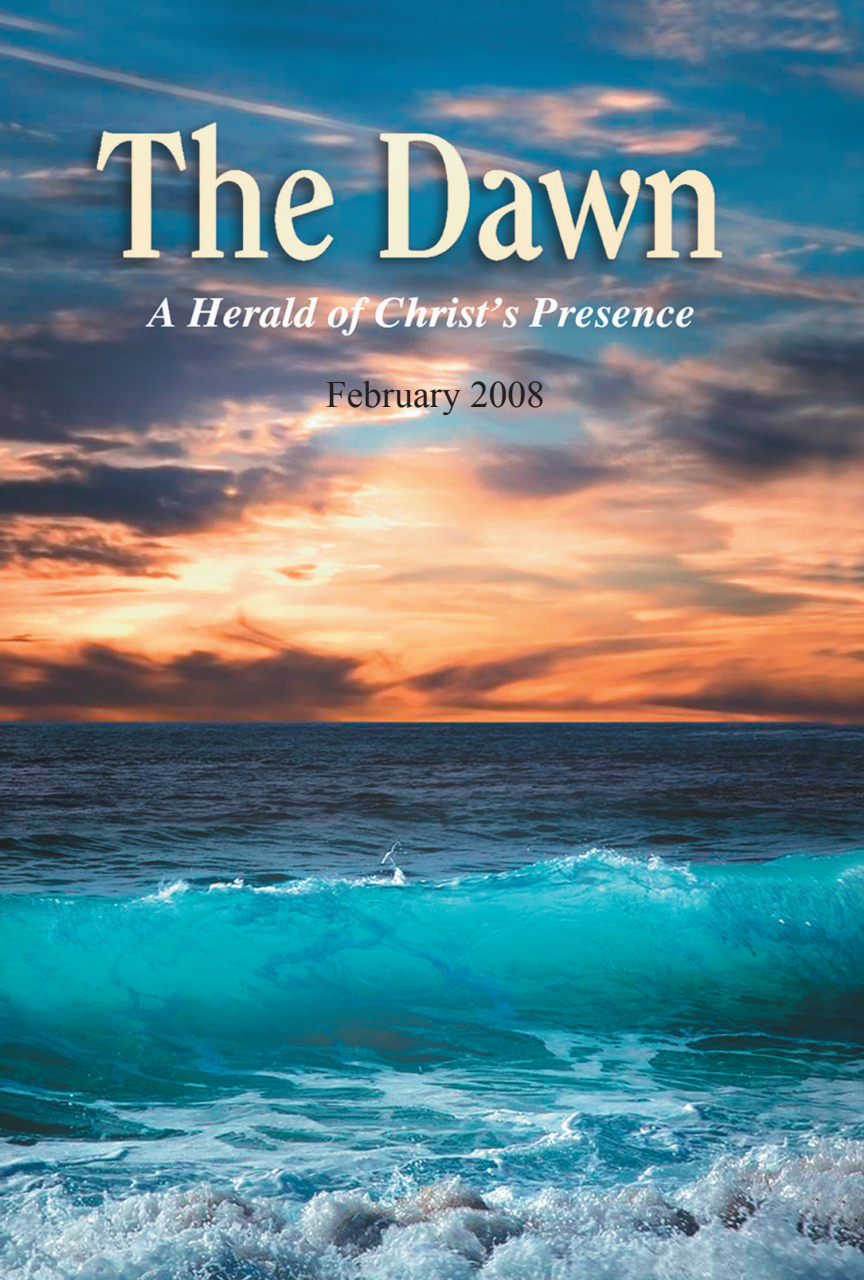


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Winds of Fire

***“Wherefore we
receiving a
kingdom which
cannot be moved,
let us have grace
[hold fast,
Marginal
Translation],
whereby we may
serve God
acceptably with
reverence and
godly fear: For
our God is a
consuming fire.”
—Hebrews 12:28,29***

FIRE IS ONE OF THE MOST

destructive of all natural phenomenon known by man. It has been defined as combustion manifested in light, flame, and heat. Since ancient times, men have wondered at its spectacular power to destroy; and it was one of the four elements under the study of alchemy by the medieval chemical scientists.

FIRE AS A SYMBOL

Because of its overwhelming power, fire has been used in a symbolic sense in the Scriptures to describe, or emphasize, total destruction. In our featured text, the Apostle Paul spoke of our Heavenly Father as being a ‘consuming fire.’ He is here speaking of fire in a positive sense. He directs our attention to the fact that God’s plan and purpose is to destroy all traces of unrighteousness and false teaching during the time of judgment, when Christ’s future kingdom will be established over all the earth.

In reference to our Heavenly Father's majestic holiness, the Prophet Habakkuk wrote, "Thou art of purer eyes than to behold evil, and canst not look on iniquity: wherefore lookest thou upon them that deal treacherously, and holdest thy tongue when the wicked devoureth the man that is more righteous than he?" (Hab. 1:13) All mankind will ultimately be lifted up in the ways of true holiness as described by Isaiah, who wrote, "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."—Isa. 35:8

FIERY JUDGMENTS

Another of God's prophets has used the word 'fire' to describe the severe judgments that will be meted out to the nations. He said, "Neither their silver nor their gold shall be able to deliver them in the day of the LORD'S wrath; but the whole land shall be devoured by the fire of his jealousy: for he shall make even a speedy riddance of all them that dwell in the land." (Zeph. 1:18) No people will be spared the judgments of the LORD. The prophet further stated, "Wait ye upon me, saith the LORD, until the day that I rise up to the prey: for my determination is to gather the nations, that I may assemble the kingdoms, to pour upon them mine indignation, even all my fierce anger: for all the earth shall be devoured with the fire of my jealousy."—Zeph. 3:8

WIND AND FIRE

When the power of wind is added to an existing fire it then becomes capable of taking on new and

added dimensions of devastation. With ignition and rapid fanning, fire spreads quickly and becomes very difficult to contain. Sparks may be carried long distances by the winds which create new and separate fires. Residents of the state of California have often been witnesses to this type of destruction during the autumn months of the year. Strong winds blow into the coastal areas of the state from an anticyclone weather system that is located over the high deserts of California and Nevada. These wildfires may be sparked when a combination of dangerous conditions prevail. This includes high wind velocity, high temperatures, low humidity, and an abundance of very dry fuel from underbrush. Specialists refer to this area of the United States as one of the most conflagration-prone environments in the world because the area also has a complex topography, and a very large human population.

SANTA ANA WINDS

These very hot, dry winds are commonly called 'Santa Anas.' This is a term that has been traced to early Spanish California when the winds were then referred to as *Satanas*, or devil winds, due to their extreme heat. One of the possible reasons that has been suggested by historians for now using the name Santa Ana instead of *Satanas* took place at the turn of the twentieth century. At that time, an Associated Press correspondent was stationed in the Santa Ana area and began to use the term Santa Ana instead of *Satanas* in his press dispatches. The term seems to have become more popular dating from that time.

CALIFORNIA INFERNO

Whatever terminology that one may use to describe wildfires, the massive inferno that took place in Southern California during the month of October 2007 was devastating and unprecedented because of its dimensions. Hurricane strength winds, coupled with tinderbox undergrowth and conditions of low humidity, as well as high temperatures combined to create chaos. This extended over an area from Santa Barbara on the north to San Diego on the south, a distance of well over a hundred miles. Some fires also entered Mexico, stretching as far south as the city of Ensenada.

REPORTS FROM THE SCENE

As the fires began to spread, residents were forced to leave their homes and seek shelter elsewhere, including San Diego's Qualcomm Stadium, home to the NFL's Chargers. In the *Los Angeles Times* (Tuesday, October 23, 2007), reporters Tony Perry, Garrett Therolf, and Mitchell Landsberg submitted the following news item under the heading, "Massive Evacuations Ordered as Onslaught of Fires Spreads." They reported, "Wind-whipped firestorms destroyed more than 700 homes and businesses in Southern California on Monday, the second day of its onslaught, and more than half a million people in San Diego county were told to evacuate their homes.

"The gale-force winds turned hillside canyons into giant blowtorches from Santa Barbara to the Mexican border. Although the worst damage was around San Diego and Lake Arrowhead, dangerous fires also threatened Malibu, parts of Orange and Ventura counties, and the Agua Dulce area of Santa

Clarita. Monday evening, a new blaze was menacing homes near Valencia and Stevenson Ranch in northern Los Angeles County.”

MASS EVACUATIONS

The fires became even more threatening as reported the next day in the *Los Angeles Daily News* (Wednesday, October 24, 2007) by Associated Press correspondents Allison Hoffman and Gillian Flaccus. Reporting from San Diego, California under the headline caption “560,000 Flee Homes: Mass Exodus from the Flames” these reporters wrote, “Deadly, wind-whipped wildfires have triggered the largest evacuation in state history, prompting more than 500,000 people to flee ahead of flames that destroyed more than 1,800 homes and continued to threaten tens of thousands more. The number of people joining the mandatory exodus—and the number of homes destroyed—was expected to grow though, as new fires started and others continued to burn a path toward the sea—through populated communities. ‘This is the largest mass evacuation of a natural disaster in California history,’ said Daniel Berlant, spokesman for the state’s Department of Forestry and Fire Protection.”

Other news items reported that new fires had flared up in the communities of Newhall and Acton, and that howling Santa Ana winds had gusted up to 100 mph to fan the flames. In the Lake Arrowhead area, firefighters were battling two fast-moving blazes in the San Bernadino Mountains and were being taxed by steep terrain, winding roads, and a forest filled with dead trees and dried up underbrush that was helping to fuel the fires.

GOVERNOR VIEWS DESTRUCTION

After viewing firsthand some of the major wildfires in Southern California, Governor Arnold Schwarznegger included a stop in Santa Clarita during an evening news conference. He declared the affected areas as disaster zones, and promised to obtain aid for the many citizens who had lost their homes.

He thanked the firefighters for their heroic efforts in helping to fight the wildfires, and praised the coordination between the many various agencies that were involved in bringing the disaster under control. He said, "The key thing in all of this is that we help people rebuild their homes as quickly as possible. We have to work together. It's all one family."

PRESIDENT BUSH SURVEYS DAMAGE

Before he traveled to San Diego, President Bush first conferred with advisors in a strategy move to determine the federal government's response to the wildfire disaster in Southern California. After the criticism surrounding his administration's response, or the lack of it, during the disaster surrounding Hurricane Katrina at New Orleans over two years ago, greater care was taken to show that it was playing a more active role in California.

Governor Schwarznegger praised the President for immediately agreeing to sign a disaster declaration, a federal authorization for the Individual and Households Program that would provide financial assistance to residents whose losses were not covered by insurance. The State Supplemental Grant Program was to be implemented as well.

The Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) also responded quickly to the needs of the evacuees, coordinating with local police and fire departments. The agency sent an extra 950 firefighters who were brought in from across the nation to support the exhausted California crews. At the Qualcomm Stadium in San Diego, Lynne Carrier, an official representing the agency said, "You can see that FEMA is here. We have people in Pasadena, San Bernadino, Riverside, and all the way up to Santa Barbara. But, San Diego has been the hardest hit of any area."

President Bush and Governor Schwarznegger together toured the area around San Diego by helicopter, and landed at Rancho Bernardo, one of the areas that suffered the most damage. Bush assured the fire victims that the federal government was there to help them with whatever was needed.

SMOKE INHALATION

As smoke from the multiple wildfires engulfed Southern California, health officials said that they had seen a dramatic increase in the number of people who were going to hospitals with asthma and other respiratory problems. One official said that they were seeing a real spike, a severalfold increase in people seeking aid, particularly with wheezing, coughing, tightness in the chest, and with difficult breathing.

Smoke and ash, along with dust raised by gusting winds, have affected the quality of air in at least four counties. Spokespersons from the South Coast Air Quality Management District reported that this will affect everyone in some way because

it's a substantial exposure. Overwhelming amounts of particulate matter can cause irritation and chest pain, which can lead to coughing and shortness of breath. Poor air quality can also linger, and during periods of smog this often becomes a particular problem.

Satellite images indicated that the smoke was being carried out to sea, but some of it could be blown back over populated areas with a shift in wind direction. The air there is sometimes bad to begin with and, when the particulate matter is combined with high levels of smoke, problems may arise.

ANIMAL RESCUES

Residents forced to evacuate their homes were being urged to take all of their household pets and other animals with them. Most Red Cross evacuation centers were accepting pets, but were asking, if possible, to place them in a crate or carrier. Because of limited supplies at some centers, pet owners were also requested to bring all necessary supplies including leashes, food, water, and medications.

Many wild animals joined in the exodus from the firestorm any way they could. Some were rescued by Animal Control Officers, and others by volunteer workers. The famous Del Mar race track became an animal safe haven for all kinds of animals including goats, ponies, horses, llamas, and others. Over 2,000 horses from all over San Diego County were being sheltered at the track. State Fairgrounds were also made available to house horses, and in some cases the owners were bunking in at the jockey's quarters. Ducks, geese and swan from

the Project Wildlife satellite facility located in Temecula were relocated to the International Bird Rescue Research Center in San Pedro where the birds were medically evaluated and admitted. They will remain there until the fire threat is over and can be returned to the Project Wildlife facility.

FEAR OF MUDSLIDES

In certain areas of northern San Diego County, investigators note that scorched, steep hillsides and hilltops may increase the chances that rain will create heavy muddy runoff. These conditions, if left unattended, could further endanger homes and clog streams and culverts. They point out that in some places the fires have killed the root systems, and if heavy rains do occur there will be no way to hold the soil in place. State and federal agencies are planning to address the threat by removing debris, placing barriers at key spots and reseeding the scorched earth.

As the rainy season approaches, protecting the areas most likely at risk from mudflows are residents of the La Jolla Indian Reservation which is located approximately 60 miles northeast of San Diego. During the firestorms that hit the area more than 90% of the tribe's 9,400 acre reservation was burned, and 59 of its 180 dwellings were destroyed.

THE STAGGERING COST

The extensive firestorms in Southern California during the autumn of 2007 affected millions of people, and seven counties were declared disaster areas. Over 6,000 firefighters battled the numerous blazes, estimated to be in excess of twenty. They were assisted by units of the United States armed

forces, and members of the United States National Guard. Additionally, over 3,000 prisoners who had been convicted of nonviolent crimes were brought in to help. Mexico also helped by sending several firefighters from the cities of Tijuana and Tecate.

Aside from the low humidity conditions, high temperatures, and hurricane force Santa Ana winds, there were numerous other causes for the terrible destruction. Several fires were triggered by power lines that had been damaged by the high winds, and one was started when a semitrailer truck overturned. At least one other fire had been deliberately set, and the suspect was shot and killed at the scene by state law authorities. Others remain under investigation. The last fire was finally brought under control on November 9th, nineteen days after the original blaze started.

There were more than twenty fires all told in which nine people died as a direct result of the fires, and eighty-five were injured including sixty-one firefighters. Crews were brought in from the neighboring states of Nevada and Arizona, and fire fighting aircraft were used when winds died down enough to use them. It is estimated that 500,000 acres were scorched which represents an area $\frac{3}{4}$ the size of the state of Rhode Island. Over 1,800 homes and other buildings were destroyed at a loss in excess of \$1 billion, while hundreds more were damaged.

A lengthy and difficult struggle faces many homeowners as they try to rebuild their homes and property and put their lives back together. Some families may not have adequate insurance to cover the costs of rebuilding, and in other cases insurance

companies may haggle over what may or may not be covered in their policies. Problems may also arise in obtaining building contractors because of the heavy overload, and the prices of certain materials may rise dramatically.

A PERFECTED EARTH

With this latest natural catastrophe to hit the United States well in memory, and with all of the other many problems facing the world of mankind today, we naturally turn to the Holy Scriptures for answers and understanding. In God's Word, we find the answers that teach that a time is near at hand when a totally new social order will be established over all the earth. This new social structure includes a tremendous reconstruction work that will be necessary to carry out this Divine program, and God has set aside a thousand years to accomplish it.

Under the future administration of Christ Jesus and his faithful church members, this glorious kingdom of truth and righteousness will carry out the lifting-up process of all the obedient of the human family who respond to the righteous laws of God. Mankind will then be brought back to perfection, and everlasting life will be made available for them all. God's wonderful plan also includes the awakening of all who are resting in their graves, and this countless resurrected class will also share in the blessing of life in a perfected new earth.

NEW HEAVENS AND EARTH

John the Revelator wrote under inspiration of the Holy Spirit of God concerning the Divine plan and promises of God concerning the perfected

earth. He said, "I saw a new heaven and a new earth: for the first heaven and the first earth were passed away; and there was no more sea. And I John saw the holy city, new Jerusalem, coming down from God out of heaven, prepared as a bride adorned for her husband. And I heard a great voice out of heaven saying, Behold, the tabernacle of God is with men, and he will dwell with them, and they shall be his people, and God himself shall be with them, and be their God."—Rev. 21:1-3

In this symbolic terminology, it is noted that the new heavenly administration under Christ and his church is represented in the 'holy city, new Jerusalem.' This is the spiritual, governing body that will administer all of earth's affairs, and is seen by the revelator as coming down from God out of heaven as the bride of Christ Jesus. The 'great voice' announces the new kingdom arrangement wherein our loving Heavenly Father's ultimate purpose is restoring mankind. He will then be with the people in carrying out his plan for the recovery of the human family from the ravages of sin and death.

As we continue to read John's words, we realize the widening perspective concerning God's blessings for his human creation. "God shall wipe away all tears from their eyes; and there shall be no more death, neither sorrow, nor crying, neither shall there be any more pain: for the former things are passed away." (vs. 4) To grasp the significance and true meaning of the new order to be established here on earth is a blessing of great proportion.

Earth's new order, together with its environment and weather patterns, will also be brought under control during the time of Christ's kingdom.

No longer will the natural elements be in conflict with the stability of the new structure established under Christ's kingdom. Disasters such as firestorms, hurricanes, tornadoes, floods, earthquakes, and other devastating incidents will become a thing of the past. Our loving Heavenly Father's ultimate design is to bring blessings of truth, happiness, and life to all of earth's inhabitants, and both man and the lower animal creation will live in peace and harmony with one another. "He that sat upon the throne said, Behold, I make all things new. And he said unto me, Write: for these words are true and faithful."—vs. 5 ■

2008 MEMORIAL SUPPER DATE

The proper time for the annual observance of the Memorial Supper will be after 6:00 P.M. on Sunday, April 18, 2008.

A complete Memorial Service is available for isolated brethren, or for any who care to have it, on audio cassette or CD, and DVD.

The audio cassette or CD can be purchased for \$3.00, or is available free on loan, from:

Dawn Recorded Lecture Service
199 Railroad Avenue
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Cut-off date for ordering all tapes is April 2.

WEEKLY PRAYER MEETING TEXTS

FEBRUARY 7—"Love worketh no ill to his neighbor: therefore love is the fulfilling of the law."—Romans 13:10 (Z. '98-201 Hymn 267)

FEBRUARY 14—"By thy words thou shalt be justified, and by thy words thou shalt be condemned."—Matthew 12:37 (Z. '96-32 Hymn 198)

FEBRUARY 21—"Thou art my rock and my fortress; therefore for Thy name's sake, lead me, and guide me."—Psalm 31:3 (Z. '02-249 Hymn 12)

FEBRUARY 28—"Be careful for nothing; but in everything by prayer and supplication with thanksgiving let your requests be made known unto God."—Philippians 4:6 (Z. '03-8 Hymn 115)

OBITUARIES

The following brethren have recently finished their Christian course. We wish to express our sincere sympathy to their family and friends in the loss of these dear ones.

Sister Sonia Baci, Ruseni, MOLDOVA—December 26.

Brother C. George, Bangalore, INDIA—December 30.

Age, 72

Sister Vivian Cole, San Diego, CA—January 5. Age, 90

Sister Sophie Rawson, Fairview, OR—January 6. Age, 87

Brother Samuel Philip, Bangalore, INDIA—January 8.

Age, 31

Brother Tim Sandridge, Hempstead, NY—January 8.

Age, 46

Summoned to Labor

Key Verse:
*"Therefore said he
unto them, The
harvest truly is
great, but the
labourers are few:
pray ye therefore
the Lord of the
harvest, that he
would send forth
labourers into his
harvest."
—Luke 10:2*

EARLIER IN HIS MINISTRY, the Lord had sent forth his twelve disciples to herald his presence to Israel, as well as the nearness of God's kingdom.

Our Key Verse relates to Christ's commission to seventy other men to do an evangelistic work among the Jews who, as a nation, had been especially selected by God to be an instrument for blessing all the families of mankind.—Num. 11:16; Luke 10:1

Selected Scripture:
Luke 10:1-12, 17-20 It is evident that the Lord did not expect the seventy to find receptive hearts to their message among the majority of the Israelites, for he stated, "Go your ways: behold, I send you forth as lambs among wolves." (Luke 10:3) Those whom the Lord appointed for this missionary service were willing to obey his instructions and to carry them out in the prescribed manner. "Carry neither purse, nor scrip, nor shoes: and salute no man by the way." (vs. 4) The fact that these sent forth ones were not to concern themselves with monetary needs, or other matters relative to wearing apparel, would be a test of their faith in the Lord's ability to overrule in their affairs as pertaining to temporal necessities.

The proper spirit to be manifested by these seventy

ambassadors was also articulated by the Master. "Into whatsoever house ye enter, first say, Peace be to this house. And if the son of peace be there, your peace shall rest upon it: if not, it shall turn to you again." (vss. 5,6) If granted a cordial reception, the servants of the Lord would bestow blessings upon such homes. (vss. 7-9) After fulfilling the terms of their commission, the disciples rejoiced in having had the great privilege of serving the Lord's cause by sharing the good news with all who had a hearing ear.—vs. 17

Just as the seventy labored at a time when the Jewish Age was ending and before the Christian era was to begin, today there is a harvest work now being completed before the Millennial Age of blessing is inaugurated by our returned Lord and his church who will reign with him in glory.—Rev. 3:21

As preparation to be a part of this elect class who will be associated with Jesus Christ in the work of reconciling mankind back to God, believers will faithfully proclaim the onset of the soon-to-be-established righteous government that will prove to be a utopia for all mankind who have been suffering since the fall of the first human pair back in Eden. "The Spirit of the Lord GOD is upon me; because the LORD hath anointed me to preach good tidings unto the meek; he hath sent me to bind up the brokenhearted, to proclaim liberty to the captives, and the opening of the prison to them that are bound."—Isa. 61:1-3

Those who are presently engaged in promoting this message to others in person, through printed literature and by the technological advances that presently exist, will, like the seventy at the time of the Lord's First Advent, experience a sense of profound joy in such labors. What a privilege is ours to be living now and declaring the soon-to-be-fulfilled promise for which the Master taught us to pray—"Thy kingdom come. Thy will be done in earth, as it is in heaven."—Matt. 6:10 ■

Summoned to Repent

Key Verse: *“I tell you, Nay: but, except ye repent, ye shall all likewise perish.”*
—*Luke 13:3*

Selected Scripture:
Luke 13:1-9

blood Pilate had mingled with their sacrifices. And Jesus answering said unto them, Suppose ye that these Galilaeans were sinners above all the Galilaeans, because they suffered such things?”—*Luke 13:1,2*

Our Key Verse underscores the erroneous theory that calamities are always meted out as punishment for sin. Additionally, the Lord used the occasion to emphasize the need for repentance by all who would ever hope to be received into God’s favor and to gain eternal life.—*Acts 3:19-21*

The theme of repentance is further highlighted in another lesson cited by Christ during his earthly ministry. “A certain man had a fig tree planted in his vineyard; and he came and sought fruit thereon, and found none. Then said he unto the dresser of his vineyard, Behold, these three years I come seeking fruit on this fig tree, and find none: cut it down; why cumbereth it the ground? And he answering said unto him, Lord, let it alone this year also, till I shall dig about it, and dung it: And if it bear fruit, well: and if not, then after that thou

TODAY’S LESSON COM-

mences with a tragic incident reported to Christ concerning some Galileans who were massacred by Pilate while offering sacrifices at the Temple in Jerusalem. “There were present at that season some that told him of the Galilaeans, whose

shalt cut it down.”—Luke 13:6-9

This parable refers primarily to the Jewish people whom God had recognized as his people out of all the families of the earth. “You only have I known of all the families of the earth.” (Amos 3:2) Since most of them had strayed from the provisions of the Mosaic Law, John the Baptist was sent to preach repentance as a means of preparing their hearts to receive Christ as their Savior.

The Master’s words of rejection to that nation at the end of his ministry ultimately paved the way for the opening of favor to Gentiles as prospective members of the body of Christ. “O Jerusalem, Jerusalem, thou that killest the prophets, and stonest them which are sent unto thee, how often would I have gathered thy children together, even as a hen gathereth her chickens under her wings, and ye would not! Behold, your house is left unto you desolate. For I say unto you, Ye shall not see me henceforth, till ye shall say, Blessed is he that cometh in the name of the Lord.”—Matt. 23:37-39

Although the theme of repentance in this lesson was directed towards the nation of Israel, the principle is the same for the Gospel Age followers of the Master as well as for the entire human family during Christ’s future Millennial kingdom.

“The Lord is not slack concerning his promise, as some men count slackness; but is longsuffering to us-ward, not willing that any should perish, but that all should come to repentance.” (II Pet. 3:9) How thankful we should be that God has provided an opportunity for repentance by the entire human family and they will return to the Heavenly Father’s favor in his own due time based upon Christ’s sacrificial death. “Who will have all men to be saved, and to come unto the knowledge of the truth. For there is one God, and one mediator between God and men, the man Christ Jesus; Who gave himself a ransom for all, to be testified in due time.”—I Tim. 2:4-6 ■

Summoned to be Humble

Key Verse:
***“Whosoever
exalteth himself
shall be abased;
and he that
humbleth himself
shall be exalted.”***
—Luke 14:11

Selected Scripture:
Luke 14:1, 7-14

AS AN INVITED GUEST TO A feast hosted by one of the chief Pharisees, our Lord performed a miracle which demonstrated his deep sympathy for the afflicted. Additionally, he utilized this opportunity to address a false concept concerning the propriety of healing on the Sabbath.—Luke 14:2-4

After the Master inquired of the religious leaders and lawyers present whether they would rescue one of their animals that had fallen into a pit on the Sabbath, they maintained their silence. Not only was there no prohibition against doing good on the Sabbath, but it was quite apparent that the protection of self interests would dictate their actions.—vss. 5,6

Our Lord then presented a parable concerning a wedding feast as he noted the selfish attitude of those who were gathered with him at the table of the host in seeking the seats of choicest favor. “When thou art bidden of any man to a wedding, sit not down in the highest room; lest a more honourable man than thou be bidden of him; And he that bade thee and him come and say to thee, Give this man place; and thou begin with shame to take the lowest room. But when thou art bidden, go and sit

down in the lowest room; that when he that bade thee cometh, he may say unto thee, Friend, go up higher: then shalt thou have worship in the presence of them that sit at meat with thee.”—vss. 7-10

A desire to be deemed superior to one’s fellow man reflects an element of pride which must be striven against if proper character development is to occur. Even Christ’s disciples needed to learn this lesson as the Lord rebuked them during his final night on earth as they strove among themselves as to which of them should be deemed the greatest. “He said unto them, . . . he that is greatest among you, let him be as the younger; and he that is chief, as he that doth serve.”—Luke 22:24-27

Our Key Verse sets forth the principle that humility must be manifested by all who would be fit to serve in God’s kingdom. “Ye see your calling, brethren, how that not many wise men after the flesh, not many mighty, not many noble, are called: But God hath chosen the foolish things of the world to confound the wise; and God hath chosen the weak things of the world to confound the things which are mighty; And base things of the world, and things which are despised, hath God chosen, yea, and things which are not, to bring to nought things that are: That no flesh should glory in his presence.”—I Cor. 1:26-29

The Master concluded his lesson by intimating that those who perform good deeds from a proper motive will be remembered by the Lord during the resurrection and receive earthly blessings proportionally as they make progress on the highway of holiness. (Luke 14:13,14; Isa. 35:8-10) Those who, in this life, go beyond doing good but engage in self-denial and sacrifice faithfully unto death have the hope of receiving a heavenly resurrection to Divine life. They will reign with Christ during the Millennial kingdom.—Matt. 16:24; II Tim. 2:1,2,11; Rev. 20:4



Summoned to be a Disciple

Key Verse:
***“Whosoever doth
not bear his cross,
and come after me,
cannot be my
disciple.”***
—Luke 14:27

Selected Scripture:
Luke 14:25-33

IN TODAY'S LESSON, THE

Master sets forth in clear terms the requirements for Christian discipleship. (Luke 14:25,26) Many individuals believe that to become true followers of our Lord it is only necessary to make a public declaration in a house of worship that they have accepted Christ as their Savior

and, from thenceforth, may expect to live forever in heaven following their demise. According to this theory, nonbelievers at their death will be eternally lost and the world will be destroyed.

Although there are some symbolic references in the Bible that the present evil social order will be removed, there are scriptural assurances that the earth will abide forever. (Eccles. 1:4) Additionally, the earth was created as a place for human habitation. “Thus saith the Lord that created the heavens; God himself that formed the earth and made it; . . . he created it not in vain, he formed it to be inhabited.”—Isa. 45:18

Only disciples who consistently and obediently follow Jesus' course of self-denial will reign with Christ in heaven for one thousand years in order to bless mankind. Following that period of time, Satan and all evil

doers will be destroyed, but the vast majority of humanity will live in peace, and enjoy prosperity and blessings in a perfect society here on earth.—Rev. 21:3,4

A disciple is a pupil, or one who follows the instruction and example of his teacher. In considering the life of Jesus, we are impressed by the difficulties he had to overcome before he merited the Heavenly Father's final approval.—John 15:18-21

Our Key Verse indicates that bearing the Master's cross is a process of daily doing God's will, as noted in scripture, regardless of the opposition faced while pursuing a righteous, sacrificial course. In view of the foregoing, our Lord gave a parable concerning a man who attempted to build a tower but, after laying its foundation, proved incapable of completing it, thus demonstrating how foolish his effort was. He also gave another illustration of a king going to war without making adequate preparations for battle. After being overwhelmed by the vast size of the opposing army, he had to change his course and then seek from his enemy the terms for obtaining peace.—Luke 14:28-32

As a valiant soldier of the cross, the Apostle Paul demonstrated in his life the great fortitude needed to be a true disciple of Christ. "I therefore so run, not as uncertainly; so fight I, not as one that beateth the air: But I keep under my body, and bring it into subjection: lest that by any means, when I have preached to others, I myself should be a castaway."—I Cor. 9:26,27

Only such believers who conscientiously devote their lives towards following the Master's example may echo, at the close of their Christian sojourn, the following testimony of the Apostle Paul. "I have fought a good fight, I have finished my course, I have kept the faith: Henceforth there is laid up for me a crown of righteousness, which the Lord, the righteous judge, shall give me at that day: and not to me only, but unto all them also that love his appearing."—II Tim. 4:7,8 ■

Our Advocate with the Father

*“My little children,
these things write I
unto you, that ye
sin not. And if any
man sin, we have
an advocate with
the Father, Jesus
Christ the
righteous.”
—I John 2:1*

ALL NECESSARY PROVI-
sions of grace are abundant-
ly supplied by our loving
Heavenly Father for the
spiritual calling, blessing,
and development of a little
flock of his earthly children
to share joint heirship with
our Lord and Master in his
spiritual kingdom. (Luke 12:

32) In our featured text, the Apostle John has addressed one of these wonderful provisions in reference to our Lord, and his special position as ‘advocate’ for those who have responded to the heavenly calling of the Father through faith in his precious blood.

THE MEANING OF ADVOCATE

The word advocate [*parakletos*—Greek] in its literal sense means ‘to call to one’s side for aid or assistance’ as in the case of an attorney. It also denotes ‘the act of consoling’ which suggests a close

and personal relationship. This identifies someone who serves in a very special way to plead for another person's cause as their intercessor or representative, and as a result of this action the recipient receives comfort, consolation, and strength. The Greek word *parakletos* has been variously translated in our English Bibles, examples of which are advocate, comforter, helper, one who will plead for us and one who will intercede for us.

ADVOCATE VERSUS MEDIATOR

The title advocate applies to the present Gospel Age, and relates to the members of the body of Christ. As our advocate, Jesus provides personal assistance and comfort to the members of his bride—those footstep followers who have responded to the Heavenly Father's calling, and have entered into a covenant of consecration with him. The Apostle Paul explains, "To them who by patient continuance in well doing seek for glory and honour and immortality, eternal life." (Rom. 2:7) This commitment takes on new and added dimensions in our lives—"We are buried with him by baptism into death: that like as Christ was raised up from the dead by the glory of the Father, even so we also should walk in newness of life."—Rom. 6:4

The New Creature in Christ must deal with the weaknesses of the flesh, as Paul points out, "We have this treasure in earthen vessels, that the excellency of the power may be of God, and not of us." (II Cor. 4:7) We also have many enemies of the Spirit, and must continue to struggle against the flesh, the world, and the wiles of the Adversary. During this present time of acceptable sacrifice,

Jesus has been provided as our Advocate by the grace of God, and he intercedes and represents us before the bar of Divine justice. We are never free from Satan's attacks, and may be sidetracked in our desire to walk in newness of life. The apostle spoke of this blessed provision. "He that searcheth the hearts knoweth what is the mind of the Spirit, because he maketh intercession for the saints according to the will of God."—Rom. 8:27

The work of the Mediator, on the other hand, will not begin until the present calling and selection of members of the body of Christ has been completed. This title describes their future office as the anointed and glorified Christ. At that time, the faithful body members will share with our Lord in blessing all the families of the earth, under the terms of the New Covenant.

Because of sin and disobedience to the Divine law, the human family is alienated from the Heavenly Father and requires a third party who will act as the 'reconciler' or 'go-between' in reestablishing a relationship between God and mankind. A thousand years has been set aside in the plan of God for this mediating process. It will be a grand work of lifting up the willing and obedient to live under the righteous laws of God, and it will include all those who will be resurrected from the grave.

Concerning this, the Prophet Isaiah wrote, "Thus saith the LORD, In an acceptable time have I heard thee, and in a day of salvation have I helped thee: and I will preserve thee, and give thee for a covenant of the people, to establish [raise up, *Marginal Translation*] the earth, to

cause to inherit the desolate heritages.” (Isa. 49:8) In harmony with this wonderful prophecy, the Apostle Paul emphasized that, “our sufficiency is of God” (II Cor. 3:5), and then added, “Who also hath made us able ministers of the new testament [covenant].”—vs. 6

JESUS OPENED THE WAY

Through his marvelous grace, our Heavenly Father has given his son—our Lord and Savior—as a means by which his consecrated children may now have communion and fellowship with him because of their faith in Jesus’ earthly ministry and sacrificial blood. This blood was shed for all mankind, and it will become effectual for the world during Christ’s future kingdom of righteousness.

The usage of the word *parakletos* in John’s first epistle clearly demonstrates the special role that our beloved Lord Jesus would fulfill in connection with these Divine arrangements. No other being could possibly open the way for the footstep members of the specially called church class to follow. This is explained by the Apostle Paul in his letter to the Hebrew brethren. He wrote, “Having therefore, brethren, boldness to enter into the holiest by the blood of Jesus, By a new and living way, which he hath consecrated for us, through the veil, that is to say, his flesh.” (Heb. 10:19,20) This opening of the ‘new and living way’ was demonstrated by Divine power at the time of his death. This was recorded by Matthew in his gospel, “Behold, the veil of the temple was rent in twain from the top to the bottom; and the earth did quake, and the rocks rent.”—Matt. 27:51

THE CLEANSING BLOOD

Paul also spoke many things to the Hebrew brethren concerning their religious ceremonies, including the offerings of the sacrificial blood of goats and calves. He explained, however, that these offerings served merely in a typical sense and pointed to something with far greater significance and value. (Heb. 9:12,13) The apostle then made the comparison between the blood of innocent animals with that of our Lord Jesus, and the true meaning surrounding his precious and life-sustaining blood.

He explained that sacrificial blood took on greater significance when manifest in its antitypical sense. "How much more shall the blood of Christ, who through the eternal Spirit offered himself without spot to God, purge your conscience from dead works to serve the living God? And for this cause he is the mediator of the new testament [new covenant], that by means of death, for the redemption of the transgressions that were under the first testament, they which are called might receive the promise of eternal inheritance." (vss. 14,15) During the administration of Christ's future kingdom, this sanctifying blood will be applied on behalf of the whole human family. "This is the blood of the testament which God hath enjoined unto you."—vs. 20

THE MERIT APPLIED

During the present Gospel Age, the 'little flock' of consecrated footstep followers of Christ have enjoyed a special blessing by sharing in the Divine program for the ultimate reconciliation and salvation

of the human family. The merit, or true value, of Jesus' blood has now been made available to them for their justification in Christ Jesus. "Christ is not entered into the holy places made with hands, which are the figures of the true; but into heaven itself, now to appear in the presence of God for us." (vs. 24) Jesus has appeared at the celestial court and in the presence of our loving Heavenly Father on behalf of the footstep members of his body. They have been brought into a covenant relationship with God and share in the wonderful plans of the Father in connection with the future work of the kingdom.

THE HOLY SPIRIT

The Apostle Peter testified to the wonderful plan and purpose of God when he rose to speak to those who had been witnesses to the great events that were taking place on the Day of Pentecost. In the Acts of the Apostles, we read, "Peter, standing up with the eleven, lifted up his voice, and said unto them, Ye men of Judaea, and all ye that dwell at Jerusalem, be this known unto you, and hearken to my words."—Acts 2:14

The apostle then turned to a prophecy which had been written by one of the prophets of God approximately eight hundred years earlier, and he read, "This is that which was spoken by the prophet Joel [2:28-32]; And it shall come to pass in the last days, saith God, I will pour out my Spirit upon all flesh: and your sons and your daughters shall prophesy, and your young men shall see visions, and your old men shall dream dreams." (vss. 16,17) Looking down the stream of time when the kingdom of our

Lord would be established, he noted that the blood of sacrifice will be applied for the whole human family, and the Spirit of truth will be available to lift up the sin-sick and dying race.

During the present Gospel Age, Joel's prophecy speaks of Christ's faithful followers who were to be especially blessed. They would be the first to receive the merit of Christ's sacrifice that was presented to the Heavenly Father, and as a result the Holy Spirit of truth and understanding would be given to them. Reading further from Joel's prophecy, Peter said, "On my servants and on my hand-maidens I will pour out in those days of my Spirit; and they shall prophesy." (vs. 18) Jesus had presented the merit of his blood to this specially called class for their justification during the present Gospel Age. When the church class has been completed, the merit of his blood will then also be applied on behalf of the whole human family.

INTERCESSION FOR US

All who love and obey our Heavenly Father have an altar of prayer that has been consecrated and sanctified for us by Jesus. Prayers that are offered to the Father must be through the Master, and it is fully available any time we have need of it. Paul explains, "He is able also to save them to the uttermost [evermore, *Marginal Translation*] that come unto God by him, seeing he ever liveth to make intercession for them." (Heb. 7:25) The word 'intercession' means to meet and converse for the purpose of making a petition for someone, a most wonderful provision of God's grace in connection with his consecrated children.

Although Jesus paid the price for Adamic sin by giving his perfect life on the cross, he promises to intercede on behalf of his class of faithful followers when they approach the throne of heavenly grace for forgiveness and spiritual guidance. This is especially true with the Lord's people who are searching their hearts to understand the mind of God. It is only for those who are fully consecrated and who obediently approach him through the precious name of Jesus. Paul said, "We know that all things work together for good to them that love God, to them who are the called according to his purpose."—Rom. 8:28

We then read, "What shall we then say to these things? If God be for us, who can be against us? He that spared not his own Son, but delivered him up for us all, how shall he not with him also freely give us all things?" (vss. 31,32) It is God's purpose to call a class of faithful Christians who will share our Lord Jesus' glory in his kingdom. "Who shall lay any thing to the charge of God's elect? It is God that justifieth. Who is he that condemneth? It is Christ that died, yea rather, that is risen again, who is even at the right hand of God, who also maketh intercession for us."—vss. 33,34

OUR SYMPATHETIC HIGH PRIEST

The Apostle Paul addressed the importance of the great High Priest and our special relationship with him. Concerning our Lord and Master he wrote, "Seeing then that we have a great high priest, that is passed into the heavens, Jesus the Son of God, let us hold fast our profession. For we have not an high priest which cannot be touched

with the feeling of our infirmities; but was in all points tempted like as we are, yet without sin.”—Heb. 4:14,15

Paul further emphasized this relationship when he said, “Who in the days of his flesh, when he had offered up prayers and supplications with strong crying and tears unto him that was able to save him from death, and was heard in that he feared [for his piety, *Marginal Translation*].” (Heb. 5:7) Even our Lord Jesus required the Father’s testing as spoken by the apostle when he pointed out, “Though he were a Son, yet learned he obedience by the things which he suffered; And being made perfect, he became the author of eternal salvation unto all them that obey him.” (vss. 8,9) Having learned the necessary testings by suffering death for the fallen human family, Jesus is now in the position to serve his Father as the personal Advocate for the children of God. During the present age, this blessing is limited to those who have been called out of the sin-sick and dying human family, and have experienced firsthand the terrible results of sin, degradation and death. He is, therefore, the great and compassionate High Priest for all those who are yet being called to share with him in the kingdom blessings soon to be made available for the sin-sick world.

THE THRONE OF GRACE

Another of the provisions that have been made available to the children of God during the present time is the privilege of prayer. This wonderful means of communication with Almighty God is offered to us whereby we may approach God and ask

him for spiritual help, guidance, direction, and the forgiveness of sins whenever and wherever necessary.

This privilege is available through our blessed Master who serves as our Advocate to the Father. Thus, all prayers and petitions that we present to the Father must be presented in and through the precious name and merit of Jesus. "Through him we both have access by one Spirit unto the Father." (Eph. 2:18) We cannot neglect this marvelous provision as we walk in newness of life with our blessed Master. "Let us therefore come boldly unto the throne of grace, that we may obtain mercy, and find grace to help in time of need." (Heb. 4:16) Jesus assures his faithful believers of the privileges and blessings associated with prayer. "If ye abide in me, and my words abide in you, ye shall ask what ye will, and it shall be done unto you."—John 15:7

IF ANY MAN SIN

In our featured text (I John 2:1), the apostle wrote that if we sin, our Lord Jesus will serve as our Advocate with the Father. The question, however, is not 'if' we sin because we have all inherited fleshly weaknesses. If anyone has convinced himself that he is without sin he is only deceiving himself. When we seek forgiveness at the throne of heavenly grace our Lord Jesus stands beside us as our Advocate and helper.

In his letter to the brethren at Rome, Paul reminds us, "There is none that understandeth, there is none that seeketh after God. They are all gone out of the way, they are together become unprofitable; there is none that doeth good, no, not

one.” (Rom. 3:11,12) The apostle was quoting from the previously written words of the psalmist David, who wrote, “The fool hath said in his heart, There is no God. They are corrupt, they have done abominable works, there is none that doeth good. The LORD looked down from heaven upon the children of men, to see if there were any that did understand, and seek God. They are all gone aside, they are all together become filthy: there is none that doeth good, no, not one.”—Ps. 14:1-3

Being subject to the weaknesses and frailties of the fallen flesh and in need of forgiveness from our Father, we need to ask forgiveness from the Father whenever we may stumble. We need to approach him for all offences, and Jesus will represent us as our advocate, intercessor, and helper at the bar of Divine justice. We must seek forgiveness for our sins on a continuing and daily basis.

SONS OF GOD

We enjoy this special relationship with the Father because we are now part of his family of New Creatures in Christ Jesus. John said, “Behold, what manner of love the Father hath bestowed upon us, that we should be called the sons of God: therefore the world knoweth us not, because it knew him not.” (I John 3:1) This has been made possible for us through the marvelous grace of our Lord Jesus. “Every man that hath this hope in him purifieth himself, even as he is pure.” (vs. 3) These wonderful provisions of the Father are given to the members of the bride of Christ to ensure their faithfulness in laying down their consecrated lives in sacrifice to him.

PRESENTED FAULTLESS TO THE FATHER

We read, “Keep yourselves in the love of God, looking for the mercy of our Lord Jesus Christ unto eternal life.” (Jude 21) We may rest in full assurance of faith that the Lord Jesus, as our Advocate, will represent us before the Heavenly Father whenever we petition him to do so. When we confess our faults to the Father and seek his forgiveness, we show him that we are in harmony with his arrangements. It is our desire to be faithful to the end of our consecrated walk in newness of life with our Lord Jesus and, if faithful unto death (Rev. 2:10), we will be privileged to receive the abundant joys of the heavenly inheritance.

Jesus is especially interested in the spiritual growth and everlasting welfare of his body members. He died for us and has promised to bless and guide us even unto the end of our consecrated course, and he will then present us all faultless and blameless to the Heavenly Father. Blessed is the precious name of Jesus who stands ready to help us to make our calling and election sure.

The servant of God wrote, “Now unto him that is able to keep you from falling, and to present you faultless before the presence of his glory with exceeding joy.”—Jude 24 ■

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India Trip Report

IT WAS A great privilege and blessing from the Lord for Bro. Bob and Sr. Deanna Gorecki, Bro. Wade and Sr. Lois Austin, and Bro. Ernie and Sr. Janice Kuenzli to visit the Indian brethren during November and December, 2007. In India, we traveled in a circle, from Chennai (on India's east coast) to Trichy, Coimbatore, the Nilgiris, Mangalore (on India's west coast), Mysore, Bangalore and then returning to Chennai for our flight home. During our 20-day trip, we visited with brethren from 28 classes, attended 4 conventions and traveled over 1,000 kilometers.

India is the second most populous country in the world with over 1 billion people—its population density being 10 times that of the United States. This results in multitudes of people everywhere—in the cities, on the roads, in the country. In large cities, travel becomes very difficult and time consuming because of the large number of vehicles and people. Air pollution in the large cities is very bad. India also suffers from a lack of clean water and little waste management. All of this leads to a significantly shorter life-span than enjoyed in the Western countries. India provides an interesting contrast of new (trucks, cars, high-speed Internet,

large computer industry) and old (push carts, oxen-drawn carts, oxen plowing in the fields). We saw many examples of great poverty and were reminded daily how desperately the world needs Christ's earthly kingdom. Only Christ and his church will have the wisdom, means, and power to heal the Indian people physically and spiritually and solve all of their many problems. It is in this environment that the Indian brethren serve the Lord—preaching the Gospel message and building one another up in the faith.

CHALLENGES OF THE INDIAN BRETHREN

Similar to brethren in other lands, the Indian brethren are being tested doctrinally by two leaders who have changed their beliefs and are now preaching a mixture of truth and error. The errors they are teaching are (1) our Lord's return is still future and (2) the miraculous gifts of healing are still being practiced. The Indian brethren are being tested in other ways. A recent change in the leadership of the Bible Students Association—an association of Indian Bible Student classes—has led to dissention and potential division of the organization. It was in this environment that we traveled to encourage the Indian brethren to hold fast to harvest truth and remain united as one body in Christ.

CHENNAI AND PONDICHERRY

We all arrived in Chennai by the early morning of November 15th. We were met at the airport by brethren who helped us get to our hotel. Throughout our trip, the Indian brethren in various cities provided great assistance in arranging taxis, purchasing

train, bus and plane tickets, and making hotel reservations. Bro. Christi Gnanasekar of Chennai was especially helpful in coordinating the overall arrangements for our trip while in India.

Chennai, the capital of the Indian state of Tamil Nadu, is India's 4th largest city, and is home to five classes which we visited. On Thursday, Nov. 15, we met with the Anbudian class. This 25-member 'break away' class left and formed their own class after their leader changed his view and began preaching that the Lord's return is future. This class did a comparative study of Matthew 24, Mark 13, and Luke 21 to re-affirm their belief that our Lord returned invisibly in 1874. They are currently studying both Volumes 1 and 6 of *Studies in the Scriptures*.

On Friday, we journeyed to the home of Bro. Denzil Michael, of the Washermenpet class. This is another 'break-away' class that left their leader



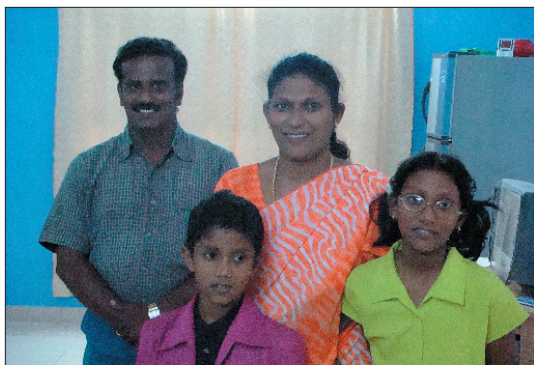
Lunch at home of Bro. Michael and his wife

when he began preaching that miraculous gifts of the Spirit, such as healing, are still taking place. This class is interested in printing small booklets in the Tamil language to continue witnessing in Chennai. Later that day, we traveled one hour to the south side of Chennai where we met with 12 brethren of the Tambaram 'break-away' class. It is difficult for many Indian brethren to attend week-night meetings because of congestion in large cities and most depend on public transportation. Skipping, or leaving, work early to attend a meeting will mean loss of wages.

While in Chennai, we became aware that Vinoth, the 7-year-old son of Bro. Srinivasa Rao of the Tambaram class, needed open-heart surgery to repair two valves and two holes in his heart. Through the generosity of American brethren, funds were provided and the surgery took place on December 7. Vinoth came home from the hospital on December 22 and is expected to make a full recovery. The open-heart surgery cost \$6,000 U.S. and is about the equivalent of five or six years income to the average Indian worker.

On Saturday, November 17, we traveled 150 kilometers down India's east coast to the city of Pondicherry, stopping along the way at a public beach to view the Bay of Bengal. In Pondicherry, a group of newly interested individuals from local Pentecostal churches are meeting twice per month to hear the message of truth. Bro. Samuel Premraj, elder of the Ooty class, travels 300 kilometers one-way twice per month to teach this group of 55-60 individuals God's plan. This group meets free of charge in a local English high school. Before the

meeting, we stopped for refreshments at the home of Bro. and Sr. Selvarani, who were instrumental in gathering this group. Then we were served lunch at the home of a former Pentecostal pastor who attends the meetings.



Bro. and Sr. Selvarani and children

A one-day convention was held on Sunday at the prayer hall built on top of the home of Bro. Udhaya Kumar and Sr. Thelma Rani. (They visited the



Immersion service on roof in Chennai

United States and attended our General Convention in 2006.) About 60 brethren from the local classes attended. During the convention, discourses were given by the American elders on the Abrahamic Covenant, Lord Teach Us to Pray, and Baptism. After the baptismal discourse, two sisters and one brother were immersed in a small tank on the roof of the prayer hall.



Thiruvottiyr meeting in Chennai

That evening, we attended a meeting of 35-40 brethren from the Thiruvottiyr class. At the meeting, Bro. Selvaraj, officially released Volume 6 (*The New Creation*) of *Studies in the Scriptures* printed in the Tamil language. Bro. Selvaraj and his class have worked since 2001 to translate this volume into Tamil. The Dawn Bible Students Association has assisted by providing funds for printing 1,400 copies of the volume. This is first time Volume 6 has been printed in one of the local Indian languages. Previously, Bro. Selvaraj translated and had Volume 2 (*The Time is at Hand*) of *Studies in*

the Scriptures printed in Tamil and funded by the Dawn Bible Students.

TRICHY, LALGUDI, AND MANAPARAI

Monday, November 19 we took an early morning 5-hour train ride to Trichy. Due to a mis-communication, we got off the train two stops too soon. “No problem” as the Indian brethren typically say when faced with any type of difficulty. After one cell-phone call and 45 minutes, 6 brethren and 8 young people greeted us with broad smiles, open arms, and flower garlands. That evening, we met with Bro. Susaraj’s small class in a prayer hall built on top of his house.

Early Tuesday morning, we were driven to a small public bathing and washing area on the Cauvery River where Bro. Ramesh and his wife, Sr. Sharmali were immersed. Then we traveled 50 kilometers to meet with the Lalgudi class. Climbing a steep ladder to reach a trap door in the floor of their 2nd floor prayer hall, we had a lovely meeting there with about 30 brethren, most of whom sat on the floor for



Meeting at Lalgudi

the meeting. Many of the Lalgudi brethren missed work to attend the meeting. Bro. Anand is the elder of this enthusiastic class. As with all of our meetings, discourses by the American elders were translated

into the local language, either Tamil or Kannada. Here, Sr. Nirmala was our translator.

We traveled back to Trichy for a short rest and an evening meeting with the class led by Bro. Felix Anthony. Before the meeting began, the class held a ribbon-cutting ceremony, since this was the first meeting in their new prayer hall. A baptismal discourse was given here for the two brethren who had been immersed that morning. After the meeting, we had dinner and fellowship at the home of Bro. Felix, a carpenter who has built beautiful podiums for classes throughout Tamil Nadu.



Bro. Jeyaraj leaving Manaparai prayer hall

Wednesday, we traveled 40 kilometers past rice fields, where men were sowing seeds by hand and women were bent over pulling weeds from the watery rice fields, to the village of Manaparai. There we met with two classes. The first, led by Bro. Jeyaraj, meets in a small prayer hall with a thatched

roof built in 2000. Bro. Jeyaraj is the new General Secretary of the Bible Students Association (BSA) in India, which sponsors the annual Indian General Convention, a yearly Youth Convention, a pilgrim service and a monthly magazine in the Tamil language. The Dawn Bible Students Association provides funds to the BSA to cover the magazine's printing and postage expenses. After the meeting, the class served us a delightful lunch on banana leaves. After lunch and fellowship, we traveled a short distance to meet with the second class, in the home of Bro. Chinnippan. Near the end of the meeting, we experienced a 'power-cut.' Bro. Chinnippan brought out a battery-powered flashlight so the speaker could finish giving his discourse.

COIMBATORE, PODANUR, METTUPALAYAM AND POLLACHI

On Thursday, November 22 we rode 5½ hours to Coimbatore, home of the largest class in India. We were met at the hotel by Bro. Ebe Manoharan, his son Bro. Newlin Rajkumar and Bro. David Pushparaj. After a short rest in the hotel, we traveled the short distance to Podanur, where we met with a mixed group of the Podanur class and newly-interested individuals. Bro. Francis Paul, from Mettupalayam, is leading the newly-interested through a series of studies to an understanding of God's plan. Shortly after the meeting finished, we experienced another 'power-cut' and left the meeting hall by candlelight, stopping at the home of brethren for a lovely dinner and fellowship.

On Friday we had lunch and fellowship at the home of brethren and, in the evening, traveled to

Mettupalayam to meet with the class there. First, we met for refreshments at the home of Bro. Francis Paul and his wife, Sr. Anbarasi. Like many others in India, Bro. Francis Paul is active in witnessing through public meetings and follow-up meetings. He showed us his small study where he prepares his lessons for witnessing. Then we traveled on to the Mettupalayam prayer hall, where we met with about 40 brethren. After the meeting, the class provided a dinner of rice, chicken, and fruit.

Morning meetings were scheduled on Saturday in Pollachi, 30 kilometers from Coimbatore. Approximately 50 attended, most of whom were interested people from other Christian churches. After lunch, we traveled to a small village nearby where land was being donated by Indian brethren for a Bible Student Retirement Center. Several palm and mango trees were planted in recognition of the donation.

We attended a one-day convention on Sunday held in the Coimbatore class prayer hall. Over 100 brethren attended the convention. During the convention, all of the American brothers spoke, along



Coimbatore class in prayer hall

with Bro. Jeyaraj from Manaparai, who gave a short lesson on “Building the Lord’s House.” After the convention, Bros. Gorecki, Austin, and Kuenzli met with the BSA’s advisory committee to review their needs for supporting the Indian General and Youth Conventions.

In the evening, several young people visited our hotel for spiritual discussions and to ask questions or ‘doubts.’ Their questions included (1) what was pictured by the covenant of circumcision instituted by God with Abraham, (2) why do American classes have multiple elders while Indian classes typically have just one, and (3) is it Scripturally proper for sisters to give short speeches at the Youth Conventions (Seminars). It was a delight to have these discussions with them. They continue to be one of the highlights of our trips to India.

KOTAGIRI, WELLINGTON, OOTY, AND COONOR

On Monday, November 26, we traveled to the Nilgiri area to meet with four classes. Nilgiri means ‘blue mountains’ and it is a very beautiful area similar to the Appalachian mountains in North Carolina. We passed monkeys along the roadside, and, as we got to the higher elevations, we passed through many tea plantations. Near the top of the mountains, we stopped at Kotagiri and met for a late morning meeting with the small class located there. Approximately 12 attended the meeting. Their elder, Bro. Jayaraj, had recently moved from Coonoor. Traveling on to Ooty, we stopped along the way at a park on top of the highest mountain (Doddabetta—8600’) in the Ghats. The view from there of the surrounding mountains was beautiful.

Arriving in Ooty, we first stopped in town to see the art studio of Bro. Samuel Premraj and his brother, Bro. Charles Russell. Bro. Premraj is an accomplished artist and his artwork, such as paintings of Bro. Russell, posters of Nebuchadnezzar's image, Charts, pictures of the Tabernacle, etc., can be seen in many prayer halls throughout India.

While in the Ooty area, the Austins and Kuenzlis stayed in the home of Bro. Premraj, his wife, Sr. Flora, and their two daughters, Ruth and Rachel. They provided wonderful hospitality during our 3-day stay.

Monday evening, a number of brethren including Bro. Basker from Erode and Bro. J. Joshua and his family from

Coimbatore traveled to Ooty to meet with us. We had enjoyed sweet fellowship with these brethren on previous visits but had been unable to meet with them up to this point.



Brethren who traveled from Erode and Coimbatore

They solved that problem by traveling 5 hours one-way Monday afternoon and evening to spend an hour of fellowship with us. returning home the same night so that they could go back to work on Tuesday. Such is the zeal of many Indian brethren to meet with those who visit from other countries.

Tuesday, we traveled 30 kilometers to Wellington to meet with the class there. Bro. C. George, the class elder, and his wife Sr. Viola, provided refreshments before



Sr. Viola and Bro. C. George

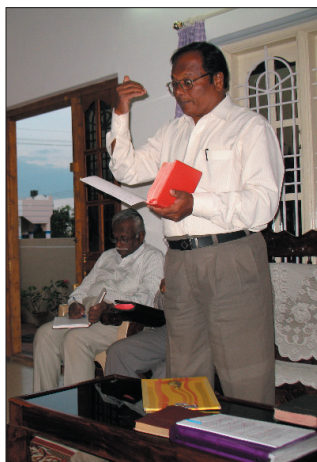
the meeting and then dinner after the meeting. Due to work commitments, only 12 brethren were able to attend the evening meeting. (Since our visit, Bro. C. George passed away on December 30, 2007, suffering a massive heart attack while giving a discourse.)

The next day, the Ooty class held a one-day convention in Bro. Premraj's home. Discourses were given by all of the American elders. Approximately 20 attended. After the convention, we traveled 30 kilometers for an evening meeting with the Coonor class. This class meets in a prayer hall built over the home of Bro. Segar, their elder. Over 30 enthusiastic brethren attended the meeting including a number from the Sesa class which meets 22 kilometers away. The Sesa class is new and Bro. Segar is leading them in their studies. After the meeting, we enjoyed an American style dinner of fried chicken, mashed potatoes, and vegetables provided by Bro. Segar's mother-in-law.

MYSORE AND MANGALORE

Early Thursday morning we left Ooty for the taxi ride down the mountains to the city of Mysore.

Along the way, we passed through several wildlife preserves, seeing numerous deer, peacocks, a very large cape buffalo, and one lone elephant. Arriving in Mysore, we met Bro. Prasad of Bangalore, one of our dear Indian brethren, and Bro. Pushparaj, elder of one of the Mysore classes. After lunch, they helped the Austins and Goreckis board a bus for the 9 hour bus ride to Mangalore over one of the bumpiest roads in India. The Kuenzlis stayed in Mysore, enjoying lunch and fellowship at the home of Bro. Pushparaj and his wife. Bro. Pushparaj is retired, and regularly he and his wife go door-to-



Bro. Pushparaj

door witnessing to the truth. They examine the name which many people put on the front of their homes and if the name sounds Christian, they stop and ask if the residents would like to discuss the Bible. We attended a late afternoon meeting in Mysore, where Bro. Pushparaj translated the discourse given into Kannada. After the meeting it was a 3-hour taxi ride on to Bangalore on a very

nice divided highway.

Friday, the Austins and Goreckis met with the Mangalore class. There were 18 adults and 3 young children gathered for the service. The meeting was held in the home of Sr. Alexander. The class elder, Bro. Christopher, lives 30 kilometers south and

travels to the meeting on his two-wheel bike which takes about 2 hours. He was transferred to Mangalore from Mysore and has been transferred to other branches of the bank that he is employed at and each time the location is within a few hours of the Mangalore class where the Lord seems to have directed his services. When he first came to Mangalore, Bro. Alexander was the class elder, who a few weeks later had a stroke and was unable to lead the class. Bro. Christopher was then used to help the class. On Saturday, the Austins and Goreckis then flew to Bangalore to rejoin the Kuenzlis.

BANGALORE, NAGENAHALLI AND KOLAR GOLD FIELDS

Saturday morning, the Kuenzlis joined Bro. Prasad, Bro. Jonathan (his brother), Bro. Jayaprasad and Bro. Ravi Chandra for the 60 kilometer journey from Bangalore to a small class in the village of Nagenahalli. Along the way, we passed numerous farmers driving their teams of oxen home



Meeting at Nagenahalli

from the fields. At Nagenahalli, we met with 17 brethren in a church built by the Korean Presbyterian church. When the people of the village could not afford to pay for a Presbyterian minister to staff the church, it sat unused until the owner of the land where the church was built heard the truth and offered it as a meeting place for the brethren. There are 22 consecrated in this class. Bro. Ravi Chandra, who lives in Bangalore, travels by bus every Sunday (a 3 hour journey) to lead the class.



Bro. and Sr. Pollock in center of 1965 photo

During our return to Bangalore, we stopped at the home of Bro. Alexander, assistant elder of a class that was formed in 1932. Bro. Alexander showed us copies of the BSA monthly magazine from the 1940s and 1950s and old photos of Indian General Conventions, including a picture of Bro. Russell and Sr. Pauline Pollock's visit to India in the 1960s.

The Austins and Goreckis arrived from Mangalore and joined the Kuenzlis for a Saturday evening dinner at the home of Bro. Prasad and Sr. Prabha. Their son Samuel, his wife Remona and their newborn daughter were there also. Bro. and Sr. Prasad

have been a great example and help to the Indian brethren. Bro. Prasad, because he is a retired doctor, has looked after the medical issues of several brethren including Bro. Abel. He is coordinating the sending of brethren to serve and encourage 'break-away' classes in Vizag and Rajhamundry. He has translated and printed a number of booklets, and Tabernacle Shadows, in local languages, and has also begun translating Volume 6 (*The New Creation*) of *Studies in the Scriptures* into Kannada, the local language of the brethren who live in Bangalore, and the Indian State of Karnataka.

Sunday, there was a convention attended by brethren from five Bangalore-area classes. Over 200 brethren attended including Bro. Abel, a young brother who was waiting for a kidney transplant from his sister. We were touched by the heart-felt welcome address given by Bro. Collins. The Kuenzlis



Bangalore Convention

first met Bro. Collins back in 1997 during their first visit to India. It was a wonderful experience to see all of these brethren assembled in convention, eager to hear the Lord's Word and zealous to know and do His will.

On Monday, December 3, the Austins and Goreckis traveled to the Kolar Gold Fields to meet with the class there. On the long ride there, Bro. Khurrsino was asked how he came into the Truth. He told us that he was from a broken family and was given no principles or direction in his life. As he was growing up, he found himself unable to advance in his career, so he turned to non-Christian groups as well as 'holy men' for answers. Finding none, he then focused on Christian groups visiting a great variety of churches. One evening, he stumbled upon a preacher who had a small group meeting inside an old cluttered garage. There were drunks as well as people of the street. He was impressed with the preacher, who was a Bible student, and his views on the Scriptures. They were different from any he had ever heard before so he went to his minister and shared the views with him. His minister said they were the words of the devil. After a few weeks of study, he went back to the old cluttered garage to challenge the preacher's views. After an exhaustive discussion, he found the preacher had answers from the Scriptures for all his questions. This led him to begin to study with the preacher in another one of his small classes. After five years, the preacher began to change his views on some of the Scriptures. Bro. Khurrsino could not accept these changes and left the preacher. It was a hard decision to leave the group that had taught him the wonderful message

of the Scriptures. He, however, found other Bible student classes in the area that held to the same teachings that he had learned. He had been taught the importance of public witness, which he then began to carry on himself. He visited small villages and put on public meetings.

The Kolar Gold Fields class was the result of one of his efforts. He also has another group of newly interested people which he visits each week. There were 30 adults and 23 children attending. Many had taken off from work to be at the meeting and the children missed school to be there also. After two discourses and fellowship, we were back in the taxi for a 3 hour ride back to our hotel.



Kolar Gold Fields' youth

The next day, all six of us met with Bro. Khurrsino and his wife, Sr. Sophie, in their home. Bro. Khurrsino has been active in witnessing to the truth in

Tamil Nadu, Karnataka, and also in Mumbai (Bombay). He has adapted the series of 52 lessons, originally developed by another brother, and converted them into 53 lessons for teaching the truth to the newly-interested. In the afternoon, we met with one of the brothers who have changed their doctrinal views and his family for lunch. After lunch, he explained to us that although he changed his views on

some doctrines, he still holds to many of the teachings of the Bible Students. We spent several hours discussing these differences.

On Tuesday evening, Bros. Jayaprasad, Murthy and Joseph met with us at our hotel. We enjoyed lovely spiritual fellowship and discussion with each of them during our final evening in Bangalore.

RETURN TO CHENNAI

We started our 2-day journey home, on December 5, with a 350 kilometer taxi ride from Bangalore to Chennai. Arriving at a hotel in Chennai, we were greeted by ten brethren. After fellowship and dinner together—all 16 of us—it was off to the airport for our plane flight at 2AM and the 19 hour trip back to America.

As we reflect on our trip to India, we rejoice in the faith and zeal of the Indian brethren. Despite temporal hardships and lack of truth literature in their local languages, there are well over 1,000 brethren in India who understand the Divine plan of salvation, who love the truth, and have a great zeal to proclaim the Gospel message. They share many of the same trials and challenges as brethren in America and other countries around the world. Truly, they are members of the body of Christ and are running faithfully for the prize of the High Calling in Christ Jesus.

As the Apostle Paul wrote in Philippians 1:3-6: We thank our God upon every remembrance of them, always in every prayer of ours for them all making request with joy, for their fellowship in the gospel from the first day until now; being confident of this very thing, that he which hath begun a good work in them will perform it until the day of Jesus Christ. ■

General Convention Bulletin

July 19-24, 2008—Johnstown, Pennsylvania

THE 2008 GENERAL CONVENTION returns once again to the lovely facilities of the University of Pittsburgh at Johnstown. Air-conditioned hotel-like rooms with private bathrooms in the Living-Learning Center (LLC), family-style apartments (also air-conditioned) with private bathrooms (APTS), and housing with two rooms sharing one bathroom (not air-conditioned) in other facilities will be available on campus. A child may sleep on a bedroom floor at no charge in his own sleeping bag if both beds are occupied. If a child is alone in a bedroom sharing the bathroom with other adults, the double occupancy rate will apply to all family members.

All room and meal costs for children 12 years old or younger will be paid by the convention. In addition, we are pleased to announce that, beginning in 2008, 100% of the cost of those from ages 13 through 17 will be refunded if the young person attends at least 75% of the studies for his or her age group. This subsidy does not cover meals paid in cash at the door.

A complete pricing table and registration form is provided for your convenience immediately following this announcement. We encourage you to make your reservations early.

The convention theme text is taken from the words of Romans 13:12, "The night is far spent,

the day is at hand: let us therefore cast off the works of darkness, and let us put on the armour of light.”

Additionally, a series of three minitalks will be presented, based on lessons from the “Feast of Unleavened Bread,” “Feast of Weeks,” and “Feast of Tabernacles;” and assigned discourse subjects will include “The One Hope of your Calling” and “Abraham, the Friend of God.”

We encourage you to make your plans now to attend this year’s General Convention.

Ages	18 & up	**13-17
Breakfast	\$6.00	\$5.00
Lunch	7.00	6.00
Dinner	9.00	8.00
Total, three meals	\$22.00	\$19.00
Lodging (per night)		
*dbl occ (LLC or APTS)	\$25.00	\$20.00
dbl occ (non-LLC or APTS)	\$20.00	\$18.00
*single occ (LLC)	\$45.00	n/a
single occ (non-LLC)	\$25.00	n/a
PKG: 7 nights, 18 meals		
*dbl occ (LLC or APTS)	\$275†	\$240†
dbl occ (non-LLC or APTS)	\$175†	\$140†
*single occ (LLC)	\$395†	n/a
single occ (non-LLC)	\$215†	n/a
If no breakfasts, deduct—†\$30 *Air conditioned **100% of these costs will be refunded if the young person attends 75% of the studies for his/her age group		

General Convention Registration

1425 Lachman Lane — Pacific Palisades, CA 90272

E-mail: Nekora@aol.com (310) 454-5248

	Brkfst	Lunch	Dinner	Bed
Friday, July 18, 2008				
Saturday, 19th				
Sunday, 20th				
Monday, 21st				
Tuesday, 22nd				
Wednesday, 23rd				
Thursday, 24th				

Check for package: 7 nights, all 18 meals ☐
or 7 nights, 12 meals (no breakfasts) ☐

Check: ☐ private bath **or** ☐ shared bath
☐ double occupancy ☐ single occupancy
☐ interested in APTS

Names and ecclesia name (age if under 18)

Address:

Statistical Report

For the year ended September 30, 2007

THE DAWN IS pleased to present another annual report to our readers. In the fiscal year 2007, the Dawn was able to maintain its witness work at a similar level to the prior year, though contributions and bequests were down 18%. We had budgeted to reduce our reserves by up to 15%, if necessary, in 2007 in order to carry on our witness work, but our actual reduction in reserves was less than 9%. Revenues were 16% higher than budget, operating expenses were 18% above budget, and witnessing expenses were 9% under budget. This resulted in a net loss of \$81,420, or 47% below the budgeted loss of \$154,000. Included in both the actual and budgeted net loss was \$44,000 of additional witness expense committed to in 2006 which was not spent until 2007.

We have budgeted to continue current radio, TV, Internet, and other witnessing work for 2008, but to limit the use of reserves to no more than \$100,000, or 15%. Further increases in witnessing efforts will be considered if revenue or bequests surpass budgeted amounts.

We continue to support the radio and television work, with substantial efforts coming in the form of 30-second commercial spots (television), as well

Income	Receipts	Expenditures
All revenue other than bequests	\$271,806	
Expenses		
Radio (domestic and foreign)		\$122,957
TV (includes spots and recordings)		37,053
Other Media and Editorial		25,825
Pilgrim Service (domestic and foreign)		12,947
Other Foreign Support		15,140
Plant Operating Expense		120,748
Shop Operating Expense		32,414
House Operating Expense		49,782
Shipping/Mailing		76,907
Outside Printing		43,053
Total Expenses		536,826
Less Income	271,806	
Net Loss before Bequests	(265,020)	
Bequests	183,600	
Net Loss after Bequests	(81,420)	

as foreign radio. We have advertised in Farmer's and Grier's Almanacs. Large amounts of free literature have been sent out by various ecclesias in this country and abroad, including many booklets available as Bible study helps. Additionally, Hope booklets continue to be sent to funeral directors throughout the United States, and by many ecclesias as well, bringing a message of comfort to those who have lost loved ones in death. All of these witness efforts have proven fruitful with many responses coming in as a result.

The Dawn recorded lecture service continues its work. The Dawn magazine and lectures are available upon request on cassette tape as well as CD. The Dawn web page continues to bring in requests for literature from around the world, with many

requests for Spanish and Portuguese literature. Because of this, a new Spanish web site is in the process of being set up. We are pleased to report that the Dawn web page reached 1 million total “hits” in 2007 for the first time. The Dawn Devotional Radio internet radio station at Live365 provides added witnessing and Truth programs 24 hours a day, 7 days a week, 365 days a year.

The Dawn continued its Internet keyword advertising on both Google and Yahoo for the booklets: *God’s Plan, Christ’s 1000-Year Kingdom, How God Answers Prayer, Hope, Jesus the World’s Savior, When a Man Dies, Hope for a Fear-filled World, Science and Creation, Armageddon Then World Peace, The Truth About Hell, Day of Judgment, Why God Permits Evil* and *Archeology Proves the Bible*.

The small ads displayed when a user’s search matches one of the Dawn’s keywords appeared over 49 million times. Users clicked on links within the small ad and viewed a Dawn web page advertising the booklet 36,318 times. From those web pages, users read the booklet online 4,552 times, downloaded a PDF version of the booklet 1,785 times and request a copy of the booklet be mailed to them 3,480 times. In January 2008, the Dawn just launched Internet keyword advertising for six additional booklets.

The Dawn is pleased that the Lord has blessed these efforts, and it is the brethren around the world who make all of this possible through their generosity. We continue to ask for your prayers and support that the work of spreading the Gospel message will continue this coming year. ■

SPEAKERS' APPOINTMENTS

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

M. Balko

Sacramento, CA February 15-17

C. Chandler

Sacramento, CA February 15-17

K. Fernets

Sacramento, CA February 15-17

J. Panucci

Sacramento, CA February 15-17

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

A. Allers

Sacramento, CA February 15-17

M. J. Balko

Sacramento, CA February 15-17

D. Blencowe

Sacramento, CA February 15-17

B. Jakubowski

Sacramento, CA February 15-17

S. Jeuck

St. Petersburg, FL February 10

E. Kalinski

Phoenix, AZ February 22-24

B. Keith

Sacramento, CA February 15-17

T. Krupa

Phoenix, AZ February 22-24

E. Kuenzli

Louisville, AL February 10

Phoenix, AZ 22-24

A. Oystrik

Sacramento, CA February 15-17

D. Wesol

Phoenix, AZ February 22-24



MOVING?



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

CONVENTIONS

These conventions are listed by request of classes who sponsor them. So your convention can be placed in these columns in time, make your request in writing three months before the date of the convention to Dawn Magazine, 199 Railroad Avenue, East Rutherford, NJ 07073.

SACRAMENTO CONVENTION, February 15,16, 17—The Clarion Hotel, 2600 Auburn Blvd., Sacramento, CA 95821. Contact K. Ajise, 6925 Gallery Way, Sacramento, CA 95831. Phone: (916) 813-3948

SOUTHWEST WINTER CONVENTION, February 23,24,25—Sunnyslope High School, 35 West Dunlap Avenue, Phoenix, AZ 85021. Contact A. Mengos. Phone: (480) 390-3767

DETROIT/METRO DETROIT JOINT GATHERING, February 24—Pleasant Ridge Community Center, 4 Ridge Road, Pleasant Ridge, MI. Contact M. Nemesh. Phone: (248) 879-1814

FLORIDA CONVENTION, March 8,9,10—Hilton Orlando Altamonte Springs, 350 S. North Lake Blvd., Altamonte Springs, FL 32701. Contact S. Jeuck, 471 Kentia Road, Casselberry, FL 32707. Phone: (407) 834-7592

COLUMBUS PRE-MEMORIAL CONVENTION, March 22,23—Ramada Inn East (Airport), 4801 E. Broad Street, Columbus, OH 43213. Phone: (614) 861-0321. Contact T. Alexander, 3278 Foxcroft Drive, Lewis Center, OH 43035. Phone: (614) 519-8282

NEW YORK SPRING CONVENTION, March 30—Doubletree Hotel, Mahway, NJ. Contact D. Szybinski. Phone: (212) 998-2095

DETROIT PRE-MEMORIAL CONVENTION, April 4,5,6—Macomb Community College, 14500 Twelve Mile

Road, Warren, MI 48088. Contact P. Nemesh. Phone: (248) 649-6588

FRESNO PRE-MEMORIAL CONVENTION, April 4,5,6—Vagabond Inn Executive, 2141 N. Parkway Drive, Fresno, CA 93705. Contact B. Wilson, 2103 N. Price Avenue, #112, Fresno, CA 93705. Phone: (559) 255-2241

GREATER NEW LONDON PRE-MEMORIAL CONVENTION, April 6—Bayview Lodge, Society Road, East Lyme, CT. Contact V. Grillo. Phone: (860) 823-7099

PITTSBURGH SPRING CONVENTION, April 20—Greentree Parkway Center Best Western Inn. Contact C. Byrd. Phone: (412) 734-4702

BOISE CONVENTION, April 25,26,27—Owyhee Plaza Hotel, 1109 Main Street, Boise, ID. Contact by April 4, D. Allers, 7558 W. Hathaway Lane, Boise, ID 83714. Phone: (208) 375-6873

In Thy Name

*Where two or three, with sweet accord,
Meet in thy name, O blessed Lord!
Meet to recount thine acts of grace,
O, how thy presence fills the place!*

*There thou hast promised, Lord, to be,
To bless the little company;
And while we offer prayer and praise,
O! may we learn more of thy ways!*

*O! fill our hearts with heavenly love,
And may we at its impulse move,
That all around may clearly see
That we have been, dear Lord, with thee.*

—Hymns of Dawn

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THY KINGDOM COME (\$2.00 + \$1.00 postage) Discusses time prophecies relating to the work of the church at this end of the age, the restoration of Israel, and the setting up of Christ's kingdom. One chapter pertains to the Great Pyramid of Egypt.—384 pages

THE BATTLE OF ARMAGEDDON (\$3.00 + \$1.50 postage) Shows the dissolution of the present order. It discusses many prophecies relating to the end of the age, noting especially our Lord's great prophecy of Matthew 24.—660 pages

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DAWN PUBLICATIONS

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To us the Scriptures clearly teach:

THAT THE CHURCH IS “THE TEMPLE” OF THE LIVING GOD —peculiarly “his workmanship;” that its construction has been in progress throughout the Gospel Age—ever since Christ became the world’s Redeemer and the chief “corner stone” of this temple, through which, when finished, God’s blessings shall come “to all people,” and they find access to him.—I Cor. 3:16,17; Eph. 2:20-22; Gen. 28:14; Gal. 3:29

THAT MEANTIME THE CHISELING, SHAPING, AND POLISHING of the consecrated believers in Christ’s atonement for sin progresses, and when the last of these “living stones,” “elect and precious,” shall have been made ready, the great Master Workman will bring all together in the first resurrection; and the temple shall be filled with his glory, and be the meeting place between God and men throughout the Millennium.—Rev. 15:5-8

THAT THE BASIS OF HOPE FOR THE CHURCH AND THE WORLD lies in the fact that Jesus Christ, by the grace of God “tasted death for every man,” “a ransom for all,” and will be “the true Light, which lighteth every man that cometh into the world,” “in due time.”—Heb. 2:9; John 1:9; I Tim. 2:5,6

THAT THE HOPE OF THE CHURCH is that she may be like her Lord, “see him as he is,” be a “partaker of the divine nature,” and share his glory as his joint-heir.—I John 3:2; John 17:24; Rom. 8:17; II Pet. 1:4

THAT THE PRESENT MISSION OF THE CHURCH is the perfecting of the saints for the future work of service; to develop in herself every grace; to be God’s witness to the world; and to prepare to be the kings and priests in the next age.—Eph. 4:12; Matt. 24:14; Rev. 1:6, 20:6

THAT THE HOPE FOR THE WORLD lies in the blessings of knowledge and opportunity to be brought to all by Christ’s millennial kingdom—the restitution of all that was lost in Adam, to all the willing and obedient, at the hands of their Redeemer and his glorified church—when all the willfully wicked will be destroyed.—Acts 3:19-23; Isa. 35