fold increase in size of brain. The

need to communicate—to speak—speeded up brain growth. Those who could think best survived and passed on intelligence to their children. And the children of the brightest parents, since they received better parental care, likewise survived. What put the brakes on brain growth? Mayr suggests that when joined together in bigger groups, the average and below average individuals became more protected. Ultimately, he says, the below-average individual (if not too far below the average) could survive and reproduce just as successfully as the above average individual.”

What shallow reasoning is here revealed! Dr. Mayr would have us believe that millions of years ago ape men were able to control their destinies to a large extent; but when they became more intelligent they did not have the know-how to sustain their gains, so went into decline. And what does he suggest now as a remedy for this situation, and for the world's ills? He urges that the more intelligent of the human race be pampered, specially cared for, and protected, so that they might produce more of their kind, crowding out the less intelligent. In this way, he thinks, man may again resume the evolutionary climb; and we suppose, if Dr. Mayr's plan worked out, a few million years from now, man would be able to build bigger and better hydrogen bombs.

Not all scientists are unbelievers. Dr. Wernher von Braun, a noted space scientist, in an article entitled, “My Faith,” said, “Manned space flights is an amazing achievement. But it has opened for us thus far only a tiny door for viewing the awesome reaches of space. Our outlook through this peephole at the vast mysteries of the universe only confirms our belief in the certainty of its Creator.”

Noted Historian Speaks

DR. ARNOLD J. TOYNBEE, noted British historian, referring to man's past ascendancy over the wild beasts, as he sees it through the theory of evolution, in a lecture in Kansas City, said,

“Today, once again man is in danger of being exterminated by one of the larger wild animals. This time the beast of prey is man himself. Despite man's ability to destroy himself, men are continuing the same kind of disputes that existed in pre-

atomic times. Think how senseless the religious wars between Catholics and Protestants in the 16th and 17th centuries seem to us today. What we fight over today may seem just as senseless to future generations."

Dr. Toynbee believes that the only solution to the present dilemma of man is for nations to forget their differences and work together for the common good of all. He fears that unless this be done the human race is doomed. He says that it is senseless for any person to accumulate more than can be used in a lifetime, rather than give the surplus to those in need. Many will agree with this, but we are still faced with the stark fact that science and invention have not changed the hearts of men, and that the motive behind most human thinking and practice is selfishness. And selfishness continues disputes, despite the fact that most times its ends produce no permanently satisfactory condition. This is true from the highest governmental circles down to the ordinary contacts and associations of men and women. Everyone wants his own way, and insists that his rights, real or fancied, be honored.

This makes for strife. It made for strife when the only weapons of warfare were stone axes, or perhaps bare fists. It still makes for warfare in this day of nuclear weapons capable of destroying the entire human race.

So the lessons of history leave us with a clearer focus on the reason, from the human standpoint, of present world distress; but they offer no workable solution to the problems. This again emphasizes that we must turn to the Word of God, not only to learn the true meaning of the chaos and distress that now plague a bewildered world, but also what the Creator of the universe proposes to do about it. We cannot reasonably conclude that the great Intelligence who brought into existence the countless billions of heavenly bodies, and who causes them to move about ceaselessly in their orbits with such absolute precision, has signally failed in his attempt to produce a race of sentient creatures here on this planet who can continue to exist under conditions of unimpaired and uninterrupted peace and happiness.

When Jesus was on the earth nearly two thousand years ago he instructed his disciples to pray, "Thy kingdom come. Thy

will be done in earth, as it is in heaven." All down through the centuries Christians have been repeating this prayer and patiently waiting for its answer. The Scriptures assure us that it will be answered; that the time is coming when sin and selfishness will no longer rule throughout the earth; that all opposition to God and to his holy will is to be put down, and that even sickness and death will be destroyed, and that ultimately God will be "all in all."—I Cor. 15:25-28; Rev. 21:4

The Scriptures also reveal that the unquestioned rulership of the Creator over the earth, when his will is done here as it is now done in heaven, is to be brought about by the thousand-year messianic rule; that is, by the kingdom of Christ. The kingdom of Christ, or the kingdom of the Messiah, was foretold by God's prophets, and when Jesus came at his first advent he associated himself with those prophecies. One of the prophecies of Jesus' birth described also his rulership in the earth. "Unto us a child is born," wrote the Prophet Isaiah, "unto us a son is given: and the government [the rulership] shall be upon his shoulder." (Isa. 9:6, 7) This prophecy assures us that "of the increase of his government and peace there shall be no end."

Christ's Kingdom

WHAT is the kingdom of Christ? It is a government in which Christ will be the supreme authority, the invisible ruler. Just as Satan's invisible rulership over the earth has resulted in evil of all sorts, including wars, sickness and death, so Christ's rulership will lead to righteousness, to peace, and health, and life. Jesus will have associates with him in his kingdom. His followers, selected from the world during the Gospel Age, tried, and proved faithful, will be exalted to heavenly glory to live and reign with him.—Rev. 20:6

Jesus and his associate invisible rulers will be represented here on the earth by what the Scriptures refer to as "princes." (Ps. 45:16) Jesus identified these as Abraham, Isaac, Jacob, and all the prophets. (Matt. 8:11; Luke 13:28, 29) Paul refers to this group of Ancient Worthies as having proved worthy of a "better resurrection," and tells us that through Christ and the church they will be made perfect. (Heb. 11:35, 40) These will constitute what we might refer to as the earthly phase of the kingdom. These intermediaries, while not the kingdom in the proper sense

of the word, will be so fully the representatives of it among men that they will be recognized as the kingdom by men. They will, indeed, be the only visible representatives of the kingdom among men.

In the prophecy of Isaiah 2:2-4 these two phases of the kingdom of Christ are represented as a "mountain"—"the mountain of the Lord," in which, symbolically speaking, are located "Zion" and "Jerusalem." We quote: "It shall come to pass in the last days, that the mountain of the Lord's house shall be established in the top of the mountains, and shall be exalted above the hills; and all nations shall flow unto it. And many people shall go and say, Come ye, and let us go up to the mountain of the Lord, to the house of the God of Jacob; and he will teach us of his ways, and we will walk in his paths: for out of Zion shall go forth the law, and the word of the Lord from Jerusalem. And he shall judge among the nations, and shall rebuke many people: and they shall beat their swords into plowshares, and their spears into pruninghooks: nation shall not lift up sword against nation, neither shall they learn war any more."

During the days when Israel was ruled by kings, these kings exercised their control from Mount Zion, in the city of Jerusalem. So to them God ruled from Mount Zion, and the language of Isaiah's prophecy would therefore be very understandable, denoting that God, through his proper representative, the Messiah, would again rule, not only in Israel, but throughout the earth. Mount Zion in Jerusalem was the ruling center, but all Jerusalem was considered the capital city of the nation. Thus it is fitting to think of Zion as representing the spiritual phase of the messianic kingdom, and Jerusalem as a whole the earthly phase.

....

The point of chief interest to us is that all nations shall flow unto it. And many people shall say, "Come ye, and let us go up to the mountain of the Lord," for eventually Christ's kingdom will indeed be a world government. The prophecy states that the Lord shall "rebuke" many people, and shall "judge" among the nations. This indicates that Christ's kingdom will be much more than a righteous influence in the earth; that it will exercise authority and power effectively. As a result of its rulership the nations will beat their swords into plowshares, and their

spears into pruninghooks, and shall learn war no more.

During the past six thousand years Satan has been the great taskmaster of the human race, and has governed by the evil principle of selfishness. With the establishment of the new kingdom this order of things will be reversed, for love will be encouraged and rewarded instead of selfishness. This change from selfishness to love will not come suddenly. The prophet suggests the gradual method by which the world will be instructed in the law of love when he says that "when Thy judgments are in the earth, the inhabitants of the world will learn righteousness." (Isa. 26:9) So thorough will be the kingdom system of instruction in righteousness that the prophet tells us God's law will be written in the very hearts of the people.—Jer. 31:31-34

However, even a world filled with and motivated by love and good will instead of selfishness and ill will would not be a completely happy situation so long as sickness, suffering, and death plagued humanity. But the Lord has also promised to abolish these evils. The reign of sin and death was ushered in by original sin. Adam transgressed God's law, and was sentenced to death, and his offspring, born in imperfection, were carried into death with him. But God still loved his erring human creatures, and sent his beloved Son to redeem them from death. (John 3:16) Thus, while "the wages of sin is death, the gift of God is eternal life through Jesus Christ our Lord."—Rom. 6:23

And this gift of life will be extended to the people through the agencies of the two phases of the kingdom, spiritual and earthly. In another prophecy of this kingdom in which it is likened to a great "mountain," we read: "And in this mountain shall the Lord of hosts make unto all people a feast of fat things, . . . of wines on the lees well refined. And he will destroy in this mountain the face of the covering cast over all people, and the veil that is spread over all nations. He will swallow up death in victory; and the Lord God will wipe away tears from off all faces; and the rebuke of his people shall he take away from off all the earth: for the Lord hath spoken it. And it shall be said in that day, Lo, this is our God; we have waited for him, and he will save us: this is the Lord; we have waited for him, we will be glad and rejoice in his salvation."—Isa. 25:6-8

What more could we ask? No wonder such lifegiving blessings are described by Isaiah as a "feast" which the Lord will make

unto all people. A feast indeed it will be, when "the desire of all nations shall come." (Hag. 2:7) The "veil" mentioned in the prophecy which now is spread over all nations, symbolizes the blinding influences of Satan, who has deceived the whole world and prevented the majority from seeing and knowing the true God. (II Cor. 4:4) But at the beginning of the messianic kingdom Satan will be bound, and will no longer be able to deceive the people. (Rev. 20:1-3) Then the knowledge of the Lord will fill the earth as the waters cover the sea.—Isa. 11:9

And, as Isaiah wrote, death is to be swallowed up in victory, and tears wiped away. In Revelation 21:4 we are assured that "there shall be no more death." The difficulty in the past has been that we tried to apply all these glorious earthly promises to heavenly rewards, overlooking the fact that only a few—the genuine footstep followers of the Master during the present age—are to have a heavenly reward, and that these will be associated with Jesus in his kingdom to dispense the blessings of earthly life to the remainder of the world of mankind. It is here on earth that death has reigned, and it is here, therefore, that "there shall be no more death," for Christ will reign until even death is destroyed.—I Cor. 15:25, 26; Rev. 20:14

Let no one's faith be staggered by the immensity of the things which God has promised to do for mankind. Remember that we are now considering what the all-powerful Creator of the universe has promised to do. And not only has he promised to restore the sick to health, but these "restitution" blessings will include the awakening of those who have fallen asleep in death. It is this that is involved in the Bible's teaching of the resurrection.

The Bible pictures adamic death as being a sleep from which all are to be awakened in the morning of the new day now dawning. Let us, then, rejoice in the inspiring prospect that is before us. And may the vision of those joys to come enable us to bear patiently the trials of the present. The reign of sin and death has been a long and weary one for the world as a whole, yet for each individual the time goes quickly by. If we can realize that the wise and loving Creator has allowed the reign of evil for the very purpose of enhancing our appreciation of him and his laws, it will help us patiently to wait for, and continue to pray for, the full ushering in of the new day.

"Children of the Day"

IT IS a wonderful privilege to know about God's loving provisions for the sin-sick and dying world, and to be assured that the kingdom of Christ, which will dispense the promised blessings to the people, is soon to manifest itself. Those who are thus enlightened are referred to by Paul as "the children of light, and the children of the day." (I Thess. 5:5) As children of the day we should walk as such, even though darkness still covers the earth. (Isa. 60:2) We should even now be living as nearly as possible in harmony with the righteous laws of God which will eventually become effective the world over.

Basically God's laws encourage love and helpfulness. What should hinder any of us, even now, from making a sincere effort actually to love our neighbors as ourselves? And there are so many ways of doing good to others—ways that are within reach of all of us. It doesn't cost money to give a smile, a word of cheer, or otherwise to share with others the joy that should be in our own hearts. To the extent that we know of the love of God as it is revealed in his Word, we should be glad to tell others about it. There is no better way to comfort distressed hearts than to tell them the glad message concerning the messianic kingdom soon to be established.

Yes, it is a glorious privilege to tell the whole world these blessed tidings as we have, and can make, opportunities. When we note the fearfulness of our friends and neighbors as they look forward to the things coming on the earth, let us be quick to heed the instructions of the Lord bidding us to "say to them that are of a fearful heart, Be strong, fear not: behold your God will come with vengeance, even God with a recompense; He will come and save you."—Isa. 35:4

There is nothing better we can do at the present time to show our appreciation to God for the hope of the kingdom which he has given us through his Word than to make it known to others. We cannot stop the mad rush of a selfish world toward the precipice of sure destruction, but we can tell as many as will listen that God is soon to establish a new world. Thus we can be ambassadors of the new kingdom, and from the vantage point of faith in the sure fulfilment of the promises of God, take our place beside those described by the prophet, who are saying unto Zion, "Thy God reigneth!"—Isa. 52:7; 61:1-3

THE BIBLE ANSWERS TV SCHEDULE

ALABAMA

Decatur WMSL-TV
Sundays, (Time and channel to be announced.)
Montgomery WCOV-TV Channel 20
Saturdays, 12:30 p.m.

ALASKA

Anchorage KTVA Channel 11
(Time and day to be announced.)
Fairbanks KTVF Channel 11
(Time and day to be announced.)

ARKANSAS

El Dorado KTVE-TV Channel 10
Sundays, (Time to be announced.)

AUSTRALIA

Perth TVW Sunday, July 7, August
11, September 15

CALIFORNIA

Solinos KSBW-TV Channel 8
Sundays, 9:30 a.m.
San Luis Obispo KSBY-TV Channel 6
Sundays, 9:30 a.m.

COLORADO

Denver KTVR Channel 2
Sundays, 2:30 p.m.

FLORIDA

Palm Beach WPTV
Sundays, (Time to be announced.)

INDIANA

Lafayette WFAM-TV Channel 18
Sundays, 11:00 a.m.

Fort Wayne WANE-TV Channel 15
Sundays, 12:30 p. m.

Marion WTAF-TV
Sundays, 2:30 p.m.

Muncie WLBC-TV Channel 49
Sundays, 12:30 p.m.

KANSAS

Wichita KAKE-TV Channel 10
Sundays, 11:00 a.m.

KENTUCKY

Louisville WLKY-TV Channel 32
Sundays, 9:00 a.m.

LOUISIANA

Lafayette KATC-TV
Sundays, (Time and channel to be announced.)
Monroe KLSE-TV
Sundays, (Time to be announced.)

MANITOBA

Thompson CESM-TV
Sundays, 5:30 p.m.

MICHIGAN

Grand Rapids WOOD-TV Channel 8
Sundays, 10:00 a.m.

MINNESOTA

Alexandria KCMT-TV Channel 7
Alternate Sundays, 10:00 a.m.

MISSISSIPPI

Laurel WDAM-TV
Sundays, 10:00 a.m.

Meridian WTOK-TV Channel 11
Sundays, 10:30 a.m.

TV BROADCAST

MISSOURI

Kansas City WDAF-TV Channel 4
Sundays, 10:30 a.m.
St. Joseph KFEQ Channel 2
Saturdays, 5:00 p.m.

NEVADA

Las Vegas KORK-TV
Sundays, (Time and channel to be announced.)

NEW YORK

Binghamton WBJA-TV
Sundays, (Time to be announced.)
Buffalo WKBW-TV Channel 7
Sundays, 8:30 a.m.
Rochester WROC-TV Channel 8
Sundays, 9:00 a.m.

OHIO

Cleveland WEWS-TV Channel 5
Saturdays, 8:30 a.m.
Zanesville WHIZ-TV Channel 18
Sundays, 9:30 a.m.

OKLAHOMA

Oklahoma City KOCO-TV Channel 5
Sundays, 9:00 a.m.

ONTARIO

Peterborough CHEX-TV
Sundays, 12:00 noon.

OREGON

Medford KMED-TV
Sundays, (Time to be announced.)

PENNSYLVANIA

Pittsburgh WTAE-TV Channel 4
Sundays, 9:30 a.m.

PUERTO RICO

San Juan WAPA-TV 5
Saturdays, (Time to be announced)

SOUTH CAROLINA

Columbia WCCA-TV
Sundays, (Time to be announced.)

TEXAS

El Paso KELP-TV Channel 13
Sundays, 12:00 noon.
San Antonio KWEK-TV Channel 4
Sundays, 12:00 noon
Temple KCEN-TV Channel 6
Sundays, 11:00 a.m.

UTAH

Salt Lake City KUTV Channel 2
Sundays, 11:00 a.m.

VIRGINIA

Bristol WCYB-TV Channel 5
Sundays, 12:00 noon.

WASHINGTON

Seattle KIRO-TV Channel 7
Sundays, 9:00 p.m.
Tacoma KTVW-TV Channel 13
Sundays, 7:30 p.m.

WEST VIRGINIA

Oakhill WOAY-TV Channel 4
Sundays, 7:30 p.m.

WISCONSIN

Milwaukee WITI-TV Channel 6
Sundays, 8:30 a.m.

"Frank and Ernest"

BROADCAST SCHEDULE

SUNDAYS UNLESS OTHERWISE NOTED

ALABAMA

Decatur WMSL 1400 10:05 a.m.
Haleyville WJBB 1230 10:05 a.m.

ARIZONA

Phoenix KUEQ 740 8:30 a.m.
Prescott KYCA 1490 10:05 a.m.
Globe KIKO 1340 10:05 a.m.

ARKANSAS

Jonesboro KBTM 12:30 10:05 a.m.

CALIFORNIA

Chico KPAY 1060 10:30 a.m.
El Centro KICO 1490 10:30 a.m.
Los Angeles XERB 1090 9:45 a.m.
Los Angeles KBCA (fm) 105.1 9:00 a.m.
Marysville KMYC 1410 10:30 a.m.
Napa KVON 1440 10:30 a.m.
Redding KVCV 600 7:45 a.m.
San Diego XERB 1090 8:30 p.m.
San Francisco KGO 810 2:00 p.m.
Tulare-Visalia KCOK 1270 10:30 a.m.

COLORADO

Fort Collins KZIX 600 10:05 a.m.
Pueblo KDZA 1230 10:05 a.m.

DELAWARE

Wilmington WTUX 1290 10:15 a.m.

DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA

Washington WOL 1450 11:00 a.m.

FLORIDA

Palatka WSUZ 800 11:05 a.m.

HAWAII

Honolulu KTRG 990 10:00 a.m.

IDAHO

Lewiston KRLC 1350 9:35 a.m.

ILLINOIS

Chicago WEAU 1330 9:15 a.m.
LaSalle WLPO 1220 9:45 a.m.
West Frankfort WFRX 1300 9:30 a.m.

INDIANA

Gary-Hammond WJOB 1230 8:30 a.m.
Muncie WLBC 1340 8:45 a.m.

IOWA

Clinton KROS 1340 7:15 p.m.

KANSAS

Goodland KLOE 730 12:45 p.m.

KENTUCKY

Bowling Green WLBK 1410 12:05 p.m.
Louisville WAVE 970 8:15 a.m.
Newport WNOP 740 9:00 a.m.
Winchester WWKY 1380 10:30 a.m.

MAINE

Bangor WABI 910 12:00 noon

MASSACHUSETTS

Marlboro WSRO 1470 12:05 p.m.
New Bedford WBSM 1420 11:00 p.m.
Orange WCAT 1390 9:15 a.m.

MICHIGAN

Detroit CKLW 800 7:15 a.m.
Grand Rapids WMAX 1490 9:00 a.m.
Saginaw WSGW 790 10:30 a.m.

MINNESOTA

Duluth-Superior WQMN 1480 12:00 noon

MISSISSIPPI

Biloxi WLOX 1490 10:05 a.m.
Waynesboro WABO 990 2:00 p.m.

MISSOURI

Farmington KREI 800 9:00 a.m.
Joplin WMBH 1450 10:05 a.m.
Kansas City KCMO 810 9:35 a.m.

MONTANA

Miles City KATL 1340 9:15 a.m.

NEW JERSEY

Newark WJRZ 970 10:00 a.m.

BROADCAST SCHEDULE

NEW MEXICO

Silver City KSIL 1340 10:05 a.m.

NEW YORK

Buffalo CHML 900 9:45 a.m.

New York WJRZ 970 10:00 a.m.

Rochester WHEC 1460 11:15 a.m.

NORTH CAROLINA

Beaufort WBMA 1400 9:00 a.m.

Belmont-Charlotte WCGC 1270 12:30 p.m.

Elizabeth City WGAI 560 11:05 p.m.

Leaksville WLOE 1490 12:05 p.m.

OHIO

Akron-Canton WHLO 640 7:30 a.m.

Cincinnati WNOP 740 9:00 a.m.

Columbus WBNS 1460 8:00 a.m.

Piqua WPTW 1570 11:30 p.m.

Zanesville WHIZ 1240 11:45 a.m.

OKLAHOMA

Oklahoma City KLPR 1140 12:05 p.m.

OREGON

Astoria KAST 1280 10:30 a.m.

Lebanon KGAL 920 9:00 a.m.

Portland KGON 1520 10:00 a.m.

The Dalles KODL 1230 9:15 a.m.

PENNSYLVANIA

Allentown WHOL 1600 10:45 a.m.

Connellsville WCVI 1340 12:05 p.m.

Pittsburgh WWVA 1170 9:30 a.m.

Pottstown WPAZ 1370 8:30 a.m.

PUERTO RICO

Aguailla (Fri.) WGRF 8:00 p.m.

SOUTH DAKOTA

Yankton KYNT 1450 10:05 a.m.

TEXAS

Livingston KVIL 1220 8:45 a.m.

Lubbock KDAV 580 9:45 a.m.

Pampa KPDN 1340 10:45 a.m.

San Antonio KBOP 1380 7:15 a.m.

Sherman-Dennison KRRV 910 11:05 a.m.

Wichita Falls KWFT 620 10:15 a.m.

UTAH

Salt Lake City KSOP 1370 9:30 a.m.

VERMONT

Brattleboro WTSA 1450 12:05 p.m.

VIRGINIA

Richmond WLEE 1480 10:10 a.m.

WASHINGTON

Bellingham KPUG 1170 11:15 a.m.

Centralia-Chehalis KELA 1470 10:30 a.m.

Olympia KGY 1240 10:30 a.m.

Seattle KAYO 1150 9:45 a.m.

Tacoma KTNT 1400 10:00 a.m.

WEST VIRGINIA

Wheeling WWVA 1170 9:30 a.m.

WISCONSIN

Fond du Lac KFIZ 1450 11:05 a.m.

Janesville WCLO 1230 11:05 a.m.

WYOMING

Cheyenne KVWO 1370 10:05 a.m.

CANADA

Calgary, Alta. CKXL 1140 8:15 a.m.

Corner Brook, Nfld. CFCB 570 10:30 a.m.

Hamilton, Ont. CHML 900 9:45 a.m.

Prince Albert, Sask. CKBI 900 10:30 a.m.

Vancouver, B. C. CJOR 600 9:00 a.m.

Dauphin, Man. CKDM 730 10:30 a.m.

SPANISH BROADCASTS

San Diego XERB 1090 6:00 a.m.

RADIO TOPICS FOR AUGUST

4—"The World's End"

18—"The Truth About Immortality"

11—"The Spirit of God"

25—"Truths Concerning Prayer"

THE PEOPLE IN GOD'S PLAN LESSON XXV

The Twelve Apostles of the Lamb

PART 2

The Apostle John

PRIOR to his call to discipleship the Apostle John was a fisherman, in business with his father, Zebedee, and his brother James.¹ John is often referred to by students of the Bible as the apostle of love. But this does not imply that he was weak, yielding, or effeminate, but he was so called because he grew into the likeness of Jesus, whom he loved dearly. The Scriptures indicate that by nature John, and also his brother James, were sturdy, and aggressive in their ministry, being referred to as "Boanerges," meaning "sons of thunder."²

John, as we shall see, was used much by the Lord in the ministry of the truth and the service of the brethren after Pentecost, but the Gospel accounts of the life and ministry of Jesus do not contain much that John said and did during the time Jesus was with his apostles in the flesh. However,

there are indications that he was especially loved by Jesus.³ Together with Peter and James, John was, on certain special occasions, with Jesus when the others were not present.⁴

Jesus revealed his love for John and his confidence in him when, as he hung dying on the cross, he committed his mother to his care.⁵ Upon receiving the report from Mary Magdalene that the body of Jesus was no longer in the sepulchre, John outran Peter to reach the tomb.⁶ This incident serves to give us a little insight into the earnestness and zeal of the Apostle John. It is through the writings of this loving servant of the Lord that we get a more comprehensive understanding of the manner in which he was used by the Lord in the outworking of his plan.

John's Gospel

THE Bible gives us four accounts of the life and ministry of Jesus, and the last of these was

written by the Apostle John. John's record is in complete harmony with the other three, although he omits much that is contained in the other Gospels and records many items of interest omitted by Matthew, Mark, and Luke. Thus the Lord overruled in the work of these four servants to give us a more complete account of the Master's life and teachings than otherwise would have been available.

In the 1st chapter of John's Gospel we are furnished with certain details concerning the prehuman existence of Jesus which the other historians did not mention at all.⁷ The clarity of John's presentation of this truth is obscured by most English translations because they fail to show the difference set forth in the Greek text between the "Word" of God that was made flesh, and the Creator himself. The "Word" or **Logos**, as it is in the Greek text, is declared by John to be "a" god, or mighty one, while the great God of the universe is referred to as "the" God.⁴

John recorded Jesus' first miracle, which was turning water into wine at the marriage in Cana of Galilee.⁸ John explains that in this "beginning of miracles" Jesus "manifested forth his glory," or, stated otherwise, revealed the glory of his kingdom in advance.

It was John who recorded the facts concerning the miracle of

awakening Lazarus from the sleep of death, and the circumstances leading up to it.⁹ In this account we are reminded that from the divine standpoint the dead are asleep, and will be awakened in the morning of the resurrection.

John reported in greater detail than Matthew, Mark, and Luke what Jesus said to the apostles in the "upper room" the night before he was crucified, including his wonderful closing prayer.¹⁰ It is in this report that we find those comforting words, "Let not your heart be troubled"; "I go and prepare a place for you"; "I will come again, and receive you unto myself; that where I am, there ye may be also"; "If ye love me, keep my commandments"; "I will not leave you comfortless [margin, or, orphans]: I will come to you"; "He that loveth me shall be loved of my Father, and I will love him"; "Peace I leave with you, my peace I give unto you"; "Herein is my Father glorified, that ye bear much fruit"; "As the Father hath loved me, so have I loved you"; "These things have I spoken unto you, that my joy might remain in you, and that your joy might be full"; and, "In the world ye shall have tribulation: but be of good cheer; I have overcome the world."

John records in considerable detail the arrest, trial, and crucifixion of Jesus. In recording some of the appearances of Jesus

after his resurrection he mentions in particular the Master's demonstration to Thomas, who had said that he would not believe that Jesus had been raised from the dead unless he could see the nail prints in his hand, and the spear wound in his side. Jesus demonstrated these to doubting Thomas. However, John recognized that this was merely a sign produced miraculously by Jesus, that Thomas and the others did not actually see Jesus, as he then was a spirit being.¹¹ In reading this record we should remember that it was written after Pentecost, when the Apostle John was enlightened by the Holy Spirit, and would know that Jesus had given his flesh for the life of the world, and therefore no longer possessed a human body.¹² John testified that he did not know what Jesus looked like, and would not know until we see him as he is, this being possible because then we shall be like him.¹³

It was John who gave us the account of Jesus' appearance to his apostles on the shore of Galilee, where he had prepared breakfast for them. It was here that Peter, after affirming his love for Jesus was given that wonderful commission, "Feed my sheep."¹⁴

John's Epistles

The Apostle John wrote three epistles. In the opening verses of his first epistle he speaks of his

experience of being with Jesus in the flesh, and explains that it is upon the basis of Jesus' teachings that we now have fellowship with the Father and with the Son. It is this fellowship of consecrated believers that gives them fulness of joy.¹⁵

John was deeply impressed by Jesus' reference to the "new commandment" which he gave to them, and in his epistle refers to this, explaining that if we have hate instead of love in our hearts for our brethren we are still in darkness, but that he who loveth his brother abideth in the light.¹⁶

Having recorded in his Gospel the fact of Jesus' prehuman existence as the "Word," or Logos of God, and that the Logos was made flesh, in his epistle he explains that belief in this great truth is the true basis of fellowship.¹⁷ This is an important point: first, that the Logos was the Son of God, not God himself; and that he was actually made flesh, not that he was merely incarnate in a body of flesh.

John was much impressed by all the teachings of Jesus, including what he had said concerning prayer. So in his epistle he mentions the confidence he had, and which all true Christians should possess, that anything we ask the Father which is according to the divine will is sure to receive a favorable answer.¹⁸

John's second epistle is addressed to "the elect lady and her children."¹⁹ There is no sure knowledge as to just who this "elect lady" may have been, although various conjectures have been suggested. On the cross Jesus committed his mother Mary to John's care, appointing him, as it were, a sort of foster father. The suggestion has been made, among others, that possibly the "elect lady" was Mary, John using this method of address to avoid keeping Mary's name too prominently before the brethren.

In the epistle John reveals his great concern for the spiritual welfare of "the elect lady" by advising her not to receive into her home certain ones whom he refers to as deceivers because they denied that Jesus had come in the flesh.²⁰ Here again John reveals the great importance of the truth which he set forth in the opening chapter of his Gospel. While John was a loving character, when the need arose he was ready and willing to stand for the truth in a firm manner, and to encourage others to do the same.

In John's third epistle we have another example of his readiness to condemn evildoers. He compliments Gaius, to whom the letter is addressed, for his faithfulness, and speaks out against Diotrephes, who, he explains, "loveth to have the pre-eminence."²¹ John had

written the church which apparently both Gaius and Diotrephes were attending, seemingly to suggest that he visit the congregation; but Diotrephes declined the proposed visit, on the grounds that it might take away some of the prominence he was seeking to maintain among the brethren. John recognized that this was contrary to the spirit of Jesus' instructions, "One is your Master, even Christ; and all ye are brethren."²²

The Revelation

The Book of Revelation, which is the last book in the Bible, was written by the Apostle John, and based upon visions given to him by the Lord while a prisoner on the Isle of Patmos. The Greek title is Apocalypse. In the opening verse of the book, John explains that what he was about to write had been "signified" to him.²³ The Greek word here translated signified really means "told in signs." This indicates that the important lessons of this last book of the Bible are set forth in sign language, or symbolisms. With few exceptions, however, the symbolisms employed appear in other books of the Bible, hence it is not too difficult to understand the important lessons this language is designed to convey to us, as this sums up and brings to a climax many of the important themes of

the Bible which can be traced throughout the Old and New Testaments.

The messianic theme is prominent throughout the entire Bible. The Messiah, the world's Deliverer from sin and death, is referred to among other titles, as "the seed."²⁴ In the New Testament this promised "Seed" is declared to be Jesus and his faithful followers.²⁵

The followers of Jesus constitute his church, and this church of Christ is symbolized in Revelation as "seven churches," seven being a symbol of completeness.²⁶ While each of these seven symbolic churches is said to be located in Asia Minor, it is reasonable to believe that they are intended to be symbolic of the entire church of Christ as it has existed in the earth since its beginning at Pentecost. The Lord's promises to these churches are inspiring.²⁷

Throughout the Bible the establishment of Christ's kingdom is shown to occur following the second coming of Christ, so the Lord used John to remind his people that Jesus would come again, and that his coming would first result in much trouble and distress for the world, as symbolized by "clouds."²⁸ This trouble is necessary in order to destroy Satan's social order, and to prepare the people for the bless-

ings of Messiah's kingdom.

The thought of the "time of trouble" which is precipitated by the return of Christ is enlarged upon by John in a statement in which he says that the nations become "angry," and that divine wrath, or judgment, would come upon them.²⁹ John explains that this will be a time for the judgment of the dead world of mankind; and a time for all the servants of God of preceding ages, such as the prophets, and the saints of the Gospel Age to be rewarded. Thus in one verse John sums up the work of the entire thousand-year reign of Christ.

The Scriptures teach that the faithful followers of Jesus will share in the work of Messiah's kingdom, so John points out that in order to do this they are restored to life in the "first resurrection," and exalted to live and reign with Christ.³⁰

In the prophecy of Isaiah, and in Peter's second letter, the messianic kingdom arrangements are described in symbol as a "new heavens and a new earth."³¹ In one of the visions given to John on the Isle of Patmos he sees the promised "new heavens and a new earth."³² John sees that in this new kingdom sickness and death are destroyed.³³

One of the symbols used in the Old Testament with respect

to the Redeemer of the world is the "Lamb." There was the slaying of the passover lamb which led to the deliverance of Israel's firstborn from death, followed by the deliverance of the whole nation from bondage. Later the Prophet Isaiah referred to Jesus as a lamb that would be led to the slaughter.³⁴ When John the Baptist introduced Jesus he referred to him as "the Lamb of God" who would take away the sin of the world.³⁵

This "lamb" symbolism appears prominently in the Book of Revelation written by the Apostle John. The Lamb is pictured as the One found worthy to open the book of divine revelation.³⁶ Mount Zion is one of the symbols of the spiritual phase of the messianic kingdom used in the Bible, and John saw the symbolic "Lamb" stand on "Mount Zion."³⁷ A "throne" is used in the Book of Revelation to picture the ruling authority and power of the kingdom, and it is referred to as "the throne of God and of the Lamb."³⁸ Flowing out from this throne is the river of life, with lifegiving trees on on either side, and the people are invited to partake of the water of life freely.³⁹

A city is also used to symbolize Christ's kingdom, and in the Book of Revelation our attention is called to an "unholy city," as well as the holy city.⁴⁰ Briefly,

the unholy city is the apostate church which endeavors to rule over the nations without waiting for the return of Christ. This is described as harlotry, and we are informed that the nations would be made drunk with the wine of her fornication.⁴¹ One of the ingredients in this intoxicating wine is the doctrine of the union of church and state.

The Lord's true people are called to come out of this unholy organization in order not to receive of the plagues which come upon her in the great "time of trouble" which destroys the kingdoms of this world in preparation for Messiah's true kingdom, the holy city.⁴²

The holy city is not a humanly constituted government. It comes down from God out of heaven.⁴³ It is prepared as a "bride adorned for her husband," and the bride here referred to is the true church of Christ, described as the "Lamb's wife."⁴⁴ Thus again the Apostle John is used by the Lord to remind us that if we are faithful in following in the footsteps of Jesus—even unto death—we will have the privilege of participating with him in bestowing upon the world of mankind all those rich blessings of health, peace, joy, and life which have been foretold by the mouth of all God's holy prophets since the world began. We rejoice that in this closing book of

the Bible these basic features of the divine plan of salvation are so definitely and beautifully re-

iterated; and this was one of the great services for which the Lord used the Apostle John.

QUESTIONS

What was the Apostle John's vocation before he was called to be an apostle of Jesus Christ? Why is he often referred to as the "apostle of love"? Why is the name Boanerges applied to John?

How much do we know about John's ministry prior to Pentecost?

How did Jesus reveal his confidence in John while dying on the cross?

How do we obtain a more comprehensive understanding of John and his ministry?

What is one reason John's Gospel is of special value to the Lord's people?

What great truth is brought to our attention in the opening chapter of John's Gospel? In this chapter, how is the true distinction between the Father and the Son clearly pointed out?

What was the first miracle performed by Jesus, and what lesson did John draw from this?

What great lesson can we draw from John's account of the awakening of Lazarus from the sleep of death?

What were some of the comforting thoughts presented by Jesus in the "upper room" as recorded by the Apostle John?

What important point is mentioned by John in his account of doubting Thomas and the nail wounds in Jesus' hands?

How did John in his writing reveal that the resurrected Jesus is no longer a human, as he was dur-

ing his earthly ministry?

Relate John's account of Jesus' appearance to the apostles on the shore of Galilee, and his commission to Peter.

What is the principal truth set forth in the opening verses of John's first epistle?

What did John mention as one of the results of loving the brethren?

According to the Apostle John what is one of the basic tests of true discipleship and fellowship?

Upon what condition may we have confidence that the Lord will answer our prayers?

Do we have any certain knowledge as to the identity of the "elect lady" to whom John's second epistle is addressed?

What counsel did John give to the "elect lady," and what trait of character does this reveal?

To whom was John's third epistle addressed, and what important trait of Christian character is highlighted in this letter?

What is meant by the word "signified" as used in the first verse of Revelation, written by John? What is indicated by this?

Does the Book of Revelation contain any basic truths of the divine plan not previously set forth in the Bible?

What is one of the important themes of the Bible?

What counsel did John give to one of the terms or titles associated with it?

What is symbolized by the seven churches mentioned in the 2nd and 3rd chapters of the Book of Revelation? What are some of the promises made to the faithful overcomers in these churches?

How is the prophetic time of trouble symbolized in the opening chapter of Revelation?

In the 11th chapter of Revelation, how does John enlarge upon the idea of trouble which precedes the full establishment of the kingdom?

How will it be possible for the faithful followers of Jesus of the entire Gospel Age to live and to reign with Christ?

What is one of the symbolisms of the messianic kingdom arrangements mentioned by Isaiah and Peter, and again by John in Revelation?

lation?

What is one of the symbols used in the Old Testament, and by John the Baptist, concerning the Redeemer?

Relate some of the instances in the Book of Revelation in which this symbolism is used, and explain.

In the Bible, what is symbolized by a "city"? Explain how this symbol is used in Revelation with respect to the "holy city," and an unholy city, called Babylon.

What call goes forth to the Lord's people with respect to the unholy city?

Is the holy city a humanly constituted government?

Who is the "bride," the "Lamb's wife"? What will be the future work of the "bride"?

SCRIPTURAL PROOF

¹Matt. 4:21; 10:2

²Mark 3:17

³John 13:23; 20:2

⁴Matt. 17:1, 2; 26:37

⁵John 19:25-27

⁶John 20:14

⁷John 1:1-3, 14

⁸John 2:1-11

⁹John 11:1-44

¹⁰John ch's 13-17

¹¹John 20:25-31

¹²John 6:51

¹³I John 3:2

¹⁴John 21:4-17

¹⁵I John 1:1-4

¹⁶I John 2:7-10

¹⁷I John 4:1-3, 15

¹⁸I John 5:14

¹⁹II John 1

²⁰II John 7-10

²¹III John 1-9

²²Matt. 23:8

²³Rev. 1:1

²⁴Gen. 3:15; 22:18

²⁵Gal. 3:8, 16, 27-29

²⁶Rev. 1:20 and ch's 2, 3

²⁷Rev. 2:10, 26, 27; 3:21

²⁸Rev. 1:7

²⁹Rev. 11:17, 18

³⁰Rev. 20:4, 6

³¹Isa. 65:17; II Pet. 3:13

³²Rev. 21:1

³³Rev. 21:4

³⁴Isa. 53:7

³⁵John 1:29

³⁶Rev. 5:5-7

³⁷Rev. 14:1

³⁸Rev. 22:1

³⁹Rev. 22:1, 2, 17

⁴⁰Rev. 14:8; 16:19; 18:1-4

⁴¹Rev. 17:2

⁴²Rev. 18:4

⁴³Rev. 21:2; John 18:36

⁴⁴Rev. 19:7; 21:9, 10

REFERENCE MATERIAL

"The Atonement Between God and Men," page 85 to top of page 88

The Church of the Living God

"The church of the living God, the pillar and ground of the truth."—I Timothy 3:15

THE word "church" which is used in the New Testament is a translation of the Greek word **ekklesia**, meaning "a calling out," or "a called-out people." Jesus said, "I have chosen you out of the world." (John 15:19) Thus the very meaning of the word church precludes the erroneous idea that the Lord is trying to get as many people into his church as possible, or, in other words, to convert the world and make church members of everyone.

The Apostle James, speaking at the Jerusalem Council, said that God visited the Gentiles "to take out of them a people for his name." (Acts 15:14) Here, again, the calling out of a few from the great mass of mankind is emphasized. In this instance God's called-out ones are referred to as a "people for his name," meaning that they are made members of his family; that they become his children in a very special sense. The Apostle John saw this company with "the Lamb" on symbolic mount Sion, and he tells us that they had the name of the Lamb's Father written in their foreheads.—Rev. 14:1

While this called-out people are now Spirit-begotten sons of God, they are called to a higher plane of life, to which, if they are faithful unto death, they will attain in the resurrection. John wrote, "Beloved, now are we the sons of God, and it doth not yet appear what we shall be: but we know, that when he shall appear, we shall be like him [Jesus]; for we shall see him as he is." (I John 3:2, 3) Doubtless John remembered the promise Jesus made to his disciples in the "upper room" the night before he

was crucified, when he said that he was going to prepare a place for them, and that he would come again and receive them unto himself; that where he was, there they might be also.—John 14:2, 3

While it does not yet appear to the prospective members of God's highly exalted and glorified church just what they will be like in the resurrection, the Scriptures reveal that it will be a high position of glory and honor. —Paul uses the expression, "Glory and honor and immortality." (Rom. 2:7) Peter wrote that there are given unto us "exceeding great and precious promises," that by the influence of these in our lives we might attain unto "the divine nature."—II Pet. 1:4

Precious to God

THIS people called out from the world and made members of the royal family of God are very precious to him. They are referred to as "a peculiar people, zealous of good works." The Greek word here translated "peculiar" means special, or extraordinary. They are indeed very special to the Lord, his jewels, making up a royal diadem in his hand.—Mal. 3:17; Isa. 62:3

Many and meaningful are the appellations used in the Scriptures to describe the precious relationship which exists between the Heavenly Father, his beloved Son, and the members of the church, which is his body. (Col. 1:18) They are, as we have seen, the children, or sons of God. (Rom. 8:16, 18) What a loving and tender association this suggests! A proper father loves and cares for his children. He is solicitous for their every need. He is sympathetic with their weaknesses, yet disciplines them when the need arises.

So it is with our Heavenly Father toward his Spirit-begotten children, He loves them dearly, and knows their every need better than they do themselves, and will supply those needs in keeping with the abundance of his grace. He knows our weaknesses also, and remembers that we are dust, members by nature of a fallen and dying race; so he has provided a robe of righteousness to cover our unwilling imperfections, that he might deal with us according to the good intentions of our hearts. (Ps. 103:14; Isa. 61:10) Certainly this is a loving provision of his grace, and we can surely depend upon it, although we should

not presume upon it. In his abounding love our Heavenly Father will also discipline his children for any waywardness they may display which could be avoided if they were more zealous in the doing of his will.

For a Purpose

WE ARE not called by God out of the world and begotten by his Holy Spirit merely in order that we might be saved from death. There is a purpose behind this calling. His children are made heirs—"heirs of God," Paul wrote, "and joint-heirs with Christ." (Rom. 8:17) Of what does this heirship consist? In Romans 5:1, 2 Paul speaks of those who have been justified by faith, and who enjoy peace with God, as rejoicing "in hope of the glory of God." This suggests that we are heirs of God's glory, and will, in the resurrection, enter into that glory even as Jesus did when he ascended on high and sat down at the right hand of God.

The glory of God is something quite beyond our finite comprehension. There are some practical aspects of it, however, which we can understand in a measure. He has promised to re-establish his rulership throughout the earth by bringing about a reconciliation of rebellious man to himself. This is to be accomplished through the agencies of Christ's kingdom, and we are promised that if faithful we will be associated with Jesus in the rulership of that kingdom. This is, then, a part of what it means to be heirs of God, and joint-heirs with Jesus Christ. If faithful, God will use us in the outworking of his grand design.

In the category of God's servants, still other illustrations are used in the Bible to help us grasp what it means to be called of God. In I Peter 2:5, 9 the apostle speaks of these called-out ones as priests, together constituting a priesthood. This terminology takes our minds back to God's dealings with typical Israel, when they had a tabernacle and a priesthood. The work of the priests during that age was to offer sacrifice, and upon the basis of the sacrifices offered extend the blessings of God to the people.

So Peter explains that we are a priesthood to offer sacrifice. Unlike the typical priests who offered animals as sacrifices, we offer ourselves. Thus we see that to be a part of God's called-out people is costly from the standpoint of the flesh, for we are urged to present our bodies living sacrifices. (Rom. 12:1) If faith-

ful to these terms of our calling it will eventually cost us everything we have, even life itself. But there is a compensation in that, if faithful, we will receive a "crown of life."—Rev. 2:10

Peter speaks of this priesthood as being a "royal" one. This does not mean that at the present time we possess any degree of royalty. It simply reminds us of the royal position to which we are called, for the priestly office of God's called-out ones will continue throughout the Millennium, as typified by Melchisedek, who was a priest upon his throne. The blessings made available by the "better sacrifices" of this age will be dispensed by those who are now sacrificing priests, but who then will be living and reigning with Christ.—Heb. 9:23; Rev. 20:6

Peter also speaks of the church as being a "holy nation," and a "chosen generation." (I Pet. 2:9) God called the natural descendants of Abraham to be his holy nation, but they did not meet the qualifications. This was God's original "chosen generation." Jesus said that because of their unfaithfulness the kingdom would be taken from them and given to a nation which would bring forth the necessary fruits of righteousness. (Matt. 21:43) It is this new nation that Peter identifies as being God's called-out ones of the Gospel Age. This new nation is not made up of the descendants of any one person or family, but of individuals of all nations who respond to the call of the Gospel and through full consecration, become Spirit-begotten sons of God.

These heirs of God, his chosen people, are strangers and pilgrims in the world. (I Pet. 2:11) They are setting their affections or minds, on things above, not on things of the earth. (Col. 3:1-3) The valuable things of the world, her gold and her treasures, are of no interest to these who, as holy brethren of Christ, have been made partakers of the heavenly calling. (Heb. 3:1) Their goal is Christ, and Christ alone, for they have been made joint-heirs with him of the glory of God. The world does not understand us, but that is of little concern, since we know that our Heavenly Father loves and cares. (John 16:27; I Pet. 5:7) His fellowship, the fellowship of his Son Christ Jesus, and of the members of his body, more than compensate for our loss of fellowship in the world.

Brethren of Christ

IN HEBREWS 2:11 Paul tells us that Christ is not ashamed to call the body members of his church his brethren. From one standpoint Jesus could justifiably be ashamed of these, for they are all so imperfect, fallen so far from the standard of perfect righteousness. There is none of Adam's race that is not fallen and sinful. Some are more noble than others, but even so, not many of these have been called, but chiefly the "poor," and the "base" things of the world. (I Cor. 26-29; James 2:5) Yet we have the assurance that Christ is not ashamed of us. That is because he sees us as his Heavenly Father does, as being covered by the robe of his own righteousness. How encouraging it is to know that our highly exalted elder brother is not ashamed of us!

Instead of being ashamed, Jesus looks upon us as being "holy brethren" who are "partakers of the heavenly calling." (Heb. 3:1) As brethren we have a responsibility toward each other. The fact that we are partakers of a heavenly calling means that we have turned our backs upon the world and its interests and, so far as fellowship on the human plane is concerned, are measurably alone. But, as brethren, we have each other, and this means that we should be on the alert to comfort and otherwise to assist our brethren whenever and wherever we can. John wrote that we ought to lay down our lives for the brethren—I John 3:16

We believe that our Heavenly Father loves and cares for us. We rejoice in the hope one day of partaking of his glory. We are encouraged to know that our elder brother, Christ Jesus, is not ashamed of us; but how do we feel about our brethren—all of them? God has called them, and loves them. They are heirs to his glory, and joint-heirs with Jesus Christ. Are we as near and dear to one another here in the flesh as we should be? Or do we love and fellowship merely with those of our brethren whose ways we particularly appreciate, and look with indifference upon those who do not walk to our way of thinking? Let us not despise those whom the Lord is not ashamed to call his brethren, but let us rather lay down our lives for them, especially our weaker brethren, and not seek, in our service, merely to please ourselves.

Bride of Christ

THE called-out ones from the world, who are chosen and prove faithful even unto death, will, together, constitute the "bride" of Christ. This illustration of our association with the family of God suggests many important thoughts for consideration. It does not apply to the church this side the veil except from the standpoint of the anticipation which it engenders in our hearts. Paul speaks of certain brethren whom he had "espoused" as "a chaste virgin" to Christ. (II Cor. 11:2) If we are ultimately to be part of the "bride" of Christ, we must remain as a "chaste virgin" in so far as our relationships to the world are concerned. We must be all for Jesus, not part for self, or for the world.

In Revelation 19:7 we read of the time when the marriage of the Lamb comes, and when his wife has made herself ready. Here we are reminded that we are to be part of that "wife," and that there is some making ready to be done. While this making ready is from one standpoint an individual work, the text reads that the "wife," that is, all the members involved, makes "herself" ready. This implies a co-operative work in which we assist one another, and this indeed is our great work in this life as new creatures in Christ Jesus.

It is in the work of making ready the "bride" that we lay down our lives for the brethren. We are to comfort and encourage them, bearing with their infirmities and weaknesses. If we are strong in the Lord we will the more easily bear with the infirmities of the weak, rather than to please ourselves. (Rom. 15:1) If we pleased ourselves we might seek the company and fellowship only of those who are compatible with us, while other brethren within our reach might be neglected. But this is not the way for the "bride" to make herself ready.

We lay down our lives for the brethren by contending for the faith once delivered to the saints, for it is by the influence of this most holy faith in our lives that we are molded into the character likeness of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ. The truth of the divine plan is a reflection of the glorious character of our Lord, and it is by the truth that we are sanctified and made like him.—John 17:17

Needlework

IN PSALM 45:13, 14 the "bride" of the Lamb is referred to as "the King's daughter," the King in this case being our Heavenly Father. This passage reads, "The King's daughter is all-glorious within: her clothing is of wrought gold. She shall be brought unto the King in raiment of needlework." The "wrought gold" symbolizes the divine nature, and it is through the influence of the exceeding great and precious promises of the Word that we are prepared to receive this glorious inheritance.—II Pet. 1:4

But there is something to be added to our faith. Peter mentions a number of these qualities, such as virtue, knowledge, self-control (translated temperance), patience (cheerful endurance, constancy), godliness (piety, reverence), and love. (vss. 5-7) Paul admonishes us to put on the fruits and graces of the Holy Spirit, such as love, joy, peace, faith, meekness, temperance (self-control), and longsuffering. (Gal. 5:22, 23) The putting on of all these lovely traits of character results in what the Psalmist refers to as fine needlework on the wrought-gold garment of the King's daughter, the "bride" of Christ.

The New Jerusalem

ONE of the "seven angels" who talked with John in his vision on the Isle of Patmos said to the apostle, "Come hither, I will show thee the bride, the Lamb's wife." (Rev. 21:9) John adds, "And he carried me away in the spirit to a great and high mountain, and showed me that great city, the holy Jerusalem, descending out of heaven from God." (vs. 10) This is the New Jerusalem. It had "the glory of God: and her light was like unto a stone most precious, even like a jasper stone, clear as crystal." —vs. 11

The glory of this "city," which is "the bride, the Lamb's wife," is quite beyond our finite minds to grasp in its fulness, even though illustrated by all manner of precious stones, and gold. (vss. 18-21) And this is part of the glorious hope set before us as the chosen of God, his church. The glory of God and of the Lamb will be the light of that city, and we are rejoicing in the hope of partaking of this glory. (Rev. 21:23; Rom. 5:2) It will be

through the rulership of this city that the people of all nations will be reconciled to God, and give glory to him.—vss. 24, 26

A New Creation

THE Apostle Paul wrote, "If any man be in Christ, he is a new creature: old things are passed away; behold, all things are become new." (II Cor. 5:17) This implies that the church as a whole, with Jesus as her Head, is a new creation. In the case of man, he was created in the image of God, and then placed on trial to determine whether or not he would be obedient to divine law. But this is not God's arrangement for his new creation, for, when completed, each one of these will possess immortality, which is indestructibility.

This means that their loyalty to God, and to his will, must be tested, and before they actually reach the divine plane. That is why we are given this new mind in a fleshly body. Note that the apostle says that we ARE new creatures, not that we have been given a new creature. The new creature, prior to exaltation in the resurrection to the divine plane, consists of a human body which has been given a new mind. This is the begotten condition, being prepared to be born of the Spirit.

As we know, there cannot be a creature of any kind without a body. The body of the new creature while still in the flesh is very imperfect, and not at all in sympathy with the new mind which endeavors to control it. But this gives an excellent opportunity for the new mind to demonstrate how determined it is to do the Father's will. If it proves faithful in these adverse circumstances, it will certainly continue faithful when given its new, divine body. How wise indeed are the ways of God!

Paul wrote that it is those "in Christ" who are new creatures; that is, a part of God's new creation in preparation. What does it mean to be "in Christ"? The reference is to being members of the body of Christ, which is his church. Christ is the Head, and we have been baptized by one Spirit into one body in him, as members of his body. (Eph. 1:22, 23) This baptism, so far as our part in it is concerned, is the burial of our will into the will of God as it is expressed through Jesus Christ our Head.—Rom. 6:3-8; I Cor. 12, 13

Thus we see that the test of faithfulness as new creatures is for us to continue this burial of our wills, the daily submerging our minds into the perfect will of God. This is not something which we do merely at the beginning of our life of consecration, but is a daily subjugation of every fond ambition, of every earthly hope, to the will of God in Christ; and doing this in opposition to the natural tendencies of our fallen flesh. This requires constancy and determination, and it is only those who are faithful unto death who will attain to the divine nature and receive the crown of life.—Rev. 2:10

Called, Chosen, Faithful

IN REVELATION 17:14 we are told of the victorious “Lord of lords, and King of kings,” and of the fact that those who are “with him are called, and chosen, and faithful.” We are called by the truth, and invited to run for the prize of the high calling of God in Christ Jesus. Accepting this invitation, and starting out in the narrow way which leads to joint-rulership with Jesus, we become a part of God’s “chosen generation,” in a probationary sense, that is. If we are to become permanently a part of his chosen new creation we must prove faithful to the terms of our calling.

Peter speaks of this as making our calling and election sure. (II Pet. 1:10) Peter urges us to give diligence in doing this. We cannot be among God’s faithful people in the kingdom, living and reigning with Christ, in any other way but by giving “all diligence” in the doing of God’s will. (II Pet. 1:5) Specifically in this context Peter is referring to the various traits of the Christian character which we must add to our faith. “If these things be in you, and abound, they make you that ye shall neither be barren nor unfruitful in the knowledge of our Lord Jesus Christ,” Peter wrote.—vs. 8

The word “barren” in this verse is translated from a Greek word meaning “idle.” We cannot be idle Christians if we are to make our calling and election sure. When Paul wrote that those in the body of Christ, the church, are new creatures, he added that these new creatures are the ambassadors of Christ, and ministers of reconciliation. (II Cor. 5:17-20) We have work to do,

and faithfulness in the doing of this work is the way in which we make our calling and election sure.

There are many difficulties in the way. Satan is the powerful enemy of every member of the church of God, and will do all he can to oppose their progress in the narrow way. The world from which they are called is also opposed to the dedicated life of the Christian. Our own flesh is likewise continually endeavoring to turn our minds away from doing the will of God.

But Jesus said, "Fear not, little flock; for it is your Father's good pleasure to give you the kingdom." (Luke 12:32) This is the Father's good pleasure for us. Is it the greatest joy of our lives to do his will, despite all the difficulties involved? If so, and we continue in this attitude of full surrender to him, we will eventually attain that glorious goal of "glory and honor and immortality."—Rom. 2:7

Barnabas--Son of Consolation

AS OUR scene opens, we find ourselves on the Isle of Cyprus. The story of Jesus of Nazareth had found its way to this island, and there were many who accepted the truths concerning Jesus and his messiahship. One of these was a man named Joses, by birth a Jew of the tribe of Levi, but well acquainted with the Gentiles, his neighbors and fellow countrymen of Cyprus.

In process of time Joses moved to Jerusalem and, being a man of means, he acquired some property. A man of moral stature and generous of heart, he was active in the affairs of the Early Church, lending a helping hand wherever possible. When these early followers of Jesus pooled their resources and lived together with all things in common, Joses sold his property

and gave the proceeds to be used for the good of his brethren.

His noble qualities of character and his generosity were recognized by all at Jerusalem, so much so that he was surnamed Barnabas, the son of consolation. We read, "And Joses, who by the apostles was surnamed Barnabas (which is being interpreted, The son of consolation) a Levite, and of the country of Cyprus."—Acts 4:36, 37

Of good education, his learning included an understanding of the Jewish Law. This helps us to see in him great reverence for God, and perhaps it also helps us to know why he was able to understand from the prophets, as well as from the oral testimony of Je-

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DAWN PUBLICATIONS

East Rutherford

NEW JERSEY

(Continued from page 31)

sus' followers, the truths concerning the Messiah. Our interest, therefore, is fixed upon Barnabas, not merely as a kind and benevolent man, but as a new creature in Christ Jesus.

His qualifications admirably suited him to become a teacher in the Early Church, for its encouragement and building up in the "faith once delivered to the saints." "He was a good man, and full of the Holy Spirit and of faith." (Acts 11:24) The Holy Spirit, or holy influence of God, was a living power in him, the new mind controlling and guiding in all of life's affairs.

As we view the scene of the Church at Jerusalem, we find the brethren scattered abroad by the great persecutions which came upon the Lord's people at this time. By divine overruling, this resulted in the spreading of the Gospel of the kingdom throughout that part of the world. This persecution was stayed in a miraculous way by the conversion of Saul, when he was apprehended by the Lord on the road to Damascus.

Saul, as soon as he was able, made his way to Jerusalem to meet those whom he had so recently been persecuting. We can imagine the feelings of the brethren toward him at that time. However, we find him being accepted into their company through the intercession of Brother Barnabas.

A forceful character, the zeal with which Saul had previously persecuted the followers of Jesus

now impelled him to preach Christ and him crucified. This brought upon him opposition and persecution to the extent that he had to flee for his life. The Early Church now entered another phase of its experiences of comparative rest from persecution. Thus, in the Lord's providence, time was allowed for the brethren to be strengthened in the faith, comforted and built up in their mutual fellowship and study of the truth.

During this time the "gifts" of the Holy Spirit, given to and imparted by the apostles, were used of God to convince and to comfort the true church. "Then had the churches [Vatican MS., church] rest throughout all Judea and Galilee and Samaria, and were edified; and walking in the fear [reverence] of the Lord, and in the comfort [paraklesis] of the Holy Spirit, were multiplied."—Acts 9:31

As the truth spread abroad there were many who accepted it, and word reached Jerusalem that there were many interested people in the city of Antioch. This thrilled and cheered the hearts of the brethren in Jerusalem much as it does today when we hear of others becoming interested in the message of truth, the Gospel of the kingdom.

No doubt there was a great deal of discussion concerning this condition in Antioch, from which came the idea of sending a representative to investigate and bring back an eyewitness report of the situation. The one chosen would have to be sound in doctrine, apt

to teach, patient and unselfishly interested in the spiritual welfare of these new-found brethren.

As we might expect, the one chosen was Barnabas! After meeting and fellowshiping with these brethren in Antioch for a short time, Barnabas would have realized that they were but "babes in Christ" with a limited knowledge. However, he was careful not to criticize, but rather to comfort them, and to encourage and assist in their earnest endeavors to know more about Jesus and to come to an accurate knowledge of the truth of God's plan.

He tried to stimulate their efforts to purity of heart intention, "heart adhesion to the Lord." Concerning this we read, "Who, when he came, and had seen the grace of God, was glad, and exhorted them all, that with purpose of heart they would cleave unto the Lord." (Acts 11:23) It is interesting to note the meaning of this word, "cleave," which is to glue, to adhere.

To a man of less noble character such a position of authority could develop a spirit of pride which would have led to jealousy in others, lest their own influence be lessened. There was no room for such a spirit in the mind of Barnabas, and realizing the need for help he sought out Saul at Tarsus and together they labored in the "vineyard" at Antioch for a whole year. The effect of this witness for the truth is attested by the fact that the Lord's people were first called Christians at Antioch.—Acts 11:26

Word now reached the church

at Antioch that the brethren at Jerusalem were needy, and their largeness of heart in developing the likeness of Christ prompted them to send help at the hands of Barnabas and Saul. (Acts 11:30) After their return to Antioch the brethren began to see the need of encouragement to others who were becoming interested in the truth. Perhaps remembering the joy and comfort that they had received from Barnabas' visit, they now organized and authorized a pilgrim trip for Barnabas and Saul. An account of this is found in Acts, chapters 13 and 14.

Later a second pilgrim trip was decided upon, and the church at Antioch again selected Paul and Barnabas to represent them. Barnabas desired to take with them, as a helper, a young brother named John Mark. (Acts 12:25) Paul, however, emphatically disagreed, because Mark had left them in the middle of their previous journey for reasons which Paul, no doubt, thought to be insufficient.—Acts 13:13

A heated argument did not resolve the issue and, as a result, Barnabas took Mark and sailed for Cyprus, while Paul took Silas and set off on the proposed journey, visiting the various churches along the way. (Acts 15:36-41) Knowing the metal of the character of both Paul and Barnabas we must conclude that each felt justified in the course that he took. Of Paul, we know that he was a "chosen vessel" of God, and that he continued to be blessed and directed by him.

Let us look a little closer at Barnabas. We have seen him as

a kind, unselfish, humble servant of the Lord, the truth, and the brethren. We saw him taking the part of Saul at Jerusalem, and again inviting Saul to help in the work at Antioch. That there were extenuating circumstances which prompted Barnabas to act as he did, we can be sure. Some of these reasons were personal.

In the thrilling account of the Apostle Peter's miraculous release from prison we find him going immediately to the home of Mary, who was the mother of John Mark. (Acts 12:12) It is suggested that Barnabas was Mark's uncle. The Diaglott rendering of Colossians 4:10 puts it: "the nephew of Barnabas."

In Barnabas' defense of those who needed help, he probably felt that Mark would be able to prove himself if given another opportunity. That Barnabas was right in this is proved by the commendation of the Apostle Paul in II Timothy 4:11; "Only Luke is with me. Take Mark, and bring him with thee: for he is profitable to me for the ministry."

While nothing more is recorded of Barnabas after he had left Antioch for Cyprus, we need not conclude that he ceased to be active in the service of the truth. We are confident that he continued to be a help and comfort to the brethren, continuing to be worthy of the name of Barnabas, the son of consolation.

The Lord had chosen Paul to go to the Gentiles. The difficulty between Paul and Barnabas was permitted, and divinely overruled, because it was Barnabas who had

begun the work in Antioch; and it is only reasonable to think that some would have concluded he had been chosen to carry the message to the Gentiles. But we see divine wisdom displayed here, for Barnabas was better suited for comforting and exhorting the brethren, whereas Paul's character and abilities suited him better for the special work of an evangelist and missionary among the Gentiles. Thus the Lord hath set the members, "every one of them in the body, as it hath pleased him."—I Cor. 12:18

The source of comfort is our God—"the God of all comfort." (II Cor. 1:3) All the means of comfort for the ones during this Gospel Age who are called to be joint-heirs with Christ are by divine arrangement. We see this wonderful arrangement centered in Jesus, whom God sent into the world to redeem us, even while we were yet sinners, still under condemnation to death because of Adam's transgression of the divine law. It is written of Jesus in Isaiah 61:1-3:

"The Spirit of the Lord God is upon me; because the Lord [Jehovah] hath anointed me to preach glad tidings unto the meek; he hath sent me to bind up the brokenhearted, ... to comfort all that mourn; to appoint unto them that mourn in Zion, to give unto them beauty for ashes, the oil of joy for mourning, the garment of praise for the spirit of heaviness."

Jesus said: "Come unto me all ye that labor and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest." (Matt. 11:28) Those who thus came to

Jesus were begotten to new aims and new hopes, and were comforted by the presence of their Leader.

It was difficult for them to grasp the thought that they would receive another Comforter, and they were unable to understand the full import of Jesus' words in John 16:7: Nevertheless I tell you the truth; It is expedient for you that I go away: for if I go not away, the Comforter will not come unto you; but if I depart, I will send him unto you."

Again in John 14:16-18: "I will pray the Father, and he shall give you another Comforter, that he may abide with you forever; even the Spirit of truth. I will not leave you comfortless [margin, orphans]."

When their Comforter Jesus was taken so suddenly from them, the disciples were cut off from their hopes, and seemingly left orphans. The eleven appearances of Jesus after his resurrection were a source of comfort to them and revived their hopes, but it was not until Pentecost that they were truly comforted by the begetting of the Holy Spirit as New Creatures in Christ Jesus, and became sons of God.

We see that the Holy Spirit is the channel of comfort during this Gospel Age. Jesus comforts his followers through the Holy Spirit, the holy power and influence of the Father and the Son. "Now our Lord Jesus Christ himself, and God, even our Father, which hath loved us, and hath given us everlasting consolation [paraklesis, comfort] and good hope through grace, comfort [paraka-

leol] your hearts, and stablish you in every good word and work."-- II Thess. 2:16, 17

The Holy Spirit comforts through the Word of truth. "For whatsoever things were written aforetime were written for our learning, that we through patience and comfort [paraklesis] of the Scriptures might have hope." (Rom. 15:4) It was through the operation of the Holy Spirit that the grand and wonderful provisions of the Abrahamic promise were opened to our understanding. Note also Hebrews 10:32, 35, 36: "But call to remembrance the former days, in which, after ye were illuminated, ye endured a great fight of afflictions. . . . Cast not away therefore your confidence, which hath great recompense of reward. For ye have need of patience, that, after ye have done the will of God, ye might receive the promise."

Another great faith and courage strengthener is found in Hebrews 6:17-20: "Wherein God, willing more abundantly to show unto the heirs of promise the immutability of his counsel, confirmed it by an oath: that by two immutable things, in which it was impossible for God to lie, we might have a strong consolation, who have fled for refuge to lay hold upon the hope set before us: which hope we have as an anchor of the soul, both sure and stedfast, and which entereth into that within the veil; whither the forerunner is for us entered, even Jesus, made an high priest forever after the order of Melchisedec."

If we have been comforted by the Holy Spirit in these many ways,

and put into practice the things which we have **learned by being** a help and comfort to others, then we become channels of the Holy Spirit. If, therefore, we become comforters, it evidences that we have developed the fruits of the Spirit, and have attained to the mark of perfect love, having developed the character likeness of Christ, and are nearing the graduating point in the school of Christ.

Some of the reasons it is profitable to consider this subject of "comfort," are: that we might be of "the same mind." (Rom. 15:5 R. V.) Also that we might learn forgiveness and love of the brethren (II Cor. 2:7,8); that we might develop the spirit of Christ; that we might have a greater interest in our brethren's welfare. (Eph. 6:22; Col. 4:8; II Cor. 7:6, 7, 13; I Thess. 3:2; Phil. 2:19) That we might develop the ability to comfort and to edify others. (I Thess. 5:14; Heb. 10:25) That, being comforted ourselves, we may be able to comfort others.—II Cor. 1:3-7

In concluding, we can do no better than to quote from the Apostle Paul: "Wherefore, comfort one another with these words" (I Thess. 4:18); that is, these words that "we which are alive and remain shall be caught up together." (vs. 17) And, "Finally, brethren, farewell. Be perfect, be of good comfort, be of one mind, live in peace; and the God of love and peace shall be with you." (II Cor. 13:11) The

exercise of comfort is the very spirit of the truth—the Holy Spirit.

Additionally, we notice the apostle implies in some of his statements that the comfort and peace of the church are dependent largely upon unity of the Spirit of the Lord in the various members, and that we, from experience, should note that this is the case as indicated in II Corinthians 13:11, quoted foregoing.

And again (Phil. 2:1,2), "If there be any consolation in Christ, if any comfort of love, if any fellowship of the Spirit, if any bowels of mercies, fulfil ye my joy, that ye be likeminded, having the same love, being of one accord, of the same mind." What exhortations these are to unity, peace, brotherly-kindness! How they suggest to us patience, forbearance, gentleness, helpfulness, and comfort one toward another in the church, that thus the Spirit of the Lord may abound in all, that each may make the greatest possible progress in the right way.

"Dear brethren and sisters, let us more and more be worthy of the name Barnabas—comforter of the brethren. Let us have the Holy Spirit abounding in us more and more, for this is the Lord's good pleasure, that with it dwelling in us, we may be all sons and daughters of comfort in Zion, representatives of our Father, and channels of the Holy Spirit, and of the truth."—Reprints

Our Spiritual Blessings

THE Epistle of Paul the Apostle to the Ephesians" was written during his imprisonment in Rome. It is another evidence of how God can make the wrath of men redound to his honor and praise, for being in prison gave the Apostle Paul time to write, and thus preserve for us this epistle which magnifies the church's calling and tells us of the transcendent grace of God through Christ.

In a sentence, the main theme of this letter to the Ephesians is Paul's endeavor to make a complete statement of the whole purpose of God, not only with respect to the church but also with respect to the entire human race. We find in this letter that the basis of our salvation is Christ. We learn here also of the "call" of the church from all nations, peoples, and tongues. And then, too, in this epistle we have emphasized the hope held forth in the doctrine of restitution.

The first chapter is dedicated to our spiritual blessings. Verses 1-3 read:

"Paul, an apostle of Jesus Christ by the will of God, to the saints which are at Ephesus, and to the faithful in Christ Jesus: grace be to you, and peace, from God our Father, and from the Lord Jesus Christ. Blessed be the God and

Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who hath blessed us with all spiritual blessings in heavenly places in Christ."

In these verses, as he has done in other letters, Paul emphasizes his divine appointment as an apostle. He states that he is "an apostle of Jesus Christ by the will of God."

The letter is addressed "to the saints which are at Ephesus, and to the faithful in Christ Jesus." At first it might appear that Paul was addressing two classes; that is, the "saints" and the "faithful," but such is not the case. Moffatt reduces these two expressions to the one class, as follows: "To the saints who are faithful in Jesus Christ." Rotherham and most other authorities agree.

Today it may sound peculiar or presumptuous for a Christian to say, "I am a saint." Yet within the meaning of the Scriptures all who are consecrated to God, all who are faithful believers, all who are devoted to doing the will of God, all who are "in the truth," can apply to themselves the assurance that they are "saints in Christ Jesus." In our study of the Word of God may we learn the simple lesson that there is a blessing in being able to think for ourselves, and in

humility apply to ourselves that which we find given in the Word of God as assurances to the Lord's children.

In verse 2 we read: "Grace be to you, and peace, from God our Father, and from the Lord Jesus Christ." "Grace" is one of the leading words in this epistle. Just as in the letter to the Philippians the words "joy" and "rejoice" are used so often, so "grace" is used many times in this letter. Grace is a gift bestowed upon all the consecrated children of God, for we all enjoy the Father's unmerited favor. "This grace wherein we stand" is the unmerited favor of God granted us throughout our Christian life. (Rom. 5:2; I Pet. 5:12) It is based upon our standing of righteousness before God, upon our justification made possible through Jesus Christ our Lord.

Romans 5:1,2, texts familiar to all, contain the two words "peace" and "grace." They read: "Therefore being justified by faith, we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ: by whom also we have access by faith into this grace wherein we stand, and rejoice in the hope of the glory of God."

Here the words "peace" and "grace" are used in describing our standing of favor before our Heavenly Father. This standing in the favor of God has been made possible by our faith in the blood of Jesus Christ, for through

consecration to God we partake of the merit of his sacrifice, being made acceptable to God through him.

Verse 3 is a text which proves that Paul was not a trinitarian, as do many other statements of the Scriptures. The expression, "Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ," is quite specific. No really honest Bible student, even though he was brought up a trinitarian, could remain a trinitarian after reading a verse that is so specific in presenting our Heavenly Father as both the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ. However, this gem of truth is but one facet of this beautiful verse of divine revelation, which continues: "Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who hath blessed us with all spiritual blessings in heavenly places in Christ."

Of ourselves we cannot bless God, but certainly we can praise him, and that is the true meaning of the text. Not only can we praise our Heavenly Father, but we certainly should praise him for his grace and favor toward us. We should praise him because we are reconciled to him by his great "unspeakable gift." (II Cor. 9:15) We should praise him because he is worthy, and because he has blessed us with "all spiritual blessings."

What are spiritual blessings? They are the blessings that come

through our possession of the Holy Spirit; the unseen, eternal blessings of the truth and its fellowship. Many of them can be recognized by others, but many of them cannot.

The meaning of the expression, "in the heavenlies," (as the Diaglott puts it) is that the same blessings which are enjoyed by those who live in heaven are the ones we are also able to enjoy who have partaken of his Spirit. And how great are these blessings—the blessings of communion with our Heavenly Father, the blessing of being able to comprehend spiritual truths, the blessing in grace, in the unmerited favor that he extends to us every day and hour of our Christian experience.

When we take time to analyze some of these often taken-for-granted texts of Scripture we may discover that they contain much more than we find when we only skim over the surface in our reading; for only through study can one learn the depth of meaning in the inspired Word of God, and as truths are revealed unto us we are "lost in wonder, love, and praise." The student of the Bible who has never been lost in wonder, love, and praise through an appreciation of a spiritual truth has not enjoyed his blessings in the full sense of the word.

Continuing, verses 4-6 read:

"According as He hath chosen

us in Him before the foundation of the world, that we should be holy and without blame before Him in love: having predestinated us unto the adoption of children by Jesus Christ to Himself, according to the good pleasure of His will, to the praise of the glory of His grace, wherein He hath made us accepted in the Beloved."

Here we find expressed our next spiritual blessing. The apostle in the third verse tells us that God has blessed us, but in these verses he tells us the manner in which we have been blessed. He has blessed us by choosing us to be his children. This is an exception to God's general plan for the remainder of mankind. It has pleased him to choose you and me to inherit spiritual life. That privilege is restricted to a "little flock."—Luke 12:32

In verse 5 we have the word "adoption." Let us read the verse substituting the word "sonship" for "adoption," which is a better translation: "Having predestinated us unto sonship by Jesus Christ to Himself, according to the good pleasure of His will." The Diaglott and others use this better understanding of the apostle's words. Here is the way Rotherham translates the verse: "Marking us out beforehand unto sonship through Jesus Christ for Himself, according to the good pleasure of his will."

But how do we become the sons of God? How can we, in our imperfection, be looked upon by

our Heavenly Father as being righteous? How can we, who have so many blemishes ("blemishes" may be considered to be a better word than "blame," which occurs in verse 4) stand before our Heavenly Father without a single blemish?

Well, the apostle tells us how this is possible. He says we are made acceptable in the Beloved. We are made acceptable through Jesus Christ. That is how our blemishes are removed from the sight of God. We are made acceptable to him through the imputed merit of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ. Thus we are begotten as sons of God. What a spiritual blessing has been granted unto us, the consecrated of the Gospel Age!

Verses 7 and 8 read:

"In whom we have redemption through His blood, the forgiveness of sins, according to the riches of His grace; wherein He hath abounded toward us in all wisdom and prudence."

The distinction must be carefully maintained between the word "redemption" and the word "ransom." Some use these words interchangeably, but they are distinctly different in meaning. Our Lord's perfect human life was the ransom in the sense of compensation; in the sense of being a corresponding price for Adam's life, forfeited through disobedience.

It is the application of the

merit of that ransom that effects our release from adamic condemnation, which is redemption, our redemption from death. Thus redemption comes as a result of the ransom. Through redemption we receive the benefits of the ransom.

When, through faith, we have consecrated ourselves to God, we are made acceptable through Christ's merit being applied to us. Thus we are delivered from adamic condemnation. We are forgiven our sins. We stand holy and without blemish before God, not in our adamic imperfections, but covered with the robe of Christ's righteousness. (Isa. 61: 10) Thus we stand righteous before God—justified, and without blemish in God's sight. This redemption manifests God's grace, and is certainly one of our spiritual blessings.

Continuing, verses 9 and 10 read:

"Having made known unto us the mystery of His will, according to His good pleasure which He hath purposed in Himself: that in the dispensation of the fulness of times he might gather together in one all things in Christ, both which are in heaven, and which are on earth; even in Him.

Some feel these two verses are the most important ones in this epistle. They parallel Acts 3:19-21 in establishing the great doctrine of restitution, for there the Apostle Peter, under inspiration of the Holy Spirit, presents the combin-

ed statement of "all God's holy prophets" as his evidence that the doctrine of restitution is one upon which we can base our hope and trust. In verses 9 and 10 Paul, under inspiration, presents as his authority for believing in restitution, the fact that God has purposed it in his own heart.

He also says that this great event is made known to his faithful. So this knowledge is another of our spiritual blessings, even though we do not expect to have a part in the earthly blessings promised in the message of restitution. God has revealed to us the secret of his purpose that salvation is not for the church only, but also for all the willing and obedient of earth's billions.

The Apostle writes concerning "the dispensation of the fulness of times." The word dispensation in this instance means the divine "arrangement," administration," or "economy." Here the apostle pictures for us a series of epochs or ages, with their respective economies, the last epoch culminating in what he calls "the fulness of times," when the will of God will have been accomplished—when the divine arrangement concerning redemption will have become a fact. God, within his heart, has purposed to restore all things to the former condition that existed before the fall of man in the Garden of Eden. Then all things were perfect and harmonious.

The Scriptures teach that this condition of harmony and perfection will be restored in "the dispensation of the fulness of times." The unity that was broken by the entrance of sin will be restored through the reign of Christ, even to the removal of the last enemy, death. And when this restitution work is at last accomplished there will be one kingdom extending its boundaries to include both earth and heaven.

Then unity and perfection will be restored. The text says "both which are in heaven, and which are on earth" shall be gathered together in one, "even in him." Surely that will be a time of jubilation, for then God will be "all in all"!—I Cor. 15:28

Is the doctrine of restitution an important one for us to understand? Yes, it is important! Certainly God thought so, for he purposed it within his own heart, and has revealed it to his people. Paul thought so, and he spoke of it as the mystery of God's will. It is a spiritual blessing which reveals to us the greatness of the kingdom of God as it blesses both the church and the world. May we continue to appreciate the importance of the doctrine of restitution, for through it we understand the greatness of God's love. Continuing, verses 11-14 read:

"In whom also we have obtained an inheritance, being predestinated according to the purpose of Him

who worketh all things after the counsel of His own will: that we should be to the praise of His glory, who first trusted in Christ. In whom ye also trusted, after that ye heard the Word of truth, the Gospel of your salvation: in whom also after that ye believed, ye were sealed with that Holy Spirit of promise, which is the earnest of our inheritance until the redemption of the purchased possession, unto the praise of His glory."

Here we have introduced another spiritual blessing—a very great one too—our inheritance. In verse II we are told that we have already obtained it, but this is qualified in verses 13 and 14 where we are told that we are now sealed with the Holy Spirit; that is, the Holy Spirit stamps as genuine all who are begotten by it.

The Holy Spirit attests our sonship. However, receiving the Holy Spirit now is but an earnest, or pledge, of our inheritance; a pledge in that if we are faithful we shall receive our full inheritance in the future. Our future inheritance is the divine nature, and this text seems to teach that we are begotten to our inheritance.

Verses 15-18 read

"Wherefore I also, after I heard of your faith in the Lord Jesus, and love unto all the saints, cease not to give thanks for you, making mention of you in my prayers; that the God of our Lord Jesus Christ, the Father of glory, may

give unto you the spirit of wisdom and revelation in the knowledge of him: the eyes of your understanding being enlightened; that ye may know what is the hope of his calling, and what the riches of the glory of his inheritance in the saints."

These are wonderful words of life! Furthermore, they are gentle words, encouraging to every child of God. Here, again, is an expression of our spiritual blessings, and a reminder as to what they are. The apostle had heard of the faithfulness of the brethren at Ephesus, and of their love for all the consecrated of God. He told them that he had received a good report. When he recognized in the Ephesian church that true spirit of love, he gave thanks to God in prayer.

In this he set us a good example. Often we see examples of true, unselfish love expressed in word or deed toward some of the Lord's little ones. May we thank God for every such expression of Christian love, and for the privilege of fellowshiping with those who thus manifest the spirit of the Lord.

Paul not only thanked God for them, he did more. He asked God to reward their faithfulness. So we should thank God for every evidence of faithfulness that we see in others, that we may be encouraged to be faithful, even unto death, for the Lord has promised to reward faithfulness with eternal life.

Again in these verses the apostle uses the expression, "The God of our Lord Jesus Christ." The trinitarians may wish he had not continued to make such clear and unmistakable statements; but the Apostle Paul, speaking under the inspiration of the Holy Spirit, expressed the same truth as did our Lord, when the Master said, "My Father is greater than I."—John 14:28

In his prayers Paul asked that we be given wisdom and understanding, that we might gain a more personal knowledge of God. Every child of God wishes to have a more profound and intimate communion with his Heavenly Father. How may this be obtained? Only through our complete devotion to the Father's will can the Holy Spirit exercise its power on our life, enlightening our path, which leads to a closer walk with God. Only thus can we also fully appreciate our calling as a spiritual blessing given to us from the hand of God; and with the hope of our calling constantly before us, spontaneously we will say:

"How vain is all beneath the syies!
How transient avery earthly bliss!
How slender all the fondest ties
that bind us to a world like this!"

Only thus can we know the "riches of the glory of his inheritance in the saints"—God's heritage. God's Spirit-begotten family—exalted to the divine plane,

enjoying the divine nature—his new creation, his divine family, those with whom he can find full fellowship, is his inheritance. Another of our spiritual blessings, then, is to be heirs of God and joint-heirs with Jesus Christ. No wonder we are lost in wonder, love, and praise!

Verses 19-21 continue:

"And what is the exceeding greatness of His power to usward who believe, according to the working of His mighty power, which He wrought in Christ, when he raised Him from the dead, and set Him at His own right hand in the heavenly places, far above all principality, and power, and might, and dominion, and every name that is named, not only in this world, but also in that which is to come."

Paul continues to pray that our spiritual vision be keen, and that our personal knowledge of God will include an understanding of his mighty power, or, as he expresses it: "the exceeding greatness of his power to usward who believe." How great is his power! The Bible record says that it is "exceeding" great.

Brethren, just let us think of how "exceeding great" is the power of God! It was his power that raised Jesus from the dead. Through his power Jesus Christ was exalted to sit at his own right hand—raised to the divine nature—placed far above every name that is named. Let any name be uttered and Christ is

(Continued on page 61.)

The Way of Life

ALL proper-minded parents know that there is a right way and a wrong way for their children to take as they grow up. Hence the Scripture exhortation, "Train up a child in the way he should go, and when he is old, he will not depart from it." (Prov. 22:6) Christian parents have an advantage over all others in the training of their children because of having been blessed with an insight into what is described by Paul as "the nurture and admonition of the Lord." Similarly God set his way before his human son Adam; that is, the way of obedience to the divine law.

The Psalmist, after making a brief reference to the vastness of the universe with its millions of suns and their planetary systems surrounding them, says, "What is man, that thou art mindful of him? and the son of man, that thou visitest him? For thou hast made him a little lower than the angels, and hast crowned him with glory and honor. Thou madest him to have dominion over the works of thy hands; thou

hast put all [earthly] things under his feet."—Ps. 8:4-6

In spite of this wonderful original endowment, man failed to continue in the way of the Lord, the way of perfect obedience; and his children, inheriting an unbalanced moral character, were unable to return to that perfect way of the Lord wherein their father Adam walked for a short period in Eden. In Romans 5:12, R. V., Paul sums up what happened as a result of the brief Edenic trial. He says, "Through one man sin entered into the world, and death through sin: and so death passed unto all men." All being condemned in one man made it possible for all to be redeemed by one sacrifice for sins. "By the trespass of the one, death reigned through the one." Again he says, "Through the trespass the judgment came unto all men to condemnation; even so through one act of righteousness [the free gift is to come] unto all men to justification of life."—Rom. 5:17, 18, R. V.

In full harmony with this, Isaiah had long ago foretold the same gracious divine purpose: "All we like sheep have gone astray; we have turned every one to his own way; and the Lord hath laid on him the iniquity of us all." (Isa.

53:6) Making reference to the result of this great ransom sacrifice, Paul says, "Since by man came death, by man came also the resurrection of the dead. For as in Adam all die, so also in Christ shall all be made alive." (I Cor. 15:21, 22, R.V.) All mankind, therefore, as a result of this divine provision, are to be released from death and are to have another judgment, or trial, for life. Telling of his future gracious purpose, the Lord says, "I will ransom them from the power of the grave; I will redeem them from death." Hos. 13:14

Not of Works

BEFORE the time came for the providing of the ransom from sin and death, God showed by his dealings with the nation of Israel the impossibility of any of the fallen race walking in the way of life by their own efforts. He showed this by giving Israel his Law. Not only did God give them his Law, but he made with Israel, through Moses as the mediator, what we speak of as the Law Covenant. God promised Israel certain earthly blessings if they would do as he instructed. These included the reward of life on the human plane for perfect obedience.

However, the completely honest Israelite would doubtless be forced to say in his heart, in the language of the Apostle Paul, "The commandment which was

unto life, this I found to be unto death." (Rom. 7:10, R. V.) Human imperfections prevent members of the fallen race from measuring up to the perfect standard of obedience. Hence, as Paul says, "by the deeds of the Law there shall no flesh be justified in his sight." (Rom. 3:20) The Law Covenant, therefore, brought condemnation to death because Israel could not live up to their covenant obligations into which, through Moses, they had entered.

By Faith

WITH the coming of Jesus and the giving in sacrifice of his perfect human life, a new "way" to life has been opened. (Heb. 10:20) This a way not wholly dependent upon works, but of a living, obedient faith. It is a way whereby those who believe that Jesus is God's Anointed who has ransomed man from the power of the grave, make a full consecration to him, and are by faith released from condemnation and receive the begetting of the Holy Spirit. Such are on the way, not to human perfection—"that which was lost"—but are traveling a new and living way.

This is not a way which brings further condemnation such as came upon Israel under the Law Covenant, but a new way which really leads to life, bringing it within the reach of all who are called with "the high calling of God in Christ Jesus." (Phil. 3:14)

This is a life obtained through oursacrificing the human, fleshly will, and as new creatures in Christ Jesus, conforming ourselves to the image of God's dear Son. In this connection the Apostle Paul gives a beautiful testimony. He writes: "There is therefore now no condemnation to them which are in Christ Jesus, who walk not after the flesh but after the Spirit. For the law of the Spirit of life in Christ Jesus hath made me free from the law of sin and death."—Rom. 8:1,2

The Gospel-Age Way

WITH reference to this way of life opened up during the Gospel Age, Jesus said, "I am the way." (John 14:6) In harmony with this statement it is explained in I Peter 2:21 that Jesus left "us an example, that we should follow in his steps." In view of the very high standard required of the followers of Jesus, it is not surprising that the Master should describe this way as being a narrow one which few find, and in which fewer still care to walk.

Because of the narrowness and the difficulties associated with this way of life opened by Jesus, we find that the majority who, in the early centuries of the Gospel Age, identified themselves with the Christian church, lost sight of the truth concerning the necessity of walking in the narrow way to life, in the footsteps of Jesus.

However, it is only thus that anyone can be a part of the glorified church, the "church of the first-born," whose names "are written in heaven."—Heb. 12:23

Thank God that now a few again find the old paths of faith and practice walked in by Jesus and his disciples, and who, as the prophet says, have found rest unto their souls. They have a knowledge of the ransom for all, resulting in the exaltation of a little flock to heavenly glory, to be followed by an awakening from death of all the remainder of mankind to enjoy the blessings of Messiah's kingdom.

This, the Bible shows, is God's way of bringing all to a knowledge of the truth, and a full opportunity of coming into harmony with himself. Further, it is indeed a "good way," a way which brings wonderful rest of heart and mind to those able to see, and to walk in it. Having heard the Lord's voice directing us through his Word, saying, "This is the way, walk ye in it," let us steadfastly resist every temptation to turn aside from the way of the Lord.—Isa. 30:21

With reference to God's help and blessing given to his people of typical Israel along the way to the land of promise, we read, "Behold, I send an Angel before thee, to keep thee in the way, and to bring thee into the place which I have prepared." (Ex. 23:20) Regarding spiritual Israel walking

the way of life to the promised heavenly inheritance, we read, "The angel of the Lord encampeth round about them that fear him, and delivereth them." (Ps. 34:7) Again, concerning the angels of the heavenly host we are told, "Are they not all ministering spirits, sent forth to minister for them who shall be heirs of salvation?"—Heb. 1:14

In order that we might continually have the Lord's providences over us, we are exhorted to pray in the words of the Psalmist, "Lead me, O Lord, in thy righteousness because of mine enemies; make thy way plain before my face." "Teach me thy way, O Lord, and lead me in a plain path." (Ps. 5:8; 27:11, R. V.) And, as assurance that "the undefiled in the way" will have the Lord's loving and sure guidance we read, "And thine ears shall hear a word behind thee [a message coming from the past, from the Law and the prophets], saying, This is the way, walk ye in it, when ye turn to the right hand, and when ye turn to the left."—Isa. 30:21

Regarding the present blessings of the way of life we read, "All the paths of the Lord are loving-kindness and truth unto such as keep his covenant and his testimonies." Ps. 25:10, R. V.) Again, "The way of the just is uprightness, thou makest exactly plain the path of the just." (Isa. 26:7, Var.) And, "The path of the righteous is as the light of dawn,

going on and brightening, unto meridian day."—Prov. 4:18, Roth.

Unto Death

HAVING accepted the truth of God's Word pointing out "the narrow way" to life, we are to be watchful, and seek to keep very near to the Lord, because the position into which we have come is indeed a responsible one, as indicated in Hebrews 10:26: "If we sin wilfully after that we have received the knowledge of the truth, there remaineth no more sacrifice for sins." A similar solemn truth is recorded in Proverbs 21:16, "The man that wandereth out of the way of understanding shall remain in the congregation of the dead." But, in harmony with Hebrews 10:39, we are not to be of "those shrinking back into destruction, but of faith in order to a preservation of life."

The exhortations of Jesus through the Revelator are: "Be thou faithful unto death, and I will give thee a crown of life." "To him that overcometh will I grant to sit with me in my throne." (Rev. 2:10; 3:21) The Apostle Paul also exhorts: "Receive not the grace of God in vain." (II Cor. 6:1) And in the next verse he points out another important feature, "Now [during the Gospel Age] is the accepted time; behold, now is the day of salvation." It is not the only "day of salvation," but it is the limited

period in which all members of the church are to make their heavenly "calling and election" sure.

The apostle here is quoting only in part from a wonderful prophecy in Isaiah 49:8, 9, which reveals to us that the completed and glorified Christ beyond the veil, Jesus the Head, and the church his body, will introduce and establish a way of life not yet available to mankind.

The Highway

DURING the early phase of the Millennial Age, those who now walk "the narrow way" will have gained the "glory and honor and immortality" for which, with the Lord's help, they sought so faithfully. And being thus clothed with the divine nature and power, they will be prepared for the great work of restoring and blessing the world in that age. With the complete ending of the

Gospel Age, the narrow way to immortality will be closed, because the select "little flock," which it was designed should be tested and proved, will have been fully gathered and glorified.

Then, in the earthly phase of the kingdom, "an highway shall be there, and a way, and it shall be called the way of holiness." (Isa. 35:8) This way to actual human perfection is to "be made very plain"; so clearly understood that, according to Leeser, "the wayfaring man, and those unacquainted therewith, shall not go astray." This way will be so plain that none will need to teach his neighbor, saying "Know the Lord: for they shall all know me, from the least of them unto the greatest of them." (Jer. 31:34) This particular "way of life" will be available during "the times of restitution of all things, which God hath spoken by the mouth of all his holy prophets since the world began."—Acts 3:21

BRITISH SPEAKERS' APPOINTMENTS

A. BOYCE

Latchford Aug. 18

J. H. MURRAY

Lincoln Aug. 11

Liverpool Sept. 1

E. T. NADAL

Latchford Sept. 22

CEDRIC SMITH

Liverpool Aug. 18

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What Is Truth?

NEARLY two thousand years ago Pilate asked Jesus the question, "What is truth?" (John 18:38) This question has been in the minds and hearts of thinking men and women throughout all the ages. Sincere and honest people want to know the truth on any and all subjects in which they are particularly interested. Our concern to know the truth relates to God's plan for his human creatures, and particularly his will for us as individuals. While Jesus did not give Pilate a direct answer to the question, "What is truth?" he had, nevertheless, answered the question the night before in the upper room when, in prayer, he said, "Thy Word is truth." John 17:17

In Jesus' day the "Word" of truth consisted primarily of the Old Testament Scriptures. It was this "Word" that directed Jesus in the doing of the Father's will. Now the New Testament Scriptures can properly be included in the expression, "Word." Jesus prayed that his followers might be sanctified by the truth contained in the "Word." and this makes the Word of God of vital importance to all who would be pleasing to the Lord because wholly sanctified, or set apart to the doing of his holy will.

Now the Word of truth is often referred to as the "Bible," or the sacred Scriptures. This wonderful collection of inspired messages from the Creator does not contain the truth on all subjects, but it does set forth God's will for his people, and his plan for the ultimate blessing of all the families of the earth. It is vitally important for the child of God to know and to be guided by this truth. Those who accept the truth of the divine plan, as revealed by his Word, know the purpose of their lives. As stated in Psalm 40:2, they have had their feet set, symbolically speaking, upon a rock, and their "goings" have been established.

Returning, then, to our original question, just what is the truth of the divine plan which is so vitally important for the consecrated Christian to know and to obey? There are, of course, many precious truths in the Bible, and it is these when viewed as a whole that constitute what we often refer to as "the truth." The individual segments of truth, which together make up the plan of God as a whole, are those teachings, or doctrines, which can be definitely proved by a "thus saith the Lord." It may be profitable at times to allow our minds to speculate on indefinite theories, but the truly sanctifying truths of the Word are those teachings upon which there can be no valid difference of opinion so far as truth-enlightened Christians are concerned.

And what are these basic doctrines of the Bible? Man's creation and its purpose is the first one we find. The earth was created for man, and man was made an earthly creature, adapted to live in this "home" which God so lovingly and bountifully provided for him. He was created in the image of God, and after his likeness. The continuance of his life in the home which God provided depended upon his obedience. Man disobeyed and was sentenced to death, and all of Adam's progeny came under this death condemnation. — Gen. 1:26-28; Isa. 45:18; Gen. 2:17; Rom. 5:18

But God did not cease to love his human creatures. Indeed, he loved them so much that at great cost to himself he made provision for their redemption from sin and death, sending his beloved Son, the Logos, to give his life that through belief and obedience condemned man might live. (John 3:16) The Scriptures are explicit as to the basis upon which this is accomplished. Paul speaks of the arrangement as a ransom, or corresponding price. The Apostle Paul wrote that God "will have all men to be saved, and to come unto the knowledge of the truth; for there is one God, and one mediator between God and men, the man Christ Jesus; who gave himself a ransom for all, to be testified in due time."—I Tim. 2:4-6

This is the great foundation truth of God's plan of salvation for the human race from sin and death. It is not human tradition, nor was it developed through deduction and speculation.

We cannot properly say concerning this truth that it seems to be this way, or it seems to be that way. Nor do we need to speculate as to God's plan whereby the salvation of the race from death as a result of the ransom is to be carried out, for the Bible clearly teaches that it is through a resurrection of the dead; and we know "that there shall be a resurrection of the dead, both of the just and unjust." (Acts 24:15) Peter uses the word "restitution," and declares that there shall be times of restitution of all things, adding that this glorious fact of the divine plan has been spoken by the mouth of all God's holy prophets since the world began.—Acts 3:19-23

Here also we are on the solid ground of clearly established biblical truth. Truth-enlightened followers of the Master do not need to wonder whether or not this segment of the divine plan is really the truth. Unless we wish to call into question the veracity of the testimony given by the inspired servants of God in both the Old and New Testaments, then there is no room for any difference of opinion concerning the fact of the restoration of the race from death as a result of the ransom sacrifice of Jesus Christ.

Heavenly and Earthly Hopes

IN THE "upper room" the night before Jesus was crucified, he explained to his disciples that he was going away to prepare a place for them, and that he would come again and receive them unto himself, that where he was there they might be also. (John 14:2, 3) Later that same night Jesus prayed, "Father, I will that they also, whom thou hast given me, be with me where I am." (John 17:24) These statements by Jesus prove that the hope of his dedicated followers is to be with him, to share his heavenly home, and his divine nature to which he was exalted when raised from the dead. Peter confirms this. He wrote: "Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, which according to his abundant mercy hath begotten us again unto a lively hope by the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead, to an inheritance incorruptible, and undefiled, and that fadeth not away, reserved in heaven for you [margin, us]."—I Pet. 1, 3, 4

This means that some of those redeemed by the precious blood

of Christ will, in the resurrection, receive a heavenly reward. These are the true followers of Jesus during the present age. Paul speaks of these as partaking of "the heavenly calling." (Heb. 3:1) It is concerning these that Jesus said, "Fear not, little flock; for it is your Father's good pleasure to give you the kingdom." (Luke 12:32) These will be given the kingdom in the sense that, together with Jesus, they will be the spiritual rulers in that government foretold by the prophets, that rulership of Christ which will subdue all opposition to God and his will, and destroy death. —I Cor. 15:24-26

Those who attain unto this heavenly calling are brought forth from death in what the Scriptures refer to as the "first resurrection." (Rev. 20:6) These are to be "kings" and "priests" together with Jesus, and will reign with him a thousand years. These suffer and die with Jesus in order that they might live and reign with him. (II Tim. 2:11, 2) Paul confirms this. He wrote that we are "heirs of God, and joint-heirs with Christ, if so be that we suffer with him." (Rom. 8:17) This, then, is the Christians's hope, his place in the great divine plan of the ages. The truth concerning this is not debatable. There is no room for an "honest difference of opinion."

The Gospel-Age Work

THE period in the divine plan for the selection and preparation of those who live and reign with Christ is what we refer to as the Gospel Age. While this title is not given in the Scriptures, the work of this period is clearly shown to be the preaching of the Gospel. So it is that the title Gospel Age properly suggests the method by which the followers of Jesus are reached and made ready for their share in the messianic kingdom. It is at the end of the Gospel Age that our Lord returns, reckons with his servants, exalts the last members of his body to heavenly glory with him and establishes his kingdom for the blessing of all the families of the earth.

It was not to be expected that when Jesus returned at his second advent he would be visible to human eyes, for he is no longer flesh, but a glorious divine being. Jesus said to his dis-

ciples, "Yet a little while, and the world seeth me no more; but ye see me: because I live, ye shall live also." (John 14:19) John got the import of this later, and wrote, "Beloved, now are we the sons of God, and it doth not yet appear what we shall be: but we know that, when he shall appear, we shall be like him; for we shall see him as he is."—I John 3:2

Parousia

THERE is every reason to believe that the invisible second presence of Christ is now a reality. This precious, fundamental truth has been revealed to us through a clarification of the Greek word **parousia**, used in a number of references to Jesus' second visit to earth. In our Common Version Bibles this word is sometimes translated "presence" and sometimes "coming." Its real meaning in New Testament times was presence. It was this word that the disciples used when they asked Jesus what would be the sign of his **parousia**, or presence—mistranslated coming in our Common Version Bible.—Matt. 24:3

In response to this question Jesus outlined a number of signs. One of these he referred to as a time of great "tribulation"—tribulation so great, he said, that unless the trouble was shortened no flesh would survive. (Matt. 24:21, 22) This sign is clearly displayed in the earth today. If we had nothing else to guide us, we could know from the fulfilment of this one sign that our Lord has returned. Today the destruction of the human race is threatened. The wise men of the world know this. The rulers know it. However, they do not see this situation as an evidence of our Lord's presence. They know nothing about the plan of God, in any event. But we see its meaning, and we are glad to have this concrete proof that our Lord has returned. It means that our deliverance from the bondage of sin and death is near. It means that the reign of sin and death will soon be brought to an end, and that all the families of the earth are soon to be blessed.

We cannot grasp fully the details of the divine plan as they are being worked out during this transition period into the full establishment of the kingdom. The Lord has not revealed these

details to us. We are still walking by faith, and not by sight. As "watchers" we should keep alert in an effort to discern more clearly the progress of the divine plan. But since at present we still see through a glass "darkly," or dimly, let us not be too sure that what we see is exactly the way things are. We can speak dogmatically on those points which can be definitely established by a "thus saith the Lord," but the deductions which we make in an attempt to fill in those details of the divine plan not as yet clearly revealed by the Lord should not be dogmatically held as fundamental truths.

God's Covenants

ONE of the ways by which the Lord reveals his plan of salvation is through his covenants—those covenants which he made with his servants in the past, and the New Covenant which he has promised to make in the future. (Gen. 12:3; 22:15-19; Jer. 31:31-34) In his covenant with Abraham God promised to bless "all the families of the earth" through his "seed." The primary fulfilment of this covenant is through Jesus and his faithful followers. (Gal. 3:8, 16, 27-29) These will be the spiritual seed of Abraham, the channel of the life-giving blessings provided through the redemptive work of Christ.

The spiritual seed of Abraham is spoken of in the Scriptures as a "house" of sons over which Jesus is the Head. But there is a fleshly house of Israel as well, referred to in the Bible as a house of "servants," over which Moses is the head. (Heb. 3:5, 6) God has made special covenants or promises to both these houses of Israel. All the promises to the fleshly house were earthly, while all those to the spiritual are heavenly.—Heb. 3:1

To the fleshly house of Israel it was said, "If ye will obey my voice indeed, and keep my covenant, then ye shall be a peculiar treasure unto me above all people: for all the earth is mine. And ye shall be unto me a kingdom of priests, and an holy nation." (Exod. 19:5-8) And though all Israel answered and said, "All that the Lord hath spoken we will do," and then failed to keep their covenant, yet the faithful among them, who earnestly endeavored in their weakness to keep it will, in the Millennial

Age, be "princes in all the earth," members of the earthly phase of the kingdom of God.—Ps. 45:16

To the spiritual house, on the contrary, it is said, "Ye . . . are built up a **spiritual house**, and holy priesthood, to offer up . . . sacrifices acceptable to God by Jesus Christ." "Ye are a chosen generation, a royal priesthood, an holy nation, a peculiar people, that ye should show forth the praises of him who hath called you out of darkness into his marvelous light: which in time past were not a people, but are now the people of God."—I Pet. 2:5, 9, 10

The royal promises of God to these two houses of Israel were not limited in their application to the generation of God's people which lived at the time they were made, but applied to the faithful in each succeeding generation. In the case of fleshly Israel, while none of the Israelites could keep God's perfect law and thereby gain life, through faith and heart obedience some in each generation did prove worthy to inherit in the resurrection the special place in the kingdom which God had promised. The 11th chapter of Hebrews relates the experiences of a number of these, and assures us that they received the testimony that they pleased God.

This special group, which includes the faithful ones who preceded Moses, down to John the Baptist, will be the earthly representatives of the divine Christ. This will indeed be a very exalted position. But thank God for the assurance of his Word that a New Covenant is to be made with those who did not thus qualify, a covenant through which their sins will be taken away, and they will be restored to life. In Romans 11:25-32 Paul assures us of this. After telling of the loss of the chief blessing through unbelief, Paul wrote:

"For I would not, brethren, that ye should be ignorant of this mystery, lest ye should be wise in your own conceits; that blindness in part is happened to Israel, until the fulness of the Gentiles be come in. And so all Israel shall be saved: as it is written, There shall come out of Sion the Deliverer, and shall turn away ungodliness from Jacob: for this is my covenant with them, when I shall take away their sins. [Jer. 31:31-34] As concerning the

Gospel, they are enemies for your sakes; but as touching the election, they are beloved for the fathers' sakes, for the gifts and calling of God are without repentance. For as ye in times past have not believed God, yet have now obtained mercy through their unbelief: even so have these also now not believed, that through your mercy they also may obtain mercy. For God hath concluded them all in unbelief, that he might have mercy upon all."

How truly gracious and loving is our Heavenly Father! Just as mercy is to be extended to the unbelieving of Israel, it will also be extended to the unbelieving world as a whole in his due time. Just as all Israel shall be saved, so the whole world of mankind shall be saved. This does not imply unconditional, universal salvation, for faith and obedience will be required of all who are given eternal life. But all will be enlightened and given a full opportunity to believe and obey. Concerning the times of restitution when this takes place the Apostle Peter said, "It shall come to pass, that every soul, which will not hear that prophet, shall be destroyed from among the people."—Acts 3:23

This refers to the future work of enlightenment and judgment of the great thousand-year judgment day of the world. The world was once on trial through father Adam. Adam failed, and brought death upon himself and upon all his offspring. A period of about six thousand years intervenes between the world's first and second judgment days. During this long period of time God has been selecting two special classes from among men, and specially trying, disciplining, and training them to be his honored instruments during the period or day of the world's judgment.

These two classes, as we have noted, are respectively designated by Paul as the house of sons and the house of servants. (Heb. 3:5, 6) The former is composed of those overcomers tried and found faithful during the Christian dispensation, and the latter is composed of the faithful overcomers who preceded the Christian dispensation. Those who successfully pass the trial of either of these special classes will not come into judgment with the world, but will enter upon their reward when the world comes into judgment. They will be God's agents in the blessing

of the world—in giving to men the instruction and training necessary for their final testing and judgment. “Do ye not know that the saints shall judge the world?”—I Cor. 6:2

These specially selected classes, like the rest of mankind, were once under adamic condemnation, but became sharers by faith in the benefits of Christ's death. The sincere and obedient believers prior to Christ's death and resurrection became the friends of God, enjoying his fellowship and rejoicing in the special promises of that time. During the Gospel Age obedient believers are begotten of the Holy Spirit and become children of God. These are all substantial and fundamental truths which are well established in the Scriptures.

What could be more beautiful and soul-satisfying than the simple statement by Paul, “Being justified by faith, we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ.” (Rom. 5:1) Again Paul wrote, “There is therefore now no condemnation to them who are in Christ Jesus.” (Rom. 8:1) These straightforward statements of truth are in the Word of God for our encouragement, to assure us that if our hearts are loyal to the Lord he deals with us as his children, and blesses us, not according to our imperfections, but in spite of them. What more could we ask?

The Purpose

WE ARE not in this article undertaking to examine all the fundamental doctrines of the Bible which constitute what we refer to as “the truth.” We have presented a few of them for the purpose of illustrating the difference between the basic truths of the divine plan and the technical philosophies and speculations which, at times, we may be inclined to associate with them. The basic truths of the Word are in themselves up-building to us as new creatures in Christ Jesus. The human philosophies which we might be inclined to associate with them are not. Indeed, at times they could lead to an opposite result.

Let us not say that brother so and so is in danger of going “out of the truth” simply because he may not accept some theory of ours, or of someone else. Our standing in the truth, and our

loyalty to it, is judged by the Lord upon the basis of what is clearly set forth in his Word. If we have dedicated ourselves to the doing of his will, he will judge our faithfulness upon the basis of how well we obey the basic teachings of his Word, and keep our hearts in tune with the spirit of divine love. May the Lord help us to remain established in the truth, and may its sanctifying power work in us more and more, as daily we seek the better to know his will, and continue our determination to do it.

WEEKLY PRAYER MEETING TEXTS

AUGUST 1—"Death and life are in the power of the tongue."—Proverbs 18:21 (Z.99-75 Hymn 198)

AUGUST 8—"Into whatsoever house ye enter, first say, Peace be to this house. And if the son of peace be there, your peace shall rest upon it: if not, it shall turn to you again."—Luke 10:5, 6 (Z. '04-108 Hymn 329)

AUGUST 15—"Now we exhort you, brethren, . . . be patient toward all."—I Thessalonians 5:14 (Z. '03-24 Hymn 312A)

AUGUST 22—"Wist ye not that I must be about My Father's business?"—Luke 2:49 (Z. '03-53 Hymn 167)

AUGUST 29—"Ye ask, and receive not, because ye ask amiss."—James 4:3 (Z. '03-204 Hymn 239)

Simple Interpretation

"Dear Brethren in Christ: I always get a blessing from reading and concentrating on your simple interpretation of the Bible, as you rightly divide the Word of truth. I have yet to hear anything that is so plain and truthful as The Dawn and your other literature."—West Virginia

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Spiritual Blessings--Continued

(Continued from page 45.)

greater. He is pre-eminent and precedes all. We may not be able to enumerate all the various strata of spiritual beings such as cherubim, seraphim, principalities, powers, might, and dominion. However, we know that above them all is our Lord Jesus Christ, for the Bible says, "that in all things he might have the pre-eminence."—Col 1:18

Why did the apostle pray that the Ephesians might understand what God's power did for Jesus Christ? Because if they could appreciate that, they would be able to appreciate also the exceeding greatness of his power "to us-ward who believe." They would be able to appreciate how great God's power was, as it was manifest toward them in their sonship. So also with us; as we think and meditate upon the exceeding greatness of his power as it was manifest toward our Lord Jesus Christ, we are able to realize more thoroughly how great is his power in our lives, to aid us every day and every hour.

This power of God in our lives is indeed one of our spiritual blessings. We have that power to help make our calling and election sure. We have that power to help us gain our future inheritance. May we depend upon it, and not on the arm of flesh,

for the arm of flesh is very weak by comparison with the exceeding greatness of his power. Let us indeed lean upon the Lord, for he says, "Not by might, nor by power, but by my Spirit, saith the Lord of hosts."—Zech. 4:6

Concluding, verses 22 and 23 read:

"And hath put all things under His feet, and gave Him to be the Head over all things to the church, which is His body, the fulness of Him that filleth all in all."

We are all glad that our Lord is our Head, even as we are glad that we are members of the Body of Christ. The body of Christ is a living organism, and each one of us is a member of that body, actuated by the Holy Spirit of God. Also, we are glad that the time is near when all things are to be put under his feet, that God might be all in all. This is the fulness of the reward for each body member: the privilege of having a part in the establishment of the kingdom of God.

An appreciation of our spiritual blessings should help each of us every day of our Christian life. Through these blessings we have been separated from the people of the land. Through them we have the assurance that we are the sons of God. May we be conscious of and enjoy these spiritual blessings as we walk in the way of the Lord!

SPEAKERS' APPOINTMENTS

These speakers are associated with the Pilgrim Department of The Dawn. Their services are furnished free, upon request. Address your request to Dawn Bible Students Association, East Rutherford, New Jersey. A visit will be arranged when possible.

SAM BAKER

Withee, Wis. Aug. 1
Wausau, Wis. 2
Milwaukee, Wis. 3, 4
Chicago, Ill. 5
Gary, Ind. 6
Muncie, Ind. 7, 8
Bloomington, Ind. 10-15

OTIS R. BARRALL

Akron, Ohio Aug. 2
Saginaw, Mich. 3, 4
Flint, Mich. 5
Jackson, Mich. 5
Grand Rapids, Mich. 7

JENS COPELAND

Sayville, N. Y. Aug. 4

O. D. DEIFER

York, Pa. Aug. 25
Lancaster, Pa. 25

THOMAS HICKS

Allentown, Pa. Aug. 25

LEVI JACOBS

Groton, Conn. Aug. 18
New London, Conn. 18

A. H. KRUMPOLT

Baltimore, Md. Aug. 25
Philadelphia, Pa. 25

L. P. LOOMIS

New Haven, Conn. Aug. 25
Waterbury, Conn. 25

J. Y. MAC AULAY

Paterson, N. J. Aug. 4

H. W. PRICE

Reading, Pa. Aug. 1
Wilmington, Del. 2
Baltimore, Md. 4
Philadelphia, Pa. 4
West Newton, Pa. 5, 6
Connellsville, Pa. 7
Steubenville, Ohio 8
Bloomington, Ind. 10-15
Chicago, Ill. 18
Minneapolis, Minn. 19, 20
Havre, Mont. 21
Spokane, Wash. 22
Seattle, Wash. 23

WM. E. ROACH

Knoxville, Tenn. Aug. 16
Hendersonville, N. C. 17
East Point, Ga. 25
Estille, S. C. 26
Newport, N. C. 27
Littleton, N. C. 28
Norfolk, Va. 29
Richmond, Va. 30
Lynchburg, Va. 31
Blue Ridge, Va. Sept. 1

E. G. ROBERTS

Denver, Colo. Aug. 1
Chicago, Ill. 3
Gary, Ind. 5
Muncie, Ind. 6
Indianapolis, Ind. 8
Bloomington, Ind. 10-15
New Albany, Ind. 18
Cincinnati, Ohio 20
Columbus, Ohio 21
Steubenville, Ohio 23
Pittsburgh, Pa. 25
Cleveland, Ohio 26
Buffalo, N. Y. 27
Rochester, N. Y. 28
New York, N. Y. Aug. 30-
Sept. 2

RICHARD SURACI

Bridgeport, Conn. Aug. 4

STEPHEN SURACI

Wallingford, Aug. 25

C. R. WEIDA

Catawissa, Pa. Aug. 4

The listings in this schedule have been arranged by local ecclesias co-operating with the Dawn.

JOHN BARACOS Monessen, Pa. Aug. 25	TED HACK Minneapolis, Minn. (Cedar Ave.) Aug 18	DANIEL KAZIAK Adrian, Mich. Aug. 18
NICK BARACOS Duquesne, Pa. Aug. 4 Washington, Pa. 18	EDMUND JEZUIT Millwaukee, Wis. Aug. 18	ALBERT SHEPPELBAUM LaSalle, Ill. Aug. 4
L. P. BORGES Miami, Fla. Aug. 11	LEONARD JEZUIT Gary, Ind. Aug 18	L. W. ZBIK Chatham, Ont. Aug. 18

THE TRUTH ABOUT IMMORTALITY

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"FRANK AND ERNEST"

WABI—910 kc.—12:00 noon

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To the left is a suggestion for a small advertisement in your local newspaper. This outline is designed for two inches in one column.

SEPTEMBER TOPIC: On Sunday, September 15, the "Frank and Ernest" topic will be, "The Old-time Religion." In view of the many conflicting theories in the world as to what the truth of the Gospel really is, this should be an interesting topic. It is a subject which should be well advertised, and special circulars will be available for this purpose. These circulars are furnished free in any quantity desired. You are invited to order as many as you can use. Address your request to The Dawn, East Rutherford, New Jersey. Ask for the September radio circular.

CONVENTIONS

Full information concerning programs and room reservations can be obtained by writing to the name listed. An asterisk (*) indicates an immersion service is being planned.

SAGINAW, MICH., Aug. 4—Saginaw Woman's Club, 311 North Jefferson. Mrs. C. A. Sundbom, 207 Alice Street.

BLOOMINGTON, IND., Aug. 10-15 — Bible Students General Convention. East Hall Auditorium.

WICHITA FALLS, TEX., Aug. 17,18—The Kemp Hotel, Eighth and Scott Streets. Mrs. G. B. Wilcott, 2406 Prairie, Fort Worth 6, Texas.

CHICAGO, ILL., Aug. 25 — Central Masonic Temple, 912 North LaSalle Street. Mr. Adam Miskowitz, 2436 Grove Avenue, Berwyn, Illinois.

MINNEAPOLIS, MINN., Aug. 31-Sept. 2 I. O. G. T. Hall, 2922 Cedar Avenue. Mrs. Doris Borowiec, 224 South Fifth Street, Delano, Minnesota.

NEW YORK, N. Y., Aug. 31-Sept. 2—Waldorf-Astoria Hotel, 50th Street and Park Avenue. Mr. F. S. Wassmann, 453 West Saddle River Road, Upper Saddle River, N. J.

SAGINAW, MICH., Aug. 31-Sept. 2 — YWCA Building, 215 South Jefferson Street. Mrs. C. A. Sundbom, 207 Alice Street.

SAN DIEGO, CALIF., Aug. 31-Sept. 2—Temple Beth Israel, 2512 Third Avenue. Mrs. Gilbert L. Rice, 4005 Olympic Street.

SEATTLE, WASH., Aug. 31-Sept. 2—The Norway Center, 300 Third Avenue West. Mrs. John R. Keith, 22515 - 95 Place West, Edmonds, Washington.

ALBANY, N. Y., Sept. 8

DENVER, COLO., Sept. 21,22

BUFFALO, N. Y., Sept. 28, 29

PITTSBURGH, PA., Sept. 28, 29—Bower Hill Civic League Community Center, 1600 Bower Hill Road. Mr. John Baracos, 736 Dunster Street, Pittsburgh 26.

GRAND RAPIDS, MICH., Oct. 5, 6

WACO, TEX., Oct. 5, 6—Town House Motel, Room 25, 1715 Washington Avenue. Mrs. J. B. Hillhouse, 3532 Frederick Avenue.

PIQUA, OHIO, Oct. 6

POTTSTOWN, PA., Oct. 13

MILWAUKEE, WIS., Oct. 19, 20

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to us the
SCRIPTURES
clearly teach

That the church is "the temple of the living God"—peculiarly "his workmanship"; that its construction has been in progress throughout the Gospel age—ever since Christ became the world's Redeemer and the chief corner stone of this temple, through which, when finished, God's blessings shall come "to all people," and they find access to him.—1 Cor. 3:16, 17; Eph. 2:20-22; Gen. 28:14; Gal. 3:29

That meantime the chiseling, shaping, and polishing of consecrated believers in Christ's atonement for sin progresses, and when the last of these "living stones," "elect and precious," shall have been made ready, the great Master Workman will bring all together in the first resurrection; and the temple shall be filled with his glory, and be the meeting place between God and men throughout the Millennium.—Rev. 15:5-8

That the basis of hope for the church and the world lies in the fact that "Jesus Christ, by the grace of God tasted death for every man," "a ransom for all," and will be "the true light which lighteth every man that cometh into the world," "in due time."—Heb. 2:9; John 1:9; 1 Tim. 2:5, 6

That the hope of the church is that she may be like her Lord, "see him as he is," be a "partaker of the divine nature," and share his glory as his joint-heir.—1 John 3:2; John 17:24; Rom. 8:17; 11 Pet. 1:4

That the present mission of the church is the perfecting of the saints for the future work of service to develop in herself every grace; to be God's witness to the world; and to prepare to be the kings and priests in the next age.—Eph. 4:12; Matt. 24:14; Rev. 1:6; 20:6

That the hope for the world lies in the blessings of knowledge and opportunity to be brought to all by Christ's millennial kingdom—the restitution of all that was lost in Adam, to all the willing and obedient, at the hands of their Redeemer and his glorified church—when all the wilfully wicked will be destroyed.—Acts 3:19-23; Isaiah 35