

The Dawn

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The Prophetic Increase of Knowledge

HOW MANY OF us realize that one hundred and fifty years ago there were many businessmen and law-makers who were unable to read and write? At that time the vast majority of men and women in all countries were illiterate; education was considered a privilege for the few. Just as there were outstanding artists and musicians in those days, there were also famous writers of fiction, philosophy, and history. These, of course, needed to know how to read and write, and they set themselves to the task of learning. But for the ordinary person, education was not considered important. The situation remained as it had been throughout the annals of history. Back in the days of ancient Israel it was necessary for scribes, or others specially qualified and appointed, to read the Law to the people if they were to be acquainted with it, for the rank and file of the people did not know how to read.

Throughout the centuries there was no change in this situation, either in Israel or among the Gentiles. General education as we know it did not develop gradually—it appeared suddenly. After thousands of years of ignorance on the part of the masses, within a remarkably short period of time from the standpoint of history, knowledge suddenly increased to the incomprehensible magnitude which it is today. This, we believe, was in fulfillment of the prophecies of the Bible, one of which states that in the “time of the end” knowledge would be “increased.”—Dan. 12:4

There are archeological evidences that the art of writing was known and used before the Flood. In that antediluvian world men learned how to record their thoughts in a way that could be understood by others, but the process was tedious and laborious. They used what is known as the

cuneiform style of writing, the words being etched upon clay tablets, and then baked in ovens or in the sun to give them a degree of permanency.

The art of writing improved somewhat after the Flood, but clay and stone tablets continued to be used for centuries. It was not unusual to the Israelites that the Ten Commandments should be given to them on tablets, or "tables of stone." (Exod. 24:12) Later came the parchment rolls, with varying degrees of quality, and improvement in durability. Finally paper appeared as we know it today.

During this entire period there was no better way of writing than by hand, with all of its limitations. Few were able to write. The philosophers of Greece had no adequate way of disseminating their theories. Probably the general public today know more about Platonic philosophy than did the Greeks themselves at the time of Plato.

The Bible itself had a very limited circulation. Copies of the Scriptures were extremely scarce in the Early Church. The making of each new copy required much time and labor. This situation continued for centuries. Not until the advent of the printing press did it begin slowly to change, and fittingly enough the first book to be printed was the Bible.

Gutenberg invented movable type for the printing press in the year 1450 A.D. Some of the astute, farseeing people of his day were quick to realize what the printing press ultimately would mean to world society. The religious leaders of that time were particularly concerned over the possibility of a general circulation of the Bible. They did not wish to see this happen, for they knew that the Word of God, to the extent that it was read and believed, would expose their traditions and weaken their control over the people.

This, we should remember, was in the days of the chained Bible, when the common people were not permitted to possess or to read the Holy Scriptures. Indeed, few of them could have read it had they been given the opportunity. Today in many printing plants an apprentice printer is called a 'printer's devil'. The legend is that this title originated in

Gutenberg's printing shop, being based on the feelings of the religious bigots of that time that the Devil would use the printing press to make the Bible available to all who could and wanted to read it.

Only those who maintain control over the minds of others through ignorance and tradition need fear the dissemination of the Bible. The knowledge of the plans and purposes of God contained in the Bible is the key to true liberty in Christ. It breaks the shackles of superstition and prejudice, and reveals the great Creator of the universe as the true God of love.

It is a far cry from Gutenberg's crude contraption to the huge, modern multicolor presses of today. Naturally that first crude press did not produce sufficient reading matter to change the course of the world, but it was a start. And the art of printing grew so rapidly that by the beginning of the nineteenth century the minds of men were beginning to be molded into a new pattern.

By that time the Bible became available in sufficient quantities to warrant the establishment of Bible Societies whose sole business would be to produce and distribute the Bible. And how wonderfully they have accomplished this mission! More copies of the Bible are sold today than of any other book. It has been translated and published in essentially all the known languages, and in many hundreds of dialects. The Bible today is available in practically all the farflung corners of the earth; although in some countries it does not enjoy such a free circulation as it does in the Western World.

Printing has also made possible the wide use of Hebrew and Greek concordances of the Bible, these being the languages from which our English Bibles are translated. By being able to check the true meaning of the Hebrew and Greek texts, we learn that the Bible does not teach the gruesome doctrine of eternal torture for the wicked. With the removal of this God-dishonoring tradition, we are able to comprehend more fully what the Bible means when it tells us that "God is love."—I John 4:8

Concurrent with the phenomenal circulation of the Bible made possible by the printing press, there came also a general diffusion of knowledge along all other lines—national, scientific, political, financial, and industrial. This knowledge has awakened the world to a sense of its needs, and has begotten in the hearts of people in general a desire for liberty which cannot be denied. It has been well said that knowledge has started the masses on the march to freedom; and the invention of the printing press was the first drumbeat to inspire this march.

Through the art of printing, the learning and experience of one generation is passed on to the next. With the printing of books it has been possible for the thoughts and discoveries of philosophers and inventors to be passed on to their successors. The printing of books also led to the public school. It would be impossible for the great educational institutions of today, public and private, to function without books—printed books which through the printing press are available in any quantity desired.

Can we imagine a world without books, newspapers, and magazines? If we can, then we can imagine a world without schools, libraries, book stores, and newsstands. This is the sort of world in which people lived prior to the prophetic 'increase of knowledge' which Daniel said would occur in the 'time of the end'. It is not that the intelligence of the human race has increased. It is simply that an invention, divinely permitted and timed, has released the potentials of knowledge which previously had been largely restricted to individual minds, and available at the most to a very limited few.

This Electronic Age

Psalm 97:4 speaks of Jehovah's "lightnings" which enlighten the world. In this prophecy lightning is used figuratively to symbolize the dissemination of knowledge, the reference being to this present time when knowledge was due to be increased. Lightning, as we know, is a demonstration of electrical energy, and it is significant, we think, that

the harnessing of electrical energy has contributed so effectively to the prophetic "increase of knowledge."

The availability of knowledge through printing greatly aided man in the harnessing of the strange force which became known as electricity. The first electric light of any kind was invented about 1710 by Fredrick Hawksbee, and which he demonstrated before the Royal Society of London. It consisted of a hollow glass globe from which the air had been exhausted, and arranged so it could be rotated rapidly. When rubbed by the hand while rotating, it produced a glow of light. But this invention proved to be of no practical value as a means of producing artificial light.

Early in the nineteenth century, Sir Humphrey Davy discovered the basic principles of arc and incandescent lamps. However, it remained for Thomas A. Edison to invent the first practical electric lamp. This was in 1879. It was an invention which in a few short years was destined to well nigh turn night into day so far as the work, pleasure, and pastime of the world was concerned.

This was only one hundred and thirteen years ago. It was just a year earlier that the General Electric Company was formed for the purpose of developing this newly discovered energy, particularly in connection with dynamos and motors. Many books have been written to set forth the details of progress in the harnessing and use of electricity for light, power, and heat. That progress has carried through into the field of electronics, which in turn has made possible the radio, television, computers, and even artificial 'moons'.

Let us try to imagine a world without the many things now available by means of electricity and electronics. In the home there would be no electric lights; no automatic oil, gas, electric heat, or coal burners; no refrigerators; no automatic washing machines; no electric stoves, or toasters; no electric clocks; no electric razors; no radios or television sets, and no telephones. And outside of the home there would be no automobiles; no electric powered trains; no telephones or computers; no elevators; or no display advertising; and no airplanes—just to mention but a few of what have now come

to be considered the necessities of life. Yet only one hundred and thirteen years ago the whole world lived without any of these 'necessities', and many of them have come into general use within very recent years.

The striking part of all this is that for thousands of years the human race lived without change. There was no progress in education. There was no 'increase of knowledge'. Our grandparents lived in essentially the same primitive fashion as people did four thousand years ago. The Europeans and Asians had different ways of life. We would probably say that the European standard of living was higher than the Asiatic, but there was little or no progress in either section of the world.

Communications

Beginning with the printing press, the means for the increase of knowledge were cumulative. The harnessing of electricity led to the farflung systems of communication which are disseminating knowledge so effectively today. There is the telephone, wired and wireless; the wired and wireless telegraph; the radio and television, satellite communication centers. Through the use of these, the important events of the whole world become known to the remainder of the world in a matter of seconds—sometimes even as they happen.

Today these rapid means of communication are taken for granted, yet a hundred years ago they were unknown, with the exception of the wired telegraph, the first patent for which was taken out in 1837. Now the electric wings of thought are bearing the ideas of the human race thither and yon around the globe to a degree that staggers the imagination. Fantastically, President Eisenhower was first to broadcast Christmas greetings to the world via an artificial 'moon' or satellite orbiting around the earth at the rate of seventeen thousand miles an hour.

While the ancients, in their fiction and fables, may have imagined the possibility of transmitting thoughts almost instantly to distant points, it remained until the 'time of the end'

for these imaginations to be translated into reality. This is because the Creator has now permitted man to unlock the secrets of nature which make it all possible.

The importance of some method of conveying intelligence to distant points was early recognized. Many centuries before Christ, Aeneas Tacitus proposed and perfected a method of signaling by which words could be spelled. It is believed that in that ancient time the reflected rays of the sun were in some way flashed as signals by the use of shields. In the Middle Ages, flags, banners, and lanterns were used to distinguish particular squadrons, and as marks of rank. The invention of cannon made an important addition to the means of signaling. In the instructions issued by Don Martin de Padilla in 1597 the use of guns, lights, and fires is mentioned. And we remember that American Indians used smoke signals to communicate across distances.

But not until the application of electricity for conveying thought was man able to communicate with his fellows over distances greater than could be spanned by the eye or ear. The deafening roar of the cannon could be heard much farther than the human voice. Fire signals, smoke signals, and reflected sun rays could be seen at a greater distance than a mere hand, arm, or flag waving. Nevertheless the limit of distance in communication was still the range of natural vision and hearing.

It remained so until the 'time of the end', when the mighty invisible force we call electricity was put to work. And now it is utilized for news, business, for pleasure, and for war; and men and women can converse with one another at will, even though separated by distances of thousands of miles, while drama and song by the world's leading artists are brought right into the homes of the people.

The telephone soon followed the telegraph, although little progress was made in this field until 1875, when Bell succeeded in making his first telephone operate. Following the telephone came the wireless telegraph. The name Marconi is prominently associated with this particular advance in the application of electrical power. The first message sent by

wireless across the English Channel was in 1898, and in 1901 the first message was sent by wireless across the Atlantic Ocean.

It was a long step from the wireless telegraph to the wireless telephone and radio. Voice and music broadcasting took place sporadically from about 1916 on, but pre-announced programs on regular schedules are credited to the Westinghouse Electric and Manufacturing Company, operating Radio Station KDKA in East Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania. These began on November 2, 1920, with the broadcasting of the Harding-Cox presidential election returns. And now television has been added to radio.

It would be folly to say that this phenomenal increase of knowledge has come about because the people of our day are more intelligent than those of previous generations, for in reality they are not. The general public does not need to be more intelligent in order to use and enjoy our modern advantages. The number of people engaged as highly educated scientists to produce the marvels of our day is small when compared with the total population of average intelligence and education. Then too, many inventions have been merely stumbled upon, rather than thought out step-by-step in advance.

It is only as we view the fast moving events and developments of these 'last days' from the standpoint of Biblical prophecies that we are able to see their real meaning, which is that we are living in what the prophecies designate as the "time of the end." (Dan. 12:4) This, however, does not mean the end of time, as traditional theology would have us believe.

One of the great benefits of the prophetic increase of knowledge is that through better means of studying the Bible it is now possible to separate tradition from the real teachings of God's Word, and one of the teachings of the Dark Ages, which is now seen to be merely a tradition, is that the earth is one day to be totally destroyed, making an end of all human experience as well as of all life, plant and animal.

Now we have come to understand through the careful study of the Scriptures, that the 'time of the end' is the period in which Satan's rulership over the earth comes to an end, and in its place the kingdom of Christ is established. The marvelous increase of knowledge now being witnessed is contributing to this transition. The Bible does not indicate how much more progress there will be in methods of communication or along other scientific lines, but the promises of God do assure us that knowledge will continue to increase, and on a much higher level than at present.

While the art of printing has immeasurably helped sincere students of the Bible to a better understanding of the plans and purposes of God, its main advances have been along lines pertaining to the material well-being of man. But it will not end here, for the Bible assures us that through the agencies of Christ's kingdom, the knowledge of the LORD will be caused to fill the whole earth as the waters cover the sea.—Isa.11:9

In Isaiah 25:7 we are told that the LORD will "destroy . . . the face of the covering cast over all people, and the veil that is spread over all nations." These expressions, 'covering' and 'veil', denote blinding influences of tradition and superstition which have hindered the people of all nations from knowing and serving the true God. But as the increase of knowledge concerning the great Creator continues, these darkening influences will be removed, and then the people will say, "Lo, this is our God; . . . we have waited for him, we will be glad and rejoice in his salvation."—Isa.25:9

"An highway shall be there, and a way, and it shall be called The Way of Holiness; the unclean shall not pass over it; but it shall be for those: the wayfaring men, though fools, shall not err therein."—Isaiah 35:8 □



Our Heavenly Home

To little children home is that dear place where mother is,
Where every wound doth ever find the healing kiss of love,
And little sobbing hearts are soothed to rest upon her breast.
In later years that dear word home awakes the precious thought
Of loving wife and happy little ones, and peace and rest,—
A refuge sweet where outside cares and worries cannot come.

And when the sun of life is sinking in the west, we dream
Of home as that blest gathering place where often through the
year
Our children, and their children, come with wealth of grateful love,
That makes our hearts forget the pain and toil of former years.

But to the Christian, though the earthly loves be near and dear,
The thought of home belongs to that most heavenly place
where God
And Christ, and all the holy angels are, where sorrow finds
No place and every longing heart is fully satisfied;

Where we shall love and serve him perfectly, and meet again,
Nor ever part from fellow-pilgrims on "the narrow way."
Where we shall sit with Christ upon his throne, and bless with
peace
And joy the whole creation, groaning now in pain and tears!

And year by year the golden chain grows longer, that doth draw
Us closer to our heavenly home, as one by one, "the priests"
In silence pass beneath "the veil"—each one an added link.
Ah, then, to gain an entrance to that blest abode, shall we
Not count the present things but "loss and dross," and lightly touch
Each object that might hold our heart's affections to this earth,—
For where our treasure is, e'en there our hearts will also be!

—G.W.S.

INTERNATIONAL BIBLE STUDY LESSONS

LESSON FOR MAY 3

Called to be God's People

KEY VERSE: "Ye are a chosen generation, a royal priesthood, an holy nation, a peculiar people; that ye should shew forth the praises of Him who hath called you out of darkness into His marvelous light."

—I Peter 2:9

SELECTED SCRIPTURE: I Peter 2:1-10

THE OPPORTUNITY TO become God's chosen people, a royal priesthood, and a holy nation was offered first to the nation of Israel. (See Exodus 19:5,6.) However, Israel did not know that this call was associated with the coming of their Messiah. God intended that the nation of Israel be a picture of the true people of God, whom he eventually called to become a people for his name.—Acts 15:14

Nevertheless, exclusive favor was given to Israel (Amos 3:2) and they enjoyed this special privilege for many centuries. In A.D. 36 this relationship came to an end when the Apostle Peter was sent by God to the

home of Cornelius, a Gentile, to extend an invitation to the high calling to him and his family. He and all his household were immersed and received the Holy Spirit. (Acts 10:9-48) Seven years earlier Jesus had come to Israel to offer them the same wondrous calling, but the majority of the nation did not receive him.—John 1:11

The epistle of I Peter was written to those in Israel who had lived in Judea and believed in Jesus, but who had fled because of persecution and were scattered throughout northern lands. (I Pet. 1:1) Peter alludes to the coming of Messiah and his rejection by Israel in I Peter 2:6-8, using a cornerstone as

an illustration of our Lord, describing how this stone became a stumbling stone to Israel.—Isa. 28:16; Isa. 8:14

The nation of Israel had the opportunity of being developed as living stones in a spiritual house or temple for the living God. (I Pet. 2:5) The chief cornerstone of that structure was to be Jesus. (Ps. 118:22) But when Israel as a nation rejected Jesus, only those who believed that he was indeed the Messiah were built up into that spiritual house.

Peter speaks of those who accepted Jesus as their Lord and Master, as "the elect according to the foreknowledge of God the Father" (I Pet. 1:2), and as "newborn babes desiring the sincere milk of the Word." (I Pet. 2:2) This class also was described as having laid aside "all malice, and all guile, and hypocrisies, and envies, and all evil speaking" (vs. 1), because God had called them to be conformed to the image of his own beloved Son.—Rom. 8:28,29

At one time these who were called by God had not been in this favorable position, but were in darkness.

However, having been called out of darkness into God's wonderful light, they then declared the praises of God at every opportunity.

This great privilege has not been extended to everyone. Contrary to the belief of many sincere Christian people, the time spanning our Lord's First Advent to the present is not for the conversion of the world. Instead, the work of the Gospel Age is to call out God's chosen people. Jesus said that many are called but few are chosen. (Matt. 22:14) The many that are called are not as many as one might suppose. Vast numbers of the world's population have never heard the name of Jesus, the only name under heaven whereby men can be saved. (Acts 4:12) Many who have heard the name of Jesus do not understand why he came into the world.

The purpose of selecting the few who are chosen is so they might suffer with Christ. If these who are selected are faithful even unto death, they will become part of the royal priesthood which will bestow blessings upon all the world of mankind. □

Witnessing in Suffering

KEY VERSE: "It is better, if the will of God be so, that ye suffer for well doing, than for evil doing."

—1 Peter 3:17

SELECTED SCRIPTURE: 1 Peter 3:13-18; 1 Peter 4:1,2,7-11

THOSE WHO HAVE been called by God to follow in the footsteps of Jesus know that they must share in his sufferings. The Scriptures are very clear on this matter. (II Tim. 2:12; I Pet. 4:1,2) In appreciation for having been called out of darkness into his marvelous light, we are to show forth the praises of God. (I Pet. 2:9) In our lesson this witnessing is described as being ready with "a reason for the hope that is in you." (I Pet. 3:15) This defense of our position is to be done boldly, yet with "meekness and fear." However, as witnesses of an unseen Master, and a future kingdom, we are certain to be misunderstood.

Under the difficult circumstances of our witness, the conduct of the Christian

must never be that of "rendering evil for evil, or railing for railing." (I Pet. 3:9) But, rather, we must follow our Lord Jesus Christ's perfect example, and be content to "suffer for righteousness' sake." (vs. 14) Our conduct must be the best possible witness to the people of the world, so that those who revile our good behavior in Christ will be "put to shame," or have no real reason to disparage us.—vs. 16

This behavior which we should adopt is no more than what Jesus manifested when upon earth. As the Apostle Peter said, "Christ also hath once suffered for sins, the just for the unjust, that he might bring us to God, being put to death in the flesh, but quickened by the Spirit." (I Pet. 3:18) The

wording in the **King James Version** of this text may not be too clear. Christ's sufferings are not to be thought as those caused by sins that he had. On the contrary, it is as Paul expressed in I Corinthians 15:3, "Christ died for our sins." Hence, he who was righteous, just, suffered for the unrighteous, unjust.

We can never fully comprehend what this willingness on our Lord's part to suffer, even unto death on the cross, has made possible for us. In the simple terms of our text, it was to "bring us unto God." Before our reconciliation with God, we walked according to the prince of the power of the air, the Devil, and were children of wrath, even as others. (Eph. 2:2,3) But now, because of our Lord's death for our sins, we have become sons of God. "As Christ hath suffered for us in the flesh, arm yourselves likewise with the same mind." (I Pet. 4:1) If we do this, we will not live to gratify our flesh, but will be glad to suffer with Jesus.

Unfortunately, we cannot expect to do everything perfectly, as Jesus did; but we

must try to behave as perfectly as possible, since Jesus is our model. Our mistakes are sure to be called to our attention by worldly people. Hence, some of our suffering may, indeed, be due to our imperfections. But as Peter tells us in the Key Verse of this lesson, "it is better . . . that [we] suffer for well doing, than for evil doing." How do we accomplish this?

In Peter's advice to us he recommended that we pray to the Father for help. God wants us to have unflinching love for one another, as expressed in I Peter 3:8: "Finally, be ye all of one mind, having compassion one of another, love as brethren, be pitiful, be courteous." If we observe his advice, our imperfections or sins will be less noticeable, because our overall, daily attitude will be that of love and selflessness. When we do everything in life with the objective of glorifying God—whether it be hospitality, or service to God, or whatever it is—we will succeed in suffering less for evil doing, and more for righteousness' sake. □

Excellent Exhortations

KEY VERSE: *"Humble yourselves therefore under the mighty hand of God, that he may exalt you in due time. Casting all your care upon him; for he careth for you."*—I Peter 5:6,7

SELECTED SCRIPTURE: I Peter 5:1-11

THE ORGANIZATION OF congregations, (Greek "ekklesia," meaning 'a calling out' or 'a selection') involved selecting some who were "apt to teach" (I Tim. 3:2), in the congregation, to be overseers or elders. In today's lesson, very good advice is given by Peter to these elders. But his exhortation is applicable not alone to teachers, but to the entire congregation.

He told the elders that they must accept their responsibilities willingly. No one should be forced to serve in this capacity as elder. They must not agree to serve in the office for any personal gain—either financial or in prestige or power—which might accompany it, but eagerly feed the flock of God no matter what it involves in the way of expendi-

ture of time, money, ignominious labor, strength, or whatever the cost might be. Peter reminded the elders that they should not be domineering, or exalt themselves above the other members of the congregation. They were appointed to be examples to the flock and, as such, should reflect the humble character and dedicated pattern of life set forth by Jesus, the Chief Shepherd of the flock of God.—vs. 4

In order for harmony to exist in an ecclesia, all elders and members must be clothed with humility, and must be subject one to another. As Peter astutely recognized, "God resisteth the proud and giveth grace to the humble." (I Pet. 5:5) Although humility is a prime requisite to be sought in selecting elders, it is equally

of utmost importance that all Christians exhibit this grace.

We recognize the appropriateness of Peter's advice when sometimes we see the intrusion of Satan into ecclesia matters. He is a wily foe, disrupting the peace and prosperity of the gatherings. As Peter also reminds us, Satan is a "roaring lion" who seeks to disrupt and destroy true faith and trust in God.— I Pet. 5:8

When the principle of humility is not carefully observed in ecclesia affairs, it may leave an opening for Satan to enter in. Pride is one of Satan's favorite tools, and he uses it well. Peter's exhortation to develop humility was written with this in mind. We can resist the Devil steadfastly in the faith by remembering all the exhortations of God's Holy Word. We are not alone in these battles with the Adversary. No, the same problems and afflictions Satan brings to bear are shared by true Christians all over the world. Therefore we must apply in our lives and in ecclesia matters the exhortations of Peter in this epistle.

Another of his tools is over-anxiety, which also can be a disturbing influence in our lives and ecclesias. Once again, Peter gave us very sound advice, exhorting us in the words of our Key Verse, "to cast all our care [anxiety] upon him."

Peter was well aware of the importance of his advice. He had been over-anxious about the delay of our Lord's acquisition of his rightful authority as the Messiah and had been rebuked by the Lord for attempting to stand in the way of the completion of his sacrifice. (Matt. 16: 21-23) At the Memorial Supper Jesus said to Peter, "Simon, Simon, behold, Satan hath desired to have you, that he may sift you as wheat. But I have prayed for thee that thy faith fail not; and when thou art converted, strengthen thy brethren."—Luke 22:31,32

If we follow Peter's advice successfully, we shall indeed be rewarded with a crown of glory when the Chief Shepherd appears. And we shall be restored, established, and strengthened by him who called us unto his eternal glory.—I Pet. 5:10 □

Growing in Grace

KEY VERSE: "According as his divine power hath given unto us all things that pertain unto life and godliness, through the knowledge of him that hath called us to glory and virtue."—II Peter 1:3

SELECTED SCRIPTURE: II Peter 1:1-14

THE 'CALLING' OF God is comprehended through an attainment of a knowledge of God and of our Lord Jesus Christ. The second epistle written by the Apostle Peter opens with the salutation: "Grace and peace be multiplied unto you through the knowledge of God, and of Jesus our Lord." (vs. 2) It closes with the words, "Grow in grace and in the knowledge of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ." (II Pet. 3:18) We often use the expression, "Grow in grace and knowledge," because one of these character attributes complements the other.

Peter stated his purpose for writing to the brethren as being to 'stir them up' by remembering the importance of Christian growth. (II Pet. 1:12,13) In verses 5 to 7, he

outlined a pattern of growth which has been called, "The Christian Ladder."

To climb this 'ladder' we must give all diligence in adding to our faith virtue. "Without faith it is impossible to please God." (Heb. 11:6) Virtue means strength of mind and character. To fortitude we must add knowledge—not just any knowledge, but knowledge concerning God's plan and character. To knowledge we should add temperance or self-control. "He that is slow to anger is better than the mighty."—Prov. 16:32

To temperance we must add patience, or cheerful endurance. "Ye have need of patience," said Paul in Hebrews 10:36. To patience we should add godliness, or piety. To godliness we must add brotherly love. In the

Greek language the word is **philadelphia**, which means love of, or emotion for our brethren. To brotherly love we will add love. This word love is **agapao** in the Greek language. It means, 'love arising from the mind or reason'.

The climbing of the 'Christian Ladder' is essential if we are to become partakers of the divine nature. Such a grand reward is promised by God in his Word to the faithful! If we heed his Word we will attain the glory and virtue promised. (II Pet. 1:3) Thus we see that the knowledge of God, and his plan, and his character, are prerequisites for our success.

The Apostle Peter devoted a lifetime to reminding his brethren about these things. He was faithful, and not negligent, in doing so. There was a sense of urgency in his preaching. His words indicated that he was aware of the shortness of time he had left when he said, "Knowing that shortly I must put off this my tabernacle even as our Lord Jesus Christ hath showed me. Moreover I will endeavour that ye may be able after my

decease to have these things always in remembrance."—II Pet. 1:14,15

The brethren he was 'reminding' were already established in the present truth and understood what God required. But Peter knew that they had to have these things brought to their minds continually if they were to gain an abundant entrance into Christ's kingdom and partake of the divine nature! (vs. 4) He wished to shock his readers into the realization that failure to grow in grace and knowledge was wrong, by saying, "He that lacketh these things is blind, and cannot see afar off, and hath forgotten that he was purged from his old sins."—II Pet. 1:9

God forbid that this should happen to us! Peter exhorted us against these results, saying: "Wherefore, the rather, give diligence to make your calling and election sure; for if ye do these things [climb the 'Christian Ladder'] ye shall never fall," but you will be assured of an "abundant entrance into the everlasting kingdom of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ."—II Pet. 1:11 □

Living in the Light of the Future

KEY VERSE: "We, according to His promise, look for new heavens and a new earth, wherein dwelleth righteousness."—II Peter 3:13

SELECTED SCRIPTURE: II Peter 3:3-14

PETER'S SECOND EPISTLE to the brethren of his day is still of special encouragement to us today. As Peter wrote this epistle, he continued to stir up the pure minds of his readers by way of remembrance of all the prophetic writings of the prophets, other apostles, and our Lord Jesus, especially as they pertain to our day.—II Pet. 3:1,2

He spoke of "scoffers" who would emerge during the last days of this present evil world (II Pet. 3:3), and said that they will ridicule those with faith, saying, "Where is the promise of his [Christ's] coming [Greek, *parousia*, meaning 'presence']." (vs. 4) In answer to their question, Peter told of the end of the first world

during Noah's day, and how the presence of the Lord will bring a parallel experience with the advent of the Day of the LORD, and an end to the present world, or social order. In both instances the key factor is that there is complete unawareness by the world of events to come.

When the 'heavens', representing spiritual control of the world, and the 'earth', representing the social order of the world, "pass away in fervent heat" (vs. 10), "a new heavens and a new earth, wherein dwelleth righteousness" (vs. 13) will replace the old world. This 'new heavens' and 'new earth' is the kingdom of God, which so many have been praying should come, even as taught by Jesus: "Thy kingdom come. Thy

will be done in earth, as it is in heaven."—Matt. 6:10

Many sincere Christian people have the erroneous concept that in God's Judgment Day the Planet Earth will be burned up. They overlook the use of the words 'heaven' and 'earth' as symbols of the spiritual and social orders of the world. Peter made it plain that the 'world that was' ended with the great Deluge: "The **heavens** were of old and the **earth** standing out of the water," were the symbolic terms he used. He continued, saying: "The world [Greek, **kosmos**, 'social arrangement'] that then was, being overflowed with water, perished." (II Pet. 3:5,6) So also, the present world (**kosmos**) will be destroyed by symbolic fire. But, we are plainly told, "The earth abideth forever."—Eccles. 1:4

When we read, "The heavens and the earth which are now, by the same word are kept in store, reserved unto fire against the Day of Judgment and perdition of ungodly men," we are not to think that a literal fire will rage during that day. Else,

we would have to visualize a fire raging for one thousand years, since Peter said, "Beloved, be not ignorant of this one thing, that one day is with the LORD as a thousand years, and a thousand years as one day." (II Pet. 3:8) From this scripture we learn that the Day of Judgment is one thousand years long, and that it's purpose is to establish righteousness on earth.

The promise of a new heavens and new earth where righteousness holds sway is synonymous with the reign of Christ upon earth. (Rev. 20:6) Then the earth shall be filled with the glory of the LORD.—Ps. 72:19; Num. 14:21

The foreknowledge of the events prophesied by Peter should inspire us to lead holy and godly lives (II Pet. 3:11), and to subdue sinful tendencies, that we may be found without spot and blameless. (vs. 14) We should live as if we were already dwelling in the Millennial day, walking honestly. (Rom. 13:13) We can only achieve this goal by "putting on the Lord Jesus Christ."—vs. 14

Run with Patience

"Seeing we also are compassed about with so great a cloud of witnesses, let us lay aside every weight, and the sin which doth so easily beset us, and let us run with patience the race that is set before us."

—Hebrews 12:1

EARLIER CHAPTERS IN Hebrews give us an overview of the "great cloud of witnesses" whom Paul mentions in our theme text. And we have been told about "the sin which doth so easily beset us," as well as all mankind down through the ages, which is a lack of faith. Paul also told us how we must lay aside all earthly encumbrances or weights, that hold us back from completely doing God's will in our lives. With this background in mind, we will look at the method which we must use in order to run this Christian racecourse successfully—Paul says we must begin, and continue on, in our engagement, ***with patience***.

These words of Paul exhort us to look backward in time, as it were, at the trying experiences that the Ancient Worthies endured. He had just recounted in the eleventh chapter of Hebrews some of the tremendously difficult experiences in which they triumphed through exercising a sufficient degree of faith in God. (vs. 13) We are aware from the apostle's statement that there were many more faithful men and women whom he has not brought to our attention by name due to the lack of time and space to list them all. (vss. 32-38) The apostle recommends that we consider the severe trials these faithful Ancient Worthies endured, and he praises their stirring examples of faith and loyalty which made them so very pleasing to God.

Paul suggested that it would be profitable for us to consider this great cloud of witnesses, all of whom possessed a steadfast and unmovable faith, and to emulate their fine ex-

amples. He wrote this epistle for the very purpose of encouraging all of us toward faithfulness and patient endurance, who—during the entire Gospel Age—have been running together on this even greater racecourse than the path which the Ancient Worthies followed.

After bringing the faith and courage of the Ancient Worthies to our attention, Paul then spoke about Jesus, who he said was the “author and finisher of our faith.” (Heb. 12:2) Jesus is our leader, our guide—it is in his footsteps that we are endeavoring to walk. Paul related how Jesus himself trod this very same course that is set before us, and it is only because of him that we are privileged to run this race.

Jesus was divinely inspired as he looked forward to the finish line which lay far ahead of him, and to all that reaching the goal would mean. He knew that in order to reach that goal it would mean that he must lay down his earthly life. To contemplate this goal was a great ‘joy that was set before him’ by his Father. Reaching that finish mark would mean that once again he would be with his Heavenly Father, as he had been for endless eons of time before his human life began in Be^hlehem.

But one of the principal joys that Jesus had as his goal was the privilege of inheriting the promise made to father Abraham, of blessing all the families of the earth. (Gen. 22:18; Gal. 3:14) To Jesus, this was what it was all about! We, too, have been called now, in advance of the world of mankind to receive the merit of the sacrifice of our Lord Jesus, so that we ultimately might be instruments to bless all the families of the earth, if we run with patience and reach our goal.—Gal. 3:29

The Apostle Paul briefly described Jesus’ loyalty to God and all the suffering that he endured as a result of this loyalty. We might say that Paul summarized it all in the illustration of the ‘cross’ and its ‘shame’ which our Lord Jesus so patiently endured. After reminding us to set aside every hindrance to the running of a triumphant race, he exhorted us to run, just as Jesus ran—with patience and with constant endurance. Our goal, then, is to be made copies of God’s dear

Son, by following so very closely in his footsteps that we too will share his victory. Surely, if we are to be successful and hope to win this crown of victory we must, just like him, delight to do the Father's will.

The scripture says, "He was tested in all points like as we are." (Heb. 4:15) But, conversely, we could also say that we are tempted in all points that Jesus was tested. So, clearly, brethren, it is only those who are tested in all points as he was, and who prove their full loyalty and devotion—to the Heavenly Father, to the Truth, and to the brethren, also—who will be conformed to the image of God's dear Son. Thus we understand that all the trials and difficulties are to be borne in the right way and with the proper spirit in order that the development of a Christ-like character will take place in each one of us. That is the very purpose of having trials and testings.

Who could know better than the great Apostle Paul the method that the LORD is using to prepare true, loyal characters and to establish them in righteousness in order to be prepared to be administrators with our Lord Jesus, in his kingdom. He suffered and endured so much, and we must expect the same experiences in order to be useful to our Master. Such a character as God is looking for, Paul pointed out to us, can only be developed through becoming 'more than conquerors' in those trying experiences which divine wisdom decrees are necessary.—Rom. 8:37

When we consider the great wisdom and love of the one who directs our paths, who are we to question the wisdom which calls upon us to endure trials. We have been exhorted to look unto Jesus and to consider the marvelous example that he set for us, as he faithfully endured each severe experience along his pathway. We must continually keep our eye upon Jesus—who is standing at that finish line, at the goal—encouraging us lest we grow weary and faint in our minds.

There once was a fine Christian who expressed the danger that each of us might fall into lethargy, and that therefore we might not receive our full reward at the end of our lives. He expressed it in this way: "On the Plains of Hesitation lie

the bones of countless millions who, at the very dawn of victory, sit down to rest, and resting, die without reaching their goal." We do not want to grow weary and sit down to rest just short of reaching the mark. The apostle has reminded us that we are to run this race with patience all the way to the end! On the surface this sounds rather easy, does it not? But let us see what this matter of patience entails.

In the New Testament we find two Greek words which have been translated by the English word patience. The first word is *makrothumia* and that word actually corresponds to what we commonly think of today as patience. It simply means 'longsuffering', and it is usually translated 'longsuffering' or 'endurance'. It usually expresses patience with respect to people—that is, the ability to bear with people even when they are wrong, or when they are insulting towards us, perhaps.

On the other hand, the Greek word *hupomone* is a noun which is almost always translated 'patience'. The verb form of this word is usually translated 'endure', but in either instance it is used in respect to things or conditions. There is a natural overlapping of these two thoughts, because when we consider persons and how they can have an influence upon conditions or circumstances, we realize that there is a similarity of thought in the two words.

But as we examine particularly the second Greek word, *hupomone*, we see that there are some wonderful truths that emerge—truths which really should be an inspiration to us in our consideration of the theme text which we are considering. We will look at several definitions that have been given to us by some of the authorities on the Greek language. One says that the word describes "an element of character which manifests itself in an endurance of wrong or affliction, with contentment." That word 'contentment' is most important. Then he says, "but without rebellion of our will, and with full acquiescence in the divine wisdom and love. It tells of persistent endurance whether in action or suffering—it tells of the brave patience with which the Christian contends against the

various hindrances, persecutions and trials that befall him in his conflict."

Thayer's Lexicon defines the word endurance in this way, "Basically it means to 'remain under', the characteristic of a man who is unswerved from his deliberate purpose, in his loyalty to faith and piety, by even the greatest trials and sufferings." So with these definitions in mind, let us apply them to our text. We have a goal set before us by God, and we are to keep our eye upon it. Regardless of what happens to us we are not to swerve from our straight course toward that goal. Someone else defined patience in this way, "Not accepting God's will with dumb resignation but with joy; not only with the absence of murmur, but with the sword of praise."

How many of us can really lift up the sword of praise when we are undergoing trials and our afflictions? But if we **can** praise the LORD for those difficult experiences which try and test us, then, and only then, will we have the proper perspective in our Christian lives. Briefly summarized, we would say that **makrothumia** is patience exhibited under ill treatment by persons.

However, this is not the word that we wish to consider primarily, because the word 'patience' in our theme text is the other Greek word—**hupomone**—which means patience shown during trials, difficulties and hardships.

We want to keep in mind that our trials in general are not concerned with persons, but rather with circumstances, hardships, and difficult conditions that come into our lives. This word is commonly used in connection with tribulation. In the 5th chapter of the Book of Romans we notice the words of Paul, "We have access by faith into this grace wherein we stand, and rejoice in hope of the glory of God." There is contained in this verse a reference to **the faith—the Truth**—not simply **any** faith or **any** truth. We know it is possible to have faith in many things. But here the apostle spoke about faith in the Truth—the plan of God as outlined in his Word. And he said the reason that we can rejoice in the hope of the glory of God is because we have faith in his

Word. Then he continued, saying, "And not only so, but we glory in tribulations also: knowing that tribulation worketh patience; and patience, experience: and experience, hope: and hope maketh not ashamed; because the love of God is shed abroad in our hearts by the Holy Spirit which is given unto us."—Rom. 5:2-5

In this passage there are a number of words which most of our modern translations render differently than the *King James Version*. Reading from the *Diaglott*, Wilson translates the passage in this way, starting with the third verse, "Not only so, but we triumph also in afflictions, knowing that affliction works out endurance: and endurance, approval; and approval, hope; and this hope is not put to shame, because the love of God has been diffused in our hearts, through that Holy Spirit which has been given to us." What Paul said here was that our faith does not give us a false hope. It does not deceive us. Why? Because "the love of God is shed abroad in our hearts by the Holy Spirit which is given unto us."

Paul sought to convey the thought that he did not exult because he was enduring tribulation or distress or burdens themselves, but because of the beneficial effect they had upon his Christian walk as he learned to place his trust in the LORD. This is something we must learn, also. We must learn to look upon these trials and testings as assets, allowed to come to us to develop our Christian character. Paul said that the patient endurance which we develop, when we have been put to the test, brings our Heavenly Father's approval, and this, in turn, increases our hope.

Again, Paul said, "Now, no chastening for the present seemeth to be joyous, but grievous: nevertheless afterward it yieldeth the peaceable fruit of righteousness unto them which are [rightly] exercised thereby." (Heb. 12:11) Now we can see more clearly the thought of the Greek word, *hupomone*, which means 'to remain under'—not to try to escape the trial just because it is not pleasing to our flesh. Rather, we are to look for a lesson in the trial.

In Romans 12:12, Paul again impresses upon our minds strongly, that those of God's family are to be patient in tribulation. It reads this way: "Rejoicing in hope; patient [or, 'we triumph'] in tribulation; continuing instant in prayer." This is the same lesson: we are to be submissive to the tests, as we have mentioned, not seeking to escape them, but eager to learn the lessons which they were sent to teach.

In all of these difficult times, we need not have any fear that the trials will harm us as New Creatures, because we have been assured that God will not test us beyond the limit of our endurance. (I Cor. 10:13) Instead, all of life's experiences are under his direction and control. These are certainly amazing and encouraging thoughts to our hearts!

Indeed, Paul said further, that Christians establish themselves as ministers of God through much "patience and affliction." (II Cor. 2:4) Just preceding these words he had been telling the Corinthians that in the work of the ministry we must try not to put obstacles in anyone's way by exhibiting a lack of faith, but to show that we are God's servants by enduring our hardships and difficulties with great patience. These are not idle words that Paul spoke. Again, in II Timothy 2:7-12 (*J.B. Phillips Translation*), Paul showed how Christ is the "center of everything," and was "raised by God from the dead according to the Gospel. For preaching this I am having to endure being chained in prison as if I were some sort of criminal. But they cannot chain the Word of God, and I can endure all these things for the sake of those whom God is calling, so that they too may receive the salvation of Christ Jesus." Then Paul added, reassuringly, that "If we die with him we shall also live with him: if we suffer we shall also reign with him."

We read in II Thessalonians 1, how Paul commended the Thessalonians for their patience and faith despite persecution and tribulation. "We are bound to thank God always for you, brethren, as it is meet, because that your faith groweth exceedingly, and the love of every one of you all toward each other aboundeth; so that we ourselves glory in you in the churches of God for your patience and faith in all your per-

secutions and tribulations that ye endure: which is a manifest token of the righteous judgment of God, that ye may be counted worthy of the kingdom of God, for which ye also suffer.”—vss. 3-5

Paul commended the Thessalonians for their patience and endurance and strong faith during all the persecution and suffering they were experiencing. He told them that he was happy to inform other churches he met with, about the proper response they had made to their experiences, as an example and encouragement to others.

We find other scriptures where this word endurance is used in connection with faith. The Apostle James said that the testing of faith produces patience. He used the expression “divers temptations,” and we realize that in using this phrase, he was indicating that they had endured successfully a number of different kinds of trials, not just one particular sort of trial. In James 1:2-5 he said: “My brethren, count it all joy when ye fall into divers temptations; knowing this that the trying [or proving] of your faith worketh patience. But let patience have her perfect work, that ye may be perfect [mature] and entire, wanting nothing. If any of you lack wisdom, let him ask of God, that giveth to all men liberally, and upbraideth not, and it shall be given him.”

Here is an example of the idea of ‘divers temptations’, and the primary thought of this passage concerns trials and testings which are directed toward a particular purpose. Of course the end which God has in mind is that we make our calling and election sure, that we be conformed to the image of his dear Son, and thus, eventually will be able to perfectly glorify and honor our Heavenly Father and his Son.

These trials are not given to us to seduce us away from the faith—No! Of course not! They are permitted with the one thought and purpose of strengthening us, and purifying us, despite the fact that many of these trials bring us sorrow and disappointment as human beings. But as New Creatures our characters and our devotion are crystalized and made sure because of our positive reaction to difficult experiences. We must never grumble nor complain no matter how difficult

an order this is for us. We should not murmur or complain, but we should rejoice in our trials. We read about many of the martyrs who did not die grimly—some even died singing, praising God!

Paul wrote concerning athletes in training. The greater and more severe an athlete's depth of training in his chosen field, the better fitted he will be to complete his effort victoriously. Likewise, your training and mine, if it is rightly borne by us, will give us the strength to bear further trials if and when they come. Each victory prepares us for new victories, and eventually the winning of not only each battle, but the war!

In James 1:2, the *Phillips Translation*, we read, "When all kinds of trials and temptations crowd into your lives, my brothers, don't resent them as intruders, but welcome them as friends! Realize that they come to test your faith and to produce in you the quality of endurance. But let the process go on until that endurance is fully developed, and you will find you have become men of mature character (men of integrity, lacking nothing.)"

Often we find, as in this case, that patience is connected with a goal, a glory, or a greatness. In Luke 21:19 our Lord said, "In your patience possess ye your souls." Just what did he mean by this? We think a better translation of this would be: "By your patient endurance gain your lives." This is a similar thought to the one Jesus gave us in Matthew 24:13, when he stated, "He that shall endure unto the end, the same shall be saved."

We know that we must endure 'unto the end'. John the Revelator said that we must be faithful *even unto death*. (Rev. 2:10) Our faith and our trust in the LORD and in his gracious promises should be so strong that they will more than counterbalance the opposition of the world, the flesh and our Adversary, the Devil—not only at the beginning of our Christian walk, but right up until our very last breath.

Let us take a look at the parable of the sower as recorded in Luke 8:5-8, to see what it has to teach us in connection with this lesson. "A sower went out to sow his seed: and as

he sowed, some fell by the wayside; and it was trodden down, and the fowls of the air devoured it. And some fell upon a rock; and as soon as it was sprung up, it withered away, because it lacked moisture. And some fell among thorns; and the thorns sprang up with it, and choked it. And other fell on good ground, and sprang up, and bare fruit an hundredfold. And when he had said these things, he cried, He that hath ears to hear, let him hear."

Jesus gave us the interpretation of this parable, starting with verse eleven, saying. "The seed is the Word of God. Those by the wayside are they that hear; then cometh the Devil, and taketh away the Word out of their hearts, lest they should believe and be saved." Then those that fell "on the rock are they which, when they hear, receive the Word with joy; and these have no root, which for a while believe, and ***in time of temptation fall away.*** And that which fell among thorns are they, which, when they have heard, go forth, and are choked with cares and riches and pleasures of this life and bring no fruit to perfection. But that on the good ground are they, which in an honest and good heart, having heard the Word, keep it, and bring forth fruit." How do they bring forth fruit? 'With patience'. They have developed patient endurance.

Here is the lesson Jesus wished to teach from the parable of the sower. We must cultivate patient endurance if we are to be pleasing and acceptable to our Heavenly Father. The parable teaches that we must do much more than just receive the Word, even though we do receive it with joy. This parable mentions some who receive this seed with joy and give evidence of growth, with vigor, but when the sun of opposition and persecution came out, they withered in the heat.

Jesus explained that this class of hearers did rejoice greatly in the truth but they had no endurance; they became discouraged because life was difficult. Discouragement is a negative feeling which we must battle against. Those who become discouraged and wither away are not pleasing to God. The parable shows us definitely that the final test of victory depends upon patient endurance under affliction.

(Continued on Page 37)

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| Duncan | CKAY 1500 | 7:30 p.m. |
| Grand Forks | CKGF 1340 | 9:00 a.m. |
| Nanaimo | CHUB 1570 | 9:30 p.m. |
| Qualicum-Parksville | CHPQ 1370 | 9:30 p.m. |

MANITOBA

| | | |
|----------|----------|-----------|
| Winnipeg | CKJS 810 | 9:00 a.m. |
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ONTARIO

| | | |
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| Leamington | CHYR 710 | 5:00 p.m. |
| St. Thomas | CHLO 1570 | 10:45 a.m. |

QUEBEC

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| Montreal | CFMB 1410 | 5:15 p.m. |
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SASKATCHEWAN

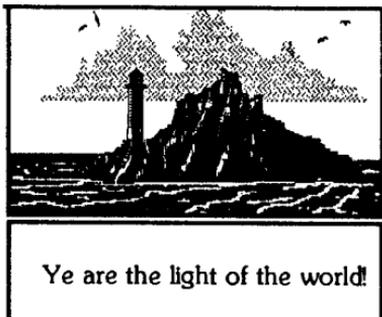
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| Rosetown | CJYM 1330 | 9:45 a.m. |
| Wayburn | CFSL 1190 | 8:45 a.m. |
| Estevan | CJSL 1280 | 8:45 a.m. |

Argentina (Spanish)

| | | |
|--------------------|----------------------|------------|
| Buenos Aires (Sat) | FM Malvinas 91.5 MHZ | |
| | | 10:00 a.m. |
| | | 10:00 p.m. |

Brazil (Portuguese)

| | | |
|----------|------------------------|-----------|
| Curitiba | Radio Capital 1270 KHZ | 8:45 a.m. |
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Ye are the light of the world!

British West Indies

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| Grand Cayman | Radio Cayman | 9:00 a.m. |
| Trinidad | Radio Trinidad 610 | 10:30 p.m. |

Chile (Spanish)

| | | |
|----------------|---------------------------|------------|
| Concepcion | Unica FM 105.5 | 10:15 a.m. |
| Santiago (Sat) | Radio Panamericana CB 142 | 10:00 a.m. |

China

| | | |
|-----------------|--------------------|-----------|
| Hong Kong Radio | Villa Verde (Fri.) | 6:00 p.m. |
|-----------------|--------------------|-----------|

Israel & Middle East

| | | |
|----------------------|--------|------------|
| Voice of Hope (Wed.) | 945 AM | 10:30 p.m. |
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Kenya & Uganda

| | | |
|-------------------|--|-----------|
| Radio East Africa | | 4:00 p.m. |
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Mexico (Spanish)

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| Culiacán Ranchera | XECQ | 8:30 a.m. |
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New Zealand

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| Whakatane | IXX | 7:00 a.m. |
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Nigeria

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| Radio Africa (Thurs.) | | 7:45 p.m. |
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Panama (Spanish)

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| Panama City (Fri.) | HOQ 1250 | 6:15 p.m. |
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Philippines

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|---------------|---------------|-----------|
| Manila (Sat.) | DZAM 1026 KHZ | 7:15 p.m. |
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South Africa

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| Joubert Park (Thurs.) | SWAZI Music | |
| | Radio 1400 & shortwave 49 & 60 | 9:00 p.m. |

Sri Lanka

| | | |
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| Columbo (Sat.) | Radio Sri Lanka | 7:15 p.m. |
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Tonga

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| Nuku' Alofa (Mon.) | | 10:15 a.m. |
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Uruguay (Spanish)

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| Montevideo | Radio El Espectador 810 | 9:15 a.m. |
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THE BIBLE ANSWERS—TV Programs

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|--------------------|----------------|-----------------------|----------------|----------------------|----------------|
| ALABAMA | Channel | MAINE | Channel | OKLAHOMA | Channel |
| Montgomery | 56 | Portland | 57 | Broken Bow | 28 |
| CALIFORNIA | | MARYLAND | | Muskogee | 19 |
| Arroyo Grande | 66 | Leonardtown | 52 | Oklahoma City | 7 |
| Lancaster | 38 | MICHIGAN | | Tulsa | 33 |
| CONNECTICUT | | Detroit | 16 & 26 | PENNSYLVANIA | |
| Litchfield | 5 | Muskogon | 40 | Berwick | 47 |
| FLORIDA | | MINNESOTA | | Harrisburg | 40 |
| Daytona | 42 | Minneapolis | 13 | Hazleton | 35 |
| Fl. Myers | 7 | MISSISSIPPI | | Johnstown | 9 |
| Jupiter | 9 | Bolivar | 8 | Pittsburgh | 63 |
| Naples | 9 | Philadelphia | 20 | SOUTH DAKOTA | |
| Orlando | 21 | Starkville | 5 | Mitchell | 16 |
| St. Augustine | 22 | Tallahatchie | 11 | TENNESSEE | |
| St. Petersburg | 35 | MISSOURI | | Harrogate | 18 |
| Tallahassee | 9 | Cameron | 35 | Heiskell | 12 |
| Tampa | 57 | Columbia | 2 | Murfreesboro | 27 |
| GEORGIA | | St. Louis | 7 | TEXAS | |
| Athens | 34 | NEBRASKA | | Austin | 13 |
| Cordele | 55 | Lincoln | 67 | Corpus Christi | 50 & 7 |
| Dublin | 36 | NEVADA | | Mt. Pleasant | 54 |
| Savannah | 55 | Las Vegas | 39 | San Antonio | 67 |
| ILLINOIS | | NEW JERSEY | | Sulphur Springs | 18 |
| DeKalb | 7 | Hammonton | 8 | UTAH | |
| Plano | 30 | NEW YORK | | St. George | 55 |
| Rockford | 45 | Glens Falls | 8 | VIRGINIA | |
| Urbana | 1 | Jamestown | 8 | Gloucester | 51 |
| INDIANA | | Oneonta | 15 | Norfolk | 68 |
| Evansville | 52 | Rochester | 40 | WASHINGTON | |
| Indianapolis | 11 | Syracuse | 14 | Wenatchee | 27 |
| IOWA | | NORTH CAROLINA | | Yakima | 60 |
| * Cedar Rapids | 13 | Burlington | 16 | WEST VIRGINIA | |
| Marshalltown | 39 | Charlotte | 15 | Huntington | 55 |
| KANSAS | | Henderson | 34 | * Logan (Mon) | 12 |
| Junction City | 6 | Lenoir | 53 | WISCONSIN | |
| Waterville | 26 | Raleigh | 63 | Wakeshau | 43 |
| KENTUCKY | | Wilmington | 10 | PUERTO RICO | |
| Morehead | 10 & 7 | OHIO | | Mayaguez | 42 |
| Mt. Sterling | 6 and 2 | Akron | 29 | | |
| LOUISIANA | | Ashland | 59 | | |
| Jennings | 13 | Cincinnati | 25 | | |
| New Orleans | 61 | Delaware | 56 | | |
| | | Youngstown | 20 | | |

"The Bible Answers" television programs are aired each Sunday afternoon from 12:00 to 12:30 p.m., Eastern Standard Time, on the stations listed above. The times, days, and channels of those listings marked with an asterisk (*) can be found in your local newspaper.

In Romans 15:4 Paul wrote, " whatsoever things were written aforetime were written for our learning, that we through patience and comfort of the Scriptures might have [possess] hope." We have been offered a great hope. It is the goal that we have been running toward since we first began to follow in Jesus' footsteps.

The Apostle Paul pointed out to us that we are able to reach our goal, not in our own strength, but only through the help of the light of the Holy Spirit shining upon God's Word. And God's Word includes all the precious promises of the Scriptures, including the examples of the Ancient Worthies, and the example of Jesus, and of Paul, and of all the LORD's faithful who have gone before us. It includes even those who are among us today who have been examples to help us in our walk in the narrow way during our lifetime; all these help us to maintain a brave and a cheerful spirit among all the sufferings and reproaches of life.

James, like Paul, also points to those faithful Ancient Worthies as patterns for us to closely follow. In James 5:10,11, he told us to remember "the prophets who have spoken in the name of the LORD, for an example of suffering affliction, and of patience. Behold, we count them happy which endure." He reminds us of Job in particular: "Ye have heard of the patience of Job," and how the LORD blessed him richly in the end. He was faithful, even though enduring much suffering. The LORD, who is full of mercy and compassion, blessed him by giving him much more than he possessed before his losses, as a reward for his enduring faith.

I Peter 2:19-23 we learn that the Apostle Peter also understood the importance of patient endurance. His words recorded there, say: "This is thankworthy, if a man for conscience toward God endure grief, suffering wrongfully. For what glory is it, if when ye be buffeted for your faults, ye shall take it patiently: but if when ye do well and suffer for it ye take it patiently, this is acceptable with God. **For even hereunto were ye called: because Christ also suffered for us, leaving us an example that ye should follow his steps:** who did no sin, neither was guile found in his mouth: who,

when he was reviled, reviled not again: when he suffered, he threatened not; but committed himself [*Margin, "his cause"*] to him that judgeth righteously."

This passage of Scripture can also teach us some very practical lessons. Jesus committed his cause to the Heavenly Father, and since he was the perfect example, and we are striving to walk in his footsteps, we should do the same in our trials and testings. Peter understood this. He saw what an all-important part that patient endurance played in pleasing the Heavenly Father, and in developing the fruits of the Spirit in his people.

"Brethren, I count not myself to have apprehended but this one thing I do, forgetting those things which are behind, and reaching forth unto those things which are before, I press toward the mark for the prize of the high calling of God in Christ Jesus." (Phil. 3:13) The *Weymouth Translation* renders this last verse, "I stretch forward" to reach the mark. We have all seen races where runners, as they near the finish line, stretch forward, putting forth every last ounce of energy and every last effort they possess to reach the goal. So Paul, as a mature Christian, explained that we are to walk in his, Paul's, footsteps as Paul walked in Jesus' footsteps—forgetting all past accomplishments, as well as all past failures, and just pressing on toward the mark in faith.

1991 GENERAL CONVENTION AUDIO TAPES

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The Parable of the Penny

IN THE PARABLE of the Penny we are told of a householder who "went out early in the morning to hire laborers into his vineyard." (Matt. 20:1) He agreed with these to pay them a penny for the day's work. At the third hour of the day he saw others standing idle, and he said to them, "Go ye also into the vineyard; and whatsoever is right I will give you."—vss. 3,4

At the sixth and ninth hours the householder hired additional workers. At the eleventh hour he found still others who were idle, and said to them, "Go ye also into the vineyard." Here the *King James Version* adds, "And whatsoever is right, that shall ye receive" (vss. 6,7) as in the case of those hired at the third hour, but this is omitted in the *Revised Version* with respect to the eleventh-hour workers. At the close of the day all these workers received the same pay, which was the penny agreed upon by the householder when he hired the first workers in the morning.

These "first" ones to be hired are said to complain because they do not receive more than those who worked fewer hours. The householder's reply to this complaint is in the form of a simple question: "Is it not lawful for me to do what I will with mine own? Is thine eye evil, because I am good?" (vs. 15) An important prerogative of our Heavenly Father is thus set forth, upon which the Apostle Paul enlarged. We quote:

"It is not of him that willeth, nor of him that runneth, but of God that showeth mercy. . . . Therefore hath he mercy on whom he will have mercy, and whom he will he hardeneth. Thou wilt say then unto me, Why doth he yet find fault? For who hath resisted his will? Nay but, O man, who

art thou that repliest against God? Shall the thing formed say to him that formed it, Why hast thou made me thus? Hath not the potter power over the clay, of the same lump to make one vessel unto honor, and another unto dishonor?"—Rom. 9:16-21

It would seem that one of the important lessons of the parable is that none of God's servants has the right to criticize him for the manner in which he bestows his benefactions. Certainly any 'wages' he may pay are actually unearned, hence, are manifestations of divine grace. Paul wrote, "By grace are ye saved through faith; and that not of yourselves: it is the gift of God."—Eph. 2:8

The Setting

The setting of the penny parable throws much light on its purpose and meaning. A young man had approached Jesus and asked him what he could do to inherit eternal life. Jesus' ultimate answer to this man was, "Go and sell that thou hast, and give to the poor, and thou shalt have treasure in heaven: and come and follow me."—Matt. 19:16-21; Luke 18:18-22

The record is that "when the young man heard that saying, he went away sorrowful: for he had great possessions." (Matt. 19:22) Then the disciples asked, "Who then can be saved?" Jesus replied, "With men this is impossible; but with God all things are possible." (vss. 25,26) Then Peter, evidently having in mind the invitation to the young man to give up all his possessions and follow Jesus, said, "Behold, we have forsaken all, and followed thee; what shall we have therefore?" (vs. 27) Jesus' reply to this question reads:

"Verily I say unto you, That ye which have followed me, in the regeneration when the Son of Man shall sit in the throne of his glory, ye also shall sit upon twelve thrones, judging the twelve tribes of Israel. And every one that hath forsaken houses, or brethren, or sisters, or father, or mother, or wife, or children, or lands, for my name's sake, shall receive an hundredfold, and shall inherit everlasting life.

But many that are first shall be last; and the last shall be first."—Matt. 19:28-30

Jesus' reply to Peter's question is his introduction to the penny parable. This fact is obscured somewhat by the improper chapter division. However, the translators have overcome this to some extent by placing a paragraph sign at the beginning of verse 27, in chapter 19, and indicating the continuance of the same subject through verse 16 in chapter 20.

This continuance of the lesson is indicated by Jesus' opening words to the parable, "For the kingdom of heaven is likened unto," etc. At the close of the parable the expression is repeated, "So [or "thus," *Rotherham*] the last shall be first, and the first last." In other words, Jesus is here simply noting that the parable is the explanation of how the first is last and the last first, as stated in verse 30 of the preceding chapter.

Prior to Pentecost, before the apostles received the Holy Spirit and were able to discern the true meaning of the promises pertaining to their heavenly inheritance, they displayed some anxiety over what their reward for following the Master would really turn out to be. In a vague sort of way they believed that they would share in the honors of his kingdom, but with this they were not entirely satisfied. Some wanted to be greatest in the kingdom. James and John wanted to sit, one on the right-hand and the other on the left-hand of Jesus in the kingdom.

Now circumstances had again reminded them of what they might expect to receive, hence the question, "What shall we have therefore?" Jesus had explained to the young rich man, that if he would give up all that he had and become his follower, he would have treasures in heaven. It is doubtful if the apostles at that time understood what this meant. They did not then expect a heavenly reward. They expected to be co-rulers with Jesus in an earthly kingdom, but now he had mentioned treasures in heaven. What did he mean?

This question was of vital concern to them because they had done exactly what Jesus suggested to the rich young ruler; they had given up all they had, and had become his

followers. If this rich man could buy treasures in heaven with his riches, to what would they be entitled for the giving up of their all, which was doubtless much less?

Besides, at this point, the apostles had been following Jesus for some time, from nearly the beginning of his ministry. Would any consideration be given to this? There is no evidence that they were complaining, but they surely were concerned, indeed, overly concerned as to what they would receive in return for giving up all that they had. This, of course, is understandable, because they were still natural men.

The Bountiful Reward

Jesus reassured his disciples in a marvelous manner that they would receive a far greater reward than anything to which they were entitled. In the time of "regeneration," the Millennial Age of restitution, when he sits on the throne of his glory they also were to be enthroned, and to share with him in the work of judging Israel and the whole world of mankind. In addition to this they were to inherit eternal life, immortality actually, as was later revealed to them.

There is no real comparison between this "prize of the high calling" and the few earthly possessions that Jesus' followers gave up to be his disciples. Nor is there any real comparison between the eternal years of joy with the Lord on the other side of the veil, and the few short years of imperfect service we render here below. The disciples, however, had not yet grasped this larger viewpoint of their relationship to the Master.

When the apostles were arguing over which one of them would be greatest in the kingdom, Jesus gave them a lesson in humility by calling attention to the humbleness of a child and stating that they should be as little children. (Matt. 18:3; Mark 9:35,36) So now, seeing that they were too concerned over how much they would receive in return for following him, he related the parable of the penny to help them see that all his faithful followers would receive a just and bountiful reward, greater than anything of which they are worthy.

But even more important then and throughout the age, is the need to have full confidence in Jesus and in his Heavenly Father, and to recognize that they have the right to reward their servants in any way they desire, and that whatever rewards they mete out are unmerited. This has been an important lesson for all of the LORD's people. It is by grace that we attain unto the "great salvation," and not by any meritorious works of our own.—Heb. 2:3

That the amount of work done by the followers of the Master has no bearing, as such, on the reward received, is emphasized in the parable by the statement that the first become last and the last first. This is simply an exchange of positions. The first workers hired put in more hours, but then, the last ones to be hired are placed in their position and become "first," while the original first ones become the "last." However, all receive the penny, emphasizing that the number of hours worked did not enter into the amount of wages paid.

Jesus taught that wonderful works would not earn his favor. He stated, "Many will say to me in that day, Lord, Lord, have we not prophesied in thy name? And in thy name have cast out devils? And in thy name have done wonderful works?" Jesus explained that he would say to these, "I never knew you."—Matt. 7:22,23

This does not mean that the LORD's people are not expected to sacrifice and serve. Those in the parable were hired to work. However, it is the matter of faithfulness in service that is important. This is indicated by the statement, "Many be called, but few chosen." (Matt. 20:16) Those who ultimately will be enthroned with Jesus are described in Revelation 17:14 as those who not only are called but are "chosen, and faithful," as well. Faithfulness, however, is not determined by the length of time served, neither by the amount of sacrifice, but by whether or not the service is rendered in a way pleasing to the LORD.

The motive for serving the LORD is one of the vital considerations from his standpoint. Paul wrote that even though he gave all that he had to feed the poor, as Jesus had sug-

gested to the rich young ruler, and did not have love, it would profit him nothing. One might even give his body to be burned, but it would be to no profit so far as treasures in heaven are concerned if it were done from any other motive than love.—I Cor. 13:3

There is only one sense in which the amount we give of goods or time enters into acceptable service to the LORD, and that is, it must be our all. This 'all' of the disciples of Christ in every part of the age includes time, strength, and goods. In the parable these are all illustrated by the element of time. Those who were hired early in the morning had to spend the entire day working in the vineyard in order to obtain the penny. Those hired at the eleventh hour had to be faithful during the one hour remaining of the day for this was their all.

In Jesus' day, the 'all' of the apostles who had been fishermen would be different from the 'all' of Matthew, the tax collector. But regardless of how little or how much our all may be, if we give it freely and with love, we will receive the penny. And what a wonderful arrangement this is! It is encouraging to the widow with her two mites (Mark 12: 41-44), and reminds those who have much of their great responsibility in connection with the work of the vineyard. The test of worthiness in all cases is the spirit with which the sacrifice is laid upon the altar and kept there until it is consumed.

A Parable

What beautiful truths concerning the Christian life are illustrated by the 'penny parable' when viewed in the light of the Master's own introduction to it! In any parable the thing said is never the thing meant. None of the details of the 'penny parable' have ever had a literal fulfillment, and never will. For example, mention is made of five periods of the day in which servants are hired to work in a vineyard. There is nothing in the Bible, neither in the history of the Gospel Age, to indicate that at five different times throughout the centuries anything even remotely resembling this has ever happened.

The parable illustrates the basis upon which the called ones may prove worthy of living and reigning with Christ—that they must give their all, regardless of how little or how much that may be. In relating the parable, Jesus anticipated that there might well be some who, when learning of this arrangement, would not be satisfied with it, so he took these into account and showed how wrong such an attitude would be—that, in effect, it would be calling in question the justice and wisdom of God.

The parable was not given to reveal what will happen when the saints pass beyond the veil, but to teach the importance of a proper appreciation of God's abounding grace, and respect for his decisions, while we are still this side of the veil. And how impressively the parable teaches these vital lessons!

The Bible clearly reveals, through this parable and otherwise, that the disciple who follows the Master for fifty or more years will receive no greater reward in the kingdom than one who has been faithful for a very short period of time. The brethren in the Early Church knew this, and we know it today. This is not a truth which will be discovered by some only after they pass beyond the veil.

However, upon the basis of faith in the promises, we have already received our reward. In prayer, Jesus said of his disciples, "The glory which thou gavest me, I have given them." (John 17:22) At that time Jesus had received this glory only by promise and he had given it to his disciples only by promise. But the promises of our Heavenly Father, and of our Lord Jesus, are sure, and it remains only for us to be faithful to the conditions attached to them for the glories promised actually to become ours.

And Jesus did, by promise, give his disciples the glory which his Father had given to him. When Peter asked what they would receive in return for the 'all' which they had given up to follow him, he said, "When the Son of Man shall sit in the throne of his glory, ye also shall sit upon twelve thrones." Over and over again the Lord, through his Word, gives this

reward to us by promise. Jesus said "To him that overcometh will I grant to sit with me in my throne."—Rev. 3:21

But this is a gift of God's grace. No one can work long enough to earn it; nor has anyone sufficient 'goods' to purchase it. This priceless 'penny' is given to those who demonstrate their faithfulness by giving their all, regardless of how much that might be. And in the parable Jesus emphasizes how wrong it would be for any of us, when we understand it, to question God's goodness and justice in making this gracious arrangement. □

OBITUARIES

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

Sister Sylvia Manzuk Kabaker, Chicago, IL—January 29. Age, 68.

Sister Suzanna Piljan, Cleveland, OH—February 11. Age, 98.

Sister Irma Hammie, New York, NY—March 18. Age, 55.

"Rejoicing in hope, patient in tribulation."

—Romans 12:12

HERE IS AN important part of the great battle of the Christian's life. He must fight the natural tendencies of the old nature and confidently anticipate the victory in the strength of the great Captain of his Salvation. He must not succumb to the flattering and deceptive influences of prosperity, nor faint under the burdens of adversity. He must not allow the trials of life to sour or harden his disposition, to make him morose, or surly, or bitter, or unkind. Nor may he allow pride or ostentation or self-righteousness to grow and feed upon the temporal good things which the LORD's providence has granted him to test his faithfulness as a steward.—Z. '95-20

Elijah the Prophet

ELIJAH DID NOT plan to simply surrender to the wicked king. When he met with King Ahab he suggested a test to demonstrate to all the people of Israel that Jehovah was indeed the true and only God. Elijah told Ahab to gather the four hundred and fifty prophets of Baal and the four hundred prophets of the groves, on top of Mount Carmel, and to have them prepare a sacrifice on their altar to their God, Baal. Elijah said that two bullocks should be brought by the people, and the prophets of Baal should choose one of them and he would take the other one. Baal's prophets were to offer their bullock first, and then Elijah would offer his sacrifice.

They agreed, and at the appointed time everything was in readiness. Elijah turned to the prophets of Baal and said, "Call ye on the name of your gods, and I will call on the name of the LORD: and the god that answereth by fire, let him be God." And all the people said, "It is well spoken." So the test began. Baal's prophets set their bullock on the altar, and called upon Baal to burn up the sacrifice by miraculously providing the fire. Nothing happened. They cried to Baal from morning until noon, and still there was no answer. They leaped up and down at the altar, but still Baal did not respond!

Now Elijah began to mock the frenzied prophets, saying, "Cry aloud: for he is a god; either he is talking, or he is pursuing; or he is in a journey, or peradventure he sleepeth, and must be awakened." The prophets of Baal seemed to think that this was good advice, so they cried louder, and cut themselves with knives and swords, until their blood gushed out upon them.—I Kings 18:27,28

But neither their loud pleadings to Baal, nor their gashing of themselves made any difference at all. Baal did not answer even though they continued their chanting and their entreaties until nightfall! Then came Elijah's opportunity. He repaired the altar of the LORD that had been broken down, no doubt by Jezebel's orders. He used twelve stones—one stone representing each of the tribes of Israel. His bullock was cut into pieces and placed upon the altar. Next, Elijah ordered four barrels of water to be poured upon the sacrifice and upon the altar. This was repeated twice more, making a total of twelve barrels of water used! The altar and the sacrifice were completely soaked; the water even filled the ditch around the altar. Elijah made certain no one could say he was using some form of trickery.

Then Elijah the prophet stepped close to the altar, and said, "LORD God of Abraham, Isaac, and of Israel, let it be known this day that thou art God in Israel, and that I am thy servant, and that I have done all these things at thy word. Hear me, O LORD, hear me, that this people may know that thou art the LORD God, and that thou hast turned their heart back again!" Then the fire of the LORD fell from heaven! It consumed the burnt sacrifice, and the wood, and the stones, and the dust, and licked up the water that was in the trench! And when all the people saw it, they fell on their faces and they said, "The LORD, he is the God; the LORD, he is the God." What a great victory for Jehovah! How shamefully Baal had been proven to be a false god. Elijah gave the order for all the prophets of Baal to be slain.

The same day the drought was broken! In fact, Ahab, with Elijah running in front of him, had to flee down the mountainside as torrents of rain came pouring out of the heavens!

When King Ahab reported these events to Queen Jezebel, and told her that all the prophets of Baal had been slain, she was furious! She was not at all ready to accept the situation, and to worship Jehovah. Immediately, she planned her revenge on Elijah, and sent a messenger to tell him, "So let the gods do to me, and more also, if I make not thy life as

the life of one of them [the slain prophets of Baal] by tomorrow about this time.”—I Kings 19:2

Once again Elijah was forced to flee for his life. Although he had been bold in facing Ahab, and in challenging the prophets of Baal, when Jezebel threatened him he took flight as quickly as he could! He certainly was an unpredictable man! Journeying two days into the wilderness, he finally sat down underneath a juniper tree. He prayed earnestly to God that he might die, saying, “It is enough; now, O LORD, take away my life; for I am not better than my fathers.” Elijah must have been ashamed and discouraged at his lack of faith in Jehovah and his fear of the evil queen, Jezebel. He was so remorseful and dejected he just wanted to die. Such a sudden change in circumstances after the glorious victory for Jehovah on Mount Carmel made the prophet wonder what the LORD’s will could possibly be for him.

Utterly exhausted, Elijah fell asleep under the juniper tree. While he was still sleeping, an angel of the LORD came. He awakened him and said, “Arise and eat.” Elijah looked, and behold, there was a cake baking on some coals, and a pitcher of water at his head. He sat up and ate the cake, and drank the water. He was still very tired, so he lay down and slept some more. (I Kings 19:5,6) This happened a second time. After he ate and drank again, the angel told him that he needed his strength for a long journey to Mount Horeb. Now he knew where the LORD wanted him to go! Quick to obey, he began the forty-day trek to Horeb, the mount of God, refreshed by the rest and strengthened by the food.

When he arrived at Mount Horeb, those forty days later, Elijah found shelter in a cave. There the LORD spoke to him and asked, “What doest thou here, Elijah?” “I have been very [zealous] for the LORD God of hosts,” he replied, “for the children of Israel have forsaken thy covenant, thrown down thine altars, and slain thy prophets with the sword. And I, even I only, am left; and they seek my life to take it away.” (I Kings 19:9,10) Poor Elijah! He thought he was the only loyal follower of Jehovah left in Israel!

To encourage his faithful servant, God caused a very remarkable thing to happen! The LORD told Elijah to leave his safe cave, and climb out onto the mountain. Then, behold, the LORD passed by, and a great and strong wind split the mountains open, and broke the rocks in pieces. But the LORD was not in the wind. And after the wind, there was an earthquake—but the LORD was not in the earthquake. And after the earthquake there came a fire—but the LORD was not in the fire. And after the fire came a still small voice. This still, small voice was the LORD speaking to Elijah!—I Kings 19:11,12

Elijah was impressed! He covered his face with his mantle, and slowly proceeded toward the entrance to the cave. He stood there, wondering what was going to happen next, when he heard a voice asking him, again, “What doest thou here, Elijah?” And again, Elijah answered, just as he had before. He was convinced that he alone was left in all Israel as a true and loyal servant of Jehovah.—I Kings 19:14

But Elijah was mistaken in supposing that he was the only one still loyal to Jehovah. The LORD informed him that there were seven thousand in Israel who had not bowed their knees to Baal. (vs. 18) Elijah had asked God to let him die. Instead of granting this request, God now gave him a further assignment of service. Since God intended the kingdoms of Israel and Judah to have new kings, Elijah was given the privilege of anointing them. As always, Elijah was quick and eager to do God’s will when it was clear to him what it was. Encouraged and hopeful for Israel, he set off to anoint the two kings, knowing now that there were seven thousand loyal Israelites who would be joyful at the prospects of having a righteous king.

After he had anointed the two kings, Elijah knew that his service as a prophet was nearing an end, but he still had one more important mission to complete. God told him to go down to meet Ahab, king of Israel, and give him a message. It was right that Elijah, who earlier had been so faithful in facing Ahab and Jezebel with an unwelcome notice from the LORD, should now be the one to prophesy the final judg-

ment of the LORD that would come upon them. They had threatened his life, and had done all they could to destroy him. Now Elijah was commissioned to prophecy the doom of Ahab and of Jezebel. And an awful doom it was to be.

The Bible says, "There was none like unto Ahab, which did sell himself to work wickedness in the sight of the LORD, whom Jezebel his wife stirred up." (I Kings 21:25) And Elijah's prophecy did come to pass—both Ahab and Jezebel met terrible fates.

In this Bible record, Satan and his relentless followers were pictured by Ahab and his wicked wife. Elijah, on the other hand, is a picture of the faithful followers of God, who will receive a wonderful heavenly reward.

His life work was over. But, to the last moment of Elijah's life, the LORD continued to direct him. He led him to the Jordan River. His death was to be as dramatic as his courageous life of service had been—he would be taken away in a whirlwind! (II Kings 2:1) When he reached the River Jordan, Elijah took his mantle and smote the water, dividing it, so that he and his servant, Elisha, walked over on dry ground to the opposite shore. They continued walking and talking, when behold, there appeared a chariot of fire, and horses of fire, which separated Elijah and Elisha, and Elijah was swept into the heavens by the whirlwind. (II Kings 2:8,11) Thus the eventful life of one of the greatest men who ever lived suddenly came to an end in a blaze of glory!

QUESTIONS

1. What test did Elijah suggest to King Ahab to prove that Baal was a false god? Tell the story of this test.
2. Was Ahab convinced that Jehovah was the true God when Baal's prophets failed, were destroyed, and the drought ended?
3. What did Ahab and Jezebel do next? What did Elijah do?
4. How did God encourage his discouraged prophet?

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5. Ahab and Jezebel met dreadful ends. Who did they represent, and what did their destruction picture in the plan of God?
 6. Describe the dramatic way in which Elijah's life came to an end. Who was with him when he died? Who did Elijah picture?



Meekness, Gentleness, Patience, Character

NEVER WAS THERE a more important moment for the church than now, as respects the above listed elements of the LORD's Spirit. When the great enemy has special power because it is "the hour of temptation which shall try all of them that dwell upon the face of the whole earth," every soldier of the cross must be more alert than ever. But let us put character and principle first, then patience, gentleness, meekness. As St. Paul wrote to Timothy, "In meekness, correcting those who oppose themselves."

Our love for the brethren, coupled with our knowledge of the testing strain they are under, will supply the needed incentive for the exercise and cultivation of the graces named. And let us remember, that this is our testing hour no less than theirs. The test to some may be false teachings; the test to others may be their positiveness of character in dealing with the error, or their love for the brethren and the gentleness with which they will seek to do all in their power to rescue them, even though they feel the task a hopeless one.—Heb. 6:3

If we fail of love we are failing on the most important point of all. Hence it is important to each of us to take our stand for the right and against the wrong, but lovingly, gently, firmly.

ENCOURAGING LETTERS

Wants More

Sirs: I have read the booklet, "**Hope**," pertaining to a glad tomorrow. I would like to read more about that time. Will you please send me a free copy of "**God and Reason**." Thank you.—*MI*

Teaching the Young

The Bible Answers: Please send me information regarding what is going on in the world. We just received the booklet, "**Armageddon, Then World Peace**," after having watched your film on that subject. It was a well-filmed movie. The class understood it and enjoyed its implications. We had just finished a unit on Lithuania, Latvia, and Estonia, and so they were able to relate the information to the unit. Thank you. From a 7th Grade teacher.—*UT*

Can't Wait

Dear Sirs: I would like **The Dawn** magazine for another year. It has to be the best book. It tells the truth according to the Bible and I

can't wait to get it. Thank you.—*CA*

Needs Fellowship

Dear Dawn: Please renew my subscription to **The Dawn** magazine. My daughter and I really enjoy reading '**The Golden Thread Series**'. Please send me the other books I have checked, also, on the attached form. I would like to donate the remainder to your general fund. I was also wondering what church or meeting place would be O.K. to attend, that would teach what you are teaching. Are there any in my area? Thank you.—*CA*

ANSWER: Address sent.

Enjoys "Songs In the Night"

Dawn Publications: I ordered your book, "**Songs in the Night**," and I am enjoying it very much. So I would like to have you send a copy to a friend of mine as a gift from me. I am enclosing the money. Thanking you in advance.—*NM*

Appreciates Spiritual Guidance

Dear Brothers in Christ: For 15 years I was a member of a nominal Christian group. I was taught that the people who didn't go along with their message constituted an 'evil slave' class, whose main purpose was to glorify themselves while destroying the work of our group. I have been reading *The Dawn* for a few months now, and really appreciate the spiritual guidance and overall *loving* tone of the articles. I found a balance and reasonableness that really surprised me, considering what I had been taught.

It would take a book to fully describe the change in my outlook, and I'm sure I'm not the first person to write you about my former religion. I noticed in the *Encouraging Letters* column a booklet mentioned entitled, "*When Pastor Russell Died.*" Is this still available? If it is may I please have a copy? Do you have the address of the nearest group of Bible Students to Weatherford, TX? I would dearly love to associate with people who serve Jehovah

out of love and with a clean conscience. May Jehovah continue to bless your service.—TX

ANSWER: Booklet sent, and address sent.

Comfort in Troublesome Times

Dear Bible Students: Please renew my subscription to *The Dawn*. I don't want to miss a copy. I receive comfort from your booklets in these difficult times; it is so comforting to read your booklets. Please use the remainder of the enclosed check as you desire. God bless your ministry.—AL

Family of the consecrated

Dear Brethren: As it has been continually in the past, my wife and I enjoy the articles in *The Dawn* and the uplifting effect it has had on both of us. Enclosed is a check for continuing our subscription to *The Dawn*, and the balance to your General Fund. Keep up the good work in these days, as we can see prophecy actually unfolding! Respectfully.—CA

Watching the Signs of the Times

Dear Brethren at the Dawn: Once again it is time to renew my subscription to **The Dawn**, which I continue to enjoy, and I appreciate the efforts of the dear brethren involved in getting it out. Also, I appreciate the efforts of the brethren who make pilgrim visits to some of us in various parts of the country. We very much enjoyed having their visits. So, as we continue to watch the signs of the times in harmony with the fulfillment of God's plan, let us also continue to pray that we may discern God's will for each of us. May he continue to bless all of you. With sincere love to all.—GA

A Question

Dear Dawn: Will you please answer a question for me? Do you believe that there will be any that live thru Armageddon? Don't all have to die to be acquitted of the Adamic sin?—WA
ANSWER—This subject is fully covered in the booklet, "**Armageddon, then World Peace**," which was sent to him.

Enjoys the Sunday School Lessons

To All of God's Children:

He builds his church with different stones,

He makes each one belong;
All shapes and sizes fit in place,
To make the structure strong.

May God bless each one of you, and keep you all doing his work. Thank you all for helping us to understand our Sunday School Lesson better. I have enclosed the money for two subscriptions. Yours in Christ.—OH

From South Africa

Dear "**Frank and Ernest**," brothers in Christ: I have been blessed listening to your programme. I am a child of God for 10 years. I give our Lord Jesus Christ all the glory and praise for saving me and my family. Could you send me the booklet, "**The Truth about Hell**." I will pass it on to others so they can also be blessed. God Bless you.—
South Africa

'One-Year Old' Subscriber

Dear Sirs: Enclosed is \$1.00 for another year's subscrip-

tion to **The Dawn** magazine. I answered your ad in the **Readers' Digest**, and have enjoyed my first year's subscription. I am thankful for it. Keep up the good work.—KS

Expresses Gratitude Well

Brothers and Sisters in Christ Jesus: After reading your booklet, "**Hope**," I received a different understanding of hope for a better world. I am requesting your booklet, "**God and Reason**." Thank you for a better understanding of God's Word. I am not very good at saying words, but Jesus knows my heart. Again, thank you. May God bless you. In Christ.—MI

'Just Happened to Hear' "Frank & Ernest"

Dear Sirs: I just "happened" to hear the last few minutes of your radio broadcast this evening, and determined to send for your booklet, "**The Church**." Much to my surprise, upon hearing how to receive the booklet it was announced that you are members of the Dawn Bible Students! Coincidentally, I

have been trying to locate your organization for various reasons and am truly happy that God has directed me to you at this time.

Although Marie, my wife, and I ponder the Scriptures daily, we have never joined any organization to date. Our son, like us, is also a Christian without a church. I did catch a brief moment of your description of baptism, and will most certainly appreciate clarification of this also. It has been our hope to be baptized one day, God willing.

Please let us know as much as possible about the Dawn people, that is, who can we talk to regarding the clarification of important aspects, and where we can get together, and when. With a hope for the future, I am sincerely, in Jesus name, Yours.—NJ

Makes a Request

Dawn Publications: Greetings. I wonder if I can make a request of you kind and very enlightening folks? I don't think I ever read one of your Dawn magazines that was as informing and

comforting as the October, 1991 issue. Could you please send me ten copies? Enclosed is \$5.00. Oh, how this poor, sick world needs more of the information that magazine contained. A million thanks for being there!—KY

Enjoys Poranek

Gentlemen: I am very grateful to you for sending me the Polish Dawn. I hesitate to ask for further literature, but it gives me enlightenment in which I am very interested. These are really truths that make it easier to understand the Bible. Please send me all the Polish booklets you have. I am enclosing \$2.00. Please send me the Polish "**Poranek**" [**The Dawn**] as it is issued. I will be very grateful for this.—NY

Out in Radioland

Dear Sirs: I sent a letter to you August 13 requesting one of your booklets I heard you speak of. I heard your broadcast on August 11 for the first time over WOR, New York, at 9:15 p.m. I have been listening ever since, each Sunday. I

love the message that you are giving to us out here in radioland. It is so uplifting and inspiring compared to other messages that I have heard. I would be interested in any booklets that you have. Please let me know if there is a charge. I do pray this letter will reach you. Thank you. God bless you and your program.—NJ

From Moldavia

Dear Brethren: Greetings! We visited Romania, and we found that they and we are led by the same spirit of love and brotherhood. I am crippled, but I know my experiences are overruled by the LORD. We are home again, and want to let you know that we had a catastrophe here. Although we had a devastating flood, the brethren were spared from this disaster. But our country is in great need of help. We did receive two packages with hymnbooks and **Tabernacle Shadows** books, and we wish to thank you for them. May the LORD reward your labor and may you be blessed with the blessings of Jehovah. Let your gifts not

wither away, but give fruit in due time, as a spring of water that flows from the Heavenly Throne. We send you our greetings with Romans 16:15,16 and I Corinthians 15:58, and with Hymns 290 and 309. May the peace of the LORD be with you.—*Moldavia*

Enjoys Dawn Too Much

I've done and renewed my magazine. I enjoy it too much to let it run out. Praise God for all he has done for people. I wish I could help everyone. This magazine is so wonderful to read. It is God's Word, and I can understand it so clearly. It's great to get it. Please send me some copies of "*Hope*," etc. I am enclosing \$1.00 for these booklets. Thank you.—*VA*

"Frank and Ernest" from 2,000 Miles Away!

I was scanning the radio in my car one evening when I stopped on your station and heard you talking about hell. I'm responding to your offer of the booklet entitled, "*The Truth about Hell*." I found it very interesting that I've never been able to pick up any stations more than 200 miles from our town, but that night you came in loud and clear and I'm probably more than 2,000 miles away from you in a town called Thunder Bay, Ont., Canada, at the west end of Lake Superior. Did you ever think that you could reach this far? Sincerely.—
Canada



If you will notify the Dawn of your new address three weeks in advance of your move, it will save us considerable expense in mailing your magazine.

Thank You!

General Convention Bulletin

July 18-23, 1992—St. Joseph, Missouri

WE ARE PLEASED that the cost for meals and rooms for the 1992 General Convention to be held at the Missouri Western College will be low. These are the prices:

| Ages 0 to 4 | Ages 5 to 11 | | 12 and over |
|-------------------------|-----------------------------|--|------------------------------|
| free | \$8.00 (all three meals) | Breakfast \$3, lunch \$5, dinner \$5 [per day] | \$12.50 (all three meals) |
| | \$7.00 | Daily DOUBLE lodging in dorm | \$7.00 |
| | | Daily SINGLE lodging | \$11.00 |
| | \$97.00 | Package: DOUBLE lodging (7 nights, 6 days of meals) | |
| Package: SINGLE lodging | | \$144.00 | |

These low room rates are partly due to a generous surplus in the General Convention treasury. A discount of \$3.00 per room per day has been included in these room rates and will be paid to the college by the Convention Treasurer. (The college does not charge for room and meals for children four years and younger.) An additional rebate of 50% of the cost for children between the ages of 5 and 17 will be given for those who attend at least 75% of the young people's Bible classes. Forms to apply for this rebate will be available at the convention.

If you have not yet received a convention Registration Form, one is supplied on the reverse side of this page.

Please fill out and return this registration form whether you intend to stay at the college or not. We will use the information you provide to generate name badges. Detailed information about the convention, and a map of the college campus, will be sent to those who make a reservation.

(Continued on Page 61)

Registration Form

Bible Students General Convention
Missouri Western State College
July 18 to 23, 1992

| | Break. | Lunch | Dinner | ↓ Older [dorm] New ↓ (check one box per night) | |
|---|--------|-------|-----------------|---|--|
| Friday July 17 | | | | | |
| Saturday | | | | | |
| Sunday | | | | | |
| Monday | | | | | |
| Tuesday | | | | | |
| Wednesday | | | | | |
| Thursday | | | | | |
| -OR- Package of 7 dorm nights, 18 meals | | | | | |
| -OR- Check this box if you want a list of near-by motels → | | | | | |
| First and last name | | | Ecclesia | Age (if under 18) | |
| | | | | | |
| | | | | | |
| | | | | | |
| Who would you like to have occupy the other bedroom? | | | | | |
| What special needs do you have? | | | | | |
| | | | | | |
| | | | | | |

Send this completed form to:

General Convention
1425 Lachman Lane
Pac. Palisades, CA 90272
(Tel.: (310) 454-5248)

The reservation confirmation we send you will show the total amount due. This may be paid in advance or upon your arrival at the convention. If your plans change, any advance payment will be promptly refunded.

All buildings are air-conditioned. We have the exclusive use of two nice, older dorms, and one new dorm. All contain three floors. The two older dorms have sinks in rooms which contain two or three beds, a toilet/shower shared by two rooms, and no elevator. Four rooms share a common living area. The new dorm has no sinks in the rooms. Two rooms each with two twin-size beds share sinks/toilet/shower and a living area. The new dorm does have an elevator. If you want to stay in one of the dormitories, let us know if you have a preference about who occupies the other bedroom. Also tell us if you have special needs (e.g. cannot walk stairs, need wider doors for wheelchair access, etc.) We will send you a list of nearby motels upon request.

The college is 35 miles north of the Kansas City, Missouri, airport. If you would like transportation from the airport to the college, send us your airline name, flight number, arrival day, and arrival time. We will send you a transportation voucher and instructions about how to meet the college van. The cost for this service will be paid by the Convention Treasurer.



Psalm 133:1-3

“BEHOLD, how good and how pleasant it is for brethren to dwell together in unity! It is like the precious ointment upon the head, that ran down upon the beard, even Aaron’s beard: that went down to the skirts of his garments; As the dew of Hermon, and as the dew that descended upon the mountains of Zion: for there the LORD commanded the blessing, even life for evermore.”

"All Scripture, given by inspiration of God, is profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness, that the man of God may be perfect, thoroughly furnished unto all good works."

—II Timothy 3:16,17



IT WILL BE well for us all to remember that all the graces of the Spirit, all the progress in the knowledge of divine things to which we have already attained that may have helped us nearer to God and to holiness, have come to us through the Scriptures of the Old Testament and through the words of our Lord and his inspired apostles; nor will it ever be necessary to go to other channels for the true wisdom which would prepare us for the salvation promised.—Z. '97-170

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LISTEN to these interesting topics discussed Sundays on

**WOR-710
9:15 P.M.**

MAY:

- 3-Days Of Creation
- 10-No More Death
- 17-One Government
- 24-The Holy Spirit
- 31-The Increase of Christ's Government

SEND FOR the FREE booklet offered after each broadcast:

"FRANK & ERNEST"
Box 60, Dept. N
New York, NY 10118

FOR YOUR NEWSPAPER

To the left is a suggestion for an advertisement in your local newspaper. This outline is designed for 3 inches in one column.

MAY SPECIAL

On Sunday, May 17th, "**Frank and Ernest**" will discuss a topic of interest, "**One Government.**" Free circulars are available which announce this program, and you are invited to send for as many as you can use. Write to:

The Dawn
East Rutherford, NJ 07073

SPEAKERS' APPOINTMENTS

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

| | | | |
|--------------------------------|----------------|------------------|--------|
| W. Blicharz | | F. Nemes | |
| Asilomar, CA | May 22-25 | West Newton, PA | May 17 |
| | | Asilomar, CA | 22-25 |
| G. Eldridge | | L. Post | |
| England | May 24-26 | Gary, IN | May 10 |
| France | 30,31 | Minneapolis, MN | 11 |
| R. Gorecki | | Havre, MT | 13 |
| West Newton, PA | May 17 | Spokane, WA | 14 |
| R.J. Krupa and T. Krupa | | Seattle, WA | 15 |
| England | April 28-May 1 | Portland, OR | 17 |
| Bomba, India | 6 | Upper Lake, CA | 19 |
| Coimbatore | 7-10 | Sacramento, CA | 20 |
| Canoor | 12 | Asilomar, CA | 22-25 |
| Mysore | 13 | Denver, CO | 31 |
| Bangalore | 14 | R. Shahan | |
| Bombay | 16 | Middletown, NY | May 17 |

WEEKLY PRAYER MEETING TEXTS

MAY 7—"Woe is unto me, if I preach not the Gospel."—I Corinthians 9:16 (Z. '03-174 Hymn 116)

MAY 14—"Speaking the truth in love, . . . grow up into him in all things, which is the Head, even Christ."—Ephesians 4:15 (Z. '03-200 Hymn 150)

MAY 21—"All Scripture, given by inspiration of God, is profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness, that the man of God may be perfect, thoroughly furnished unto all good works."—II Timothy 3:16,17 (Z. '97-170 Hymn 22)

MAY 28—"We are always confident, knowing that, whilst we are at home in the body [so long as we feel entirely contented with present conditions—ourselves and our surroundings], we are absent from the LORD."—II Corinthians 5:6 (Z. '97-305 Hymn 188)

CONVENTIONS

Conventions are listed at the request of the classes who sponsor them. Please send your listing IN WRITING at least three months before the date of the convention. If received in time, your convention will be listed for those three months.

HARTFORD, CT, May 3—Carmel Hall, 30 Olde Roberts St., East Hartford. Contact: Mrs. D. Slivinsky, 42 Andrew Dr., East Hartford, 06108 Phone: (203) 289-0116

AGAWAM, MA, May 17—Ramada Inn, 161 Bridge St., East Windsor, CT. Contact: Mrs. Sophie Zielinski, 21 Silver St., Agawam, MA 01001 Phone: (413) 786 1216

WEST NEWTON, PA, May 17—Sewickley Grange, West Newton. Contact: John Krasonic, RD #4, Belle Vernon, PA 15012, for information.

ASILOMAR CONVENTION, May 22, 23, 24, 25—Pacific Grove, CA. Contact: Tom Marshall, 1089 Bluebell Drive, #1108, Livermore, CA 94550 Cutoff date: April 21. Phone: (510) 443-0567

WATERBURY, CT, June 7—YWCA, 80 Prospect St., Contact: Associated Bible Students, P.O. Box 1494, Waterbury, CT 08721

ALLENTOWN, PA, June 19-21—Moravian College, Bethlehem, PA. Contact for information: Allentown

Bible Students, c/o Margaret Young, P.O. Box 1672, Allentown 18105 Phone: (215) 867-5418

PORTLAND CONVENTION, June 26-29—Collins Retreat Center, 32867 S.E. Highway 211, Eagle Creek 97022. Phone: (503) 637-6411. For reservations, contact T. Krupa, 11980 S.E. Zion Hill Dr., Gresham 97030 Phone: (503) 658-4115

LOS ANGELES CONVENTION, July 3-5—Holiday Inn, 7000 Beach Blvd., Buena Park. Phone: (714) 522-7000. Contact Michael Nekora, 1425 Lachman Lane, Pacific Palisades 90272 Phone: (310) 454-5248

BIBLE STUDENTS GENERAL CONVENTION, July 18-23—Missouri State College, St. Joseph MO. More information will be given in future issues of *The Dawn* magazine.

INTERNATIONAL CONVENTION OF BIBLE STUDENTS, August 8-14—Poitiers, France. Contact: Michael Nekora, 1425 Lachman Lane, Pacific Palisades CA 90272. Phone: (310) 454-5248

